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Luther in Focus

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Fanfare is still blaring as the world celebrates the 500th anniversary of the birth of its conquering hero, Martin Luther, and it should come as little surprise that some of the loudest trumpeting emanates from the Conciliar "Catholic" Church.

The centerpiece for the Conciliarists has been John Paul II's visit to the Lutheran temple, Christ Church, in Rome, where the "pope" preached, proclaiming without hesitation, Luther's "profound religiousness." While knowledgeable Catholics ponder the enormnity manifest in such official praise given the arch-heretic of the ages, we ought to consider, as well, the following from the sordid litany:

- St. Columba Cathedral (Youngstown, Ohio) is the scene of a Conciliar-Lutheran service in which ten clergymen from each denomination takes part. A Conciliar minister says that there is no difference between the two sects. There perhaps isn't much difference, of course, but the public at large still mistakenly reads such statements to mean that the Roman Catholic Church (the true Church, that is) is the same as the Lutheran heresy.
- The Rev. Alan Detscher of the Conciliar diocese of Bridgeport, Connecticut, speaks at the local Luther Festival.
- In Eugene, Oregon, Lutheran laymen lecture at St. Jude Conciliar Church on the theme, "Luther in the 20th Century."
- Dr. Otto Pesch, a "Catholic" from Germany, helps celebrate Luther by speaking at the Protestant Southern Seminary in Columbia, South Carolina, on "Luther and the Catholic Tradition."
- Returning the favor, once-Catholic Notre Dame University welcomes an address by Luther professor Robert Jenson.

Such activities are strange coming from self-professed Catholics; strange, indeed, when we reflect on the man being honored. After all, wasn't this the same Martin Luther who was excommunicated from the Church in 1521 by a papal bull beginning: "Arise, O Lord...a wild boar has invaded your vineyard"? The same Luther who, even unto his death 25 years later, refused to recant, writing the pamphlet, "Against the Papacy Established by the Devil," a year before his death and attacking the Church even in his last sermon? The same Luther, finally, whose violent assault on the Mystical Body of Christ sent shock waves through Christendom which reverberate even today?

The "rehabilitation" of Luther by John Paul II and others in the Conciliar Church was being promoted in "progressive" quarters of the Catholic Church even prior to Vatican II.* It argues that the whole "Luther affair" was a tragic mistake that could have been avoided were it not for misunderstandings on both sides.

Such a position is more in line with the myth of Luther the hero than with the reality of Luther the rebel. The historical picture of the man has been intentionally blurred to meet the demands of false ecumenism. The aim of this article is to put the *real* Luther in focus.

The Battle Lines are Drawn

When Martin Luther entered the world on 10 November, 1583, in the village of Eiseleben (now a part of Communist-occupied East Germany), he became a citizen of a Europe in transition—the Renaissance.

Renaissance means "rebirth" and, in the present context, a rebirth of the paganism of ancient Greece and Rome. It is used to describe that period (roughly the fourteenth, fifteenth and sixteenth centuries) in which the viewpoint shifted from the God-centered Middle Ages to the more worldly outlook favored by "modern" thinkers. So much was it a time for the acquisition of material gain and for the glorification of Man, that it is always mentioned in the same breath as the intellectual movement of the time—and reaching into our time—known as *Humanism.*

Unfortunately, the Church was not immune from the nox-

*Hans Kung, the radical who has been described by his part-time sparring partner, John Paul II, as, variously, an "eminent theologian" *and* "not a Catholic theologian," praises Luther. In his book, *On Being a Christian*, Kung calls him one of "the greatest minds in theology," linking his name with Saints Augustine and Thomas Aquinas. (p. 395)

ious influence, and many churchmen became corrupted with the spirit of the times...even Rome was not spared. Many leaders in the Church began to warn of the long-range effects such materialism would cause, and to call for immediate reform.

Other, less savory, men used the crisis to attack, not the abuses in the Church, *but the Church itself.* John Wycliffe (c. 1320-1384) and John Hus (1369-1415) advanced such errors as the Bible being the sole rule of faith, religion being an inward experience rather than membership in a visible Church, and the denial of the divinely established authority of the pope and bishops. Appearance aside, however, this was not a repudiation of Renaissance Humanism, but only its license taken from the natural order to the spiritual order.

