THE ATHANASIAN

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In Regard To John Paul II—

Many Questions, One Answer

Fr. Francis E. Fenton

1. John Paul II has occupied the papal throne for more than six years now. In all that period he has never once, to my knowledge, even mentioned the word Communism, much less condemned it. How come? (The Vatican-Moscow Agreement of 1962 is likely the explanation of this—but in no way is it a justification.)

2. In the "new" Canon Law automatic excommunication for the Catholic laity who join the Masons has been dropped. Why? Freemasonry is every bit as much today the "powerful auxiliary of Satan" against the Church as it was when Pope Leo XIII so described it in his 1884 encyclical, *Humanum Genus*.

3. When the Blessed Virgin Mary appeared at Fatima in 1917, she requested in specific terms the consecration of Russia to her Immaculate Heart. In this consecration the pope was to be directly involved. To this day John Paul II has not fulfilled that request. Why?

4. Even among the more *notorious* of the American bishops of the Conciliar Church, the Archbishop of Newark, New Jersey (Peter Gerety) is conspicuous. By his words and deeds he has clearly shown that he is not a Catholic at all. Yet he and many other Conciliar Church prelates of essentially similar kind are allowed to retain their positions. How come? And the same holds true for any number of that Church's "priests" and "nuns" who preach and teach all kinds of heresy and immorality—and they remain "in good standing." Again, how come? (Every once in a while, of course, the Vatican—to placate the Conciliar Church conservatives of *The Remnant* and *The Wanderer* stripe—will issue some threat or impose some innocuous penalty, the effect of which could hardly mean less to the agitators and revolutionaries involved.)

5. The Church in this country granted a total of 448 marriage annulments in 1968. Today the American Conciliar Church annually gives out some *one hundred times* that number! I have no doubt that many of these "annulments" are in violation of *divine* law. What has John Paul II *done* to terminate this scandalous desecration of the marriage bond? If little or nothing, why?

6. Imagine a Vicar of Christ praising an ex-priest who hated the Church and who may well have done more harm to the Church than any other one person in history. John Paul II did so and the one he praised was Martin Luther. Strange, isn't it?

7. "It is not the Church's place to teach unbelievers. She must seek in common with the rest of the world." That statement was made by the Archbishop of Cracow, Poland, at Vatican Council II. He is now John Paul II. How could any Roman Catholic say such a thing?

8. From a reading of a number of statements made by John Paul II over the past several years, it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that he believes that all will be saved. But this is contrary to the teaching of the Church and was condemned by the Council of Trent. How, then, could a pope speak or write in this manner?

9. The Declaration on Religious Liberty of Vatican Council II (Dignitatis Humanae Personae), discussed in a past issue of this newsletter, is manifestly heretical, heresy which has been condemned by the Church on several occasions, most notably, perhaps, by Pope Pius IX in his encyclical, *Quanta Cura*. But John Paul II has publicly and frequently declared his approval of the documents of Vatican Council II, including the heretical Declaration on Religious Liberty. How come?

The one answer to all the above questions, and to many others of the same kind, is a simple one: John Paul II is not a valid pope. How can a man be a legitimate pontiff who openly and persistently promotes heresy? If the present occupant of the papal throne is not a formal heretic, what more, pray tell, must he say or do before he becomes one? True enough, a definitive statement to that effect will have to await the formal declaration of the Church at some future date. But, in the meantime, to hold that John Paul II is not a formal

heretic (and has thereby ceased to be a valid pontiff) flies in the face of the facts. The record speaks for itself. The contention is not acceptable that this is merely my opinion and that of those who take the same position. This is my *conviction*—and it completely escapes me how anyone who has studied this matter can honestly conclude otherwise.

Many traditional-minded Roman Catholics, I submit, simply refuse to consider even the possibility that John Paul II could be a non-pope. They have a closed mind on the subject. So enraptured are they by his appearance and charisma and occasional words and deeds that give the impression of genuine Catholicism, so enthralled are they by all this that it is simply inconceivable to them that John Paul II may not be what he appears to be. They are firmly convinced that *he has to be* a valid pope and, therefore, he *is*.

