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The Idolatry of Sports

— Fr. Victor Mroz, O.F.M. Conv.

Christianity, the religion of love, requires us to walk in the footsteps of Jesus crucified and to carry our own crosses, to deny ourselves in everything and live like "pilgrims and strangers on the earth" (Heb. 11:13). Even in our time of relaxation we are supposed to devote ourselves to all kinds of religious and charitable acts. Our only real reason for living is to know, love and serve God in order to be happy with Him throughout eternity. Unfortunately, many "Christians" have a completely different reason for living. Professional sports are one of these idols for which they live. Sports replace God in their lives.

Whatever it is that becomes **everything** in our life becomes an idol for us and very soon we will sacrifice our best to it: our heart, our time, our energy, even our thoughts. We transfer our interest and admiration from God to a particular kind of sport or to its heroes. In a way, we change the cult that should be reserved for God alone. We are guilty of a sort of idolatry.

We consider ourselves as good Christians if we go to Sunday Mass, stay away from serious evil practices and support the Church, but on the other hand we spend the greatest portion of our free time in organized and commercialized sports, such as hockey, football, baseball, horse racing, etc. All of that is innocent in itself, we say. But what God and the teaching of our Faith say is: These amusements are unworthy of true Christians.

Many forms of professional sport activities were known and practised in Greece and Rome in the first centuries of Christianity, and the Popes, the Saints and the Fathers of the Church strongly opposed them. Tertullian, for example, one of the Fathers of both the Greek and Latin Churches, writes as follows:

> "All the Holy Fathers blame the uselessness, prodigious dissipation, disturbance and mental commotion in games and theatres, scarcely fitting for a Christian whose heart is the sanctuary of peace. They blame these games and theatres for exciting passions, for debasement, for the desire to see and to be seen - the overly great occupation with the useless things . . . that makes man forget God's presence and the account we will have to render for our life before God's justice . . ."

Organized sports cause such damage to souls because big business involved in them uses every kind of communications media - radio, television, newspapers, magazines - to build up around these games a halo of innocence and prestige. Sports fans spend countless hours glued to television sets, neglecting their own duties and families; they scarcely have any time for their own souls; they fail to improve their own lives and those of their children. Such a passion for games kills true devotion, the Christian spirit, penance and sacrifice.

Consider how much money is lavished on these spectacles, how much time is wasted! Even the Lord's Day is violated. It is not too much to say that sports and games have become the "god of Sunday". The spiritual damage to Christian life is incalculable. Ask most Christians who attend sports events on Sundays to devote the same time to prayer and works of charity and they will tell you they have no time for such things. Yet a Christian has an obligation to devote Sunday to God, praying, visiting the sick, reading spiritual books and taking care of his own soul. Ask these slaves of sports to give alms for the poor and they will tell you that they do not have enough money, because the cost of living is high. But they manage to have enough money for tickets for hockey games, football games, etc.

As Christians, we should not place our hearts in any trivial thing. Now, sports fans really do put their hearts into it! Just accompany them to some sports

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DEATH

(Traditionally dedicated by the Church to the souls in purgatory, the month of November provides fitting occasion for a few salutary thoughts on the subject of death.)

There is hardly an adult who has not seen death in one form or another and no one who has, unless he be quite utterly devoid of feeling and emotion, could fail to be at least somewhat moved by it. Human nature being what it is, however, those people are most affected by death who thereby lose the companionship of one with whom they were closely joined in life through bonds of blood or friendship or marriage. Time alone and a strong, abiding faith in the good Providence of God can mitigate the wound which the loss of a loved one has inflicted and, while it is well that sorrow and grief be not unduly prolonged, it is regrettable indeed if the lesson death teaches fails to have any wholesome and lasting effect.

And the lesson death teaches all who will but learn and profit by it is the simple one expressed by Saint Paul: "It is appointed unto man once to die and after this the judgment". In God's own good time death will come to each and every one of us for we have not here a lasting home. Although the time and place and circumstances of death are known to none but God, yet there is nothing more certain in all life than that it will one day come to an end. At that supreme moment, life ends and eternity begins. At that supreme moment, all of our earthly ambitions, all of our joys and sorrows, all of our hopes and plans suddenly and forever cease to be. At that moment, whether we be young or old, rich or poor, strong or weak (for death is no respecter of persons) — at that supreme moment, life and everybody and everything that have any connection with it become a part of the irrevocable past. The judgment of a just and merciful God alone remains, to be followed by the eternal consequences of that judgment.