So, years before Luther ever hurled at the Church his defiant "I neither can or will recant anything," the battle lines had already been drawn, and the first volleys fired, in the revolt that has falsely come to be known as the Protestant "Reformation." All that was left for him to do would be to sound the call for the major assault on Holy Mother Church. This would not be long in its arrival.

Throughout his life, Martin Luther was a man of hot temper and stormy rhetoric. From all indications, including his own writings, he came by his violent nature honestly. He states that his father, Hans Luther, once beat him so mercilessly that he ran away from home. Later, when young Martin returned, the elder Luther found a boy so "embittered against him," according to the "Reformer," "that he had to win me to himself again." Margaret Luther was capable of giving great punishments as well. She caught him in an act of theft and, "on account of an insignificant nut, beat me till the blood flowed...it was this harshness and severity that forced me subsequently to run away to a monastery and become a monk." (quotes from Luther's *Table-Talk.*)

We have to a large extent only Luther's version of his childhood to go on, and Luther was notorious for his tendency to exaggerate, romanticize and overdramatize events. (A Catholic contemporary once jokingly called him *Doctor Hyperbolicus.*) Yet, on this matter, Luther may be understating the case. H.G. Ganss observes:

> In the opinion of many of his biographers, it was an exhibition of uncontrolled rage (by Hans Luther), an evident congenital inheritance transmitted to his eldest son, that compelled him to flee from Mohra, the family seat, to escape the penalty or odium of homicide. This, though first charged by Wicelius, a convert from Lutheranism, has found admission into Protestant history and tradition...*(Catholic Encyclopedia,* 1910 ed., Vol. IX, p. 438.)

That may help explain how Luther, before his break with Rome, could advocate the slaughter of those who opposed the Catholic Church and, after his break, the slaughter of those who supported her.

A major turning point occurred in Luther's life in 1505. Only months after he earned a master's degree from the University of Erfurt, a degree which would have paved the way for a successful career in law, he had a brush with death. Attributing his survival to his invocation of St. Anne, he vowed, on impulse (a trait he carried throughout his life), to become a monk, and did so in July of the same year.

As an Augustinian, Luther became a priest and earned degrees in Scripture and theology. He was assigned in 1513 to lecture on Scripture. Despite his learning, his days as a religious were marked by his extreme scrupulosity and a fear of God that pointed to mental unbalance. At his first Mass, his fear of making a rubrical error was so great that he had to be restrained from leaving the altar. His fellow priests had all they could to to make him trust in God's love and merciful forgiveness. He began to doubt that he was a Christian and he expressed even hatred towards God; he once stated his feelings to his superior, a Fr. Staupitz, in terms that border on despair: "The Lord acts in a frightful manner towards us! Who can serve Him if he strikes terror all around Him?"

The rigors of monastic life were not suited to Luther. Instead of persevering, Luther became lax in his duties. Years before his excommunication, he had ceased saying Mass and the Divine Office, both of which he was *obliged* to say as part of his priestly vocation. He also began to develop his own views on salvation, views that he knew were not in keeping with Catholic teaching. As early as 1513, in his commentary on Psalm 105:3, we find him saying: "We are not justified by works but just works proceed from the just..."*

How much of Luther's wandering from the Church teaching was, at this point, due to earlier unavoidable events in his life joined with mental imbalance, and how much to his wilfull nature, is not easy to unravel. Whatever the case, by the year 1517 he was a theological time bomb waiting to be set off. The unsuspecting detonator would be a personable Dominican monk with an oratorical gift that made him a successful indulgence preacher and who would be immortalized by Luther's attackes on him... Johann Tetzel.

Indulgences—Smoke Screen for a Frontal Assault

An indulgence is "the remission before God of the temporal punishment due to those sins of which the guilt has

*This line of thinking was later condemned at the Council of Trent.

been forgiven, either in the Sacrament of Penance or because of an act of perfect contrition, granted by the competent ecclesiastical authority out of the Treasury of the Church to the living by way of absolution, to the dead by the way of suffrage." (Attwater's *Catholic Dictionary,* p. 266.) In no way is it, as this quote clearly indicates, the purchase of "permission to sin," as Luther and his followers contended.