The matter of the validity/invalidity of John Paul II is the principal issue which separates authentic traditional Roman Catholics from the quasi-traditionalists. And, since the latter believe in the validity of John Paul II, then they (bishops, priests, laymen) are a part of the Conciliar Church, are they not? Is it possible to accept the legitimacy of John Paul II and yet repudiate the Church over which he presides? I think not.†

To those many people who have, orally or in their letters, commended and praised this newsletter (some of them in rather superlative terms), it will likely come as a surprise that *The Athanasian* is losing more subscribers than it is gaining—and this, despite the new and gift subscriptions we receive and despite the advertising we have been doing. We are unable to retain a steady level of subscriptions, much less increase the number. This decrease is not anything dramatic but rather a very gradual thing—but a definite decrease nonetheless. As of this writing we have 859 *paid* subscribers to *The Athanasian*. By contrast, I believe *The Remnant* has some 7,000 subscribers and *The Wanderer* about 35,000. Little wonder, then, that *The Athanasian* cannot even begin effectively to counteract the damage done to traditional Catholicism by those two publications.

SUBSCRIPTION RENEWALS

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.†

The Question Box

Fr. Francis E. Fenton

Q. When a traditional Roman Catholic attends the Novus Ordo service for a deceased relative or friend in a Conciliar parish church, in what manner should he conduct himself? In other words, to what extent, if any, may he or should he participate in that service?

A. A., Montana

A. Unless there be a very good reason to justify it, no truly traditional Catholic will ever attend the "new Mass" or any other service or devotion in a Conciliar church. From time to time, however, the occasion arises when there is such a justifiable reason. Such is the case in the question above. Since it is the position of sound traditional Catholicism that the Conciliar Church is not Catholic, the answer to the question would be the same as the one given in moral theology regarding a Catholic's attendance at any non-Catholic Church service.

So, active participation is entirely forbidden, that is, taking any part in the ceremonies which are involved in the official services of this or that particular denomination or sect. What is called passive participation (the term is really a contradiction) is permissible. What this means is perhaps best described by saying that one may, while fully avoiding active participation, do no more than what common courtesy would warrant, it being understood that even one's physical presence at a non-Catholic religious service requires a justifiable reason. To be specific in reply to the question here, a traditional Catholic attending a Novus Ordo "Mass" should not genuflect upon entering or leaving the pew; he should not kneel at the "Consecration" or "Communion"; he should not recite any of the congregational prayers or sing any of the hymns which may be a part of the Novus Ordo service; and so on.

False forms of divine worship are forbidden by the First Commandment of God. The Novus Ordo service of the Conciliar Church is a false form of worship. Hence, a Roman Catholic may not attend that service without a very good reason and he may never actively participate in it.†

The Sacred Duty of Catholic Children

John Kenneth Weiskittel

Honor thy father and thy mother...(Ex. 20:12) In these six words, the beginning of the Fourth Commandment, lies the essence of conduct for Catholic children. How very significant that this is a part of the code given by God to Moses atop Mount Sinai, for thus we are told that failure to obey it is both an offense against parents and a sin against the Almighty.

As a companion piece to an earlier article, "The Sacred Duty of Catholic Parents," it might be well if we pose a related question before going to the body of this study. Namely, why is there no commandment; "Honor thy children" or the like? Put quite simply, because the natural affection of parents for offspring should need no commandment for compliance (it is revolt against this that makes abortion a particularly heinous crime). Any parent worthy of the name has offered untold prayers and tears, labors and sacrifices in the raising of a child, who may be scarcely appreciative of such efforts, and it is precisely for this reason that God commands that esteem be shown and felt.

What This Duty Entails

The honoring of one's parents involves various aspects: affection, deference, submission. Yet it is more than any of these considered alone. *The Catechism of the Council or Trent* (or *Roman Catechism*) teaches:

> ...To *honor* is to think respectfully of anybody and to hold in the highest esteem all that relates to him. It includes love, respect, obedience and reverence.
>
> Very properly, then, is the word *honor* used here in preference to the word *fear* or *love*, although parents are also to be much loved and feared. Respect and reverence are not always the accompaniments of love; neither is love the inseparable companion of fear; but honor, when proceeding from the heart, combines both fear and love.

Hence, only the term *honor* expresses all aspects perfectly.

Keeping the Fourth Commandment binds children to obey all that is expected of them by their parents, so long as such orders are morally lawful or of probable lawfulness. Only in parental commands that are clearly sinful may youths avail themselves of the divine maxim: *We ought to obey God rather than men.* (Acts 5:29) Christ, though God Himself, did not challenge the authority of Mary and Joseph but lovingly carried out their every wish. The boy Jesus, then, is the perfect role model for Catholic boys and girls.

