

Ad Veritatem

Volume 11 Issue 4

St. Thomas More Society of Orange County

APRIL 2006

"Thomas More, like King David, was convinced that
"my courage is the Lord."

Thomas More:
A Portrait of Courage
Gerard Wegemer

APRIL MEETING:

WEDNESDAY APRIL 19, 2006 NOON

SPEAKER: FRED LAPUZZA, OC DIOCESE
DETENTION MINISTRY COORDINATOR

TOPIC: "WHEN I WAS IN PRISON,
YOU VISITED ME."

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

Don Hunsberger at (714) 663-8000 or email to dah@hunsbergerlaw.com, or
Judy Patno at (714) 871-6655 or email to jpatno@patnolaw.com.

VISIT OUR WEBSITE at www.stthomasmore.net

THOMAS MORE SOCIETY BOARD OF DIRECTORS

DAVID BELZ
Kuhn & Belz

HON. MICHAEL BRENNER
O. C. Superior Court

STEVEN COTUGNO
*Software Engineering
Consultant*

JOHN FLYNN
*Nossaman Guthner
Knox & Elliott*

RONALD GABLE
*Economic & Financial
Analytics, Inc.*

DONALD A. HUNSBERGER
*The Law Offices of
Donald A. Hunsberger*

DEBORAH KNEFEL
*Anaheim Deputy
City Attorney*

ANNE LANPHAR
*First American Title
Insurance Company*

HON. DAVID MCEACHEN
O. C. Superior Court

JUDY PATNO
Law Offices of Judy Patno

COM'R THOMAS SCHULTE
O. C. Superior Court

WALLACE WADE
*Child Support Services
of OC*

GREGORY WEILER
*Palmieri Tyler Weiner
Wilhelm & Waldron*

PRESIDENT
Donald Hunsberger

SECRETARY
Judy Patno

CHAPLAIN
FR. HUGH BARBOUR,
O. PRAEM, PH.D.
St. Michael's Abbey

AD VERITATEM EDITORS

ANNE LANPHAR
RONALD GABLE

FRED LAPUZZA

“When I Was In Prison, You Visited Me.”

APRIL MEETING

WHEN:
NOON
Wed. April 19th

WHERE:
First American
Title Ins. Co.
5 First American
Way, Santa Ana

FOR DIRECTIONS
CALL (714) 800-3000

COST:
\$10 for lunch

Born in 1956, Fred was raised in Omaha, Nebraska where he was a gang member. Struggling to free himself from the gang environment, Fred moved to California in 1986 where he restructured his life. In 1998, he volunteered with the Orange Diocese detention ministry program and began doing 1-on-1 visits and communion services in juvenile hall. In 1989, he entered Trinity Missions Seminary to discern if he had a vocation to the priesthood. He left the seminary shortly thereafter but continued with their lay missionary formation program. For 7 years Fred worked for Allstate as an insurance adjuster during the day while he spent many nights on the streets of Santa Ana as part of the Street Gang Outreach as a lay missionary. In 1997, Fred was hired as the full-time youth minister at St Joachim’s in Costa Mesa. In 2003, he became the Facility Coordinator for Catholic Detention Ministry for the OC Diocese. In 2005, Fred received the Orange County Ambassador of Peace Award for his gang outreach work and his work in the OC jails. Fred is married with two children.

For more information, please contact either Don Hunsberger (714) 663-8000 or dah@hunsbergerlaw.com or Anne Lanphar at (714) 250-8605 alanphar@firstam.com †

STM MONTHLY MTGS: 3RD WEDNESDAY OF MONTH:

MAY 17
JUNE 21
JULY 19
AUGUST 16
SEPTEMBER 20



FIRST THURSDAY MASS

BUSCH LAW PRIVATE CHAPEL
FATHER JOHN HILTZ
FREE LUNCH PROVIDED.
2532 DUPONT AVE, IRVINE
TIME: NOON
RSVP NOT REQUIRED
EVERYONE IS WELCOME! †

CALENDAR REMINDERS



IN THIS ISSUE:

4
A Message from our Chaplain
Sins v Imperfections

5
Lenten Reflections
By Bishop Norman McFarland

9
Our Plea: Justice or Mercy?

14
Cries from the Captive Heart
Writings from Youthful Offenders in Custody

15
Thought for the Day
Fasting



Lenten Reflections
Page 5



Our Plea: Justice or Mercy?
Page 9

17
More on Sincerity & Truth

18
Scriptural Corner
Psalm 51

19
Message from the Pope:
2006 Youth Day Message

22
The Catholic Catechism
The Many Forms of Penance
in Christian Life

24
From the Library
Lord, Have Mercy

SINS VS IMPERFECTIONS

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

Our Chaplain

A MESSAGE FROM OUR CHAPLAIN

QUESTION: *Some spiritual reading I am doing says we should work on eliminating not only our venial sins, but also our imperfections. What is the difference between the two? Why is something imperfect if it isn't a sin?*

ANSWER: This is one of those disputed questions about which moral theologians used to write a great deal. Using the principles of St. Thomas Aquinas, I will try to give the simplest answer possible.

Any sin is first of all a thought, word, deed or omission for which we are responsible; it is voluntary, and contradicts the judgment of our reason enlightened by faith in a matter which affects our relationship with God. Mortal sin is an act which is incompatible with that tie, while venial sin is an abuse or exaggeration not incompatible with a relationship to God, but which genuinely hinders our progress toward Him. On a journey, mortal sin would be like turning an about face and going in the opposite direction, or leaving the road altogether. Venial sin would be like stopping temporarily for no good reason just because the journey is a bit too hard; you might be tempted to give up and so fall into some grave sin, so it's best to keep going.

An imperfection is quite different from these two. An imperfection would consist not in doing something we know is wrong, but in choosing something good when we really could choose something better. On a journey this would be like crawling when we could walk, or walking when we could run. For example, on my day off, I could go to a First Friday Mass, but I am really tired and decide to sleep in. Getting proper rest is really a good thing, but getting to Mass and taking a nap later would be much, much better.

Or in my spiritual reading, I am attracted to lots of stories about apparitions, even though I have never read the Gospel of Luke. Reading about approved apparitions is fine and edifying, but first things first. Sacred scripture is much better for my soul. In fact there's a plenary indulgence for devoutly reading Sacred Scripture for half an hour. You could offer that for the souls of the faithful departed who, like yourself, have neglected the study of their Faith during life! Or I have an inspiration to do a penance by not putting salt on my french fries, but I say, "No, I like french fries with salt. I'll do some other penance." Eating salt on your french fires is a good thing in itself, but an act of penance is much better.

Imperfections are not so much obstacles to the love of God, as they are obstacles to a more fervent love for Him. It's as though He offers us better gifts than we actually want. We're at Cana and we say, "Would You mind changing that wine back into water? Water's good enough for me. You shouldn't have put Yourself to the trouble." Zeal for overcoming imperfections is really what distinguishes us from the heroism of the saints. We work on the imperfections of others, they worked on their own. Thus, if we want to be saints, we have to work on our imperfections honestly, and be sensitive to the good inspirations God gives us. Usually, though, God permits at least some sudden and barely deliberate imperfections even in very holy people. This keeps them humble and dependent on Him. While we need to remember that imperfections are not sins, we should always ask God to give us the grace to be so generous with Him that we will "go the extra mile" spiritually. As it says in Psalm 119 (or 118 in older Catholic Bibles), "I will run in the way of your commandments because you have enlarged my heart." †



SCENE FROM
THE LIFE
ST THOMAS AQUINAS
(DETAIL)

Filippino Lippi

(1489)

LENTEN REFLECTIONS

ADDRESS GIVEN AT MARCH 15, 2006
ST THOMAS MORE LUNCHEON MEETING

BISHOP NORMAN MCFARLAND

I am happy to be with you today once again. As a matter of fact, at my age I am happy to be anywhere today. Which is why I understand the late W.C. Fields wanting to have carved on his tombstone, "On the whole, I would rather be in Philadelphia." And which for some reason reminds me – because that's the way my mind works – that when in the year 47 B.C. Julius Caesar engaged in battle, and defeated, the armies of the King of Pontus in Asia Minor, he sent his famous and laconic dispatch to the Roman Senate: "Veni, vidi, vici" – "I came, I saw, I conquered." So when asked about the state of my health and well-being these days, I have recently adopted, and adapted, that pithy statement for my own. Only instead of *veni, vidi, vici*, my version is *veni, vidi, velcro* – I came, I saw, I hung around. And thank you for asking.