And the moral for any Catholic, and indeed for anyone professing a belief in a future life of reward or punishment, is, of course, the obvious one of the absolute necessity of always being fully prepared. Whether any one of us will be alive a year, a month, a week, a day, an hour from now, no one knows but the God who made us. But, just as surely as we are now alive, just as surely will there come a day which will be our last upon earth, a day when we will stand before the judgment seat of the Almighty to render an account of our stewardship. How tremendously important, then, how absolutely essential it is to be ever ready for that supreme moment! "Vanity of vanities, and all is vanity". A good life is the only sane and sound preparation for death. A living of every day as if that were to be our last upon earth is the only guarantee of a truly happy death. "Watch ye and pray for you know not the day nor the hour."

And so it behooves us Catholics to develop and to retain a truly Christ-like attitude towards death. This life is merely a period of probation, of trial, a time of preparation for the life of glory to come. Our few years on this earth are but a fleeting instant compared to the eternity that awaits us beyond the grave. We live to die, 'tis true, but death, if we are but ever prepared for it, is not the end nor hell our eternal destiny. Death is only the beginning, the beginning of endless happiness in the glorious Kingdom of God. In the words of the poet, "the grave is not our goal; dust to dust was not spoken of the soul". The grave is rather the gateway to eternity, the gateway to the Beatific Vision of the Infinite Godhead.

Let us, then, pray often and earnestly for that singular grace of final perseverance. And whenever we behold the sight of death, let us recall that prayer of the traditional Church offered by the priest at the grave of the deceased:

> "Grant, O Lord, we beseech Thee . . . that we may bear in mind that we are most certainly to follow . . . Give us the grace to make ready for that last hour by a devout and holy life, and protect us against a sudden and unprovided death. Teach us how to watch and pray that, when Thy sūmmons comes, we may go forth to meet the Bridegroom and enter with Him into life everlasting. Through Christ our Lord. Amen".

All but innumerable are the examples which can be cited to prove the truly abominable state of the USA at the present time. And practically all of those examples have one thing in common, namely, **immorality** - dishonor, treason, falsehood, sexual promiscuity and pornography, the desecration of marriage, murder (including abortion), and so on. Here, then, is the fundamental cause of the current chaotic condition of the USA, widespread immorality of every description and of the grossest kind. Our beloved nation is today saturated with vice. It is grovelling in licentiousness and debauchery. It is a cesspool of moral iniquity. Secular humanism, which is essentially a philosophy of atheism, is the prevailing godless "religion" of the day in which man reigns supreme. It is said that nineteen of the twenty-one civilizations in the course of history collapsed from moral decay from within. If that be true, then one wonders just how much more morally rotten America will become before that catastrophe befalls it. As Whittaker Chambers wrote, "history is cluttered with the wreckage of nations that became indifferent to God and died." And as God once wrote: "Unless the Lord build the house they labor in vain who build it." Unless the One True God be recognized and given the worship due Him, and unless His moral law be acknowledged and obeyed in the assemblies and deliberations of government and in the private and public lives of the inhabitants of this land, then surely the future of America is a very dim and bleak one indeed. How true the famous words of William Penn: "Those people who are not governed by God will be ruled by tyrants." Or, as General Douglas MacArthur once stated: "The problem is basically theological." It most certainly is.

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Are We Really Preserving the Catholic Faith?

— *R. Lance Lohr*

No minority culture has ever survived in a hostile environment by constantly exposing its essential unit - the family - to constant attack on all sides. But this is exactly what the vast majority of traditional Catholic parents persist in doing. Look on the street where you live. Count the "new order" Catholic families, count the Protestant families, count the families that apparently have no religion. Survey your child's school. How many children in his class come from broken homes, one-parent families, parents divorced and remarried? If the school is average, **half** of the children will fit these categories. If this does not seem to present a problem with younger traditional Catholic children, just wait until they are teenagers!

Most teenage sons and daughters of traditional Catholic parents regularly date non-Catholic peers. As a matter of fact, many children of traditional parents marry non-Catholics. Some may not see this as a problem. The experience of the Church shows this to be a disaster! Ask any struggling traditional Catholic who is forced to go to the Communion rail alone what it is like. Not only is the Faith of the children likely to be neglected; today the Faith of the Catholic party is more than ever in jeopardy.