In 1506, the great Italian architect Bramante approached Pope Julius II with a plan to build a new St. Peter's in Rome. His Holiness didn't hesitate in giving his blessing to the project, for the existing thousand-year-old structure was beyond repair. The expenses of such an effort were gigantic, so indulgences were granted to those contributing to this work and fulfilling the usual conditions of confession and Communion.

Unfortunately, a lack of Christian spirit was evident in Germany by many who opposed Rome for nationalistic and financial reasons. The next pope, "Leo X, renewed his predecessor's indulgence but such was the resentment of German princes and prelates to inroads in their revenues that by 1514 only a few dioceses were open to indulgence preaching." (Fr. Newman Eberhardt, *A Summary of Catholic History,* Vol. 2, p. 146.) The papal bull authorizing indulgence solicitation in the German Mainz-Magdeburg dioceses, after Leo had struck a questionable financial deal with Archbishop Albrecht of Magdeburg, brought the situation into Luther's neighborhood. To make matters worse, there was a certain jealousy and rivalry among the religious orders as to which one would be picked to preach indulgences. When the Dominicans received the commission, it caused what Leo X called a "squabble among monks."

The most celebrated and effective indulgence preacher of the day was Tetzel. It was his preaching that was the direct catalyst of Luther's act of public resistance to Catholic teaching—the *Ninety-Five Theses.* Down through the years, Tetzel has been the object of one of the most vicious smear campaigns in all history. At best, say his detractors, Tetzel was a poor theologian who didn't know real Church teaching on indulgences, so he made up his own as he went along; at worst, he was a despicable character: one-part fool and nine-parts spiritual mercenary, his only goal being the advancement of Johann Tetzel. Apart from a less than adequate knowledge of how indulgences are applied to the dead, none of this is true. Tetzel was an eloquent homilist deeply devoted to Christ. Luther was by no means speaking accurately when he claimed: "Tetzel sold grace for money at the highest price." It is truly an irony that, while some abuses involving indulgences did occur (such as Leo's mentioned above), a sincere and pious man is the one who is remembered for them.

On October 31, 1517, an event occurred that many historians cite as one of the first acts of our *modern* age, for that is when Luther nailed his propositions (or theses) to the door of the castle church in Wittenberg. The gesture was not *per se* an attack on the Church. As Ganss writes: "The act was not an open declaration of war, but simply an academic challenge to a disputation." (op. cit., p. 442)

If Luther used an acceptable *form* of protest, the same cannot be said about the substance of that protest. While some of the points he made could be interpreted as Catholic, the overall tenor of the document is "a covert attack on the whole penitential system of the Church and (strikes) at the very root of ecclesiastical authority." (ibid.)

At first, surprisingly few grasped the revolutionary depth of the theses. One of the initial replies came from Tetzel himself who, in the same year, wrote his *One Hundred and Six Anti-Theses.* In them, he proved his cool, level-headed logic over the impassioned rantings of Luther and warned that, through adoption of the "Reformer's" ideas, "many will be led to despise the authority of the pope and the Holy Roman See." Tetzel also wrote:

> For one who has never heard them, to declare in public Theses that the indulgence-preachers employ scandalous language before the people, and take up more time in explaining indulgences than in expounding the Gospel, is to scatter lies picked up from others, to spread fictions in place of truths, and to show oneself light-headed and credulous; and is to fall into mischievous error.

The "cold war" was heating up.

Pope Leo X moved in characteristically slow and ineffective fashion. Earlier, he failed to put teeth into the disciplinary canons of the Fifth Lateran Council (1512-1517), canons which would have curbed many of the abuses Luther used as an excuse for his disobedience. On June 15, 1520, some 32 months after the act of defiance, Leo issued *Exsurge Domine,* a bull condemning 41 of the rebel's propositions. Did Leo's hesitation hurt the Church's ability to put an end to Luther's guerilla warfare? Quite possibly. Scholar Will Durant notes: "Leo was disposed or compelled to lenience; indeed, a Protestant historian (William Roscoe) has ascribed the triumph of the Reformation to the moderation of the Pope." (*The Story of Civilization:* Part VI. *The Reformation,* p. 347.)