Unlike love and respect, which are of a permanent nature, obedience is required only so long as a child lives under his parents' roof. After the age of maturity is reached and the young adult is no longer his parents' charge, he gains independence from their dictates though, through respect, he ought to give thoughtful consideration to their suggestions. (Again, even this freedom has exceptions, such as the right of parents to veto what would be a manifestly unwise marriage by a son or daughter.) At this age the young man or woman is free to choose the kind of life he or she wants to live. Unfortunately, it isn't always easy for parents to accept their offspring's calling, such as the religious vocations given them. Thomas Aquinas, to cite but one example, had to battle his own mother, who had his brothers literally kidnap him, lock him away in a tower of the family's castle and send a beautiful but wretched woman into his cell to tempt him away from the Dominican Order. The church rejoices that this evil stratagem was unsuccessful, for Saint Thomas rejected it to become one of Catholicism's greatest lights.

To obey means to follow orders or commands. A Catholic family is not a democracy; it is a monarchy in which the parents have a God-given dominion. A child's beliefs and behavior should never be allowed to be freely chosen on an options basis. Bishop Fulton Sheen, in *Love, Marriage and Children,* debunks this "progressive" form of child-rearing in a chapter wittily entitled "Should Parents Obey Children?" He presents the arguments used to defend such a position: if parents don't obey their child, then the child must obey them (horrors!), leading to a dictatorship situation; if the child doesn't get his way he'll hate his parents; and such a child will grow up neurotic because he wasn't permitted to be "free." The idea that parental authority is the same as power in an authoritarian government is false, writes Bishop Sheen, because the latter rules by repression, while "Authority, on the other hand, particularly in the home or in religion, is based on love and respect, not force." Far from creating hatred, trust is usually instilled: "For most boys, 'My daddy told me' is a final authority." And on the matter of mental encumbrances or so-called "guilt complexes," Bishop Sheen notes that authority only "becomes a burden when there is no love behind it" and that true guilt comes only from a sense of having disobeyed, citing the Prodigal Son's lament: *"Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee. I am not now worthy to be called thy son."* (Luke 15:21) In summary, Bishop Sheen tells us:

> It is wrong to say that the child should be left free until he is old enough to decide for himself whether he should be given a moral education. Habits of virtue are learned before the reasons for virtue. Habits of cleanliness are learned before the reasons for cleanliness. Habits of speaking

> are learned before the reason for speaking. Habits of knowledge are learned before the reason for knowledge...

And, we may add, a child learns the habit of obedience before knowing the reason for it.

Catholic children need, of course, to have their parents give them the proper sort of things to obey. Computer buffs have a saying, "garbage in; garbage out," which is a way of saying that, no matter how sophisticated a computer one happens to be using, it is only as valuable as the information programmed into it. While avoiding, as much as possible, ground covered in the companion article, we need to reemphasize the importance of parental example, since one of the earliest ways small children show their obedience is through imitation of those grown-ups they love and admire. If the model chosen is rude and faultfinding, the little mimic will soon develop the same traits. What can we expect from the sons of supposedly Christian fathers whose references to God are usually in the form of profanity or from the daughters of "Sunday Catholic" mothers who go around the house half-naked? Can parents be too shocked if their children treat them with little respect, after they behaved in like fashion when their own parents paid a visit? Or can they be too surprised that their teenagers are lukewarm in the Faith, when the TV in the house has become a jealous secular god that will not permit "intrusions" by family rosaries and other devotions? Among the predominant lessons to be taught in the home are prayer, purity, honesty, truthfulness, self-denial and respect for elders.

Love of parents should be second only to love of God. It should include care for aging parents (sadly neglected by many in our time), and prayers and Masses for the souls of deceased parents. After God and parents, honor is to go to those priests and religious in the Church who are selflessly giving of themselves for our salvation. (It is not without reason that the Church wants us to call priests "Father" and the heads of orders of female religious "Mother.") Next, while children are to be taught to respect religious and civil authorities and teachers, parents must emphasize to youngsters the distinction between the office and the person holding it since respect does not mean an obligation to follow those authorities and teachers down the false paths they often lead. Finally, there is an overall respect due to one's elders, especially the elderly.