It is possible to supervise strictly the television younger children watch (although it is doubtful that many parents do). It is fairly easy to limit a grade schooler's trips to the movie theater. But it is almost impossible to prevent a teenager from seeing what he or she wants, especially when they are pressured by their peers and other outside influences.

Bluntly put, traditional Catholic parents are, for the most part, fighting an uphill battle. Why? It should be obvious. They, in America today, are, at least in relation to the time spent with their children, a minor influence on them. The argument of quality versus quantity could be given to counter this gloomy picture. But any good teacher will support the position that repetition is the surest way to learn anything. Even with Chopin as a teacher it would take years to learn the piano. Even with the good sisters of the past it took eight years to finally get through Baltimore Catechism Number Three.

Well, the essentials of Catholic morals also take time to learn. The best means are, of course, the teaching and example of good parents, and truly Catholic schools. Very few of the latter exist and one cannot really expect too much from the former, considering the odds against them.

The majority of traditionalists hear Mass in motel meeting rooms, usually once or twice a month. Catechism lessons frequently take the form of a crash course before First Communion or Confirmation. Teenagers get little formal moral training, let alone apologetics.

It might be said that these handicaps are resolved with the acquisition of a chapel. To some degree this is true, but not to a very great degree. The surroundings are indeed an improvement over a motel, yet the chapel is still a far cry from a community. For most it is no different than the motel. They rush to their cars after Mass, never to be seen until the next circuit priest arrives. It might not be unusual within these quasi-parishes to have a member die or become severely ill without anyone knowing it. Sometimes there are pending divorces, or grave difficulties with teenage children, and no one is even aware so as to offer help, while the circuit priest is usually just too busy to be of any aid. It should be noted too that the acquisition of a chapel could and often does foster an unhealthy provincialism. (Such a provincialism or parochialism is not uncommon among traditional Catholics. - Editor)

Every Catholic - whether he has children or not; whether they are grown and have perhaps lost the Faith - has a responsibility to make the sacrifices necessary to preserve the Faith for the next generation. There is a tendency to forget this and salve our consciences with the notion that somehow a Mass now and again will solve all our problems. God only goes so far. He does expect us to reach a little. Yet some of us find it very comfortable to go to Mass once a month. It is easy on our finances and facilitates the demands made by the Third Commandment of God and the First Precept of the Church.

Can these handicaps be overcome? Yes, of course, but difficult problems require more effort to resolve. Catholicism is a creed that begets a culture. This should not be a surprise. Following Christ is a way of life. But long before Vatican Council II, Catholics began to try to separate the Mass and Sacraments from their daily living. The results were predictable. The once strong and vibrant Catholic culture was gradually integrated into that of Protestant America. More recently the Faith itself was

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The Monsignor

— *Teresa L. Benns*

When the dog days of summer make their first appearance each year, I think of the Monsignor. My experiences with him were limited. My family only visited his parish every other Sunday at best, and more frequently in summer than in winter. I last saw him some seventeen years ago, yet he is etched clearly in my mind as a **man**, a good shepherd - one of the last of his kind.

When he first came from his native County Cork, my mother claims his Irish brogue was so thick he was barely understandable. He was her pastor, you see, the priest who administered her First Communion, prepared her for Confirmation, and officiated at her wedding. He christened me, firstborn of my parents, and named for the patron saint of the church of my mother's youth.

Perhaps it is not surprising that the Monsignor has lingered so long in my mind for he was a "fire and brimstone" priest, the likes of whom are seldom found today, especially in the Novus Ordo Church. But he was very Catholic, very Irish, and very formidable-looking in the pulpit. He was a large man in height and girth, and he effectively used his size as well as his facial features (he bore a striking resemblance to John L. Lewis, especially in his bristling eyebrows) to intimidate the mischievious grade school boys and the less diligent of his parishioners. When elevated to the rank of Monsignor, he wore the purple proudly, and made certain his flock took note of the honor. His duties were not confined to saying Mass, the pulpit, and the confessional. He also served as part-time usher on aisle patrol. To the child that I then was, it seemed advisable not to move or breathe until he had passed, and to make certain my eyes were riveted to the altar. Whether in the aisles or in the pulpit, he commanded attention.