In the current, March issue of your Society's publication, *Ad Veritatem*, your chaplain, Father Hugh Barbour, has a very instructive and interesting article on the early Fathers of the Church, who as he notes, "are witnesses to the ancient, universal ("catholic"), orthodox faith of the Church." I recommend it to your reading. The late Cardinal Danielou said that the Fathers "are not only the truthful witnesses of a bygone era; they are also the most contemporary nourishment of men and women today."

Now over the 60 years of my priesthood, 36 of them as a bishop, in my sermons, talks, writings, there probably is no one whom I have quoted more consistently and frequently than one of these early Fathers, the fifth century Bishop of the North African Diocese of Hippo, St. Augustine. And not to wonder about that, for of all the Fathers and Doctors of the early Church, no other has left such a massive store of salient writings, none richer in content, more universal in scope or more cited in contemporary theology. His total output consists of more than 4 million words, and a medieval monk quipped: "He who says he has read all of Augustine lies!" His has been a conspicuous, enduring impact on Church and society over these hundreds of years right down to the present day. The historian Christopher Dawson wrote of him: "He was to a far greater degree than any emperor or barbarian war-lord, a maker of history and a builder of the bridge which was to lead from the old world to the new." Paul Johnson, in his *A History of Christianity*, says "Next to Saint Paul who supplied the basic theology, he did more to shape Christianity than any other human being."

The endless quest of his religious searching and speculating, his passionate search for truth amid life's most profound enigmas, a mind restlessly occupied with meaning ("I have become an enigma to myself," he wrote, "and herein lies my sickness"), all this reminds his readers today, especially when reading a work like *My Confessions in Thirteen Books* (his own chosen title) how Augustine and we have puzzled over the same questions and verities. This probably sounds pretentious ("Augustine and we") but a major fascination with *The Confessions* is that someone writing sixteen centuries ago can be so like us in grappling with the meaning of God's creation and our place in it.

Augustine's preoccupations in this regard were pursued in a milieu of exhausting public life spent in pastoral minutiae (he was a bishop of a diocese, remember), as well as being confronted with enormous challenges. At the same time, it probably seems to many in today's world that his preoccupations (and let me say my own preoccupations) reflect



**PILATE'S DISPUTE
WITH THE
HIGH PRIEST**

Gerard David

(1480-85)

All in all, the Governor of Judea comes through as a civilized and dedicated public servant, conscientious about doing a good job in difficult circumstances, with a manifest respect for right and reason. And that precisely is what makes his encounter with Christ so painful to observe.

(Continued from page 5) *Lenten Reflections*

a strange order of priorities, when his world and mine appeared and appear to be coming apart. Today's hot and cold wars around the globe, the subjugation of peoples and their physical and spiritual deprivations and sufferings, the maniacal and frightening terrorism, the breakdown of public and private morality, the disregard for human dignity, living in a world profoundly wounded and in cultural decay, are the same kind of troubles that confronted Augustine in his era. As Christopher Dawson wrote: "To the materialist nothing could be more futile than the spectacle of Augustine busying himself [with his esoteric intellectual questions and theological conundrums] while civilization was falling about his ears. It would seem like the activity of an ant which works on its nest while its nest is being destroyed. But St. Augustine saw things otherwise. To him the ruin of civilization and the destruction of the Empire were not very important things. He looked beyond the aimless and bloody chaos of history to the world of eternal realities."



**CHRIST BEFORE
PILATE**

Tintoretto
(1566-67)

And that, my dear friends, is what the Church would have you do at this particular juncture in your lives as you make your way through another season of Lent. There is much more to this wonderful season than just additional practices of piety or acts of penance and mortification, as important and praiseworthy these are. In Lent the Church calls us to *metanoia*, which is a Greek word connoting a change of mind and heart, altering one's mind-set toward whole new ways of thinking and acting. This involves taking a look at where we are and trying to see where we ought to be. It involves testing our values and discerning how they stack up against the values that Jesus offers His followers. And you have to find the time to do this, whatever avenue you may have to pursue in regularly seeking out a quiet fifteen minutes or so of reflection here and there in your busy lives that are filled with responsibilities. I recall an editor of a national magazine writing how "the silences of my life have nearly slipped away ... (the days are filled with) business, conversation, noise and chaos ... I still cling to an hour or two each morning, rising before the family stirs, to sit silently in the green glow of my desk lamp."

In a similar vein, a young executive type, who in the seat in front of me on a flight from Dallas to John Wayne Airport worked a laptop computer the entire way, agreed with my comment as we stood in the crowded aisle to deplane, that life's frantic pace was getting to be a bit much. As a matter of fact, he told me, he had spent the previous week in silence at the Trappist Abbey of Our Lady of Gethsemani in Kentucky, because he needed to pause and focus and remind himself of what life is really all about. This was the fourth consecutive year he had visited the Abbey – in Thomas Merton's words, "to entertain silence in the heart and listen for the voice of God."

Both of these individuals were responding to the spiritual imperative to keep things in perspective, following our Lord's example at the beginning of His public life of withdrawing to the desert where He remains for forty days, praying, meditating, struggling in profound solitude and silence. We may not be able to go to the desert, but we must create a bit of desert within ourselves. Saint Francis of Assisi gives us a practical suggestion in this regard. "We have," he said, "a hermitage always within us; wherever we go and whenever we wish it we can enclose ourselves in it as hermits. The hermitage is our body and the soul is the hermit within."

Following his advice, we can go into this "portable" hermitage without being seen by anyone, even in the midst of a crowded day. It all consists in knowing how to "go into ourselves" every now and then. Our aim should be to rid ourselves of clutter in life, to be free from the smothering influences of the world, with attention given to essentials and true values, to recall what it means to be a Catholic Christian.

And especially this for you, ladies and gentlemen, in the milieu of your lofty calling as servants of the law, whose lives are ordained to truth and justice, who are to remember

Lenten Reflections (Continued on page 7)

(Continued from page 6) ***Lenten Reflections***

God's Word: "I will give you a gift, not to be forsaken, the Law – to rejoice the heart, to be a lamp that gives light to the eyes and that gives life to a people." Your role is absolutely essential if our society is to survive, and especially if it is to survive in peace. For it is only the law – correctly perceived, wisely enacted, justly applied and observed as a human expression of Divine Wisdom, reflecting in the words of the Declaration of Independence the "Laws of Nature and Nature's God" – that provides the structure for sane and productive living in this world, whereby men and women can achieve the potential to which God has called them.

It is indeed a large role that is assigned to the law, but sadly, as we know, the law has not always been looked upon and treated with the reverence it deserves as the embodiment of truth and justice. In all too many instances, truth – the law's lodestar – is manipulated and mangled by forensic game playing, giving rise to an unhealthy cynicism in people generally. And Lent is a good opportunity for the law's practitioners to reflect how they are or are not contributing to its validity, its pertinence, the value that is attributed to it.

