

Ad Veritatem

Volume 11 Issue 8

St. Thomas More Society of Orange County

AUGUST 2006

*“Why would any sane person buy
a momentary pleasure for
an eternity of pain?”*

Thomas More:
A Portrait of Courage
Gerard Wegemer

AUGUST MEETING:

WEDNESDAY AUGUST 16, 2006 NOON

SPEAKER: FR. RAYMOND SKONEZNY

TOPIC: “*MARY AS INTERCESSOR*”

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, five "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. ☩

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VISIT OUR WEBSITE at www.stthomasmore.net

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AUGUST
MEETING

FR. RAYMOND SKONEZNY
Mary as Intercessor



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Father Ray entered the Navy as a teenager. After being discharged, he entered the Trappist Monastery in Ogden, Utah where he lived under a vow of silence for 14 years. In 1981, Fr. Ray became the Director of Orange County Cursillo from which he recently retired. Fr. Ray is also currently serving as the associate pastor at St. John Neumann parish in Irvine. Father Ray is a well-known and highly respected speaker who has inspired hundreds of Catholics through the Cursillo movement including the original founders of the St Thomas More Society of Orange County!

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:

AUGUST 16
SEPTEMBER 20
OCTOBER 18
NOVEMBER 15
DECEMBER 20 †

RESERVE THE DATE!
RED MASS

MONDAY SEPT 25, 2006
HOLY FAMILY CATHEDRAL
6:00 PM MASS
RECEPTION FOLLOWING
FOR DETAILS, SEE PAGE 11 †

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HOW NEVER TO TELL A LIE WITHOUT ALWAYS TELLING THE TRUTH

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

A MESSAGE FROM OUR CHAPLAIN

The reader's first impression on seeing the title of this article might be a certain unease. Surely a priest should advise us never to lie, but is it his business to instruct us on how to conceal the truth? Sad to say, even priests, and especially priests, since they deal with the divinely private world of the penitent, have to consider not just what is the moral ideal, but also what is the moral minimum. Dealing with the minimum in moral law is a precarious activity, but sometimes it is necessary, in order to protect a higher good which would be put at risk if one were too rigorous in applying some principle. On occasion too, we have to distinguish between what is morally obligatory, and what is better and more praiseworthy, but not required. Telling or not telling the truth is one of those areas, especially in social and professional life, where there are innumerable cases where distinctions must be made.

A lie means expressing to others what one knows is not the case, when one's communication does not correspond to one's inner judgment. The first rule is simple: we are never, ever under any circumstances permitted to tell a lie. This rule admits of absolutely no exceptions, no matter what the case may be. All deliberate lying is a sin, even in small matters. The so-called "officious lie" which is told simply to avoid inconveniences, without harming anyone, is sinful. So is the "jocose lie" told in jest to amuse oneself at the expense of another, without him being able to see through or suspect the joke, is also not permissible. Obviously, the "malicious lie" is wrong, told with the knowledge that it will harm another. Normally the first two types of lies, "white lies", are only venially sinful, but a malicious lie is mortally sinful if it leads to serious loss of reputation or property. The principle at work is this: whereas all do not have the right to know the facts about some matter, everyone does have the right not to be deceived or misled, even persons who are unjust and evil-minded. Christ teaches us we must not render evil for evil, but rather do unto others as we would have them do unto us. We may not lie even to our enemies.

Even so, it is no lie for a secretary to tell a client that someone is "unavailable" since this is a social convention understood by all that can simply express that it would be inconvenient to take the call at that very moment. Similarly, we are not bound to say how we really are feeling when someone say "How are you?" "Fine" is fine, even if you're feeling rotten. That harsh, acidic Chardonnay your friend bought a case of can have your nod of approval when he asks what you think. Good sense allows us to take it for granted that these courteous expressions cannot be lies.

Sometimes, however, our questioner does not have the right to know the truth we happen to know. We can answer with silence or a direct statement that we cannot or do not have to answer, or that he or she does not have any business asking. This kind of frankness can be laudable and courageous. Yet frequently the direct approach would be damaging to ourselves or others, and so we need to make use of another means of responding. We can speak ambiguously or with a broad mental reservation, that is in such a way that the truth might be reasonably inferred from

Telling the Truth (Continued on page 21)



THE VICTORY OF
EUCCHARISTIC TRUTH
OVER HERESY

Pieter Pauwel Rubens
(1626)

IF THE TRUTH WILL MAKE YOU FREE, THEN.....

ANNE NELSON LANPHAR, ESQ.

If “the truth shall will make you free” (John 8:32) then implicitly, lies will entrap you.

Lying is so easy since it is a response to our fallen nature, our inclination to sin, a burden born by all mankind. The youngest of children seem to lie instinctively if they think it will get them what they want: a cookie, out of trouble, a toy. As adults we often lie for the same reason although the benefit we seek is a little more sophisticated than a cookie.

Although an inclination to sin is part of human nature, it is not an “automatic” response like an animal acting in accordance with its nature. God gave each person a soul and with it, one of the most amazing gifts ever given: a free will! Free will gives us an awareness of our own being together with the ability to make a decision based on right and wrong. Our soul is immortal—it is how we are created in the “likeness” of God. And in our soul each person finds the imprint of God—our conscience—through which He speaks to us. But although God speaks to us, He does not, and never will, control us.

Free will is the ability to reject...or accept...God. Why did God give this right? The answer is quite simple: so that when we choose to love Him, we do so freely thereby making that gift of love something of value. Without free will, obedience to God would have no greater meaning than a dog panting when he is hot, barking when he hears a noise or obeying a command. Obedience without choice is meaningless. Humans are intrinsically greater than animals because of the existence of the immortal soul blessed with the gift—the right—of free choice.

However, due to the fall of Adam and Eve, our ability to choose what is right is burdened with an inclination to sin... the direct result of original sin.

Although mankind may have an inclination to sin, sin* is always a free choice—it is a decision for which we are answerable. Removing responsibility for a choice denies the free will. Furthermore, if the person is not responsible, then logically he is reduced to eternal victim status and, by definition, he has not ability or hope to change.

Our society seems to be drifting toward a general belief that no one is responsible for the consequences of their decisions with a corollary that denies any characterization of “sin.” Although such sentiments may be a nice temporary salve for the guilty, unfortunately it does not really relieve any anxiety but rather drives them further away from God and their own soul. If they are not responsible, then they are always a victim of something outside their control: nature, someone else, alcohol, drugs, pornography, childhood trauma, bad parents, and on and on. They are an eternal victim with no ability to escape. What an awful situation – isolating, depressing, hopeless! Furthermore, this societal belief also leads to the inevitable conclusion that some people can never change—they are deemed to be hopeless. As Christians we can not accept this conclusion since it is a fundamental truth of Christianity that all men can be saved by seeking God.