Satan's Children

A shameful lack of courtesy for their elders and of respect for authority in general seems to be a feature of the personality of a sizable portion of today's youngsters—likely a far greater percentage of such youth than in any past era. We live in a time when millions of teens seem more interested in what their favorite rock stars are doing than in what Christ did for them and what they can do for Him. Can anyone recall a period in years gone by when so few children use "sir" or "ma'am" to address adults as does this generation? Or manifest politeness to the elderly through little acts of charity?

Lack of respect is bad enough but modern children are being taught that they can openly ridicule adults and get by with it. Their lessons are often to be found on 30-minute television "sitcoms," and their teachers are the principal characters on the shows. The secular humanists who produce many TV programs apparently believe that there is something humorous about mouthy kids who ridicule stupid adults. NBC carries two such series, *Under One Roof* and *It's Your Move.* Reviewing episodes of the pair, the January 1985 *Journal* of the National Federation for Decency describes *Under One Roof's* main character, Spencer Winger, as "a small, average-looking 16-year-old" who "occasionally takes God's name in vain and uses a little other 'dirty' language," takes "every opportunity to insult adults—who, somehow, are never bright enough to understand" and "is impudent to adults in general." And *It's Your Move's* 14-year-old "hero," Matthew Burton, "cheats, lies, insults all adults, and manipulates everyone for his own selfish purposes."

What comes after verbal abuse? Physical violence, of course. Not too long ago, police in Cleveland arrested a teenage brother and sister for successfully plotting the *murder* of their father. They said they killed him because he didn't let them smoke marijuana in the home. Some observers have rightly criticized rock music for encouraging young people to commit suicide. Now, the same critics are finding proof that there are songs with murder as the theme. One group, The Police, had a hit record called "Murder by Numbers," with lyrics such as "you can bump off every member of your family, and anybody else you find a bore..." A rock video of the song, "We're Not Gonna Take It," by Twisted Sisters starts with a teenager listening to the tune in his room. When his father yells at him to turn it down, he is transformed into the guitar-wielding lead singer of the group and proceeds to throw the offending parent *out of a second-story window!*

Violence towards parents has always been an important psychological tool used by those enemies of God and man, the Communists, as a way of "confirming" the revolutionary zeal of their adherents. Such depraved reasoning is based on the premise that, if they could succeed in breaking down this fundamental taboo in the minds and hearts of their followers, they could then count on them to attack with fury and without remorse any and every element of society. "We must hate," preached Lenin, "for hatred is the basis of Communism. Children must be taught to hate their parents if they are not Communists." The Reverend Leslie Millin, a Protestant missionary in China, during

the Revolution witnessed how Chinese teenagers plunged knives into the hearts of their own mothers and fathers because the parents were allegedly reactionary. And only 15 years ago in America, New Left spokesman Jerry Rubin proclaimed: "The first part of the Yippie program, you know, is kill your parents...until you're prepared to kill your parents you're not really prepared to change the country, because our parents are our first oppressors." (Oh, the joys of free speech!)

Christ called the Pharisees the children of the devil. In twentieth century America it appears that his Satanic Majesty is recruiting them at a much younger age.

Strengthening Our Catholic Families

The dangers confronting Catholic sons and daughters today can scarcely be overstated. If the infernal temptations against their duties were confined to TV, films, books, music and acquaintances, the task for parents of monitoring bad influences would be formidable enough, but this is often compounded by the influences upon the child of the school he attends. Decades ago, Father Charles Sheedy, C.S.C., (*The Christian Virtues*) diagnosed the problem this way: "Public education in the United States is becoming more and more progressively 'secular,' that is to say, utterly divorced from God and from religion. It is not at all true to say that American public education is 'neutral,' neither favoring nor disfavoring religion nor any particular form of religion. Children are profoundly influenced by what goes on at school—often school 'competes' with parental influence—and if they see religion ignored at school they find this hard to reconcile with the importance placed on the subject at home." (Note that these words were written *before* prayer was removed from the schools; the secularization of government-masonic schools was going on even before the infamous Supreme Court decision.) However bad conditions were at the time Father Sheedy wrote this, we must regard them as tame compared with today's schools for his words were written prior to pornographic sex education, "values clarification" classes and other courses found in the secular humanist curricula.

