THE ATHANASIAN

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THE ABOMINATION OF ABORTION

John Kenneth Weiskittel

The numbers are staggering. With the precision of some monstrous clockwork the lives tick off: somewhere in the United States an unborn child will be snuffed out by state-sanctioned, surgical abortion in the next 21 seconds; 125,000 children within the month, and 1,500,000 by the year's end. But, as we shall see later, even these ghastly figures represent a mere fraction of all abortions now taking place legally in this country.

The horror of such statistics, obvious enough to those of us who are blessed with the unshakeable conviction that God created us in His image, continues to be willfully disregarded—even *suppressed*—by most of the national news media. The term "terrorist" is routinely applied to those who bomb or set fire to abortion chambers and "family-planning" offices, never to those who operate the "clinics." (Since 1982, over 40 attacks have been made against these "reproductive health" facilities in the U.S. and Canada and, although more than two million dollars in damages have occurred, none has resulted in a death or even an injury.) After "The Silent Scream," a powerfully moving film that graphically depicts with high-tech skill the abortion of a 12-week-old fetus, proved itself to be an effective pro-life educational tool, *The New York Times* blasted it editorially and *CBS Morning News* assembled a panel of medical "experts" to discredit it. What the news media seek is to blunt the brutal reality of abortion and to replace it with what Dr. Bernard Nathanson, the reformed abortionist who narrated the film, calls "the picture of an unborn child sliding happily through the suction tubing, waving and smiling as it sinks blissfully into the bloody gauze trap at the bottom of the vacuum bottle..."

Feminist Backlash To "The Silent Scream"

The feminist movement—for all intents synonymous with the pro-abortion lobby—has publicly poohpoohed the impact of "The Silent Scream," but it shows its concern by its actions. After getting a big assist from media allies, it has made some moves of its own.

Planned Parenthood has announced plans to produce a movie showing abandoned children in Latin America where abortion is illegal and pictures of women who died or were injured by illegal abortions in the U.S. Bill Hamilton, director of the group's Washington office, concedes that "in the aftermath of 'The Silent Scream,' we have to do a better job of dramatizing the issue." Leftist cartoonist Garry Trudeau has contributed a six-part "Silent Scream II" parody in his *Doonesbury* comic strip that is so offensive that Universal Press Syndicate, the distributor, decided to print it in *The New Republic* magazine instead of in the usual newspaper run. And, although he may have begun working on it prior to "Silent Scream," novelist John Irving's latest work, *The Cider House Rules,* will fit right in with the rest of the feminist backlash. In part, it tells the story of the kindly director of an orphanage who performs abortions on the side (the character describes himself as a doctor who delivers babies...*and women*).

But the biggest effort to offset the power of "Silent Scream" has been the "Abortion Rights: Silent No More" project of the National Abortion Rights Action League (NARAL). This propaganda campaign was kicked off around the U.S. on May 13 and lasted for a month. Organizers of the "Silent No More" event sought to shift the focus of the right-to-life debate back to the women having abortions. Some of these women came forth with letters or speeches in which they defended their decision to abort. The theme of the project is summed up in this slogan used as a heading for press releases: "We are your mothers, your daughters, your sisters, your friends, and abortion is a choice we have made." Other "pro-choice" groups participating in it included the National Organization for Women, American Civil Liberties Union and Women's Political Caucus.