Fortunately God blessed each of us with a free will for which we are responsible.

If The Truth Will Make You Free... (Continued on page 6)



EXPULSION FROM
THE GARDEN OF
EDEN

Michelangelo

(1622)

***If they are not
responsible,
then they are
always a victim
of something
outside their
control....
with no ability
to escape.
What an awful
situation –
isolating,
depressing,
hopeless!***

* For an act to constitute a sin, three elements must be satisfied: 1. It must be seriously wrong; 2. We must know it is seriously wrong; and (3) we must do it deliberately.

(Continued from page 5) ***If The Truth Will Make You Free...***

And with that gift He gave us the ability *to choose and by definition, to change!*

With the grace of God, we can change! We can choose to stop sinning. The freedom to choose starts with a decision deep within the soul...that we accept the **truth** that we are responsible for our acts together with their consequences. Of course, changing is often a difficult struggle since we may be subject to many forces pulling us away from that decision...sometimes physical forces such as addiction; sometimes psychological forces such as family or friends egging us on; sometimes the force of pure selfish pleasure; and often the underestimated force of Satan and his followers. Since society scoffs at the existence of sin, it logically must also deny the existence of Satan...to his great delight! Satan does not want us to believe in his existence...he has a distinct advantage when he convinces his victims that he is not there so that the person is ill-prepared to deal with his temptations. But God does not demand perfection from us, He only requires that we truly fight against sin.

How does one fight sin?

First and foremost, each person must accept the simple truth that he is responsible for his sins and seeking forgiveness through the sacrament of Reconciliation. This sacrament is a brilliant reflection of God's full understanding of our human nature: that we need to admit our sin to another, to express our remorse and to hear the words of forgiveness. Even psychologists acknowledge the basic human need for these specific acts in order to forgive one self. Of course, in Reconciliation we speak to a priest who acts in God's name to give us true forgiveness and with it the graces to change. Of course, in order to obtain God's forgiveness and grace through Reconciliation sacrament, we must be truly sorry for our sins and truly resolve to avoid committing those sins in the future.

Second, a nightly examination of conscience before sleep is extremely important. Such an examination forces us to examine our conduct of that day, to be **truthful** in our heart by acknowledging our sins and seeking God's forgiveness. This simple act allows us to recognize our small sins early—before they become imbedded into our character—before we become addicted to them. As part of the examination of conscience, the Church Fathers and many saints have recommended going through the Ten Commandments with a full understanding of the full extent of God's directions implicit in those commandments. For example, the Church teaches that the commandment "Thou shall not kill" also includes the admonition against other acts such as fighting, anger, condescension, belittling another, etc. (For a sample examination of conscience, please see page 15.) It is also helpful to review your day's actions in relation to the Two Greatest Commandments: (1) You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and (2) love your neighbor as yourself. (Matthew 22: 37-38)

Third, we need to **practice humility**. True humility is a virtue and an antidote to the vicious and insidious sin of pride. St. Thomas More wrote extensively about pride as he literally feared this sin above all others. Pride is the first of the deadly sins since it leads to many other sins. More actively studied this sin and wrote many warnings about it some of which are chilling when considering the consequences:

- Pride can form a "blindness almost incurable" because it "covereth the eyes of their soul."
- Pride distorts one's judgment—clouding the clarity of one's conscience.
- Pride is the "...perversion of the rational creature's highest and most distinctive power of free will."
- Pride is "the chief of all plagues."
- Pride is "the root of all sin."
- Pride is "the head and root of all other sins and of them all, most pestilent."
- Pride is "the most dangerous habit there is."
- Pride is "the mischievous mother of all manner of vices."

More also wrote: "Pride, therefore, arises from the soul's intrinsic power to imagine what it wants and then to freely delight in that image regardless of its truth or goodness. With this spiritual freedom, rational creatures can will to devise 'worldly fantasies' of their own creation that are actually opposed to what exists."

More pointed out that a lack of rational consistency is not the greatest obstacle to clear thinking but rather it is

If The Truth Will Make You Free... (Continued on page 7)

(Continued from page 6) ***If The Truth Will Make You Free...***

hardened pride which gives delusions that can displace knowledge one knows to be true. “More noted that heresy is such a difficult social disorder in that hardened pride is inevitably involved. Since ‘pride is the very mother of all heresies,’ heretics can come to a point where only the frantic pleasure of their own will can satisfy and content them. These proud fantasies arise among the learned ‘because they want to be singular among the people’; they arise among the not-so-learned because they ‘long to seem far better learned than they are.’”

The warnings of Thomas More about the sin of pride should resonate deep in our souls. If we succumb to pride, we will not even be able to recognize the truth and to acknowledge our sin which, of course, inevitably leads to more sins...a deadly path. For if we die in a state of serious sin, we will be condemned to hell for all eternity. What a steep price to pay!

How do we practice humility? One simple way is to say our nightly act of contrition to God by physically kneeling down and bowing our head to seek God’s mercy.

Another insidious characteristic of pride is lying. Why? Because aware of our sin, our pride keeps us from wanting others to know what we really are so we lie to avoid being discovered. Lying is obviously the antithesis of truth. If the truth shall set you free, then the logic dictates that lies entrap us. Our pride and arrogance which leads to lying virtually ensnares us—boxing us in with evil in our effort to escape detection. Oddly enough we don’t mind sinning but we certainly don’t want anyone else to know! Lying is a terrible burden that we have to carry for a long time since we have to be very careful to remember all our lies so we don’t accidentally trip up and inadvertently say something that will lead to our detection. Such a burden consumes a lot of energy. And the more we lie, the greater the burden! Furthermore, an insidious consequence of lying is that we gradually start to believe our own lies. Of critical importance in maintaining a relationship with God and a healthy relationship with our self is intellectual honesty. Once we lie to ourselves, it is the beginning of a deadly slide to evil since we will not even recognize it—or if we do recognize it, we will refuse to acknowledge it. Lying to oneself is a by-product of the sin of pride....

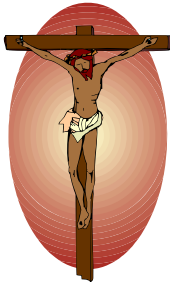
Fortunately or unfortunately...depending on the vantage point...evil eventually self destructs. It cannot help itself....evil cannot be honest, nor fair, nor loyal, nor kind,...it does not, and by definition can not, have any redeeming virtues. The nature of evil is to be anything and everything that is the opposite of God. A person who chooses evil believing that he will be able to control it is a real fool. Evil is never satisfied, it always wants more---just like an addiction. And the consequences of evil are not always restricted to the next world. In the business world, when someone becomes known as a liar or a cheat, that reputation spreads rapidly with the result that they will be avoided or at least, others will be extremely cautious in their dealings with that person. People instinctively know (a) that someone who lies in small things will certainly lie in important matters; and (b) that someone who betrays their spouse (the very person who they have sworn to love) will certainly have no scruples with lying to anyone else. However, the liar or cheat often does not even recognize these consequences—how could he? If he is not intellectually honest with himself, how can he possibly even recognize the truth of what is going on around him? He has trapped himself in a circle of evil which blinds him completely. If one refuses to recognize the truth, how can one honestly deal with the situation? As lawyers it is extremely critical that we acknowledge the truth of all aspects of a matter so that we can help craft a solution for the client. If we cannot see the truth, how do we find the solution? The same is true for our own souls.