I remember little of the content of his sermons, only that they spoke of such things as eternal hellfire, true contrition, humility, genuine charity, salvation, Satan and the eternal verities. I often left Church convinced he could see straight to the core of my grimy little soul, and certain in my child's conceit that he had been so appalled by what he saw that it had prompted the sermon he had delivered. His sermons were not short in duration either. They were lengthy, even in the heat of midsummer, and he cared not one whit that there was only the flutter of ceiling fans to alleviate the acute discomfort of the congregation. He was duty-bound to save our souls, whether we liked it or not, and he was determined to make us aware of our shortcomings. He could slur his "r's" most eloquently to make a point, and I would not be surprised if he left the imprints of his fists in the pulpit. His brows would knit together, his face turn red with his efforts and the heat, and he would become a thundercloud ready to descend on us. Like trees in a storm gust, parishioners would visibly quiver, waiting for the inevitable ravages from the heavens. But often on these occasions, just when he had everyone's attention riveted to him, he would lower his voice, speak sweetly, and watch their shoulders slump in momentary relief. Then, having caught them unawares, he would stun them with the punch line and let them stew in their own juices for a moment or two while he "harrumphed" contentedly, or busily shuffled his notes.

The Monsignor would have been equally at home on the stage or in the political arena. He had a marvelous sense of humor; he knew his "craft", and he knew people. But best of all he knew his state in life and his mission in this world. He always kept a distance between himself and his congregation, and he was always the stern pastor. For this he was revered and respected by the people, however grudgingly at times. Even non-Catholics were known to harbor respect for this man who refused to waffle on controversial issues.

Shortly after the changes following Vatican Council II went into effect, the Monsignor retired. Knowing his fierce love for the Faith, I cannot help but feel he was saddened and sorely puzzled by these changes, and welcomed his retirement as an escape from their consequences. Had his health been other than it was during his last years, I feel certain he would have put up a fight. But perhaps he felt that all his days and years of faithful service as a priest would have to suffice.

The Monsignor was the man who cleansed my soul of original sin, who set me on my course as a Roman Catholic. The strength of his beliefs, of his personality, stood like an impenetrable shield around him. Surely he imparted a strong dose of faith and tenacity to those he touched in his lifetime. And by the force of his will, which seemingly survived even his death, perhaps he has helped to stay me and countless others on a truly Catholic course.

Our Lady of Victory Chapel
Aurora, Colorado

Recently expanded and extensively renovated, the Chapel of Our Lady of Victory in Aurora, Colorado (the Denver area) is today one of the more beautiful traditional Roman Catholic chapels in the country. Father Placid White, OSB is the resident pastor of a sizeable and growing congregation. Two Masses are offered here every Sunday and, in addition to frequent daily Mass, traditional devotions are scheduled throughout the year. Our Lady of Victory Chapel has two real nuns as well — a rarity indeed — in the persons of Sister Alice Scherr, OSB (pictured below) and Sister Rita Lawrence, CSJ. With the expectation of continued growth, the future, please God, looks promising for Our Lady of Victory Chapel.