Part of my own Lenten practices over the years has been to spend some time contemplating the various persons who played a special role in the passion and death of Christ. The study is fascinating in itself – to consider and wonder about such characters as Judas Iscariot, Peter, Herod, Simon the Cyrenian, the two criminals crucified with Christ, and others who walked across the stage of that drama. I have often found the pondering of their actions and reactions, their strengths and weaknesses, quite discomfiting, with one or another evoking a tinge of recognition of an ambivalence or a failing not completely foreign to my own makeup. And certainly no one is more apt to prompt such reflection in those devoted to law and justice than the one who alone could and did pass the death sentence on the Son of God. For among the observations to be made about the Governor of Judea – and surely the most disconcerting – is that he was not wicked.

The first thing to remember about Pontius Pilate is that he was a career civil servant, and secondly that he had an impossible job. For the truth of the matter is that the Romans were never able to solve the Palestinian question either (their ultimate exasperation being to raze Jerusalem to the ground in the year 70 AD and rebuild it as a pagan city). Concurring only in a shared hatred of oppressor Rome, Palestine Judaism in Christ's day was not really a unitary religion but a collection of sects with their conflicts and mutual exclusions, characterized by irredentist politics and religious extremism. It was not a context conducive to the public order which Rome insisted upon in its Provinces, and the post called for a succession of procurators exercising direct Roman custody, in contrast to the more usual practice, in less volatile situations, of working with a local "strong man" personally subservient to Rome (as actually had been the case earlier with Herod the Great).

Pilate was the fifth Roman Procurator of Judea. As such he has to be regarded as fairly successful, although no procurator could make a real success of Judea. For one thing, he lasted ten years in the office (the years 26 to 36) which usually had a turnover every three, and Rome was not known for patience with gross incompetence in her public servants. It is true that he ruled with an iron fist, and had the reputation of being not in the least hesitant to punish with death, but always, it seems, directed by innate respect for law and justice in the Roman mode, quite highly developed at the time.

Which is not to say that Pilate did not "blow" a few. He was several times reported to the Emperor for his insensitivity to Jewish religious belief and practice, and he was especially hated for his seizure of Temple funds. Even here, however, Pilate evokes a

Lenten Reflections (Continued on page 8)



**CHRIST BEFORE
PILATE**

Nicholaes Maes

(1649-50)

(Continued from page 7) *Lenten Reflections*

certain sympathetic understanding when we realize that this last was the act of a hard-pressed public administrator trying to finance much needed improvements in Jerusalem's water system. Civic officials currently struggling with problems of inadequate water supply and sewage disposal would probably be quite sympathetic, even if not approving!

All in all, the Governor of Judea comes through as a civilized and dedicated public servant, conscientious about doing a good job in difficult circumstances, with a manifest respect for right and reason. And that precisely is what makes his encounter with Christ so painful to observe. Accurately he reads the situation ("I find no case against this man"), sees where justice lay and what the verdict has to be ("Pilate was eager to release him") – and then condemns him to death ("In the end, Pilate handed Jesus over to be crucified.") What is the explanation of this paradox? Was it malice, or base wickedness? Obviously not -- the Procurator uses every evasive action he can think of to avoid giving that sentence. He attempts a change of venue (an obviously insincere recognition of the jurisdiction of Herod Antipas); then an offer to trade (Barabbas for Christ); and finally flagellation as a kind of plea bargaining (not so much even by way of penalty as a forlorn hope that the sight of blood might satisfy).

No, what explains Pontius Pilate is not wickedness, but weakness. His antagonists knew their man, and their threat once again to report him to the Emperor ("If you free this man you are no friend of Caesar") has the Roman career man come apart at the seams. They and he both knew what another complaint to Caesar would entail (amply demonstrated a few years later when, reported on another matter, he was summoned to Rome to answer charges). Once again, truth gives way to self-serving expediency. Once again, we see the harm wrought in this world by those who do not intend what is wrong, but are not strong enough for what is right.

There is no need for me to draw out the implication here for today's followers of Christ who are committed to justice in their profession. Truth is the issue – so important, as we have many times noted, that our Lord described it to Pilate as the very purpose of his coming into this world: "The reason I was born, the reason why I came into the world, is to testify to the truth." And Pilate responded, "Truth! What does that mean?" He very well knew – and he knew its consequences, at least as far as his encounter with Christ was concerned. And so do we. The motto on my Episcopal coat of arms, placed there 36 years ago, and engraved on my ring, is "*In Veritate Ambulare*," -- *To Walk In Truth*. Lent is a good time for me to ask myself, how am I doing currently? And it is a good thing for you to ask also.

Thank you for your attention. †



**PILATE WASHING
HIS HANDS**

Mattia Preti

(1663-67)



OUR PLEA: JUSTICE OR MERCY?

ANNE NELSON LANPHAR, ESQ.

One of the hottest debates currently waging in this country revolves around capital punishment. I have always been a strong advocate of the death penalty but recently I have reviewed my position and found it wanting. This article will explain how and why I came to change my view.

The Catholic Church teaches that societies have the right to utilize capital punishment under the same arguments that justify the use of deadly force in self-defense. The second argument in favor of capital punishment is the demand for justice for the victims and their families as well as society. One of the strongest practical arguments to support capital punishment is its deterrent effect with another argument centering on the cost involved in maintaining a murderer in prison for life.

A few years ago, Father Leo Celano spoke at the monthly meeting of our Society. At that time he was the Catholic chaplain at the California Youth Authority in Norwalk which serves as a interim institution for youthful offenders involved in serious crimes. Father pointed out that 80% of these boys (primarily ages 14-20) come from fatherless families – they come from gang areas where they have no real family security except for the gang which serves as their substitute family. They have little to no awareness of any alternatives to their life style and they have virtually *no hope* of even living to middle age. The most notable statement that Father made was that it was very difficult to talk to these boys about a loving God who is “Our Heavenly *Father*” when, to this audience, a “father” was a missing person that had abandoned them and obviously didn’t care about them, or worse, was physically abusive.

Father Leo invited my husband Bob and me to become involved with the CYA to present some basic classes as a married couple – something that most of these boys have rarely witnessed. When we went to visit the facility, I was really scared – these young men are accused of serious crimes including murder. As we started through the facility, we saw a group marching through with 2 guards. I will never forget my first impression: “My God, they look like my sons; they look like the boys in our Scout troop! But their eyes are scared. They are *so young*! How can this be?” When I looked into their eyes, I saw boys – children. They were so young – they could not be hopeless – they had barely started living.

I am not naive – I know these boys have committed serious crimes and they must be punished but will punishment alone change them or just make them more rigid into their current life styles? If we don’t show them alternatives, why and how can they possibly change? When looking back on my life, the highlight events that caused me to change occurred when I did not in any way deserve love but the other person gave it anyway. I specifically remember at age 11 being forgiven by my aunt for stealing a transistor radio. I was so scared and humiliated when I had to face her but her first act was to hug me and tell me she loved me, then she talked about why it was wrong and I did receive some punishment. From that day forward, I solemnly promised God and myself that I would never steal again. But it was her love given when I didn’t deserve it that changed me, not the punishment.