Fourth, to avoid evolving into a person who is not intellectually honest, it is very important to have a spiritual advisor to whom we can confide and who can help us see the truth when we are inclined to avoid it. The spiritual advisor can be a priest, but it can also be a spiritually grounded friend or spouse to whom we are candid and honest and who will, in turn, be candid and honest with us in a loving manner.

And, finally, to know the truth and to avoid sin, we must pray constantly. Prayer is critical to maintaining our connection to God. We can pray anytime and any place...as we walk in our office, as we walk to our car, as we drive, as we shop...prayer allows us to connect to God in a personal way.

God is Truth. If we want to be personally free and, therefore, happy, we need to be truthful: with ourselves, with God and with others. Only through truthful awareness of ourselves and our actions can we stay connected with God. †

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*

- ◆ Melissa DiFelice (serious illness)
- ◆ Fr. George M. Luznicky (deceased)
- ◆ Madeline McKimmey (birth problems)
- ◆ Ellie Shonefelt & Her Children (divorce)
 - ◆ Janet Prahll (illness)
 - ◆ Lindsay Stevens (illness)
 - ◆ Douglas Kniec (illness)
- ◆ Anne Lanphar (special intention)
- ◆ Eleanor Kott & Family (illness)
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 - ◆ Eric & Marie Bessem
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 - ◆ 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)
 - ◆ Joan Hansen (conversion) †

“WHEN I WAS HUNGRY, YOU FED ME”



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LIVING A TRUTHFUL LIFE

C. T. MAIER*

When I was about seven years old, I found a pebble in the driveway. Smooth and white, it looked, to my amazement, every bit like a molar. I took my find to my mother.

A sudden mischievousness took me by surprise. “Look mom! I lost a tooth,” I fibbed with a wily grin.

Not that I wanted to trick anyone. I expected my mom to take one look at the pebble in my palm and laugh with me. But to my surprise, she took me at my word and told me to put it under my pillow for the tooth fairy.

My stomach suddenly turned. I had lied, and my mother had trusted me so easily. Had I undermined that trust? I didn’t mean to.

I came clean, and I learned a lesson about how easy—and tempting—lying can be. We know that lying is wrong, plain and simple. But we also know that lying is something everyone faces. So, how do we live a truthful life?

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* teaches that the Eighth Commandment “forbids misrepresenting the truth in our relations with others” (no. 2464). We believe in a God of truth, and we believe that we are called to respect and bear witness to that truth. Jesus says the truth sets us free. It sanctifies us (no. 2466). Without the truth, we cannot live a holy life. And without a holy life, we can never be the people God wants us to be.

The effects of constant lying are incremental, slow, inexorable, and devastating. In *Lying: Moral Choice in Public and Private Life*, Harvard professor Sissela Bok observes that some of the worst victims of lies are the liars themselves. Little “white lies,” so innocently told, can lead to others as liars try to cover their tracks. “So few lies are solitary ones,” writes Bok. “The first lie ‘must be thatched with another or it will rain through.’”

Once we see how easy it is to lie, a single lie can become a life of lies. The little lies can make the larger ones seem so easy, so convenient. But lies are corrosive, even deadly. A parent lies to a sick child because the little girl “can’t handle the truth,” and he keeps her from dealing with her illness. An accountant cooks the books because “everyone does it,” and he commits fraud. A doctor provides an abortion because she tells herself that the fetus “isn’t a person,” and she takes an innocent life.

Lying offends the truth God has entrusted to us, destroys the trust that we have in each other, and harms our relationship with God (*Catechism*, no. 2483). It also is capable of destroying human life. A society of liars, like a society of thieves, cannot exist for long.

For centuries, secular philosophy has assured us that it is a far better teacher of ethics than the Church. But how has it done? Bok’s book is a report card two centuries in the making. In the eighteenth century, the German philosopher Immanuel Kant “discovered” what the Church had always known—that lying is wrong. But his teaching had an iron edge: Telling the truth for him was a “categorical imperative,” something one must do regardless of the consequences.

The problem, Bok argues, is that the ideal of compelling the truth breaks up on the shoals of experience. What if you were hiding Jews from Nazis? Are you morally compelled to tell the truth, even if doing so would cause the deaths of innocent people? Kant’s idea suddenly seems wildly impractical, even heartless.

Other philosophies offer even less appealing guidance. Moral anarchists say that lying is so commonplace that we are permitted to lie as often as we need in order to meet our needs. Utilitarian thinkers attempt to justify particular lies through assessing the



**TIME SAVING
TRUTH FROM
FALSEHOOD & ENVY**

Francois Lemoyne

(1737)

* C. T. Maier writes from Pittsburgh and works in the communications office of the Diocese of Pittsburgh.

A Truthful Life (Continued on page 10)

(Continued from page 9) *A Truthful Life*

“good” they could produce—the number of lives a lie saves, for instance—though the vaunted benefits of lies often have a hollow ring.

The most tortured reasoning Bok discovered was the “loopholes” sought in Kant’s universal prohibition to lie by more legalistic thinkers—like using “mental reservation,” in which people tell only part of what they are thinking to misdirect others. A president, for instance, could deny having sex with an intern, so long as his definition of sex didn’t include what they did. Theoretically, his “mental reservation” wasn’t a lie. Practically, of course, it was.

In the end, Bok’s book shows how two centuries of moral philosophy have led to moral anarchy. Kant’s theory failed, and the “excuses” offered in its place are at best sloppy ethical shortcuts. Our justifications for lying are most often lies themselves.

Though she doesn’t adopt a Catholic, or even an explicitly Christian perspective, Bok’s research on the ethics of lying actually leads back to the Church. The core of Bok’s solution to the problem of lying in human life is actually a matter of emphasis: What is important? Is it *not lying*? Or is it *respecting and seeking the truth*?

Of course, lying is incompatible with truth. But living in truth requires much more than not lying, in the same way that living a chaste life is much more than not having sex. While the *Catechism* condemns lying, it also recognizes that some lies are worse than others: “The *gravity of a lie* is measured against the nature of the truth it deforms, the circumstances, the intentions of the one who lies, and the harm suffered by its victims” (no. 2484).