Yet in this case, to give Pope Leo his due, he had Luther summoned to Augsburg to appear before the papal legate, Tommaso Cardinal Cajetan. Cardinal Cajetan was not only a man of piety, but also of a theological brilliance recognized even today. His meetings in 1518 with the

troublesome monk were of no avail. Reason made no impact on one the cardinal later called "the German beast."* In the end, Luther refused to recant.

But the greatest confrontation of the "Reformation" did not occur until the following year in Leipzig when Luther agreed to debate the celebrated academician, Johann Eck. Eck, along with Tetzel, was one of the first to see the real dangers of the Luther manifesto, calling it steeped in "Bohemian poison" (the heresies of Hus). The Leipzig Debate is crucial because Eck was able to force the *real* Luther out in the open, compelling him to admit that he denied the infallibility of the pope and councils (for which he would substitute the infallibility of Luther). Eck succeeded in exposing Luther's real war, as Luther apologist Roland H. Bainton states: "Not the abuses of medieval Catholicism, but Catholicism itself as an abuse of the Gospel was the object of his onslaught." (*The Reformation of the Sixteenth Century,* p. 24.) When Tetzel was on his deathbed, as if to confirm this, Luther wrote him a kindly letter, saying of the indulgence matter "that the affair had not begun on that account, but that the child had quite another father."

In summary, then, Luther cast out of his catechism virtually all Catholic doctrine, and that which was not purged was refashioned in an unorthodox sense. Father John P. Markoe, S.J. in his work, *The Triumph of the Church,* lists Luther's principal errors as follows:

> Luther denied tradition; the divine authority of the Papacy; that councils were infallible; that original justice was a supernatural gift; that human nature remained essentially the same in its powers after the fall of Adam; that man, after the fall, can produce any good works; held that man sins in whatever he does; that the sins of the just are covered by faith and not done away with; maintained that all works of sinners are sins; denied free will; all the Sacraments except Baptism and the Eucharist; transubstantiation; the Sacrifice of the Mass; purgatory and the utility of praying to the Saints; he maintained that vows are made to the devil; that concupiscence is invincible; that the sensual instincts are irrepressible, and held that the gratification of sexual propensities is as natural and inexorable as the performance of any of the physiological necessities of our being. (p. 22)

Denying any tradition and calling reason an enemy of the faith, Luther's system (if anything so jumbled and contradictory as his set of beliefs can properly be called a system) is based on his narrow reading of Scripture, a reading in which anything that does not fit is thrown out.

The Gospel According to Luther
A War of Words

Another trait by which Martin Luther is known is, contrary to Christ's admonition to humility, tremendous egotism. On the matter of biblical interpretation, we have this self-deception: "Dr. Martin Luther, God's own notary and witness of His Gospel...I am the prophet of the Germans... I understand the Scripture a great deal better than the pope and all his people...Not for a thousand years has God bestowed such great gifts on any bishops as He has on me...I am not far behind many of the (Church) fathers." (Eberhardt, op. cit., p. 140.)

Luther, it is often maintained, opened the Scriptures to the common man by holding: "The pope is no judge of matters pertaining to God's word and faith. But the Christian man must examine and judge for himself." (Bainton, op. cit., p. 61.) Yet he dubbed himself the "Lutheran Pope," and pontificated: "Whoever teaches otherwise than I teach, condemns God, and must remain a child of hell." (John Stoddard, *Rebuilding a Lost Faith,* p. 97.) This last statement came, evidently, when certain of his former followers split with him and took his "private interpretation" theme a step further, declaring that they could interpret as well as he could.

His other "contribution" in this field is his translation of the Bible into German. Over a dozen translations were made into that language before his, though it is generally conceded that his was the first in modern literary German. That point granted, the liberties he took in translating are matched in our day only by the "liberal" and feminist travesties.

The most notorious of his Scriptural frauds is his addition of the word *alone* to Romans 3:28—"Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law." He translated it "by faith alone" in order to make it fit *his* theology, even though the word is not in the original Greek. When he was confronted with this inexcusable deceit, he responded:

> You tell me what a great fuss the Papists are making because the world "alone" is not in the text of Paul. If your Papist makes such an unnecessary row about the word "alone," say right out to him: Dr. Martin Luther *will have it so,*" and say "Papists and asses are one and the same thing." *I will have it so, and I order it so, and my will is reason enough.* I know very well that the word "alone" is not in the Latin and Greek text, and it was not necessary for the Papists to teach me that. It is true, those letters are not in it, which letters the jackasses look at as a cow looks at a new gate...It ("alone") shall remain in my New Testament, and if the Papish donkeys were to get mad and beside themselves, they will not get it out." (Stoddard, pp. 101-2.)