My world and my background are so different from these boys, how can I possibly relate to them? How could I teach them? Was this worth doing or was this hopeless and wasting my time? By a very interesting series of coincidences, Bob and I learned about a prison ministry class conducted by the Los Angeles Diocese which has a number of Catholic lay people who assist the appointed chaplains in the youth and adult prisons throughout

Justice or Mercy? (Continued on page 10)



RETURN OF THE
PRODIGAL SON

*Bartolomeo Esteban
Murillo*

(1632-35)

(Continued from page 9) Justice or Mercy?

the LA area. The class was extremely well done and the chaplains told us so many things that surprised us – how the criminals have a strong internal code that no one hurts a teacher or a chaplain. The stories they told were inspiring and amazing. However, the most startling revelations came from the panel discussion – the panel was comprised of former convicts and family members of convicts. Amazingly each and everyone of the convicts made it absolutely clear how much the few words of kindness from the Catholic volunteer chaplains meant to them: the fact that someone remembered their name and actually cared enough to volunteer their time to come to this awful place and visit them, touched them deeply. They emphasized that they would think about the kind word, or that the chaplain remembered their name, or the little touch on the shoulder, *for days!* Each of them gradually become involved with religious classes as a result of these volunteers who told them that they were worth saving, something that no one else had done! They knew what they had done was wrong, they made no excuses, but they emphasized that they had viewed themselves as worthless, not worth saving, not worth forgiving, until someone showed them that God did care.

One young man, Juan, now age 26 was a former gang member who had been arrested and convicted of a gang murder at age 16. He took the blame himself because he refused to name the others who were involved. At the time he thought that his gang would support him especially since he had honored the code of silence. He was sadly surprised when they did not come through for him as he expected – not one visit, not one letter, not one dollar, nothing. He said that the only person who stood by him through it all was his mother. He admitted he was a tough guy in prison – he believed it was either be tough or be a victim. He was often in trouble and ended up in solitary confinement. Because of the involvement of a Catholic chaplain, he gradually started to see himself and his life, for what they were. He came to a point where he wanted to try to change, to no longer be part of the gang in prison but was afraid – he was afraid of being killed by the rival gang whose member he was involved with killing. He was so afraid that he preferred to stay in solitary confinement. Gradually he withdrew from the others with whom he hung around and became mostly a loner. The Catholic chaplains helped him to come to believe in himself and in God and that he was not ever alone – God would be with him. Juan said that he was very afraid of going back to his home because he would be surrounded by the same gang – his own and the rivals. To prevent this, his mom moved from their home 2 years before his release. When he was released, he went to live in the new area with his mom and he started a new life. One evening he went to Baskin Robbins to get some ice cream when the employee called him his old gang name – Juan denied being that person and left. He said he drove to a side street and had to stop the car because he was shaking so badly – and he prayed.

When Juan finished speaking, I was deeply moved. This young man, a handsome young man, came from such a difficult background with so few opportunities and was facing such difficult odds, I was astounded at his courage and faith. I realized how easy my life really was and it put my problems in a whole different light. I went up to him and gave him a small gold crucifix and chain. I hoped it would help remind him that he was never alone. As I turned to leave, he caught me and said that he couldn't take it. I was surprised but asked him to please wear it – he had helped me feel less afraid of this ministry and that the only way to keep Christ was to share Him. I must admit that tears filled my eyes during this discussion. He was also moved and gave me a big hug! There I was hugging a gang member convicted of murder! I realized something that I had not really thought about before: these people involved in serious crimes, are individual human beings each with a soul given to them by God, each of which is precious to God, each of which is capable through the grace of God *TO CHANGE and to be saved!*

Justice or Mercy? (Continued on page 11)



CRUCIFIXION

El Greco

(1596-1660)

(Continued from page 10) **Justice or Mercy?**

Some time ago at Sunday Mass, one of our parish priests, Father John, spoke about capital punishment. He made a few outstanding points but the one that struck me hard was this: if we take the life of a criminal, aren't we cutting off the chance, the real chance, that this person could, through the grace of God, find God and repent? At this point, I remembered a movie I had seen years ago "The Scarlett and the Black" which was the true story of Monsignor O'Flaherty, a priest who lived in the Vatican during World War II and ventured out at night to help hide the Jews and Allied soldiers. His adversary was a Nazi officer who was subsequently convicted of war crimes and spent the rest of his life in prison. For twenty years, Monsignor visited this man whom everyone else had forgotten. Eventually the Nazi was converted and ultimately died a holy death. This conversion would not have happened if he had been executed. Do any of us have the right to alter God's timing and to cut off the opportunity for any soul to be saved? Is there anything of more value than a human soul? Can any of us really say that there is no chance that a specific person could find God and save his soul? Judas lost his soul because he despaired that his crime was so bad that God couldn't possibly forgive him. His fatal sin was that of despair. Can we despair that God can not forgive even the worst criminal? I also thought about the Good Shepherd: "Now the tax collectors and sinners were all drawing near to hear him. And the Pharisees and the scribes murmured, saying, This man receives sinners and eats with them.' So he told them this parable: 'What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he has lost one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness, and go after the one which is lost, until he finds it? And when he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders, rejoicing. And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and his neighbors, saying to them, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep which was lost.' Just so, I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance.'" (Luke 15:1-10) Is there anyone more lost to God than a murderer?

As I continued to listen to Father's sermon again, he was discussing the awful situation of society inadvertently executing an innocent person. I wondered if this really happened all that often and thought about the argument that the needs of the many outweigh the needs of the one. At that point, I happened to look up to the front of the Church and focused on the crucifix. It suddenly dawned on me that I was looking at the strongest possible evidence that human societies do make mistakes and execute innocent people – *Christ Himself was such a victim!* In fact, most of the Catholic martyrs were executed by lawful civil authority.

Furthermore, since the advancing of DNA and other forensic procedures, a ***significant number of totally innocent people*** have been released from death row and set free! Is our justice system so sure it cannot be in error? I think not.

But what about justice for the victims and their families?

JUSTICE. This is a complex word. In the Merchant of Venice, Shakespeare aptly points out:

*"Though justice be thy plea, consider this,
That in the course of justice, none of us
Should see salvation: we do pray for mercy."*

In Eucharistic Prayer I, the priest prays at Mass: "*Though we are sinners, we trust in your mercy and love. Do not consider what we truly deserve, but grant us your forgiveness.*" Even in the Lord's Prayer we say: "*Forgive us our trespasses AS we forgive those who trespass against us.*" I am not sure it is really wise for us to demand God's justice - it might be wiser for us all to seek His mercy.

But is capital punishment really "justice"? The civil law, which follows the moral law, is clear that a person has the right to use as much force as necessary to defend him-

Justice or Mercy? (Continued on page 12)



JUSTICE
Sanzio Raffaello
(1509-11)

(Continued from page 11) Justice or Mercy?

self from harm. A victim can not use excessive force nor can the victim seek revenge. If the victim exceeds these limits, the victim will be answerable under the law. Does society's right to defend itself exceed these same limits that apply to an individual whose natural desire to use excess force or to seek revenge is at least understandable? If society has the means to place the criminal in life imprisonment, isn't going further than necessary to take his life really a form of revenge rather than self-defense?

The Catholic Catechism states:

“2263 The legitimate defense of persons and societies is not an exception to the prohibition against the murder of the innocent that constitutes intentional killing. The act of self-defense can have a double effect: the preservation of one's own life; and the killing of the aggressor...The one is intended, the other is not.

2264 Love toward oneself remains a fundamental principle of morality. Therefore, it is legitimate to insist on respect for one's own right to life. Someone who defends his life is not guilty of murder even if he is forced to deal his aggressor a lethal blow:

If a man in self-defense uses more than necessary violence, it will be unlawful: whereas if he repels force with moderation, his defense will be lawful...Nor is it necessary for salvation that a man omit the act of moderate self-defense to avoid killing the other man, since one is bound to take more care of one's own life than of another's. (St. Thomas Aquinas)

2265 Legitimate defense can be not only a right but a grave duty for someone responsible for another's life, the common good of the family or of the state.