Keeping children Catholic in such a subversive cultural climate is no easy job but it is one that must be done. The threat that they may be lost is very real and, hence, a threat which we cannot afford to take lightly. For parents to say that the danger is all from the environment is, to use the popular expression, a "cop-out." First-century Catholics lived in an age where their neighbors worshiped idols; some hung on to the Faith while others lost it. To blame the surroundings is to shirk responsibility. Father Ernest Hull wrote a book some 65 years ago, *Collapses in Adult Life,* that is every bit as relevant for today's crisis as it was for the day he wrote. Father Hull's premise is that these collapses are due to poor formation of character in one's early years. He writes: "Why should Catholics who have been under such a long course of religious training, and have quickly given such marked satisfaction under it, so quickly and completely succumb to environment? We can only explain it in one way, by saying that it is due to *want of grit, want of backbone,* or *want of character."*

In other words, the weakness comes from a lack of courage to be a Catholic when such is not fashionable; lack of courage to stand up to the scorn and ridicule that accompany taking an unpopular position; lack of courage fitting a soldier of Christ. For a child to develop this grit, it is necessary that the parent inculcate upon his mind the simple but profound truth that he is not meant for this world but that his life in it is a pilgrimage toward God, and that, while he exists in the midst of modern Babylon, he does so as "a stranger in a foreign country." (Ex. 18:3) To accomplish the pilgrimage he must develop a strong prayer life and a spirit of penance and self-denial which, in turn, lead him to value work over pleasure and gain self-reliance. Leisure time should be spent, in part, reading devotional books (such as lives of the saints). Though it may sound trite, families do need to pray—as well as play—together. And, we should add, children need to be instructed to relate to parents any unusual "lessons" being "taught" them at school.

The attack on the family is undoubtedly one of Satan's foremost efforts, and he is advancing far along in his vicious assaults. But he is doomed to failure against *our* families if we remember God's design of the family. Returning to the words of Bishop Sheen, we are told:

> The secret of the parent-child relationship is for the parent to say to the child: "I ask for obedience, because I am responsible to God for you." The child, in his turn, should say to himself: "In obeying my parents I am obeying God, for they take His place in my home." (op. cit.)

We need, also, to recommend our families each day to the Holy Family. Pope Leo XIII speaks of the benefits of such prayers in these words: "When Jesus, Mary and Joseph are invoked in the home, there they foster charity, there they exert a good influence over conduct, set an example of virtue, and make more bearable the hardships of every life." Many prayers to Jesus, Mary and Joseph can be found in prayer books, a short one being "Holy Family, protect our family." If we wish to save our Church (and our country), we must save our families! †

Pray The Rosary Daily

America's Catholic Heritage (Part II)

THE FRENCH MISSIONARIES

Jill Wiesner

In the year 1608, a settlement was founded on the banks of the Saint Lawrence River, one which was to have a lasting influence on the history of our nation. From this little settlement came missionary priests who gave their knowledge, their talents and, in many cases, their lives to bring the truth of the Catholic Faith to a people gripped by the terror and darkness of paganism. For 150 years, Quebec, founded by Samuel de Champlain, was the center of the Catholic Faith for the vast province of New France, which extended from Hudson Bay to the Gulf of Mexico and stretched westward to the Mississippi River.

Champlain, a man of energy and ability, surveyed America's Atlantic coast 15 years before the Puritans landed at Plymouth. He also discovered Lakes Ontario, Huron and Champlain, and was the first white man to explore New York State. Like Columbus, Champlain wanted "to plant in this country the standard of the Cross, and to teach the knowledge of God and the glory of His Holy Name." He firmly believed that "the salvation of a single soul is worth more than an empire." The first priests to respond to his plea for missionaries were four Franciscans. These were soon followed by Jesuits, Dominicans, Sulpicians, Carmelites and secular priests.

The two great Indian families of the Northeastern United States, the Hurons and the Algonquins, befriended the French. Among other things they showed the settlers, as they had shown the explorer Jacques Cartier 70 years earlier, how to make an infusion of pine needles to cure the scurvy from which so many colonists had died. Mortal enemies of these two Indian nations were the Iroquois or Five Nations, an alliance comprised of the Senecas, Cayugas, Onondagas, Oneidas and the ferocious Mohawks (whose name comes from the Algonquin word meaning "man-eater"). This powerful confederation, capable of fielding 2,000 men into battle on short notice, was immediately hostile to the French because of their friendship with the Hurons and Algonquins. An Iroquois chief asked a priest if all men were capable of getting to heaven. When told that they were, he asked if that included Hurons. When the priest replied in the affirmative, the Iroquois refused to hear anything more about the Faith.

The first French mission in United States territory, Saint Sauveur (Holy Savior), was opened in 1613 near Bar Harbor, Maine. The Indians of Saint Sauveur, of the Algonquin nation called Abnakis, were fervent and loyal converts.