The *Catechism* rejects lying, to be sure, but in comparison to Kant’s “categorical imperative” approach, it allows for the wisdom that flows from centuries of Christian teaching on the subject, resulting not in a form of “situational ethics,” but in an understanding of the differences between lies. Both St. Augustine and St. Thomas Aquinas agreed about the sinfulness and profound danger of lying, but they also recognized some distinctions, and Aquinas’s is particularly important. Lies that do great harm are mortal sins, he said, while “white lies” that do little harm (like my lie about the pebble) are venial.

Aquinas wasn’t giving a blank check for some types of lies. A venial sin is still a sin. Lying is still wrong, even if it is done for a justifiable cause. Respecting truth means that truth is always good. A lie, at best, is only a little wrong, and a liar, no matter how good the excuse, is still a liar.

Respecting the truth, though, isn’t the same as telling the truth without discretion, what Bok calls “truth dumping.” Telling a little girl that her nose reminds you of a pig’s snout isn’t better than telling her that she is the most beautiful girl in the world. “Everyone must conform his life to the Gospel precept of fraternal love,” the *Catechism* says. “This requires us in concrete situations to judge whether or not it is appropriate to reveal the truth to someone who asks for it” (no. 2488).

As confessors, Catholic priests are living examples of how to maintain confidentiality while respecting the truth. The seal of the confessional is inviolable, and priests must keep what they hear there in the strictest confidence.

But they don’t lie. They keep silent when sensitive topics come up, and they avoid situations or conversations where boundaries could be crossed. A priest’s confidentiality requires discipline, imagination, and work, but it provides a model for all of us.

Respecting the truth requires accepting the burden that truth brings. “Trust and integrity are precious resources,” Bok writes, “easily squandered, hard to regain. They can thrive only on a foundation of respect for veracity.” We are to defend and preserve the truth, the *Catechism* teaches, even to the point of martyrdom (no. 2474). But most of all, we are to respect the truth and lead a life worthy of what we have received. †



TRUTH

Gian Lorenzo Bernini

(1645-52)



*St. Thomas More Society of Orange County
Invites the Entire Legal Community to the*



Red Mass

**HOLY FAMILY CATHEDRAL
ORANGE, CALIFORNIA
MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 25, 2006
EUCHARISTIC CELEBRATION AT 6:00 P.M.**

Reception with Dinner following in the Holy Family Cathedral Hall

JURISTS WISHING TO PARTICIPATE IN THE PROCESSION, PLEASE CONTACT HON. WILLIAM MONROE

HISTORY OF THE RED MASS

The first recorded Red Mass, a special Mass for the Bench and Bar, was celebrated in Paris in 1245. For many centuries it was held in the chapel of the Order of Advocates, La Sainte Chapelle, which was built by Louis IX. In certain localities of France, the Red Mass was celebrated in honor of St. Ives, the patron saint of lawyers. In England, the tradition began about 1310, during the reign of Edward I. The entire Bench and Bar attended the Red Mass together at the opening of each term of Court. The priest and the judges of the High Court wore red robes, thus the Eucharistic celebration became popularly known as the Red Mass.

The tradition of the Red Mass has continued in the United States. Each year in Washington, D.C., the members of the United States Supreme Court join the President and members of Congress in the celebration of the Red Mass at St. Matthew's Cathedral. The Red Mass is also celebrated in Sacramento and most other state capitals and major cities throughout the United States. The first Red Mass in Orange County was celebrated in 1988 and has become as much a tradition in Orange County as it is in the United States and other parts of the world.

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ANONYMOUS (3)

For more information visit: www.stthomasmore.net

ANGST

By Richard Santner

I cry out to the Lord -
squeezing tears upon my cheek
to no avail
my heart is hardened!

I think of Pharaoh, what he must have gone
through
Back and forth, back and forth to no avail,
to no satisfaction of relief.

Whatever the call, Pharaoh was not making
it.



SUICIDE
OF JUDAS
Gislebertus

(1120)

“And what about me my lot to Thee,” I
cry out, “Why me?”

“Even in this poem, I am squeezed, I
have confessed to Thee, Oh God.”
“Unto Thee have I sinned?”

“Would I have been better off than to
have never been born?”

“Even that phrase seems so foreign to me.”



MORE ON SINCERITY AND TRUTH



THE WRITINGS OF THOMAS MORE

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 Gerard B. Wegemer (Pg. 183) †

EXPERIENCING GOD

COMM. THOMAS H. SCHULTE

The prominent twentieth century theologian, Karl Rahner, was once asked by an interviewer, "Is there one question that seems to you as a theologian to be perhaps the most important?" He replied: "Yes, there is such a question. It runs like this: Is human existence absurd or does it have an ultimate meaning? If it is absurd, why do human beings have an unquenchable hunger for meaning? Is it not a consequence of God's existence?"¹ After thinking about this quote for a time I raise an additional question. Isn't this hunger for meaning in our lives not only an evidence of God but also a means through which we experience him? Rahner is also often quoted as having said, "The devout Christian of the future will either be a 'mystic,' one who has 'experienced' something, or he will cease to be anything at all."² Last month in the *Ad Veritatem* we read a series of articles written by three of our members, Judge Francisco Firmat, David Belz and Laura Knox, attesting to their experiences with the Spiritual Exercises of Ignatius Loyola. As I read the above referenced quotes from Karl Rahner my mind went back to my own experience with the Exercises and how they have not only led me on my search for meaning in my life, my search for God, but also led me to begin to learn that it is possible to experience God in my innermost self, to understand the transcendental qualities in our human nature.

There is no surprise in the fact that Karl Rahner was a Jesuit and as is true of all members of the Society of Jesus he made the Spiritual Exercises at least twice in his life. Despite his busy schedule teaching and writing theology, he regularly led others through the experience. He regarded guiding people in the Spiritual Exercises to be a Jesuit's primary task. For Rahner, the study of God and the experience of God were two aspects of the same enterprise.³ As a result of my having made the Exercises, my reaction to them is similar to that of my three friends Frank, David and Laura. Like Rahner we feel called to share this gift with others; in a sense we have become lay Jesuits when it comes to our love for the spirituality of Ignatius.

As I look back, it was not a conscious longing to experience God that drew me to the Exercises. It had more to do with versions of that first of Rahner's questions quoted above. "Does my life have meaning?" "If so, what is it, what are my goals? Where am I going?" It was in the Exercises that I began to realize that as a Christian there can be no satisfactory answer to those questions unless it includes a recognition of that part of me which is spiritual in nature. If Rahner's definition of a "mystic" is one who has "experienced something," then I can say after having made the Exercises "I am a mystic." What I learned was that evidence of God is not only in nature where St. Francis of Assisi taught us to look; in the holiness of the Word as emphasized by Benedict; or through a complete loss of self into the spirit of God that we might find in Teresa of Avila and John of the Cross, but also in Ignatius's discipline of praying through the imagery created by our own thoughts, desires and feelings guided by the Holy Spirit and the Sacred Word. In my view these spiritualities are not exclusive of one another; they are in reality more like sunlight shining on an image of God from different directions or through different stained glass windows.