2266 Preserving the common good of society requires rendering the aggressor unable to inflict harm. For this reason the traditional teaching of the Church has acknowledged as well-founded the right and duty of legitimate public authority to punish malefactors by means of penalties commensurate with the gravity of the crime, not excluding, in cases of extreme gravity, the death penalty. For analogous reasons those holding authority have the right to repel by armed force aggressors against the community in their charge.

The primary effect of punishment is to redress the disorder caused by the offense. When his punishment is voluntarily accepted by the offender, it takes on the value of expiation. Moreover, punishment has the effect of preserving public order and the safety of persons. Finally, punishment has a medicinal value; as far as possible it should contribute to the correction of the offender.

2267 If bloodless means are sufficient to defend human lives against an aggressor and to protect public order and the safety of persons, public authority should limit itself to such means, because they better correspond to the concrete conditions of the common good and are more in conformity to the dignity of the human person.”

If the United States with its vast wealth and resources does not have sufficient means to provide bloodless alternatives to capital punishment, such as life imprisonment without the possibility of parole, what country of the world does?

An argument that is commonly advanced is that society does not want to pay the cost for keeping someone in prison for life: it is cheaper to kill them. Actually the facts do not support this assumption as it costs 6 times more for the process to execute a criminal through capital punishment than to support him in prison for his life! *“In Florida, which may be typical, each death sentence is estimated to cost approximately \$3.18 million, compared to the cost of life imprisonment (40 years) of about \$516,000.”* (Dead Man Walking, Helen Prejean, C.S.J., page 129).

But our hearts bleed for the innocent victims and their families. As between the innocent and the guilty, isn't it better to take the side of the innocent – to help them recover? Of course, but are we really helping the victims by executing the criminal? Many

Justice or Mercy? (Continued on page 13)



**CHRIST THE
GOOD SHEPHERD**

**Bartolome Esteban
Murillo**

(1660)

(Continued from page 12) ***Justice or Mercy?***

family members claim that they need to see the execution to “have justice” or “closure.” But hate and revenge NEVER gives peace or closure. As Christians we need to help the victim’s family understand this and to look higher – to God and to trust God for justice and peace. The only true way to feel at peace is for these people to forgive the criminal! *Radical?* Yes, I guess Christ was radical. But these are *His* words! Of course, the only way to accomplish this is to truly give the hatred and anger to God. The Old Testament adage of “*An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth*” was replaced by Christ’s new covenant requiring us to “*Love our enemies!*” I can not possibly imagine the pain of losing a loved one, especially a child, to a violent crime, but I firmly believe that we must help the family find true peace in Christ’s covenant of forgiveness, not encouraging them to dwell in the bottomless pit of hatred. “*Deliberate hatred is contrary to charity. Hatred of the neighbor is a sin when one deliberately wishes him evil. Hatred of the neighbor is a grave sin when one deliberately desires him grave harm. ‘But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven.’*” (Catechism of the Catholic Church, Section 2303.) As Christians shouldn’t we gently and lovingly remind the victim’s family of the true way through Christ rather than encouraging them to become additional victims of hatred and sin?

My last argument is very basic and more a practical risk analysis: we can not possibly be violating God’s law by *not* using capital punishment, so why take the risk when we have a reasonable alternative?

Bishop Sheen used to say when he visited prisoners: “*The only difference between you and me, is that you got caught!*” Haven’t we all committed serious sins for which we deserve punishment? Are we really so different? Are we so free from sin that we dare cast the first stone, a stone which will kill? Personally, I am going for the plea of mercy.

Lord, though we are sinners, we trust in your mercy and love.

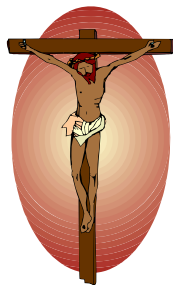
Do not consider what we truly deserve, but grant us your forgiveness.

Lord, our plea is for mercy. Amen. †

PRAYER PETITIONS

*Heavenly Father, I offer you this day
all that I shall think, 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*



- ◆ Ellie Shonefelt (Divorce)
- ◆ 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).
- ◆ 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)
- ◆ 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) †



CRIES FROM THE CAPTIVE HEART WRITINGS FROM YOUTHFUL OFFENDERS IN CUSTODY

HALF OF MY LIFE IS GONE AWAY

I was only a kid when my mom walked out. I didn't know what it was all about, I was too small to even shout, the words I tried to say never came out of my mouth. But what I really wanted to say was for her to stay. I try to think of days I spent with my dad, even now it makes me so sad, I was only 4 years old when he passed away. I don't know what to say. 18 and still haven't been to his grave. Now that I'm stuck, I started to bang, now the pain is strong it still remains. I wish I had never gone to his funeral cuz I just remember his face and what can a 4 year old kid do when he sees his father in the wrong place? So now I pray to the Lord, please change my ways, 'cause being in my cell makes me feel like hell.

Frank A. (Theo Lacy)

ON WISDOM

I'd pretend to be rugged, so fast and cool
When I'm actually lost like an old blind fool.
I'm getting too old for this boring game,
Of acting real hard with no sense of shame.
It's time that I change and move on with my life,
What my future will hold I really don't know
But the years that I've waited are starting to show.
I just live for the day when I'll get a new start
And accomplish the dreams I still hold deep in my heart.
I hope I can make it, I at least have to try,
Because I'm heading toward death and I don't want to die.
Marcos (C.Y.A.)

MOM, I'M SORRY

Standing in court facing the judge, hearing my mom's cries for the bad things that I've done. I couldn't believe it when I was sent to Y.A. I got committed but I've really messed up and I have to admit it. I looked at my mom and I guess I wasn't cool. All the fights for my hood that got me here just made me here just made me look like a fool. Mom, I'm sorry for the things that I've done, I love you a lot and I want you to know that my plans were never meant to cause you any harm. I know I've messed up and so I wrote you this poem so you could believe me. That I want you and the Lord to come

into my life because I finally realized that I'm not ready to die.

Marcos A. (C.Y.A.)

ANGELS AND DEMONS

The days keep moving and the clock keeps spinning
The angels keep looking and the demons keep grinning.
They wait in anticipation for us to decide
And the grinning faces are tempting us to their side.
They both look so good as you look in both ways;
One offers peace and the other crazy days.
You look at the angels and they all look so peaceful
And then you look at the demons and they all look so cheerful.

You think for a second and look at your situation.
You can't seem to choose and you're full of frustration.
The angels move back and the demons come close.
That's all you need to choose one of both.
You run to the demons and you see so much fun
But as you pay closer attention you see the barrel of a gun.

You stop in that instant and realize your mistake,
But it's a little too late—your soul is theirs to take.

Rafael

TO MY HEAVENLY FATHER

To My Heavenly Father:
I'm writing you this lonely letter because for some reason I need you a lot right now. Well as you already know I just got six years C.Y.A. but that's not what is bothering me. What's really bothering me is my loved ones must suffer for my mistakes. Lord please help my family get through these rough times. I know I have turned my back against you and I hope you forgive me for my evil sins. Lord, I'd like to take this time to pray for my family, the unfortunate and all my boys who are doing the bid. Thank you Lord for hearing my prayer tonight.

With much love and respect,

Esteban M. †



FASTING

*Lent should be more than a time of fasting.
It should be a joyous season of feasting.
Lent is a time to fast from certain things and to feast on others.
It is a season in which we should:*

Fast from judging others; feast on the Christ dwelling in them.

Fast from emphasis on differences; feast on the unity of all life.

Fast from apparent darkness; feast on the reality of light.