*Some believe that Luther only called the papacy the Antichrist later in life, as the result of too much drink. In truth, after his meeting with Cardinal Cajetan, he wrote: "Antichrist holds sway over the Roman court."

Finally, Luther was arbitrary in what went into his Bible; he listed books as "A" or "B," depending upon how well they conformed to his teaching. The Epistle of St. James was a "straw epistle" since the Apostle refutes his "faith alone" theory in the second chapter. (Luther wrote: "Whoever can reconcile Paul and James, I'll give him my doctor's biretta and let myself be a fool.") Of St. John's Apocalypse, he said: "I cannot see the Holy Spirit at work in this book." Nor can we see Him at work in the writings of Luther.

"To the Gallows with Moses!"

Luther's heresy, that man is saved through justification by "faith alone," denies good works as an essential component of salvation. Still worse, if that is possible, is another element of it, namely, the trivializing of sin. It is not unfair to say that, in certain respects, Luther was the real father of that amoralism known today as "situation ethics" or the "new morality." A pastor in Luther's day complained that when people wanted to live according to their lusts they would say: "Today we will live in the Lutheran fashion!"

Luther's moral teachings were based on three equally false premises: 1. Denial of free will; 2. Denial of the sanctifiying power of God's grace; and 3. The claim that Christians were no longer subject to God's law. First, he argues that man is as "unfree as a block of wood," and that the human will is like a "beast of burden" which either God or Satan can mount without permission and without the will making the choice of rider. The second premise flows freely from the first: since man cannot control his actions, God will "cover" his sins after redemption, but grace won't affect his basically sinful nature (sanctity was a concept alien to Luther). "Doubtless sin is no longer condemned," he wrote, "but it remains. You discover no purification, but only a satanic darkness (in the soul)." The third aspect, freedom from divine law, was based on his misreading of St. Paul (e.g. Galatians 3:11). Although Luther said that it was permissible to use the Ten Commandments as "Ten Suggestions," more revealing is this astonishing quote: "We must put the whole decalogue out of our sight and out of our hearts. If Moses scares you with his stupid Ten Commandments, say to him at once: 'Take yourself off to your Jews! To the gallows with Moses!'"

All of this leads, logically, to the sin of presumption, and the writings of Luther are full of presumptuous-sounding statements. As, for example:

> Seek out the society of your boon companions, drink, play, talk bawdy, and amuse yourselves. One must sometimes commit a sin out of hatred and contempt for the Devil, so as not to give him the chance to make one scrupulous over mere nothings; if one is too frightened of sinning, one is lost...Oh, if I could find some really good sin that would give the Devil a toss.

And what sins did he view as "mere nothings"? Apparently any of them, for he wrote: "It is of no great significance that we commit serious sin." He sunk to his lowest when he wrote these infamous words: "Be a sinner, and sin boldly, but believe more boldly still. Sin shall not drag us away from Him, even should we commit fornication or murder thousands and thousands of times a day."

On more than one occasion our Redeemer, in restoring a person to health, admonished: *"Go, and sin no more."* In Ecclesiasticus 5:4-7, God instructs further: "Say not: I have sinned, and what harm has befallen me? for the most High is a patient rewarder. Be not without fear about sin forgiven, and add not sin upon sin: And say not: The mercy of the Lord is great, he will have mercy on the multitude of my sins. For mercy and wrath quickly come from him, and his wrath looketh upon sinners." St. Paul, therefore, told the Philippians: "with fear and trembling work out your salvation," and St. Peter warned the faithful: "if the just man scarcely shall be saved, where shall the ungodly and sinner appear?" So much for the "once saved, always saved" myth propagated by Luther.