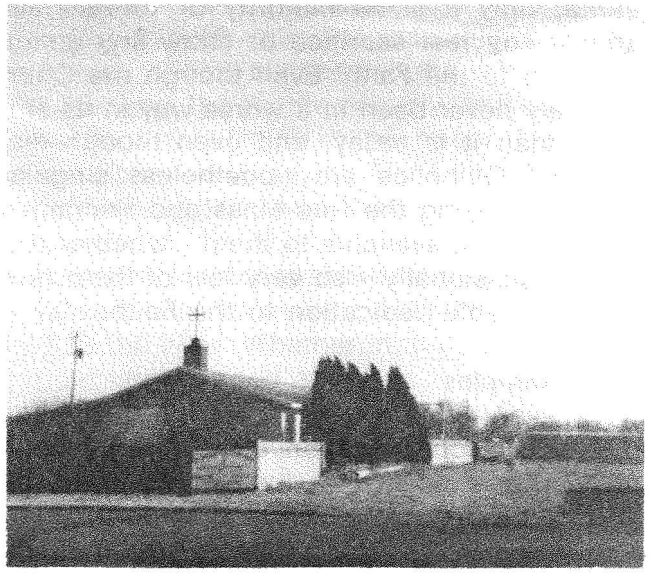


Our Lady of Fatima Chapel
Stratton, Colorado





Immaculate Heart of Mary Chapel
Pueblo, Colorado





On Dedication to the Faith

— Fr. Francis E. Fenton

When traditional Roman Catholics employ the expression, "the Faith", they mean the religion of the Roman Catholic Church, the entirety of that creed which distinguishes them from every other religious body in the world. It is the totality of the teachings of that Church founded by the Son of God for the salvation of all men and outside of which (properly understood) no one can be saved. The Faith is **the** Cause for which multitudes have been martyred all down through the Christian centuries, and for which untold numbers are today being starved and tortured and murdered in Communist nations throughout the world. Indeed, history is replete with accounts of heroic priests and religious and laymen for whom no sacrifice was too great, no risk too high, when it involved the profession or preservation of the Faith. Rather than deny the Faith or otherwise prove disloyal to it, millions of our fellow Catholics have willingly and readily made the supreme sacrifice of life itself, even rejoicing that they were deemed worthy to suffer death for the sake of Christ and His eternal truth.

And so how very precious is the gift of our divine Faith! It is the treasure par excellence. It is a gem of incomparable worth. It is the one thing in all the world whose value is literally priceless. Indeed, it can be said in all truth that nothing more glorious, more wondrous, more noble can be imagined this side of Heaven than the Roman Catholic Faith. And how incomparably fortunate are those who possess it!

Now, since I have no reason to doubt it, I take for granted that each and every traditional Roman Catholic would be in agreement with the above brief evaluation of the Faith. Theoretically, no such Catholic would question or take issue with it — theoretically, that is. In practice the matter is something else again. In my remarks that follow, (1) I am not referring to the members of the Conciliar or Novus Ordo Church but rather to those who are members of the traditional Roman Catholic Church; and (2) I do not have in mind any traditional group in particular but rather traditional Catholics and congregations around the country.

If our God-given Faith is the pearl of great price, the treasure of unparalleled worth that we claim we believe it to be, why is it that so few seem to have, or at least seem to show, any wholehearted appreciation of it? Where the True Mass is available within a reasonable distance, traditional Catholics attend Mass on Sundays and, if they can do so, on holydays, and many of them receive the Sacraments frequently - from which practice it can be assumed that they are making an honest effort to lead morally good personal lives. And, if these traditional Catholics are parents, it can be further assumed that they are exerting varying degrees of effort to bring up their children in the true Faith — a very formidable task in these days, I readily grant.

But these, and other similar examples that might be given, are for the most part duties incumbent upon every Roman Catholic. No significant appreciation of the Faith is indicated in the mere performance of one's Catholic duty. But what are traditional Roman Catholics in general doing above and beyond the call of duty? Judging from my dealings and association with numerous traditional Catholic groups across the country over the past seven years, my answer is: traditional Roman Catholics in general are doing precious little indeed above and beyond the call of duty. In just about every area where there is a chapel or Mass center, only a handful, only a small minority of traditionalists manifest any real sacrifice or show any genuine dedication to the Faith. Even though the Church has surely never been in a worse way in its entire history than it is today, and even though many traditional Catholics are nonetheless singularly blessed in having the true Mass and Sacraments and all the rest available to them - whether regularly or occasionally - so very few of them reveal any appreciable dedication to the Faith.

A few examples:

(1) In every area where there is a traditional chapel or congregation, about 5% - 10% of the people would be described as really dedicated to the traditionalist cause. Even in the matter of financial support, how many traditional Catholics actually make any significant sacrifice in this regard? Indeed, even though the value of the dollar, in purchasing power, is about 25% or 30% of what it was some twenty or twenty-five years ago, how many are giving any more to the support of the Church now than they were then?

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(2) The true Mass is the heart and center of our divine Faith. There are a few chapels around the country where Mass is offered on a daily basis, or at least frequently during the week. And how many attend, even occasionally? I'll wager that, in most of those locations, almost nobody does. Where, I ask, is any authentic love for the Mass in evidence in such a situation? Just where is the dedication to the Faith manifest among traditional Catholics when the very heart and core of that Faith, the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, is ignored except on days when its attendance is binding under pain of mortal sin? The desire to avoid grave sin is indeed a very valid reason for the performance or non-performance of a particular action but - if this be the extent of one's motivation in the practice of one's Catholic religion - he or she can hardly be described as a dedicated Catholic.