Fast from thoughts of illness; feast on the healing power of God.

Fast from words that pollute; feast on phrases that purify.

Fast from discontent; feast on gratitude.

Fast from anger; feast on patience.

Fast from pessimism; feast on optimism.

Fast from worry; feast on Divine order.

Fast from complaining; feast on appreciation.

Fast from negatives; feast on affirmatives.

Fast from unrelenting pressures; feast on unceasing prayer.

Fast from hostility; feast on non-resistance.

Fast from bitterness; feast on forgiveness.

Fast from personal anxiety; feast on eternal truth.

Fast from discouragement; feast on hope.

Fast from facts that depress; feast on verities that uplift.

Fast from lethargy; feast on enthusiasm.

Fast from suspicion; feast on truth.

Fast from thoughts that weaken; feast on promises that inspire.

Fast from shadows of sorrow; feast on the sunlight of serenity.

Fast from idle gossip; feast on purposeful silence.

Fast from problems that overwhelm; feast on prayer that undergirds.

- Author Unknown



**THOUGHT
FOR
THE
DAY**



**ANGELS WORSHIPPING
(DETAIL)**

Benozzo Gozzoloi
(1459)

SIMPLE TRUTHS



Fulton J. Sheen

DON'T PASS BY WITHOUT KNOCKING

What does the Gospel mean when it says, describing the Risen Lord's appearance at Emmaus, "He gave the impression that He was going on farther; but they urged Him to stay with them?" It means that Our Lord passes us by each day in every opportunity to do good. If we neglect the opportunity, He does not reveal Himself. When the false Christ comes he will say, "I am the Christ." But not so with the Divine Christ. He seems to walk by us, trying our dim eyes and weak hands to see if we have faith enough to want Him to stay with us. He leaves us in darkness if we ask not for the Light. Never does He act independently of our desires for intimate union with Him. He breaks down no doors; the latch is on our side. He stands without the door and knocks.

He has "no place to lay His head" unless a friendly soul, like the friends at Bethany, give Him lodging. The innkeeper at Bethlehem missed the opportunity of forever saying of his inn, "Jesus was born here." *"I was a stranger and you took Me in,"* He will say on the Last Day, but He will be only a stranger to those who did not press the invitation.

This same principle of hiding until sought after is evident throughout His life. At Jericho there was a blind man by the name of Bartimaeus who kept crying out, "Jesus, Son of David, have pity on me." The Lord pretended to pass him by, but despite the rebuke even of others in the crowd the blind man cried out more loudly and was cured.

So it was with the woman who came from the neighborhood of Tyre and Sidon and pleaded that He cure her ailing daughter, who was troubled by an evil spirit; He gave her no word in answer. His disciples came to Him and pleaded with Him. "Rid us of her," they said. But after further testing her faith, He answered her, *"Woman, great is your faith! Let it be done for you as you wish."* And from that hour, her daughter was cured.

Every word that comes to us about the uncomfortable, the homeless, the lepers, is the Son of God passing by. If we let Him pass, He may never be recalled. Graces unused are not often repeated; whispers ignored do not become shouts. All through life, our hands will stretch forth empty of the richest blessings of wisdom and truth unless they are first used to clutch at the sleeve of the Divine, Who gives the impression that He would pass us by. Emotional responsiveness without practical issue harms the soul. The drama stirs the emotions, but awakens no duties toward the afflicted on the stage. For the moment we may feel we are on the side of the angels. But that is what the Romans called *ignis fatuus* - the empty fire - the pleasurable glow that consumes no evil and illumines no path. †



SUPPER AT EMMAUS

Rembrandt

(1648)

MORE ON SINCERITY AND TRUTH

For the family prayer, which he led whenever he was at home, he chose four psalms. The first of these, Psalm 51, might seem a surprising choice; this is, after all, the prayer of repentance that David wrote after he committed adultery with Bathsheba and had her husband murdered. But a consideration of the inherent beauty and power of this prayer readily suggest the kind of impact it could have had on the More children.

The first part begins with a moving petition for pardon and ends with an affirmation of the importance of sincerity and truth.

Have mercy on me, O God, in your goodness; in the greatness of your compassion wipe out my offense, Thoroughly wash me from my guilt and of my sin cleanse me, For I acknowledge my offense and my sin is before me always; Against you only have I sinned, and done what is evil in your sight.”...In guilt was I born and in sin my mother conceived me; behold, you are pleased with sincerity of heart, and in my inmost being you teach me wisdom.

That More had his children join him in this praise of sincerity and inner wisdom resonates with his primary goal in educating them. As we have already seen, he considered the goal of education to be “*the testimony of God and a good conscience.*” Only if these were attained, he wrote, could one achieve an inner joy and peace that would not be “*stirred by praise of flatterers or stung by the follies of unlearned mockers of learning.*”

In the second part of Psalm 51, the psalmist, acknowledging that only “*a clean heart...and a steadfast spirit*” can bring true “*joy and gladness,*” asks that his soul be cleansed and strengthened. This part of the psalm recalls a theme of central importance to More: that the greatest earthly joy comes from a clear conscience. It is no wonder, therefore, that he recited this psalm (commonly known as the *Miserere*) on the scaffold, as his last prayer on earth.

Thomas More: A Portrait of Courage by Gerald B. Wegemer Scepter Publishers (p. 183)



THE WRITINGS OF THOMAS MORE

Ad Risum Vertere Veritatem*



**Latin for “To turn truth into laughter”*

ASH WEDNESDAY SERMON

At the Ash Wednesday Mass, the priest began his sermon "Dear Lord," with arms extended toward heaven and a rapturous look on his upturned face, "...without you, we are but dust." He would have continued but at that moment one very diligent little girl (who was listening carefully) leaned over to her mother and asked quite audibly in her shrill little girl voice, "Mommy, what is butt dust?" †





SCRIPTURAL CORNER



DAVID & URIAH
Rembrandt
(1665)

**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.*

PSALM 51 MISERERE: A PLEA FOR PURIFICATION AND FOR A HEART MADE CLEAN

*Have mercy on me, 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 mouth shall declare your praise.*

*For in sacrifice you take no delight,
burnt offering from me you would refuse,
my sacrifice, a contrite spirit.
A humbled, contrite heart you will not spurn.*

*In your goodness, show favor to Zion:
rebuild the walls of Jerusalem.
Then you will be pleased with lawful
sacrifice,
holocausts offered on your altar.
Amen*

COMMENT FROM THE NAVARRE BIBLE:*

The psalmist begins his prayer by asking God to take away his sin (vv. 1-2); he then acknowledges that he is a sinner (vv. 3-6), and against asks to be freed of his sin by means of a purification rite (vv. 7-9). The first part of the psalm is followed by another that focuses on grace (vv. 10-17): the psalmist asks God to renew and restore him (vv. 10-12) and promises to testify that he has done so, and to praise him and offer an acceptable sacrifice, one that comes from his heart (vv. 13-17). Finally, he prays for Jerusalem (vv. 18-20), just as he prayed for himself at the start of his prayer.

The title of this psalm shows it to be a penitential one, placing its composition, as it does, after David admitted his sin of adultery with Bathsheba and his crime of having arranged for the death of Uriah (cf. 2 Sam 11-12). A Christian can use the psalm to seek God's forgiveness and to pray for inner renewal by the Holy Spirit.