The wickedness of Luther's ideas are most prominent in regard to marriage. He broke his vow of celibacy to "marry" an apostate nun after it was rumored that they committed fornication. He deviously blessed in private the bigamy of Philip of Hesse, for the "greater glory of God," while publicly he pretended to oppose it, and he also recommended that Henry VIII "solve" his problems in like manner. He even condoned polygamy; his follower, John of Leyden, married three women at once! Morton Hunt (a secular writer who attacks Catholics for Mariolatry), in his *The Natural History of Love,* shows one of Luther's foulest lies:

> Luther found in sex an ideal weapon in his war against Rome. He early sanctioned the marriage of priests and hotly argued that celibacy had been invented by the Devil as a source of sin; after a while he advanced the radical view that marriage was not a sacrament at all, but a civil matter, subject to city and state regulations rather than to canon law; and still later in life (1532) he held that Christ had probably committed adultery with Mary Magdalene and other women so as to fully partake of the nature of man. (pp. 221-222)

(Consider what it means when Conciliarists speak of Luther's devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary!)

The Meaning of Luther

Saint Martin Luther? An Associated Press article written a little over two years ago suggests just that. Titled "Luther was Saint, minister says," it quotes Lutheran minister Lee Roy Brandes as saying: "The time may very well come

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"Lying—An Abomination to the Lord" (Proverbs 12, 22)

Fr. Francis E. Fenton

The 1984 edition of the quadrennial hoax known as the presidential campaign has been performing on the national stage for some months now. The performance continues until the convention of each of the two major political parties occurs, at which time the candidate of each party approved by the powers that be will emerge as the convention victor. Following the conventions, the two winners will continue the farce right up to election day in November. On that big day one of the two performers will be voted into office as President of the United States. Whoever of the two contestants is elected, he is certain to be a superb actor and a master of the art of deception. While some few readers of these lines may cringe at such comments about presidential candidates, those comments are true, a fact of which any rightly informed person is very well aware. If it be correct that the first President of the United States never told a lie, it may be correct as well that the last several occupants of the White House have seldom told the truth—except, of course, when they couldn't avoid it or when it was politically expedient to do so.

Despite any appearances to the contrary, the present state of Church and nation is a wretched one indeed. While this condition is the result of a combination of various factors, surely one of the primary ones is the wholesale disregard for truth which contaminates the American scene in this our day—in politics, in education, in the communications media, in the legal profession, in business, etc. Falsehoods, half-truths, distortions, hypocrisies are, for multitudes, as natural as eating and drinking. To indicate to them that these things are offensive to God and sinful is more than likely to be futile because most such people have no sense of sin. Situation ethics is, after all, the "morality" of the times. Why be honest and trustworthy and authentic when it pays off to be otherwise? Indeed, so common is deception in one form or another among the generality of the American people that an individual who is, or strives to be, perfectly honest in all ways is apt to be considered a human misfit by many. But really, do not even the best of people find themselves in situations from time to time in which, for example, they have to lie? No one ever *has* to commit sin—and a deliberate lie is always sinful. (There are situations, it should be noted, in which one may permissibly conceal the truth but this may never be done by way of falsehood).

And then there is hypocrisy which is simply lying or deception in action rather than in word. A hypocrite is a person who conveys the impression of being what he is not in fact, who conveys the pretense of being virtuous in one way or another but who is in reality something else than he appears to be. He is often a smooth talker, a suave personality, a charmer—and, of course, very diplomatic. He is, in a word, an impostor, a sham, a "phony." And the number of such hypocrites is legion. A popular song of many years ago contained the words: "It's a Barnum and Bailey world, just as 'phony' as it can be." Indeed. While the best examples of hypocrisy are undoubtedly to be found in politicians who are professionals in the art of deception, yet many of those wearing clerical garb, in, say, the Conciliar Church are, I submit, likewise very adept in the art of hypocrisy. 'Tis said that there is a bit of the hypocrite in most of us. Perhaps. But with so many it seems to be a way of life—people whose lives are an ongoing lie; people whose stock in trade is falsehood, pretense, hypocrisy; people to whom such concepts as honesty, veracity, sincerity are all but totally alien.