(3) Another example which, in my opinion, shows a lack of any substantial appreciation of the Faith by the generality of traditional Roman Catholics is the absence of any noticeable appreciation on their part for the priests and nuns who have taken an uncompromising stand on behalf of traditional Catholicism. Not that we **seek** gratitude or acclaim or compliments. Because the traditional position I have taken is the result of my strong convictions and is a matter of conscience, I, for one, would continue to maintain my traditionalist stand even if I did not get so much as a "thank you" from anyone for the rest of my life. But when you realize that about one priest per thousand in this country (and about one nun per five or six thousand) has had whatever it takes to stand up without compromise for the totality of our historic Catholic Faith - refusing to have any part of the Novus Ordo Church - it puzzles me that so few traditional Catholics appear to have any appreciation of this. Indeed, there are some traditional Catholics, although, thank God, admittedly very few, who would seem to want to give the traditional priest as tough a time as possible. How ironic! Instead of confronting the Novus Ordo clergy who are destroying the Faith, these "traditional" Catholics choose rather to do battle with the few **real** priests who are trying to do their best to preserve it! Well, taking for granted that Almighty God appreciates the dedicated efforts of the relatively few traditional priests and nuns in this country, it really makes little difference, I suppose, whether anyone else does or not. I have brought up this particular point merely as an example of the absence of any considerable esteem for the Faith on the part of most traditional Catholics. Presumably, if one honestly values and treasures the Faith, he will be particularly grateful to those who are so very instrumental in its preservation — traditional priests and nuns.

The traditional Roman Catholic movement, nationwide and world-wide, supposedly comprises those Catholics who, in various degrees, understand what has happened to the Church and who, having the courage of their convictions, are determined to remain loyal to their God-given Faith. Some years ago I would have thought that the ranks of traditional Catholics would have been far larger by now than they are and that the vast majority of them would be exceedingly dedicated people. Such has not proved to be the case. Quite the contrary, the vast majority of them, in my opinion, have no significant appreciation of the priceless treasure which is theirs and, consequently, lack any particularly strong dedication to it. Should the day ever come, and the thought is not a farfetched one, when religion will be openly and physically persecuted in this country, traditional Catholicism — that is, the one true Church — will be the principal target of that persecution. Make no mistake of that. But if, for the reason that we do not sufficiently love and truly value our Faith, we are failing to **live** that Faith wholeheartedly here and now, will we one day, do you think, be ready and willing to die for it?

As Roman Catholics we belong to the One, True and Eternal Church of Jesus Christ. As members of that Church we have the most precious treasure in the world, bar none, the Roman Catholic Faith. Do we **truly** believe this? Do we **really** prize this unique treasure which is ours? If we honestly do, then it **will** have and **must** have top priority in our daily lives. If our divine Faith has anything less than this, then our scale of values is sorely in need of an overhauling. If we Roman Catholics have our priorities straight, then all other interests, all other considerations, all other occupations will be secondary and subordinate to our Faith. Such is an idea of what is meant by an appreciation of it. And how many of us have that appreciation, which is to say, how many of us really love our Faith, the greatest thing on God's earth? If we do, then wholehearted dedication to it should be very clearly in evidence in our daily lives. But with most of us, where, pray tell, where is that dedication?

"Preserving the Catholic Faith?" cont. from page 4

attacked, done most effectively by some of the clergy and hierarchy. Many Catholics never gave a second thought to the changes within the Church. Why should they? They had long ago begun to live like many of their non-Catholic neighbors.

The answer - the arrangement that served the Church for centuries - is to revive the parish as it was traditionally known to be. It was a defined geographical area with a homogeneity of purpose that served to strengthen the Catholics there in Faith and spirit. Schools, the indispensible transmission belt of the Faith in modern society, thrived. Today even those locations with chapels rarely have schools. Why? Often because the children are scattered all over creation. And some schools are far from the ideal. One group in the Midwest, with a beautiful church, has resorted to hiring disgruntled public school teachers. If they lived nearby, good traditional Catholic housewives would be a better choice.

The physical proximity of fellow Catholics is the cure. It is no secret that parishes of decades ago with very high concentrations of Catholics - frequently of similar national background - had few mixed marriages, few divorced, raised children that cared for their parents in old age, etc. Parents had less trouble with their children because the outside influences were held to a minimum. Some of us still remember those times. Do not relegate these memories to the dustbin with "The Catholic Hour" and Bishop Sheen's "Life is Worth Living."