If you are at a time in your life when you are asking yourself questions about its meaning and feel that you can give some time each day in prayer, following the guiding hand of Ignatius, it is not too late for you to contact Judge Firmat at frankf@cox.net and let him know you are interested. If, after some thought and prayer, you feel a yearning, or as Rahner would say an "unquenchable hunger," but sense that this is not the time for you to make the Exercises, spend this next year in some form of study and prayer and keep the door open for Ignatius some time soon. †



THE MIRACLES
OF ST. IGNATIUS

Pieter Pauwel Rubens
(1615-20)

1. Ronald Modras, *Ignatian Humanism, A Dynamic Spirituality for the 21st Century*, Loyola Press, 2004, page 239.
2. Rahner, *Theological Investigations*, 7:15.
3. Modras, *Ignatian Humanism*, page 237.

Summer Saint Series

July - September

This summer, we have some special saint stories for you. *Don't miss this great opportunity for the whole family to learn more about our friends in heaven!!*

- **Thursday, July 13, 7 pm - parish hall**

- **SAINT THERESE OF LISIEUX: A FATHER'S LOVE**

- Learn about this popular young saint and why she is declared patron of missionaries, and why she was declared a doctor of the church by Pope John Paul II! Mike Mullard is an engaging presenter and a licensed psychologist. He learned about St. Therese as an adult from a Benedictine monk at Prince of Peace Abbey. He will include pictures from the 100-year celebration of St. Therese's Feast. This evening presentation will end with brief candlelight prayer.

- **Thursday, August 17, 7 pm - parish hall**

- **SURPRISE SAINT PRESENTATION**

- Our own St. John the Baptist Youth Group will give us a live presentation on one or several saints – which saint(s) will be a surprise!!

- **Saturday, September 23, 7 pm - parish hall (need tickets)**

- **SAINT MAXIMILIAN KOLBE by Saint Luke Productions**

- An award-winning professional one-man drama by Saint Luke Productions, featuring Leonardo Defilippis. Immerse yourself in the gripping drama of St. Maximilian Kolbe, who gave up his life for another prisoner in a Nazi prison camp in Poland. Pope John Paul II declared him a saint for our times and patron of mass media - why? SEATING IS LIMITED. Purchase your tickets early: Advance tickets: \$15 per person before September 10, and \$20 at the door. Call parish office for ticket information. No seat confirmed without payment due to limited seating in parish hall.

St. John the Baptist parish · 1015 Baker Street · Costa Mesa · phone: 714.540.2214

EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE (SAMPLE)

FIRST COMMANDMENT

"I am the Lord your God. You shall not have strange gods before Me." (Ex 20:2-3)

- Did I doubt or deny that God exists?
- Did I refuse to believe what God has revealed to us?
- Did I believe in fortune telling, horoscopes, dreams, the occult, good-luck charms, tarot cards, palmistry, Ouija boards, séances, reincarnation?
- Did I deny that I was Catholic or leave the Catholic Faith?
- Did I give time to God each day in prayer?
- Did I love God with my whole heart?
- Did I despair of or presume on God's mercy?
- Have I failed to know my faith?
- Did I have false gods in my life that I gave greater attention to than God, like money, profession, drugs, TV, fame, pleasure, property, etc.?

SECOND COMMANDMENT

"You shall not take the Name of the Lord your God in vain." (Ex 20:7)

- Did I blaspheme or insult God?
- Did I take God's name carelessly or uselessly?
- Did I curse, or break an oath or vow?
- Did I get angry with God?
- Have I maligned priests or others consecrated to God?

THIRD COMMANDMENT

"Remember that you keep holy the Sabbath Day." (Ex 20:8)

- Did I miss Mass on Sunday or a Holy Day of Obligation through my own fault?
- Did I come late to Mass due to my own negligence?
- Did I do work on Sunday that was not necessary?
- Did I set aside Sunday as a day of rest and a family day?
- Did I show reverence in the presence of Jesus in the Most Blessed Sacrament?

FOURTH COMMANDMENT

"Honor your father and your mother." (Ex 20:12)

- Did I disobey or disrespect my parents or legitimate superiors?
- Did I neglect my duties to my husband, wife, children or parents?
- Did I neglect to give good religious example to my family?
- Did I fail to actively take an interest in the religious education and formation of my children?
- Did I fail to educate myself on the true teachings of the Church?
- Did I give scandal by what I said or did, especially to the young?
- Did I cause tension and fights in my family?
- Did I care for my aged and infirm relatives?

FIFTH COMMANDMENT

"You shall not kill." (Ex 20:13)

- Did I kill or physically injure anyone? Did I get angry, impatient, envious, unkind, proud, revengeful, jealous, hateful toward another?
- Did I give bad example by drug abuse, drinking alcohol to excess, fighting, quarreling?
- Did I abuse anyone physically, emotionally or psychologically?
- Is there anyone with whom I have refused to be reconciled?
- Have I been lazy or slothful?
- Did I have an abortion, or advise someone else to have an abortion? (One who procures an abortion is automatically ex-

(Continued from page 15) **Examination of Conscience**

communicated, as is anyone who is involved in an abortion, Canon 1398. The excommunication will be lifted in the Sacrament of Reconciliation.)

- Did I use or cause my spouse to use birth control pills (whether or not realizing that birth control pills do abort the fetus if and when conceived)?
- Did I attempt suicide?
- Did I take part in or approve of "mercy killing" (euthanasia)?

SIXTH & NINTH COMMANDMENTS

"You shall not commit adultery." (Ex 20:14) "You shall not covet your neighbor's wife." (Ex 20:17)

Note: In the area of deliberate sexual sins listed below, almost all are mortal sins if there is sufficient reflection and full consent of the will. "No fornicators, idolaters, or adulterers, no sodomites,... will inherit the kingdom of God." (1 Cor 6:9-10) "Anyone who looks lustfully at a woman has already committed adultery with her in his thoughts." (Mt 5:28). See page 22 for the definitions of mortal and venial sins from the Catholic Catechism.

- Did I willfully entertain impure thoughts or desires?
- Did I use impure or suggestive words? Tell impure stories? Listen to them?
- Did I deliberately look at impure TV, videos, plays, pictures or movies? Or deliberately read impure materials?
- Did I commit impure acts by myself (masturbation)?
- Did I commit impure acts with another - fornication (premarital sex), adultery (sex with a married person)?
- Did I practice artificial birth control (by pills, device, withdrawal)?
- Did I marry or advise anyone to marry outside the Church?
- Did I avoid the occasions of impurity?
- Did I try to control my impure thoughts?
- Did I engage in homosexual activity?
- Did I respect all members of the opposite sex, or have I thought of other people as objects?
- Did I or my spouse have sterilization done?
- Did I abuse my marriage rights?