An example of the "Silent No More" testimonials for abortion is a letter from a woman in St. Petersburg, Florida. Identified only as Susan S., she relates the details of an illegal abortion she had over 50 years ago, when in her 20's. At the time she learned of her pregnancy she was caring for her three-year-old daughter, who was "confined to bed with a cast." Her concern did not extend to the life within her (she had attempted to prevent it through contraception): "I thought of this embryo as a little parasite trying to attack me and my crippled child and to make our lives more difficult. Needless to say, I felt no tenderness for it and no regret when it was aborted." She then chose a drug-induced

abortion over one requiring surgery for the sake of convenience. She hadn't bargained on the drug's side effects, which she describes along with a sickening account of the abortion:

> *...It produced results but only after I was so ill for a week that I thought I would surely die before I had taken all the drug as directed. I felt and saw the tiny sac pass enclosed in a large clot of blood, which I opened carefully in order to be sure what was contained within.*

She concludes by lodging her contempt against anyone who would oppose the "right" to abortion:

> *I think that the torture which I endured during those few weeks of unwanted pregnancy all returns to me now in the form of hatred for those presidents, popes and other politicians who have the gall to harangue women on the subject of duty and morality while they plan great war machines with which to kill the children they ask us to produce in agony. How dare they try to make laws that would in effect nationalize a woman's reproductive system and criminalize her most private personal decisions.*

On the subject of her abortion she flatly states: "I have never regretted it nor felt any guilt about it."

If this letter is representative of what other women have submitted to the "Silent No More" project, then NARAL's massive public relations drive to "humanize" abortion and to put the women who have them in a sympathetic light has failed miserably, for it again demonstrates the lack of any compassion whatsoever for prenatal life as well as the selfishness that goes with such an attitude—traits that pro-abortionists find impossible to shed. It also clearly shows, by her cold-blooded inspection of the expelled fruit of her womb, that this woman was not a "victim" who was unaware of the consequences of her decision, as some pro-lifers hold regarding women who undergo the deadly procedure. Equally unlikely to win any fresh support for the abortion cause is the openly declared hatred of the abortionists for those who would intervene on behalf of the unborn. No one could possibly connect the writer of the above-quoted letter with the sketch accompanying it, which shows three smiling, feminine, wholesome-looking women, one of whom holds a happy, contented infant in her arms. (Isn't there a law on the books requiring truth in advertising?)

Pro-Life...But Not *Too* Pro-Life

An increasingly common occurrence in American pro-life circles is to hear a leader qualify his support of laws to protect the unborn, to hear him say that we need to compromise our defense of unborn human life. It is as if they are unconsciously repeating the line more fittingly mouthed by "pro-choice" hypocrites: "I'm personally opposed to abortion, but..."

Remember how earlier this year President Reagan attacked the issue in his State of the Union speech? There he stated, "Abortion is either the taking of human life or it isn't; and if it is—and medical terminology is increasingly showing it is—it must be stopped." But in his first debate with Walter Mondale last fall, when pressed to be specific, he said that no pregnancy need run its course in the case of rape, incest or life-threatening circumstances for the mother. For the president to put conditions on the taking of innocent life is like him making a perverse paraphrase of Abraham Lincoln: "You can kill some of the children all of the time and you can kill all of the children some of the time, but you can't kill all of the children all of the time."

Another popular figure on the same wavelength is the "born-again" Baptist preacher and Moral Majority president, Jerry Falwell. In response to a question put to him after he debated NOW's Judy Goldsmith at the National Press Club, he correctly answered: "I do not feel that rape or incest are moral grounds for abortion." He then turned right around and explained away his objection:

> *We do not think there will ever be an absolutist amendment. As a matter of fact, I would oppose that. I believe that when the life of the mother is threatened, as in every case of self-defense, a moral decision can be made. I believe that rape, incest, and life of the mother will be exceptions when in fact the law is changed...Since less than one percent of all 1.5 million abortions annually are a result of pregnancies caused by rape or incest, I am willing to put an end to 1.4 million abortions rather than say: "All or nothing." (USA Today,* February 13, 1985, p. 9A)

What he's saying in plain English is that he's willing to sacrifice 100,000 babies a year on the altar of political expediency. But, for us "absolutists," *one* baby is one too many. (Incidentally, the Reverend Falwell's use of the self-defense argument—the fetus-as-aggressor argument—plays into the hands of the feminists and shows that he is in sore need of a course in sound moral theology.)