Some traditional Catholics have made an heroic effort to establish Catholic communities, some even without resident priests. And a few are successful in varying degrees. Their sacrifices are not in vain. It is their thinking that without such attempts there may be no next generation of Catholics.

Several of these attempts have failed not because of a lack of spirit but because of not making practical decisions. Of necessity Catholic men must work to support their families. This makes urban centers the likely place to find the diversity of jobs needed. Because of lack of finances the areas chosen should have housing affordable to the lowest income families. Another consideration would be locating near an already existing chapel.

Communities thus established would have families that did not have constantly to battle their environment. On the one hand you could not watch "Dallas" and the soap operas and not feel peculiar. On the other hand a church would be nearby for daily Mass (remember Daily Mass?), devotions to our Blessed Mother, Benediction, sodalities, Holy Name Societies, St. Vincent de Paul Societies, etc. etc. - in other words, the very opportunities for piety and charity that aren't available now.

Remember that simply acquiring a chapel will not help much. The prospects for resident priests at new chapels remain minimal. And count the number of young people at your next Mass. Will they all be around ten or twenty years from now? Or will your chapel be sold for the same reasons as the Protestants, from whom you likely bought it, sold it to you?

Your children do not know what it is like to be able to go to confession on a Saturday afternoon, nor do they see real priests and sisters often enough to develop a religious vocation. They are not in the habit of going to Mass on holydays or having their catechism heard at school the first thing in the morning. Think, pray and then do something about it.

(The preceding article clearly argues **against**, at least as a general rule, the acquisition of local chapels by traditional Roman Catholics. It provides food for thought, insights on the subject of chapels perhaps not previously considered by some. While the pros and cons should certainly be weighed by traditional groups before they proceed to acquire them, a good case could also undoubtedly be made **for** the acquisition of chapels in certain local areas. - Editor)

Communism is an international, criminal, militant, atheistic conspiracy run by a gang of power-hungry degenerates who aim to control and enslave the world, and to destroy the Roman Catholic Church and every last vestige of religion in the process. Communism is inhuman; it's amoral; it's satanic! It is "intrinsically evil," the very antithesis of Christ and Christianity!

"Idolatry of Sports" cont. from page 1

event and watch how they behave during the game: their interest in the action sometimes reaches a ridiculous frenzy. And their adulation of sports stars or champions is sometimes almost unreal. Backed up by "reams" of publicity, these idols are delivered to the crowd's "devotion" and cult. Would you recognize those guilty of such massive pagan idolatry as followers of Christ? Assuredly, such people would not put forth one small part of this enthusiasm for God and His Church. A similar degree of fervor for religious activities they would call "fanaticism". But nothing is too much for sports and their stars. Stadiums are full but churches are empty. For Jesus Christ the crowds remain cold, indifferent. Their enthusiasm, passion and love go to their own "gods".

But Jesus Christ said: "For what does it profit a man if he gain the whole world, and suffer the loss of his own soul?" (Mat. 16:26). We cannot win Heaven with games. They have little value for life eternal.

There is nothing wrong with certain sports activities for children, and even for adults who need some physical exercise for the purpose of health - but prudence and moderation are indispensible even here. Parents and teachers are responsible to teach the young not to waste their time in all sorts of foolish activities which have nothing to do with the promotion of their health. Young Christians can find plenty of exercise in good, charitable works, such as in taking care of the elderly and infirm, and in helping the poor. So many sick people could have the joy of remaining at home instead of living in nursing homes, if only they received a helping hand from those who are well.