Maine, however, was soon caught up in the war between France and England. When Maine became an English colony, the Catholic priests, regarded as enemies by the English, were arrested and the mission closed. But the Abnakis pleaded for a return of their priests and eventually the mission was reopened, incurring the wrath of the English governor.

Father Sebastian Rale, who lived among the Penobscot Abnakis at Norridgewock on the Kennebec River for 30 years, compiled a dictionary of their dialect, which was taken by the British in a raid on his mission station and which has been preserved. It is presently kept at Harvard University. During the summer absence of Father Rale and the tribe from the village in 1724, their chapel was burned by the English. The chiefs, whose alliance was sought by the English governor, demanded that the English rebuild it. He agreed to do so, providing they would accept the clergy of his choosing. The Abnaki chief's reply:

> *When you came here... no one of you spoke of prayer or of the Great Spirit. You thought only of my skins and furs. But one day I met a French blackcoat in the forest. He did not look at the skins with which I was loaded, but he said words to me of the Great Spirit, of paradise and of hell, and of prayer, by which is the only path to heaven.*
>
> *I listened with pleasure, and at last begged him to teach and to baptize me.*
>
> *If, when you saw me, you had spoken to me of prayer, I should have had the misfortune to pray as you do; for I was not then able to know if your prayers were good. So, I tell you, I will hold fast to the prayers of the French. I will keep them until the earth burn up and perish.*

On August 23, a combined force of English and Mohawks attacked the village. Father Rale stood in full view before the mission cross, hoping, by sacrificing himself, to prevent a massacre. Seven chiefs came and stood with him. All were killed and the body of Father Rale was viciously mutilated. The Indians, including women and children, who were not able to escape into the forest were brutally murdered.

Though without a priest for years to come, the Penobscot tribe remained Catholic. The old taught the young and, even though they had no priest, they gathered every Sunday to chant the music of the Mass and Vespers. During our War for Independence, the Abnakis were American allies.

As the English settlements expanded along America's

coast, French missionaries penetrated the heart of the continent. Father John de Brebeuf, who arrived at Quebec in the summer of 1624, was physically strong as well as a brilliant scholar. Having a powerful build and an iron constitution, he was able to adapt to the Indian way of life, a way of life which permanently ruined the health of many French priests. Father Brebeuf labored among the Hurons from 1626 to 1649. He won their respect so thoroughly that he was adopted into their tribe.

Father Brebeuf and his fellow priests worked tirelessly among the Hurons, instructing those willing to listen, aiding the sick and comforting the dying. Their lives were constantly in danger, as the superstitious Hurons, incited by the medicine men, accused them of possessing evil charms and held them responsible for every calamity.

Finally, their perseverance was rewarded. In 1627, Father Brebeuf had the joy of baptizing a Huron chief—the first adult in health to receive the sacrament. The Huron mission began to grow, expanding to six stations.

However, a truce between the Huron and the Iroquois dissolved into war. On the morning of March 16, 1649, a thousand Iroquois burst upon the station at Saint Ignatius. Father Brebeuf and Father Gabriel Lallemant hastened to comfort the wounded and dying, and themselves fell into the hands of the Iroquois, the masters of brutality and torture.

The martyrdoms of Father Brebeuf and Father Lallemant are among the most appalling on record. Yet, through it all, the heroic priests endured. Father Brebeuf never once cried out, but continued, until rendered physically incapable of doing so, to exhort the faithful and to pray for their murderers.

Father Isaac Jogues, who had been a professor at the University of Rouen, was the first to plant the cross on the soil of Michigan. He worked with Father Brebeuf in the Great Lakes region for six years before going on to found new mission stations among the Hurons. In 1642, at Three Rivers near Quebec, Father Jogues and a party of Hurons were taken prisoner in a Mohawk ambush. The chief, Ahasistari, who had escaped, returned to share the fate of his priest. The captives were marched to the Mohawk village of Caughnawaga, near Albany, New York, where they underwent agonizing tortures.

Thirteen months of slavery began for Father Jogues, during which Rene Goupil, a novice of the mission, was tomahawked for making the sign of the cross over an Indian child. Father Jogues' captivity familiarized him with the Mohawk language and customs, and enabled him to minister to the other Christian prisoners. Though the hostility of the Mohawks did not diminish, he gained from them a grudging respect, which later made possible the first Mohawk mission.