For Catholics, the continued refusal of any Conciliar "Catholic" Church authority, from John Paul II on down to local bishops, to excommunicate "Catholic" lawmakers who procure federally-funded abortions for women via Medicaid is a scandal (since it is seen

by the uninformed as official Catholic policy) and provides further confirmation of our conviction that they—and not we—are the real renegades breaking from Church teaching. Geraldine Ferraro's audience with the "pope" in the spring, at which abortion was not so much as mentioned (why let "trivia" interfere with a friendly visit?), says a lot about him, does it not? A simple refusal to meet with her would at least have sent a message showing repugnance for her offenses.

Pick Your Poison

Pepsi-Cola tabs Geraldine Ferraro to hawk their soft drink on one of its "Choice of a New Generation" TV ad campaign spots. After all, she's about as pro-*choice* as they come.

And the tie-in goes a little further. Pepsi's diet cola, as well as Diet Coke and many other low calorie soft drinks, and sugarless varieties of iced tea mix, Kool Aid, Swiss Miss instant hot chocolate and Jell-o and Royal gelatins (to name a few), all contain NutraSweet, brand name for aspartame, a sugar substitute manufactured by Searle Pharmaceuticals. Ordinarily, that wouldn't mean much, but in this case Searle also happens to be one of the largest makers of contraceptives in the nation and, if an article in the Good Friday issue of the Conciliar *Catholics United for Life Newsletter* is accurate, some of its "contraceptives" are, in truth, abortifacients.

C.U.L. volunteers regularly perform missions of mercy with their sidewalk counseling outside abortion "clinics," resulting in scores of babies being snatched from the jaws of death. They also publish much educational material on pro-life subjects. The article mentioned above, "Surgical Abortion has Become a Minor Problem," contends that for each unborn soul lost to "conventional" abortion techniques, five are lost to so-called "contraceptives." While the old high-dosage Pill was truly a contraceptive in that it suppressed ovulation, the low-dose "mini" Pills produced by Searle and other firms are actually "self-administered abortion pills." This is explained by Dr. Herbert Ratner as follows:

> *The newer lower dosage Pills primarily interfere with the reproductive process at a late stage, ending pregnancy after an egg has been fertilized. Normally, this new child implants itself in the wall of the uterus, where it will be protected and able to nourish itself. But it can do this only if the uterus wall has been made ready for the egg by a hormone sent from the ovary. The blocking of this hormone by the abortion agent prevents implantation of the tiny baby and ends pregnancy.*

Other birth control methods, such as the I.U.D.'s (Intra-Uterine Device) and, obviously, the "morning-after" Pill, are not contraceptives either, but abortifacients.

NutraSweet is a convenient substitute for sugar, but oughtn't we think twice before enriching the coffers of its parent company, Searle, at the expense of countless unbaptized infants?

"And your league with death shall be abolished, and your covenant with hell shall not stand: when the over-flowing scourge shall pass, you shall be trodden down by it." So God told the impious Israelites nearly 3,000 years ago through His prophet Isaias (28:18). He speaks the same words today to the abortion industry, which will not be able to escape His approaching scourge. How long more will the Almighty withhold His just punishment due our nation's sins against His little ones? And what, in addition to prayer, are *you* doing to bring an end to the abortion holocaust? †



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The date on the envelope address label indicates the month and year in which the recipient's subscription is due for renewal. At the proper time, a subscription envelope will be enclosed with the newsletter. One may enter a new subscription at any time, of course, and will then receive the eight following newsletter issues. †

America's Catholic Heritage (Part III)

MARYLAND

Jill Wiesner

England's colonies in America provided a new beginning for those who had been subjected to tyranny and persecution. However, most of the colonial governments continued the English practice of setting up an official state religion and brutally suppressing all who would not conform. One colony stood out as an exception to that. That colony, Maryland, was founded and settled by Catholics.