SEVENTH & TENTH COMMANDMENTS

"You shall not steal." (Ex 20:15) "You shall not covet your neighbor's goods." (Ex 20:17)

- Did I steal, cheat, help or encourage others to steal or keep stolen goods? Have I made restitution for stolen goods?
- Did I fulfill my contracts; give or accept bribes; pay my bills; rashly gamble or speculate; deprive my family of the necessities of life?
- Did I waste time at work, school or at home?
- Did I envy other people's families or possessions?
- Did I make material possessions the purpose of my life?
- Did I give a full day's work for a full day's pay?
- Did I give a fair wage to my employees?

EIGHTH COMMANDMENT

"You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor." (Ex 20:16)

- Did I lie?
- Did I deliberately deceive others, or injure others by lies?
- Did I commit perjury?
- Did I gossip or reveal others' faults or sins?
- Did I fail to keep secret what should be confidential?

OTHER SINS

- Did I fast on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday?
- Did I eat meat on the Fridays of Lent or Ash Wednesday?
- Did I fail to receive Holy Communion during Eastertime?
- Did I go to Holy Communion in a state of mortal sin? Without fasting (water and medicine permitted) for one hour from food and drink?
- Did I deliberately make a bad confession?
- Did I fail to contribute to the support of the Church? ☩

IF I KNEW...

If I knew it would be the last time
that I'd see you fall asleep,
I would tuck you in more tightly
and pray the Lord, your soul to keep.

If I knew it would be the last time
that I see you walk out the door,
I would give you a hug and kiss
and call you back for one more.

If I knew it would be the last time
I'd hear your voice lifted up in praise,
I would video tape each action and word,
so I could play them back day after day.

If I knew it would be the last time,
I could spare an extra minute
to stop and say "I love you,"
instead of assuming you would KNOW I do.

If I knew it would be the last time
I would be there to share your day,
Well I'm sure you'll have so many more,
so I can let just this one slip away.

For surely there's always tomorrow
to make up for an oversight,
and we always get a second chance
to make everything just right.

There will always be another day
to say "I love you,"
And certainly there's another chance
to say our "Anything I can do?"

But just in case I might be wrong,
and today is all I get,
I'd like to say how much I love you
and I hope we never forget.

Tomorrow is not promised to anyone,
young or old alike,
And today may be the last chance
you get to hold your loved one tight.

So if you're waiting for tomorrow,
why not do it today?
For if tomorrow never comes,
you'll surely regret the day,

That you didn't take that extra time
for a smile, a hug, or a kiss
and you were too busy to grant someone,
what turned out to be their one last wish.

So hold your loved ones close today,
and whisper in their ear,
Tell them how much you love them
and that you'll always hold them dear.

Take time to say "I'm sorry," "Please for
give me," "Thank you," or "It's okay."
And if tomorrow never comes,
you'll have no regrets about today.

Author Unknown †



**THOUGHT
FOR
THE
DAY**

SIMPLE TRUTHS



Fulton J. Sheen

"The denial of Truth is just as fatal to the mind as the denial of light is to vision. Truth in its fullness is not easy to attain, even if one does admit its existence. There are certain psychological and spiritual conditions which are essential for its discovery, and the most important of these is the virtue of humility." †

JOHN 8: 2-11



SCRIPTURAL CORNER



CHRIST AND THE ADULTERESS

Polidor da Lanciano

(Date Unknown)

**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.*

²Early in the morning he came again into the temple; all the people came to him, and he sat down and taught them. ³The scribes and the Pharisees brought him a woman who had been caught taken in adultery, and placing her in the midst ⁴they said to him: “Teacher, this woman has been caught in the act of adultery. ⁵Now in the law Moses commanded us to stone such. What do you say about her?” ⁶This they said to test him, that they might have some charge to bring against him. Jesus bent down and wrote with his finger on the ground. ⁷And as they continued to ask him, he stood up, and said to them, “Let him who is without sin among you be the first to throw a stone at her.” ⁸And once more he bent down and he wrote with his finger on the ground. ⁹But when they heard it, they went away, one by one, beginning with the eldest, and Jesus was left alone with the woman standing before him. ¹⁰Jesus looked up and said to her, “Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?” ¹¹She said, “No one, Lord.” And Jesus said, “Neither do I condemn you; go and do not sin again.”

Comment from the Navarre Bible:*

⁶The question put by the scribes and Pharisees has a catch: our Lord had often shown understanding to people whom they considered sinners; they come to him now with this case to see if he will be equally indulgent—which will allow them to accuse him of infringing a very clear precept of the Law (cf. Lev. 20:10).

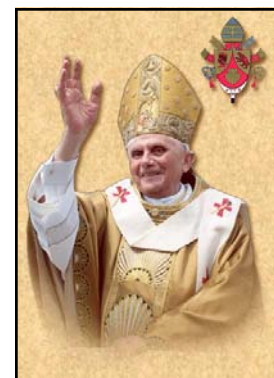
⁷Jesus’ reply refers to the way stoning was carried out: those who witnessed the crime had to throw the first stones, and then others joined in, to erase the slur on the people which the crime implied (cf. Deut 17:7). The question put to Jesus was couched in legal terms; he raises it to the moral plane (the basis and justification of the legal plane), appealing to the people’s conscience. He does not violate the law, St Augustine says, and at the same time he does not want to lose what he is seeking—for he has come to save that which was lost: “His answer is so full of justice, gentleness and truth. [...] O true answer of Wisdom. You have heard: Keep the Law, let the woman be stoned. But how can sinners keep the Law and punish this woman? Let each of them look inside himself and enter the tribunal of his heart and conscience; before he will discover that he is a sinner. Let this woman be punished, but not by sinners; let the Law be applied, but not by its transgressors” (St Augustine, *In Ioann. Evang.*, 33, 5).