He was finally ransomed by the Dutch settlers of Fort Orange (Albany), who also arranged for his passage to France. (These debts were later repaid by Father Jogues.) Arriving home on Christmas Day, Father Jogues was able to receive Holy Communion for the first time in a year and a half. Because his hands were so badly mutilated, a dispensation was required to permit him to offer Mass. This was readily granted by Pope Urban VII, who also proclaimed Father Jogues a living "Martyr of Christ," the first person to be so honored.

In the spring of 1644, Father Jogues, having returned to Canada, negotiated a peace treaty between the French and the Iroquois and began to prepare for the Mohawk mission. The summer of 1646, however, brought famine and plague to the Five Nations. The Mohawks blamed Father Jogues, saying he had put a curse on them. He was again taken prisoner and on October 18, near the shores of Lake George (discovered by Father Jogues and named Lake of the Blessed Sacrament by him), he was tomahawked as he bent to enter the door of a lodge.

Fathers John de Brebeuf, Isaac Jogues, Gabriel Lallemant, John Garnier, Noel Chabanel, Anthony Daniel and lay brothers Rene Goupil and John Lalande were canonized in 1930 by Pope Pius XI and are the first canonized North American saints. Their feast is celebrated in the United States on September 26 and is called the "Feast of the North American Martyrs." Their guiding purpose was expressed by Saint John de Brebeuf:

> *Jesus Christ is our true greatness; it is He alone and His Cross that should be sought in the pursuit of these people, for if you strive for anything else, you will find naught but bodily and spiritual afflictions. But having found Jesus Christ in this Cross, you have found roses in the thorns, sweetness in bitterness, all in nothing.*

The martyrs laid the groundwork for those who followed. Priests were no longer regarded with superstitious fear and mistrust. The way was open for them to bring the Catholic Faith to the tribes of the "Northwestern Territory" (Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin and Minnesota). In 1660 the confederation of the Three Fires (consisting of the Ojibwa, Ottawa and Pottawatami nations) requested a French missionary. Father Rene Menard, S.J., a veteran of the Huron mission, was the first to come. He was followed by Father Claude Allouez, "the founder of Catholicism in the West," who was personally responsible for the baptism of 10,000 Indians.

In 1666, a young Jesuit named James Marquette ar-

rived at Quebec. Having read in the Jesuit *Relations* the detailed accounts of the North American missions, he had resolved to give his life for the conversion of souls. A descendant of Saint John Baptist de la Salle, Father Marquette had a facility for language as well as a gentle and kind nature. His devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary was the guiding force of his life.

Founder of the mission stations at Saulte Sainte Marie and Saint Ignace (Saint Ignatius) in Michigan, Father Marquette also opened the first mission among the Illinois, a tribe who lived near the banks of the Mississippi River and who had twice sent emissaries asking him to come to them. Pere (Father) Marquette is the "blackrobe" immortalized in Longfellow's epic poem, "Hiawatha," and the beautiful speech uttered by the "joyous Hiawatha" was actually the greeting extended to Pere Marquette by the chiefs of the Illinois.

Like the North American Martyrs, Father Marquette gave his life for the conversion of souls, though his death was caused by illness and deprivation. Though he knew he was dying, he established his Illinois mission, instructing them in the Faith and preparing them for his successor. On May 18, 1675, en route to Saint Ignace, thirty-eight year old Father Marquette died. His last words were "Jesus, Mary."

The Illinois, who, according to his superior Father Dablon, received him "as an angel from heaven," remained steadfast in their Faith. In 1730, after the massacre perpetrated by the Natchez and the supposedly friendly Yazous in Louisiana, the surviving French settlers were visited by a delegation from the Illinois. Their chief, Chikagou, told the settlers:

> *We have come a great distance to weep with you for the death of the French, and to offer our warriors to strike those hostile nations whom you may wish to designate. You have but to speak. We are of the prayer.*

The light of Faith had spread across America. The selfless sacrifice and magnificent courage of the missionary priests freed countless souls from the bonds of paganism, and planted the seed of truth at the inception of a nation, a nation which would grow to become the finest on earth and would, for the first time in the history of the world, offer liberty to mankind. These American heroes answered the martyred Father Menard who asked: "Are we to serve God only when there is nothing to suffer and no risk of life?" May we, inspired by their courage, emulate their unwavering devotion to our Holy Catholic Faith.†

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