Respect for truth is an essential requisite for peaceful and harmonious relations among men and among nations. Without it, dissensions, conflicts and wars are inevitable. What a vastly different world this would be if all men (and women) could be taken at their word, and their actions taken at face value. How much simpler and more pleasant life would be if man could implicitly trust his fellow man and if liars and hypocrites and wheeler-dealers were non-existent. Such a situation, unfortunately, will never be, this side of Heaven. As long as this world exists, there will always be men and women who will lie, cheat, deceive without the slightest remorse to further their purposes or if the truth hurts or embarrasses them. But if only there weren't so many of them! I submit that an individual today who is thoroughly truthful and honorable and genuine is an exceptional person indeed and that liars are a dime a dozen.

Yet not all people, thank God, are liars. There are solidly honorable individuals to be found nearly everywhere. And, since the Roman Catholic Church (traditional Catholicism) possesses divine truth in its entirety, surely its membership must number many such solidly honorable individuals, at least in proportionately larger numbers than are to be found elsewhere. Traditional Roman Catholics have in their God-given Faith the strongest motives for the apprecation of truth and for the living of that truth in all ways in their daily lives. Of all the divine attributes, truth is one of the most distinctive. God is the supreme personification of truth. Indeed, God is truth. May we traditional Catholics, then, be ever 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 attempt to justify any abuse of it on any score. Let us shun all forms of false-

hood and stand up for truth at all costs. In a word, may the complete honesty and integrity of our daily lives bear firm witness to the glorious Faith which is ours. "Even to the death fight for truth, and the Lord your God will battle for you." (Ecclesiasticus 4, 28) †

Pray the Rosary Daily

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when the Roman Catholic Church may make Martin Luther a saint. He did Christendom a great deal of good, though at the time he was considered a heretic." If he means the Conciliar Church, then the day *may* come, since John Paul II has used terms very close to the idea of the "heroic virtue" of the saints in praising Luther's "profound religiousness." But for the real Church to canonize a man who died without recanting his errors and who spoke of his hatred for God and His Church, well, one should look, rather, for hell to reopen as a winter resort.

Luther a saint? When I read the lives of the saints, I am uplifted. I want to read more about them and see how I can follow their examples. When I read about Luther, I am depressed. I want to read no more and wish to avoid walking in his footsteps. If anything, his life was one of profound *irreligiousness!*

Better, we should consider whether Luther was in league with the devil. Once, when still a monk, he fell to the floor when the Gospel of the man possessed was read, exclaiming: "It is not I, it is not I!" And was his posting of the *Ninety-Five Theses* a mere "Halloween prank" or had he struck a bargain with the Evil One? The current *Encyclopedia Brittanica* notes: "Halloween was thought to be the most favorable time for divination concerning marriage, luck, health and death. It was the time the devil was invoked for such purposes." Could Luther have sought and received aid at that time for his war against the Church? Father Herman B. Kramer, in his *Book of Destiny* interpretation of Apocalypse 9:1, states: "Luther did truly open the pit and let loose against the Church all the fury of hell. Therefore modern interpreters almost universally see in this fallen star Luther." (p. 223) Further, Luther, had ties with forerunners of Masonry and other occult forces against the Church; he opened the door for the modern antichristian secular state by teaching that Christian princes had no obligation to rule *as Christians;* and his all-power-to-the-state thinking has endeared him to the satanic twentieth century totalitarians, from the Nazis to the Communists (the Bolsheviks in East Germany celebrated his birth last year and work well with the Lutheran Church in that country). When Luther wrote: "where God built a church, there the Devil would also build a chapel," he assuredly had firsthand knowledge.

In one respect, anyway, we Catholics should take heart over the statements and activities of the Conciliar Church leaders concerning Luther, for possibly no event since Vatican II so clearly and demonstrably shows their rupture from Church teachings. Far from merely another sad chapter, leading to the gloom, this has all the makings of a *cause celebre,* capable of leading, we hope, many of our *potential* allies in the Conciliar Church into becoming *active* allies.

There is, then, reason for cautious optimism on our part. We must, however, do more than simply pray about it, though pray we must. We must impress upon those potential allies who the *real* Martin Luther was and what he stood for! And we must then urge them to ask themselves the question: What, in the name of all that is holy, what kind of men are those leaders of the Conciliar Church who would revere the memory of such a man as Martin Luther? †

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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.