¹¹“The two of them were left on their own, the wretched woman and Mercy. But the Lord, having smitten them with the dart of justice, does not even deign to watch them go but turns his gaze away from them and once more writes on the ground with his finger. But when the woman was left alone and they had all gone, he lifted up his eyes to the woman. We have already heard the voice of justice; let us now hear the voice of gentleness. I think that woman was the more terrified when she heard the Lord say, ‘Let him who is without sin among you be the first to throw the a stone at her,’ [...] fearing now that she would be punished by him, in whom no sin could be found. But he, who had driven away her adversaries with the tongue of justice, now looking at her with the eyes of gentleness asks her, ‘Has no one condemned you?’” She replies, ‘No one, Lord.’ And he says, ‘Neither do I condemn you; I who perhaps you feared would punish you, because in me you have found no sin.’ Lord, can it be that you favor sinners? Assuredly not. See what follows: ‘Go and sin no more.’ Therefore, the Lord also condemned sin, but not the woman” (St Augustine, *In Ioann. Evang.*, 33, 5-6). Jesus, who is the Just One, does not condemn the woman; whereas these people are sinners, yet they pass sentence of death. God’s infinite mercy should move us always to have compassion on those who commit sins, because we ourselves are sinners and in need of God’s forgiveness. †

AND THE TRUTH SHALL MAKE YOU FREE*
HOW FAITH IN CHRIST ILLUMINATES THE DIALOGUE
BETWEEN RELIGION AND SCIENCE
Pope Benedict XVI



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



**From the May/June
 2006 Issue of Lay
 Witness Magazine*

Faith has a fundamental importance in the life of the Church, because the gift that God makes of Himself in revelation is fundamental and God's gift of Himself is accepted through faith.

If the truth of the faith is placed simply and decisively at the heart of Christian existence, human life is innovated and revived by a love that knows no rest or bounds, as I had the opportunity to recall in my recent encyclical letter, *Deus Caritas Est*.

Charity, like love that renews all things, moves from God's heart to the heart of Jesus Christ, and through His Spirit across the world. This love is born from the encounter with Christ in faith: "Being Christian is not the result of an ethical choice or a lofty idea, but the encounter with an event, a person, which gives life a new horizon and a decisive direction." (*Deus Caritas Est*, no. 1).

Jesus Christ is the Personified Truth who attracts the world to Himself. The light that shines out from Jesus is the splendor of the truth. Every other truth is a fragment of the Truth that He is, and refers to Him.

Jesus is the Pole Star of human freedom: Without Him it loses its sense of direction, for without the knowledge of the truth, freedom degenerates, becomes isolated, and is reduced to sterile arbitration.

With Him, freedom is rediscovered; it is recognized to have been created for our good and is expressed in charitable actions and behavior.

Therefore, Jesus gives men and women total familiarity with the truth and continuously invites them to live in it. It is truth offered as a reality that restores the human being and at the same time surpasses him and towers above him, as a Mystery that embraces and at the same time exceeds the impulse of his intelligence.

And nothing succeeds as well as love for the truth in impelling the human mind toward unexplored horizons. Jesus Christ, who is the fullness of the truth, draws to Himself the heart of each person, enlarges it, and fills it with joy. Indeed, truth alone can take possession of the mind and make it rejoice to the full.

It is this joy that increases the dimensions of the human heart, lifting it anew from the narrowness of selfishness and rendering it capable of authentic love. It is the experience of this joy that moves and attracts the human person to free adoration, not to servile prostration, but to bow with heartfelt respect before the Truth he has encountered.

Thus, service to the faith, which is a witness to the one who is the entire Truth, is also a service to joy, and this is the joy that Christ desires to spread in the world: It is the joy of faith in Him, of truth that is communicated through Him, of salvation that comes from Him! It is this joy we feel in our hearts when we kneel with faith to worship Jesus!

This love for truth also inspires and directs the Christian approach to the contemporary world and the evangelizing commitment of the Church.

The Church welcomes with joy the authentic breakthroughs of human knowledge and recognizes that evangelization also demands a proper grasp of the horizons and the challenges that modern knowledge is unfolding. In fact, the great progress of scientific knowledge that we saw during the last century has helped us understand the mystery of creation better and has profoundly marked the awareness of all peoples.

Papal Message (Continued on page 20)

(Continued from page 19) Papal Message

However, scientific advances have sometimes been so rapid as to make it very difficult to discern whether they are compatible with the truths about man and the world that God has revealed. At times, certain assertions of scientific knowledge have even been opposed to these truths. This may have given rise to a certain confusion among the faithful and may also have made the proclamation and acceptance of the Gospel difficult.

Consequently, every study that aims to deepen the knowledge of the truths discovered by reason is vitally important, in the certainty that there is no “competition of any kind between reason and faith” (*Fides et Ratio*, no. 17).

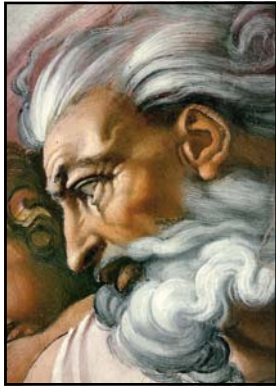
We must have no fears about facing this challenge: Jesus Christ is indeed the Lord of all creation and of all history. The believer knows well that “all things were created through him and for him . . . and in him all things hold together” (Col. 1:16-17).

By continually deepening our knowledge of Christ, the center of the cosmos and of history, we can show the men and women of our time that faith in Him is important for humanity’s future: Indeed, it is the accomplishment of all that is authentically human. Only in this perspective will we be able to give convincing answers to the person who is searching.

This commitment is crucially important for the proclamation and transmission of the faith in the contemporary world. Today, in fact, the task of evangelizing is an urgent priority and demands equal commitment.

The dialogue between faith and reason, religion and science, does not only make it possible to show people of our time the reasonableness of faith in God as effectively and convincingly as possible, but also to demonstrate that the definitive fulfillment of every authentic human aspiration rests in Jesus Christ. In this regard, a serious evangelizing effort cannot ignore the questions that arise also from today’s scientific and philosophical discoveries.

The desire for the truth is part of human nature itself. The whole of creation is an immense invitation to seek those responses that open human reason to the great response that it has always sought and awaited: “The truth of Christian Revelation, found in Jesus of Nazareth, enables all men and women to embrace the ‘mystery’ of their own life. As absolute truth, it summons human beings to be open to the transcendent, while respecting both their autonomy as creatures and their freedom. At this point, the relationship between freedom and truth is complete, and we understand the full meaning of the Lord’s words: ‘You will know the truth, and the truth will make you free’ (Jn. 8:32)” (*Fides et Ratio*, no. 15). †



CREATION OF
ADAM (DETAIL)

Michelangelo
(1510)



(Continued from page 4) *Telling the Truth*

our words, but is not directly stated by them. This can be justified when the questioner is impertinent or rash, or is requiring that we reveal our own faults outside of the sacrament of confession, or is delving into professional secrets given in confidence we are not permitted to reveal without damaging the rights of our clients.

It is evident that mental reservation is a necessary minimum of truth if we consider that without it no lawyer could ever defend someone he knew to be guilty. The defense of the guilty consists in avoiding his incrimination. A plea of “not guilty” can carry the mental reservation “within the provable limits of the law, if the client’s rights are to be maintained.” Similarly an innocent man could plead “guilty” if he knew that his conviction under the law was unavoidable, and he wanted a milder settlement of the matter. The common good of society requires such usages in order to protect the higher good of fairness and justice, but none of this requires lying.