The religious persecution begun by Henry VIII and continued by his daughter Elizabeth had caused chaos in England. The unity of Faith broken, Englishmen scattered into one sect after another, each claiming divine guidance and each hostile to all others. They were united in one thing only: enmity to the Catholic Church. Recusancy Laws were passed by Parliament, imposing fines and imprisonment on anyone convicted of hearing Mass or of being absent from the mandatory Church of England services. Catholic priests were imprisoned, tortured and banished. Priests found in England after having been banished were denounced as traitors and executed. Bribes were paid to those who would betray Catholics to the authorities.

English Catholics began to look to the New World as a place of refuge, and several attempts were made to establish a Catholic colony on our shores. The first English colony in America was settled by Sir Humphrey Gilbert and 260 Catholics on the coast of Maine in 1584. However, the severe weather and the loss of their supply ship soon forced their return to England, and many of them were lost in a storm at sea on the return voyage.

In 1625, Sir George Calvert, Secretary of State under King James I, converted to Catholicism and, as a result, was forced to resign his post. James, however, elevated Sir George to the peerage, naming him Lord Baltimore. George Calvert saw America as a place of refuge for English Catholics and made plans for a colony. He died, however, before his dream could be realized, and his title passed to his eldest son, Cecil, who carried out his father's plan.

The name of Mary was given to the colony by the new Lord Baltimore and King James' son, Charles I. To avoid opposition by Parliament, King Charles gave the official explanation that the colony was being named for his wife, Henrietta Maria. Leonard Calvert, Lord Baltimore's brother, was appointed governor of Maryland, and application was made to the Jesuit superior of England for priests "to attend the Catholic planters and settlers and convert the native Indians." Father Andrew White was chosen, with Father John Altham and two lay brothers.

Father White, born in London during the reign of Elizabeth, had been educated at the college of Douay in France because all Catholic schools of England and Ireland were closed. Ordained in 1605, Father White was sent in secret to the Catholics in London. Soon after his arrival, he was arrested, imprisoned and then banished. In France, he was admitted to the Society of Jesus and was soon back in England, risking the death penalty. This time he was not caught. After several years, he was reassigned to the teaching of Holy Scripture, Hebrew and Theology in Jesuit colleges in Spain and Belgium.

From this assignment, he was called to accompany Lord Baltimore's colonists to Maryland. Two vessels, the Ark and the Dove, were to carry 200 colonists, about half of whom were Catholic. In his journal, Father White described their departure:

> *On the 22nd of November, in the year 1633, being St. Cecilia's day, we set sail from Cowes, in the Isle of Wight, with a gentle east wind blowing. After committing the principal parts of the ship to the protection of God especially, and of His Most Holy Mother, and St. Ignatius, and all of the guardian angels of Maryland, we sailed on...*

After seven weeks at sea, with a stopover in the West Indies, they reached Chesapeake Bay. Landing on St. Clement's Island on March 25,

> *the day of the Annunciation, in the year 1634, we offered in this island the sacrifice of the Mass for the first time... The sacrifice being ended, we took upon our shoulders the great cross which we had hewn from a tree, and going to a place that had been designated—the governor, commissioners, and other Catholics participating in the ceremony—we erected it as a trophy to Christ, the Savior, while the Litany of the Holy Cross was chanted humbly, on our bended knees, with*

great emotion of soul.

The colonists of Maryland bought tracts of land from the Patuxent Indians and, through their fairness and honesty, won the Indians' friendship. As Catholics, Protestants and Indians lived in peace together, helping one another, the settlers of Maryland did not go through a period of near famine as those in Virginia had.