The Church's position concerning public entertainment was clear in past ages. Not any more. The Council of Carthage (418) excommunicated "those who deserted the assembly of Christians to attend public games on days of solemnities". No one is excommunicated today. On the contrary, those who want to spend Sunday in games and stadiums are favored: their Sunday duty can be fulfilled on Saturday evening so that "Christians" can have fun on Sunday without being disturbed. In fact, all this business with present Saturday Mass is made to destroy the religious character of the Lord's Day. Like many other things the "post-Vatican Church" is playing the role of a deceiver, accommodating itself to the world. As little as possible for God and everything for the World and for Man. Where is the Conciliar Church's responsibility for the salvation of the soul? The guidance system aboard the Bark of Peter is gone. Modern theologians speak of the "theology of Sports", giving ample recognition to the achievements of Man in the field of sport. The deification of Man has found many words of encouragement during some audiences of professional sport organizations with the highest Church authorities in recent years. How different in their teaching and opinions were the Fathers of the Church and all the Popes of the past! Saint Pius V forbade bishops, "under pain of excommunication", to permit bullfights in their dioceses. He described them as "bloody and shameful spectacles worthy of demons and not of men" (De Salute Gregis, Nov. 1, 1567). What would he have said of boxing matches where human beings are mutilated? There was a time when Church burial was refused to anyone who died in violent sport encounters. Not any more. Nowadays they are considered as being sort of saints and heroes, martyrs for the honor and glory of sports.

Sports addiction is one more form of so many addictions in our time. It has the same motive and effect: evasion from the solid and hard facts of life. Instead of rolling up their sleeves to accomplish something worthwhile, instead of working towards building a truly successful life, people evade their own responsibilities and project themselves into sport fiction. They imagine they are living out whatever comes onto the screen from the sports world. This is so much easier than doing something real to improve one's condition in life. In order to escape their dull lives and daily problems, people fill their heads with false successes in sports activities. They are ready to stand in line for hours to get a better spot in order to see and hear their idol in auditoriums and ampitheatres.

Not so long ago I read in a newspaper about a girl who suffered a nervous breakdown because one of her sports heroes happened to lose some game or other. Can we imagine a true Christian falling into despair over such meaningless things? And such things do happen among our sports addicts. And they happen because our generation has lost the value of the eternal truths of the Gospels. Life becomes meaningless without God. But our hearts cannot remain empty because they are created by God for Himself. No wonder that people who do not truly adore and love God must find a substitute object for their adoration and love. So many find it in the "god of sports".

pray the rosary daily!

COLORADO

AURORA (Denver area)
OUR LADY OF VICTORY CHAPEL
2566 Sable Boulevard
(303) 321-3683 or 364-8040
Masses at 9 & 11 a.m. (every Sunday)
Weekday Masses at 8:00 a.m.

DURANGO
OUR LADY OF THE ROSARY
Durango Savings and Loan
1101 E. Second Ave.
(303) 884-2878
Mass at 10:00 a.m.
Oct. 19, Nov. 16

PUEBLO
IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY CHAPEL
1406 East 21st Street
(303) 544-0336
Mass at 11:00 a.m.
Nov. 9

STRATTON
OUR LADY OF FATIMA CHAPEL
(303) 348-5454
Call for time:
Oct. 26, Nov. 23

FLORIDA

PORT RICHEY (Tampa area)
ST. JOSEPH'S
Gulf Highland Club House
900 Gulf Highland Drive
(813) 868-0166
Mass at 12:30 p.m. on 3rd and 5th
Sundays of month

LOUISIANA

OPELOUSAS (Lafayette area)
OUR LADY OF THE ROSARY CHAPEL
Route 1, Box 195
(318) 942-9053
Mass at 10:30 a.m. on 2nd and 4th
Sundays of month

MINNESOTA

ROCHESTER
OUR LADY OF THE ROSARY CHAPEL
5820 Viola Road, NE
(507) 282-5163 or 289-8522
Mass at 10:00 a.m.: Oct. 26
Mass at 11:00 a.m.: Nov. 16, Nov. 30

MONTANA

GREAT FALLS
IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY CHAPEL
2020 Second Avenue North
(406) 452-8826
Mass at 10:00 a.m.: Oct. 26
Mass at 11:00 a.m.: Nov. 9, Nov. 30

PENNSYLVANIA

ESSINGTON (Philadelphia area)
OUR LADY OF THE ROSARY
Holiday Inn
45 Industrial Highway (one mile from airport)
(215) 328-1348
Mass at 10:00 a.m.
Oct. 19, Nov. 2, Nov. 9

UTAH

SALT LAKE CITY
OUR LADY OF PERPETUAL HELP
Hilton Inn
154 West 600 South
(801) 278-7501
Mass at 11:00 a.m.
Nov. 2

VIRGINIA

RICHMOND
OUR LADY OF FATIMA CHAPEL
5217 Futura Avenue
(804) 737-8211 or 262-4354
Mass at 11:00 a.m.
Nov. 16, Nov. 30