The psalmist feels the weight of his sin through the pain of illness he suffers (v. 8). He cries to God for help ("Have mercy on me": cf. Ps. 56,57), not on the grounds of his innocence, as happened elsewhere (cf. Ps 17), but by appealing to God's steadfast love and abundant mercy as proclaimed by him to Moses before the making of the Covenant (cd. Ex 34:6-7). ☩

**MESSAGE OF HOLY FATHER BENEDICT XVI
TO THE YOUTH OF THE WORLD
ON THE OCCASION OF THE 21ST WORLD YOUTH DAY
APRIL 9, 2006**

***"Your word is a lamp to my feet
and a light to my path" (Ps 119 [118]:105)***



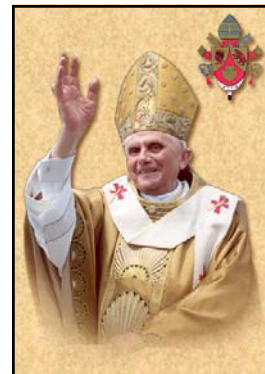
**FROM
PETER'S
SUCCESSOR,
POPE
BENEDICT XVI**

My dear young friends!

It is with great joy that I greet you as you prepare for the 21st World Youth Day, and I relive the memory of those enriching experiences we had in August last year in Germany. World Youth Day this year will be celebrated in the local Churches, and it will be a good opportunity to rekindle the flame of enthusiasm that was awakened in Cologne and which many of you have brought to your families, parishes, associations and movements. At the same time, it will be a wonderful chance to invite many of your friends to join the young generation's spiritual pilgrimage towards Christ.

The theme that I suggest to you is a verse from Psalm 119 [118]: "*Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path*" (v. 105). Our dearly loved John Paul II commented on that verse of the psalm as follows: "The one who prays pours out his thanks for the Law of God that he adopts as a lamp for his steps in the often dark path of Life" (General Audience, Wednesday 14 November 2001). God reveals himself in history. He speaks to humankind, and the word he speaks has creative power. The Hebrew concept "*dabar*", usually translated as "word", really conveys both the meaning of *word* and *act*. God says what he does and does what he says. The Old Testament announces to the Children of Israel the coming of the Messiah and the establishment of a "new" covenant; in the Word made flesh He fulfils his promise. This is clearly specified in the Catechism of the Catholic Church: "Christ, the Son of God made man, is the Father's one, perfect and unsurpassable Word. In him he has said everything; there will be no other word than this one" (n. 65). The Holy Spirit who has led the chosen people by inspiring the authors of the Sacred Scriptures, opens the hearts of believers to understand their meaning. This same Spirit is actively present in the Eucharistic celebration when the priest, "*in persona Christi*", says the words of consecration, changing the bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Christ, for the spiritual nourishment of the faithful. In order to progress on our earthly pilgrimage towards the heavenly Kingdom, we all need to be nourished by the word and the bread of eternal Life, and these are inseparable from one another!

The Apostles received the word of salvation and passed it on to their successors as a precious gem kept safely in the jewel box of the Church: without the Church, this pearl runs the risk of being lost or destroyed. My dear young friends, love the word of God and love the Church, and this will give you access to a treasure of very great value and will teach you how to appreciate its richness. Love and follow the Church, for it has received from its Founder the mission of showing people the way to true happiness. It is not easy to recognize and find authentic happiness in this



(Continued from page 19) 2006 Youth Day Message

world in which we live, where people are often held captive by the current ways of thinking. They may think they are "free", but they are being led astray and become lost amid the errors or illusions of aberrant ideologies. "Freedom itself needs to be set free" (cf the encyclical *Veritas Splendor*, 86), and the darkness in which humankind is groping needs to be illuminated. Jesus taught us how this can be done: "If you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples; and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free" (*Jn* 8:31-32). The incarnate Word, Word of Truth, makes us free and directs our freedom towards the good. My dear young friends, meditate often on the word of God, and allow the Holy Spirit to be your teacher. You will then discover that God's way of thinking is not the same as that of humankind's. You will find yourselves led to contemplate the real God and to read the events of history through his eyes. You will savor in fullness the joy that is born of truth. On life's journey, which is neither easy nor free of deceptions, you will meet difficulties and suffering and at times you will be tempted to exclaim with the psalmist: "I am severely afflicted" (*Ps* 119 [118]. v. 107). Do not forget to add as the psalmist did: "give me life, O Lord, according to your word... I hold my life in my hand continually, but I do not forget your law" (*ibid.* vv. 107; 109). The loving presence of God, through his word, is the lamp that dispels the darkness of fear and lights up the path even when times are most difficult.



THE TRINITY

El Greco

(1577)

The author of the Letter to the Hebrews wrote: "Indeed, the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing until it divides soul from spirit, joints from marrow; it is able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart" (4:12). It is necessary to take seriously the injunction to consider the word of God to be an indispensable "weapon" in the spiritual struggle. This will be effective and show results if we learn to *listen* to it and then to *obey* it. The Catechism of the Catholic Church explains: "To obey (from the Latin *ob-audire*, to 'hear or listen to') in faith is to submit freely to the word that has been heard, because its truth is guaranteed by God, who is Truth itself" (n. 144). While Abraham exemplifies this way of listening which is obedience, Solomon in his turn shows himself to be a passionate explorer of the wisdom contained in the Word. When God said to him: "Ask what I should give you", the wise king replied: "Give your servant therefore an understanding heart" (1 *Kings* 3:5,9). The secret of acquiring "*an understanding heart*" is to train your heart to *listen*. This is obtained by persistently meditating on the word of God and by remaining firmly rooted in it through the commitment to persevere in getting to know it better.

My dear young friends, I urge you to become familiar with the Bible, and to have it at hand so that it can be your compass pointing out the road to follow. By reading it, you will learn to know Christ. Note what Saint Jerome said in this regard: "Ignorance of the Scriptures is ignorance of Christ" (*PL* 24,17; cf *Dei Verbum*, 25). A time-honored way to study and savor the word of God is *lectio divina* which constitutes a real and veritable *spiritual journey* marked out in stages. After the *lectio*, which consists of reading and rereading a passage from Sacred Scripture and taking in the main elements, we proceed to *meditatio*. This is a moment of interior reflection in which the soul turns to God and tries to understand what his word is saying to us today. Then comes *oratio* in which we linger to talk with God directly. Finally we come to *contemplatio*. This helps us to keep our hearts

2006 Youth Day Message (Continued on page 21)

(Continued from page 20) **2006 Youth Day Message**

attentive to the presence of Christ whose word is "a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts" (2 Pet 1:19). Reading, study and meditation of the Word should then flow into a life of consistent fidelity to Christ and his teachings.

Saint James tells us: "Be doers of the word, and not merely hearers who deceive themselves. For if any are hearers of the word and not doers, they are like those who look at themselves in a mirror; for they look at themselves and, on going away, immediately forget what they were like. But those who look into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and persevere, being not hearers who forget but doers who act - they will be blessed in their doing" (1:22-25). Those who listen to the word of God and refer to it always, are constructing their existence on solid foundations. "Everyone then who hears these words of mine and acts on them", Jesus said, "will be like a wise man who built his house on rock" (Mt 7:24). It will not collapse when bad weather comes.

To build your life on Christ, to accept the word with joy and put its teachings into practice: this, young people of the third millennium, should be your program! There is an urgent need for the emergence of a new generation of apostles anchored firmly in the word of Christ, capable of responding to the challenges of our times and prepared to spread the Gospel far and wide. It is this that the Lord asks of you, it is to this that the Church invites you, and it is this that the world - even though it may not be aware of it - expects of you! If Jesus calls you, do not be afraid to respond to him with generosity, especially when he asks you to follow him in the consecrated life or in the priesthood. Do not be afraid; trust in him and you will not be disappointed.