A site was chosen and the capital city of St. Mary's was founded. Increasing numbers of Protestants converted to the Catholic fold, and more priests arrived to tend to the spiritual needs of the thriving colony. Father White was able to expand his missionary efforts. He composed the first Indian grammar and dictionary in English, as well as a catechism. (The manuscript for the grammar is now in Rome.) He gained the conversion of Tayac, the king of the Patuxent, who, at his baptism in 1640, took the name of Charles in honor of the king of England. His wife took the name of Mary. The Patuxent king had such a deep appreciation of the Faith that, when Governor Calvert explained to him the mutual advantages of trade with the English, he replied:

> *In truth, I consider these trifling, when compared with this one advantage, that through these missionaries I have arrived at the knowledge of the one true God. To me there is nothing among you greater than this; nor ought there to be anything greater.*

From the beginning, Maryland was unique among England's colonies. In addition to dealing fairly with all who came there, Lord Baltimore's colony established an Assembly in which all free men had the right and responsibility to vote, regardless of the amount of property they held.

In other New England colonies, persecution was imported to America. Virginia and New York brutally enforced the rules of the Church of England. Massachusetts, founded by Puritans fleeing Anglican persecution, imprisoned, fined, flogged and ejected all non-Puritans. Those who did not follow the Puritan dictates for worship were also liable to charges of witchcraft. Cotton Mather's *Magnalia* described Goody Glover, executed in 1688 for being a witch, as one who "profest herself a Roman Catholic and could recite her Paternoster in Latin very readily." Roger Williams, ousted from Massachusetts, founded Rhode Island for his Baptists. William Penn, also put out of the commonwealth, founded Pennsylvania for the Quakers.

Maryland alone welcomed all and, because of this, many Protestants sought refuge there. In 1642, a group of Puritans, who had been expelled from Virginia, arrived in Maryland. Welcomed in friendship, they soon began to plot the overthrow of Lord Baltimore's government. In 1644, under the leadership of William Claiborne, they deposed Governor Calvert, banished many of the Catholics, stole their lands and possessions and sent Fathers White and Fisher back to England in chains. In England, Father White was sentenced to prison for several years, then banished once more. Though advanced in age, he returned to England to aid the faithful. He died in London in 1657.

England's excesses continued to cause mischief in Maryland. The Civil War in England resulted in the overthrow and execution of Charles I, and Oliver Cromwell, a Puritan, became the "Protector" of the government. When the news reached America, Claiborne, now a commissioner in Virginia, accused Lord Baltimore's colony of being disloyal to the new English Commonwealth. He and his followers invaded Maryland, excluded all Catholics from the Assembly and repealed the Toleration Act, which protected the right of Catholics to practice their Faith in their own colony. When Maryland's Protestant Governor Stone tried to prevent a takeover, he was put out of office and, despite promises of clemency, four of his supporters were hanged.

Reflecting English government policy, the Protestants who had sought refuge in Maryland passed a series of anti-Catholic laws. In 1692, the Church of England was declared the official religion of Maryland and all citizens were taxed to support the Anglican clergy. In 1704, "An act to prevent the increase of popery in the province" was passed, forbidding all priests to say Mass, administer the Sacraments or attempt to gain converts. In addition, it prohibited all Catholics from teaching and allowed Catholic children, on becoming Protestants, to claim their portion of their Catholic parents' property. Catholics were prohibited from voting unless they took the test oath and renounced their Faith and they were forced to pay double the tax levied on Protestants. The capital of the colony was moved from St. Mary's to Protestant Annapolis.

The new governor, Seymour, on having a couple of "Mass-mongers" brought before him in 1704, addressed them as follows:

> *Gentlemen, it is the unhappy temper of you and all your tribe to grow insolent under civility... I assure you the next occasion you give me, you shall find the truth of what I say... If you intend to live here let me have no more of these things, for if I do, and they are made against you, be assured I'll chastise you... Pray take notice that I am an English Protes-*

tant Gentleman, and can never equivocate.

By 1715, however, the tide of persecution had begun to recede. With a generation of colonists who had been born and reared in America there grew a spirit of independence. Men who had survived together the rigors of a new land had less interest in political upheavals in England. Catholics, who had endured the storm of persecution, were again allowed to practice their Faith without reprisal. The Jesuits began to open schools once more, among them Bohemia Manor. The Carroll family, who would soon take an important part in America's fight for independence, received their education there.