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More on John Paul II

Towards the conclusion of his article on John Paul II in the previous issue of this newsletter, Mr. Weiskittel indicated that he had considerably more material on the subject and would readily do a follow-up article "if reader response warrants one." We are pleased to say that reader response does warrant one and so, if all goes well, that follow-up article will appear in the next issue of *The Athanasian* (June 1, 1984).

TCA Traditional Latin Mass Schedule

COLORADO
COLORADO SPRINGS
OUR LADY OF THE ROSARY
(303) 636-1575
Mass at 10:00 a.m. April 22, June 3
Mass every Friday at 9:00 a.m.

DURANGO
OUR LADY OF THE ROSARY
Centennial Savings and Loan
1101 E. Second Ave.
(303) 884-2526
Mass at 10:00 a.m. May 6, June 24

STRATTON
OUR LADY OF FATIMA CHAPEL
(303) 348-5454
Mass on April 15, May 6, June 3

LOUISIANA
OPELOUSAS (Lafayette area)
OUR LADY OF THE ROSARY CHAPEL
Route 1, Box 195
(318) 942-9053
Mass at 11:00 a.m. April 22, May 20, June 17

MINNESOTA
ROCHESTER
OUR LADY OF THE ROSARY CHAPEL
5820 Viola Road, NE
(507) 282-5163 or 289-8522
Mass at 10:00 a.m. April 29, May 13, June 10

MONTANA
GREAT FALLS
IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY CHAPEL
2020 Second Avenue North
(406) 452-8826
Mass at 11:00 a.m. April 15
Mass at 10:00 a.m. May 13, May 27, June 10, June 24

NEW YORK
BUFFALO
OUR LADY OF THE ROSARY CHAPEL
231 McKinley Parkway
(716) 537-9533

UTAH
SALT LAKE CITY
OUR LADY OF PERPETUAL HELP
Hilton Inn
154 West 600 South
(801) 278-7501
Mass at 11:00 a.m. May 27

The TCA has been in existence for nearly four and a half years now. During that period we have brought the true Mass and Sacraments to traditional Roman Catholics at chapels and Mass centers around the country. Originally there were 14 such locations but in the course of time that number, for one or another reason, was reduced to 10—and so it has remained for approximately one year until now when circumstances have necessitated a further reduction in our TCA circuit Mass schedule. Anyone familiar with that schedule as it has appeared in each issue of *The Athanasian* will notice in this issue that our TCA Mass locations are now eight in number, those in the Philadelphia (Essington) and Denver (Aurora) areas having been removed.

The circumstances, referred to above and requiring the dropping of these two locations, differ in each case. In regard to Philadelphia, the group of priests associated with Father Clarence Kelly has a chapel which is but a rather brief distance from the location of the motel where Father Victor Mroz, O.F.M. Conv. has been offering Mass for several years under TCA auspices. Because of the ever-present scarcity of traditional Roman Catholic priests, it was increasingly apparent that this situation ought not to continue. Hence, the termination of TCA-sponsored Masses in that area.

As for the termination of the TCA's association with the chapel in Aurora, Colorado, the reason is simply the advanced age (middle 80's) of Father Placid White, OSB and the inability of the TCA to provide a priest to replace him. Father Eugene Berry, who is one of the priests aligned with Father Clarence Kelly, is now in residence in Aurora and is the pastor of the chapel there. Father White has moved to Colorado Springs. I dare not say he has retired for he has no such intention!

This brief article points up once again the extreme shortage of traditional Roman Catholic priests, a sorrowful situation indeed. Of the eight locations remaining on the TCA Mass Schedule, Father Mroz offers the Masses in Buffalo, New York, and in Rochester, Minnesota; Monsignor Raymond Ruscitto serves the chapel in Great Falls, Montana, one weekend a month; and Father White, health permitting, will be offering Mass here in Colorado Springs and in Stratton, Colorado. I myself am on our TCA Mass circuit some 40 weekends a year (being here in Colorado Springs for Sunday Masses on, approximately, the remaining 12 weekends)—and, God willing, I will continue on that schedule (Montana, Utah, Louisiana and three places in Colorado) unless, for whatever reason, further changes become necessary. Maybe some soundly traditional priest will show up some day from some place to help. Who knows? "Hope springs eternal."

—Father Fenton—

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