Saint Thomas More’s self-defense against King Henry’s charge of treasonous rebellion was his silence. But he went beyond silence and used mental reservation. He even reminded the court of the legal tag *Qui tacet consentire videtur*: “Silence implies consent.” Obviously More did not consent to the King’s new doctrine of state headship of the Church, but he was willing to argue in his own defense that his silence implied consent, and so it could not be used as legal evidence against him. Here is a case where a saint took mental reservation to the limit: he died a martyr for a truth which he was prepared to seem juridically to deny without denying it. He was a humble man, aware of his duty to his family and his country and his Church, a jurist ready to die a martyr to the truth professed in moderation.

The best example of all is the Lord Himself. In the fourth chapter of the Gospel according to St. Luke, He answers the inquisitive devil with quotations from Scripture. In John 18 and 19 one can see the contrast between the lies told by St. Peter, and the carefully nuanced responses given by Our Lord to Pilate. Jesus, Who is the Truth, is always our perfect model. Let us ask of Him through the intercession of Saint Thomas More to become ever more perfect servants of the truth, both that truth which we must reveal and that truth which we must keep hidden. †



**THE TRIUMPH
OF TRUTH**

Pieter Pawel Rubens

(1622)

Ad Risum Vertere Veritatem*



*Latin for “To turn truth into laughter”

A SPECIAL SERMON

A pastor told his congregation, “Next week I plan to preach about the sin of lying. To help you understand my sermon, I want you all to read Mark 17.”

The following Sunday, as he prepared to deliver his sermon, the minister asked for a show of hands. He wanted to know how many had read Mark 17.

Every hand went up.

The pastor smiled and said, “Mark has only sixteen chapters. I will now proceed with my sermon on the sin of lying.” †



THE CATECHISM OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

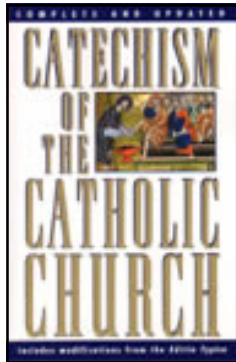
PART THREE: CHRISTIAN MYSTERY

SECTION ONE : MAN'S VOCATION: LIFE IN THE SPIRIT

CHAPTER ONE: THE DIGNITY OF THE HUMAN PERSON

ARTICLE 8: SIN

IV. THE GRAVITY OF SIN: MORTAL AND VENIAL SIN



CATECHISM CORNER



THE PRODIGAL SON

Rembrandt

(1669)

1854 Sins are rightly evaluated according to their gravity. The distinction between mortal and venial sin, already evident in Scripture, became part of the tradition of the Church. It is corroborated by human experience.

1855 Mortal sin destroys charity in the heart of man by a grave violation of God's law; it turns man away from God, who is his ultimate end and his beatitude, by preferring an inferior good to him. Venial sin allows charity to subsist, even though it offends and wounds it.

1856 Mortal sin, by attacking the vital principle within us—that is, charity—necessitates a new initiative of God's mercy and a conversion of heart which is normally accomplished within the setting of the sacrament of reconciliation. [...]

1857 For a sin to be mortal, three conditions must together be met: "Mortal sin is sin whose object is grave matter and which is also committed with full knowledge and deliberate consent."

1858 Grave matter is specified by the Ten Commandments, corresponding to the answer of Jesus to the rich young man: "Do not kill, Do not commit adultery, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Do not defraud, Honor your father and your mother." The gravity of sins is more or less great: murder is graver than theft. One must also take into account who is wronged: violence against parents is in itself graver than violence against a stranger.

1859 Mortal sin requires full knowledge and complete consent. It presupposes knowledge of the sinful character of the act, of its opposition to God's law. It also implies a consent sufficiently deliberate to be a personal choice. Feigned ignorance and hardness of heart do not diminish, but rather increase, the voluntary character of a sin.

1860 Unintentional ignorance can diminish or even remove the imputability of a grave offense. But no one is deemed to be ignorant of the principles of the moral law, which are written in the conscience of every man. The promptings of feelings and passions can also diminish the voluntary and free character of the offense, as can external pressures or pathological disorders. Sin committed through malice, by deliberate choice of evil, is the gravest.

1861 Mortal sin is a radical possibility of human freedom, as is love itself. It results in the loss of charity and the privation of sanctifying grace, that is, of the state of grace. If it is not redeemed by repentance and God's forgiveness, it causes exclusion from Christ's kingdom and the eternal death of hell, for our freedom has the power to make choices for ever, with no turning back. However, although we can judge that an act is in itself a grave offense, we must entrust judgment of persons to the justice and mercy of God.

1862 One commits venial sin when, in a less serious matter, he does not observe the standard prescribed by the moral law, or when he disobeys the moral law in a grave matter, but without full knowledge or without complete consent.

1863 Venial sin weakens charity; it manifests a disordered affection for created goods; it impedes the soul's progress in the exercise of the virtues and the practice of the moral good; it merits temporal punishment. Deliberate and unrepented venial sin disposes us little by little to commit mortal sin. However venial sin does not break the covenant with God. With God's grace it is humanly reparable. "Venial sin does not deprive the sinner of sanctifying grace, friendship with God, charity, and consequently eternal happiness." [...]

1864 "Therefore I tell you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven men, but the blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven." There are no limits to the mercy of God, but anyone who deliberately refuses to accept his mercy by repenting, rejects the forgiveness of his sins and the salvation offered by the Holy Spirit. Such hardness of heart can lead to final impenitence and eternal loss. †

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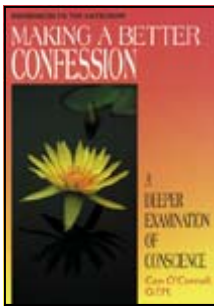
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Making a Better Confession: A Deeper Examination of Conscience

Con O'Connell, O.F.M.

**FROM
THE
LIBRARY**



Many of us are unhappy with our confessions. It may seem as though you can never think of anything to tell, or you always say the same old things. Or maybe confession doesn't always make you feel better afterwards - it has become a routine.

Father O'Connell helps readers unmask deep attitudes which lie at the root of sin. Through soul searching, you will begin the process of self-discovery and reconciliation - the process of making a more satisfying, meaningful confession. In order to experience a more fulfilling confession, you must carefully examine your conscience. However, people often do this by themselves without the help of Jesus or the Holy Spirit. Without the guidance of Jesus, you may be asking yourself the wrong questions.

With Jesus as your guide, he can help you realize "why" you have wronged another person. Without his help, you may end up confessing the symptoms of the sin - such as not helping someone in need, taking someone else's possessions, or lashing out at others - instead of the sin. These behaviors are usually indications of a self-centered attitude fueled by laziness, greed, and anger - the real sins.

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