Learning from the mistakes of the colonial governments, the founding fathers of our republic worked to prevent further abuses like those of the Puritans and the Church of England. Article VI and the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States protect the right of Catholics to worship God in the manner directed by our Lord and to continue the work begun by Father White and the colonists of Maryland: the conversion of America. †

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"Even to the death fight for truth..." (Ecclus. 4, 28)

It is hardly surprising that Communism, denying the very existence of God, has absolutely no regard for truth except insofar as it might happen to serve its satanic purposes to be truthful in a particular case. To the Communist, whatever furthers his immediate or long-range goals is good and right and true; whatever hinders or obstructs the attainment of those goals is bad and wrong and false. His spoken or written word means nothing. "Promises are like pie crust," he says, "made to be broken."

But disregard for the truth is not the monopoly of the Communist, by any means. Falsehoods, half-truths, innuendoes, distortions are a stock-in-trade of most of the American communications media, surely one of the best allies the Communist conspirators could possibly have in their efforts to destroy our nation. If the so-called American press had told the truth about Communism to the American people over the past several decades, there is no doubt but that the Communist conspiracy would never have become the momentous threat to this country which it now is. And, if that same so-called American press, even at this late date, began to tell that truth to the American people, the Communist conspiracy could still be effectively exposed and even ultimately destroyed. Unfortunately it goes without saying that so many of our alleged political leaders have a similar regard for truth, that is, none, unless, on occasion, to tell the truth happens to be to their political advantage.

But whatever be the extent of the irreverence and contempt for truth on the part of those who do not share our principles, or who are even hostile to them, let us ever be zealous in its pursuit, treasure its worth, and be unremitting in our efforts to convey it to all men of good will. Let us never compromise truth for whatever reason, nor underestimate its value, nor attempt to justify any abuse of it. Truth, divine truth in particular, is one of the most effective weapons we possess and, God willing, will one day prove to be a decisive factor in bringing about victory over the diabolical enemy which is Communism. †

As I See It

Fr. Francis E. Fenton

"Masonry's War Against the Roman Catholic Church" is the title of the excellent article by Mr. John Weiskittel in the April 15, 1985 issue of this newsletter. The satanic nature of Freemasonry and its hatred and hostility toward the Church have been exposed and discussed in numerous books, papal encyclicals and other writings over the years. In recent times the subject of Freemasonry has received a considerable amount of adverse publicity in Italy and England.

The position of the Conciliar Catholic church in relation to Freemasonry is, not surprisingly, a far cry from the adamant, uncompromising, condemnatory stand of the Roman Catholic church against, in the words of Pope Leo XIII, this "powerful auxiliary of Satan." But since it is the Roman Catholic Church which is the prime object of Masonry's antagonism and destructive intent and since that Church is today traditional Catholicism, one might presume that traditional Roman Catholics would be *very* concerned about Freemasonry. Such, most regrettably, is not the case.