Dear friends, at the 21st World Youth Day that we will celebrate on 9 April next, Palm Sunday, we will set out, in our hearts, on a pilgrimage towards the world encounter with young people that will take place in Sydney in July 2008. We will prepare for that great appointment reflecting together on the theme *The Holy Spirit and the mission* in successive stages. This year our attention will focus on the Holy Spirit, *Spirit of Truth*, who reveals Christ to us, the Word made flesh, opening the heart of each one to the Word of salvation that leads to the fullness of Truth. Next year, 2007, we will meditate on a verse from the Gospel of John: "*Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another*" (13:34). We will discover more about the Holy Spirit, *Spirit of Love*, who infuses divine charity within us and makes us aware of the material and spiritual needs of our brothers and sisters. We will finally reach the world meeting of 2008 and its theme will be: "*You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses*" (Acts 1:8).

From this moment onwards, my dear young friends, in a climate of constant listening to the word of God, call on the Holy Spirit, *Spirit of fortitude and witness*, that you may be able to proclaim the Gospel without fear even to the ends of the earth. Our Lady was present in the cenacle with the Apostles as they waited for Pentecost. May she be your mother and guide. May she teach you to receive the word of God, to treasure it and to ponder on it in your heart (cf Lk 2:19) as she did throughout her life. May she encourage you to declare your "yes" to the Lord as you live "the obedience of faith". May she help you to remain strong in the faith, constant in hope, persevering in charity, always attentive to the word of God. I am together with you in prayer, and I bless each one of you with all my heart. ✠



**THE ADORATION OF
THE NAME OF JESUS**

El Greco

(1578-9)

THE CATECHISM OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

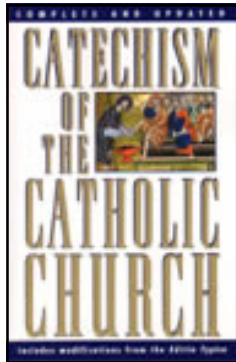
PART TWO: THE CHRISTIAN MYSTERY

SECTION TWO: "I BELIEVE IN THE HOLY SPIRIT"

CHAPTER TWO: THE SACRAMENTS OF HEALING

ARTICLE 4: THE SACRAMENT OF PENANCE

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 the 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. †



**ST PETER
IN PENITANCE**

El Greco
(1580's)

PLEASE SUPPORT OUR SPONSORS!

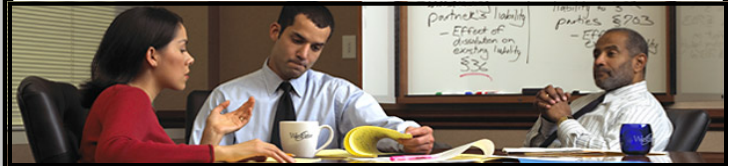
E
F
A

Economic and Financial Analytics, Inc.
18837 Brookhurst Street, Suite 204, Fountain Valley, CA 92708
Additional Office Locations: Riverside * San Diego * Ventura
(714) 964-9147* FAX: (714) 964-9167

Ronald C. Gable, M.A., CFP

Forensic Economics and Finance:

- ◆ Economic Loss/Damages In:
 - Personal Injury
 - Wrongful Death/Termination
 - Professional Malpractice
 - Business Disputes
- ◆ Post-Mortem A-B-C Trust Asset Division
Analysis for Surviving Spouse:
 - Capital Gains
 - Liquidity
 - Income
- ◆ Financial Planning:
 - Standard of Care
 - Suitability
 - Evaluation of Securities Integrated
with Income Tax, Retirement Plan,
Estate Plan & Family Considerations



DIFFERENCES THAT MATTER

More than just legal research...
Thomson West can provide



- On-line continuing legal education
- Access to public records
- Office management software
- Numerous legal support products for lawyers

Visit: www.west.thomson.com



The First American Corporation

*Providing the Information
Resources of Today*

*With the Technology
of Tomorrow*

First American. All you need to know.

*A Fortune 300 Company
One of America's Most Admired Companies*



www.firstam.com

CAREER DEVELOPMENT

Joseph H. Torres, M.Ed.

Vocational Rehabilitation ♦ Expert Witness Services

VOCATIONAL ASSESSMENTS

- ◆ Employability Analysis
- ◆ Academic/Vocational Assessment
- ◆ Transferable Skills Analysis
- ◆ Career/Vocational Counseling
- ◆ Labor Market/Training Facility Research
- ◆ Development of Rehabilitation Plans
- ◆ Mexico Plans
- ◆ Job Seeking Skills
Preparation
- ◆ Job Placement

PHYSICAL ASSESSMENTS

- ◆ Physical Tolerance Assessment
- ◆ Functional Capacity Evaluation
- ◆ Work Hardening Programs
- ◆ Upper Extremity Evaluations
- ◆ Manual Dexterity Evaluations

Bilingual/Bicultural ♦ English/Spanish

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE:
902 N. Grand Ave., Suite 101-C
Santa Ana CA 92701
(714) 667-8020 Telephone
(714) 667-8177 Fax
Email: careerdev@pacbell.net

SERVICE OFFICES:
Fountain Valley
Long Beach
Santa Fe Springs
San Diego
Riverside

THE THOMAS MORE SOCIETY OF ORANGE COUNTY IS A CALIFORNIA NON PROFIT CORPORATION AND TAX EXEMPT UNDER IRC 501(C)(3). DONATIONS ARE TAX DEDUCTIBLE. †



LORD, HAVE MERCY: THE HEALING POWER OF CONFESSION

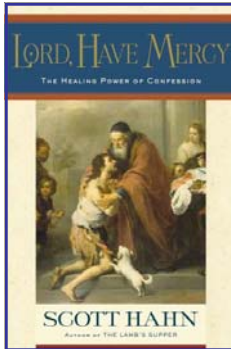
DR. SCOTT HAHN

**FROM
THE
LIBRARY**

Jesus told his first clergy, “If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.” In *Lord, Have Mercy*, Scott Hahn explores the sacrament of reconciliation and shows why it is the key to spiritual growth, particularly in these times of intense anxiety and uncertainty.

Drawing on the history of ancient Israel, the Gospels, the writings of the early Church, and the lives of the saints, Hahn reveals the living, scriptural heart of the Church’s teachings on penance, forgiveness, and reconciliation. It is a story that begins with the sin of Adam and Eve, continues in the biographies of Moses, King David, and the Apostle Peter, and reverberates in the lives of believers today. Hahn presents the Catholic and biblical perspective on sin and mercy, elucidating in clear, easily understood language the true import of Jesus’ simple, yet profound promise—“I am the door; if anyone enters by Me, he will be saved (John 10:9).

Like Hahn’s earlier books, *Lord, Have Mercy* offers thoughtful, authoritative insights into controversial issues and disputed doctrines in a manner that will enlighten lay readers yet is thorough enough for scholars to appreciate. More than just a Bible study, it is a guide for the perplexed, providing practical advice and inspiration that will help readers come to a deeper knowledge of themselves and of Jesus through the sacrament of penance.



Publisher: Doubleday **ISBN:** 0385501706 **pages** 208 **\$ 12.97 (Amazon)** †

St. Thomas More Society of Orange County

1102 N NIGUEL CANYON WAY
BREA, CA 92821
ATTN: ROBERT & ANNE LANPHAR

**NON-PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
ANAHEIM, CA
PERMIT NO. 8355**

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



OUR NEXT MEETING:

* **WHEN: WEDNESDAY APRIL 19TH @ NOON (LUNCH \$10)** *
* **SPEAKER: Fred LaPuzza, OC Diocese Detention Ministry Coordinator** *
* **TOPIC: “When I Was In Prison, You Visited Me.”** *

VISIT OUR WEBSITE at www.stthomasmore.net