In view of the lack of knowledge of so many about the true nature of the Masonic conspiracy, it was with much anticipation that we published the article in question. While I am personally strongly inclined to believe that most (90 percent perhaps) traditional Roman Catholics lack, in varying degrees, any genuine apostolic spirit or missionary zeal or solid dedication to the Faith in terms of exposing and fighting the Church's enemies (how sad a commentary!), I did feel that this one article would be well received by traditional Catholics and that they would give it a wide circulation, especially, perhaps, among their friends and acquaintances in the Conciliar Church. How very wrong I was! Of the approximately 870 recipients of *The Athanasian*, only some 17 individuals ordered copies of the article! That figures out to about one in 60. Wow! Some Catholic Action! Some Church Militant! As well aware as I have become in recent years that the typical traditional Catholic leaves so much to be desired when it comes to his *duty* of defending the Faith and fighting its enemies, I ardently hope that the situation is not as utterly deplorable as my experience seems to indicate. The Roman Catholic Church exists today only in authentic traditional Catholicism—and nowhere else. When we say, then, that Freemasonry (and Communism and Modernism) are the deadly enemies of the Church, the Church to which we refer is, of course, traditional Catholicism. But if the vast majority of traditional Catholics remain as inactive as they presently are, how can our divine Faith, humanly speaking, survive against those enemies? If anyone had told me some 15 years back that the typical traditional Catholic would be what he is today, I simply would not, could not believe it. He would attend the True Mass, receive the Sacraments, probably say the rosary each day—and he would be much concerned about saving his own soul and those of his loved ones. But, as far as being an activist, an apostle, a fighter for the Faith, he would prove to be a miserable failure. Why, he won't even stand up against the "perverse sect" (Pope Pius IX) of Freemasonry to the extent of purchasing and circulating a few copies of an article which powerfully exposes this horrendous conspiracy whose God is Satan (Pope Pius VIII) and whose purpose "is to blot out the Church of Christ... from the face of the Universe" (Pope Pius IX).

So, after some 12 years of intense involvement in the traditional Roman Catholic movement, am I disillusioned by the apathy and indifference to the greatest cause on God's earth on the part of the vast majority of traditional Roman Catholics? You bet I am. While I do not relish writing in this fashion, it is my conviction that I must do so if I am to be honest with myself and realistic in the matter at hand. The stark truth is that there are, I estimate, no more than, say, 10 percent of traditional Catholics who are of the caliber and character that I had for so long naively thought all of them would be in this time of unprecedented crisis for our beloved Church. It is upon that 10 percent that the preservation and the propagation and the defense of our divine Faith depends. They are the apostles, the warriors, the cream of traditional Catholicism.

My own disillusionment, of course, will never, please God, cause me to become discouraged or lose heart. I will continue to fight the good fight as well and as long as I can. One day the good Lord will ask me to render an account of my stewardship. I must be ready to render a worthy account.†

† † †

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The Question Box

Fr. Francis E. Fenton

Q. It is a law of the Church that servile work is forbidden on Sundays and holy days of obligation. Just what is meant by servile work? It is always forbidden or can it be justified at times?

V.G., Minnesota

A. "Remember Thou Keep Holy the Lord's Day." This is the Third Commandment of God and involves a two-fold obligation: attendance at the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass (that is, the traditional Latin Mass) and abstention from servile work. This obligation is also binding on holy days insofar as it can be observed in one's particular circumstances. If a very good reason is present a person is excused from attending Mass and/or refraining from servile work on either a Sunday or a holy day. To miss Mass on these days or to perform servile work for, say, some three hours without a serious reason is a mortal sin. So the Church teaches.

Servile work is manual labor, work which involves labor of body rather than mind. Such work, it should be noted, remains forbidden even though a person receives no payment for it and even though he may find it enjoyable or engage in it for the purpose of recreation.

Also included in the list of activities forbidden on Sundays and holy days are what moral theology calls commercial occupations (buying and selling, shopping, public auctions, etc.) unless, again, there is a proportionately good reason to justify this or that activity in a particular case. Because in this country some holy days occur during the workweek, certain servile work is necessarily permissible on those days which would otherwise be forbidden.

For countless Americans Sunday has long since become but another day of the week devoted to "business as usual," to say nothing of its widespread desecration in so many ways. In this increasingly godless age in which we live, it remains for Roman Catholics to preserve and to observe this teaching of the Church relating to the proper observance of the Lord's Day (and, to the extent feasible, holy days as well): (1) attendance at the True Mass and reception of the Holy Eucharist; (2) abstention from unnecessary servile work and "business as usual"; (3) though not obligatory, giving some additional time to prayer and meditation on the things of God and eternity. By so doing, not only will they be observing the Third Commandment of God in a manner pleasing to Him but will also be helping to counteract and to atone for the widespread and gross immoralities with which our nation is saturated in this our day. †

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