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## ASSISI: THE CONCILIAR CHURCH'S PAGAN LOVE SONG

*John Kenneth Weiskittel*

The "Spiritual Summit" of world religions at Assisi last October was convened by "Pope" John Paul II ostensibly to pray for peace around the planet. Belligerents were invited to cool off global hot spots by honoring the summit's call for cease-fires, a request met with mixed response.

Over 150 leaders of 12 faiths, representing more than three billion of the earth's people, attended the gathering in the town beloved by Catholics as the birthplace of Saint Francis. Moslems—for whose sultan Francis once offered to walk into a fire to prove that Christ's Church was the one true faith—were there, as were Hindus, Bahis, Jainists, Sikhs, Shintoists, Zoroastrians, animists, Buddhists, Jews, American Indians—and the usual World Council of Churches crowd.

In attendance were such "ecumenical" celebrities as the Dali Lama; Anglican Archbishop of Canterbury Robert Runcie; "anti-apartheid" leader of the South African Reform Church, Allan Boesak; Metropolitan Filaret of the USSR; and Mother Teresa who, reported *Time* (November 10, 1986), saw the summit as a "most beautiful gift from God." The *Time* article went on to note:

*Assisi went symbolically well beyond the ceremonial friendship accorded other faiths by any previous Pontiff. The assemblage included not only monotheists but believers in creeds once labeled "heathen" and "pagan" by a church that for centuries preached unambiguously that there was no salvation outside its walls...*

And what were the fruits of this "gift"? Among the prayers heard at the meetings were those of an African witch doctor; a Zoroastrian fireworshiper assisted by "a young Italian woman volunteer (who) periodically fed modern charcoal igniter pellets to the sacred iron brazier that was the focus of his prayers"; and various pagans praying at once-Catholic churches, such as John Pretty-On-Top, a Crow medicine man from Montana, who used his ritual fan of feathers to "bless" those attending his ceremony at the little church of San Gregorio. *(Miami Herald,* November 28, 1986)

As if to deflect charges of religious syncretism, John Paul II stated, "The fact that we have come here does not imply any intention of seeking a religious consensus among ourselves or of negotiating our faith convictions," and "Certainly we cannot pray together, namely, to make a common prayer, but we can be present while others pray." *(Time)* Yet, despite these protestations, many saw the move to be "a heretical stop towards syncretism, the amalgamation of various conflicting religions...U.S. Fundamentalist gadfly Carl McIntire branded the meeting the 'greatest single abomination in church history,' and Catholic extremists in France passed out leaflets consigning John Paul II to hell." (Ibid.) And Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre categorically condemned it as "the supreme imposture, the culminating insult to Our Lord."

The "papal" defense of Assisi notwithstanding, it is easy to see why such strong words were being used to censure it: implicit in such an affair is an indifferentism holding that God will honor prayers from *even those who profess other gods* and that, therefore, it is proper and even efficacious for different faiths to come together in pursuit of a common objective. A UPI/Reuters photo taken at the interdenominational conclave shows John Paul II seated with Dr. Runcie, the Dali Lama and Greek Orthodox Patriarch Methodios beneath a banner proclaiming "Peace" in various languages. The caption tells us that they "pray for peace." Dr. Runcie and His Eminence Methodios plainly have prayer books in their hands, while it appears that John Paul II, closed-eyed and frowning, has his copy's place marked with his finger. All four men sit at the same lev l, suggesting that none of their faiths has preeminence over the others. But the most amazing thing about the picture is that John Paul II, who *claims* to be the Vicar of God Incarnate, is seated next to the Dali Lama, who is held by Tibetan Buddhists to be...God Incarnate. As for the claim by the "pontiff" that "we cannot pray together," an article in the Conciliar "Catholic" weekly, *The Wanderer,* one of his stauchest American backers, reveals that, after each group had separate prayer meetings, the delegates all returned "to the Basilica of Saint Francis for a final outdoor peace service." (Note the singular "service" used. Whether the participants actually joined in a collective prayer or merely took turns isn't important; the fact that they were involved in a common service amounts to *communicatio in sacris.* Under Canon Law it is a mortal sin for Catholics to take part in such activities. While it is true that John Paul II and other Conciliar "Catholics" there are no longer Roman Catholics, it is worth remembering that they *are,* by and large, lapsed Catholics and *will* one day be answerable to God as such.)

## Related Interfaith Activities

The Assisi Summit was preceded by a less publicized but remarkably similar event—the Million Minutes of Peace International Appeal. This self-proclaimed "global initiative" expressed its purpose as "bringing together people of diverse ethnic, political and religious backgrounds in a program to espouse and support peace . . . through positive thoughts, meditation or prayer." The program was held in 42 nations around the world from September 16 to October 16, 1986, culminating with a celebration at New York City's (Episcopal) Cathedral of Saint John the Divine on October 22 and with a presentation to the Secretary-General of the United Nations two days later.

Sponsors of the Million Minutes included groups such as the New Age Planetary Citizens, the Human Unity Institute, the Child Development Foundation and the (Hindu) Brahma Kumaris World Spiritual Organization. Conciliar support included Mother Teresa, Archbishop Giovanni Cheli (the New Vatican's Permanent Observer to the U.N.) and the Christophers. Another group promoting it was the openly syncretic Lucis Trust. (For more on this spiritually subversive organization and its Conciliar ties, see "The New Age Movement and the Conciliar Church" in the September 1, 1986 issue of *The Athanasian.*)

Radio Marti, the U.S.-sponsored station broadcasting to Cuba, was involved in another interfaith enterprise. It would air on December 4, 1986, a program of prayer for the Feast of Saint Barbara. The *Miami Herald* (November 21, 1986) reported that Conciliar priest Francisco Santana and Santeria (Cuban voodoo) practitioner Ernesto Pichardo, who identifies our saint with the thunder god Chango, will explain their beliefs, offer a joint prayer and urge unity. "The message," says Father Santana, "is that the church is open, that we want to respect other beliefs, that we have an open door."

Another development, the World Healing Meditation, took place December 31, 1986. The November-December 1986 issue of *The Forum,* a publication of Eagle Education Fund of Colorado, carried an article that tells how "organizers (of the event) continue to ask the world to pray or meditate to their 'Source' for world peace," and states that it is also being described as World Unity Day and World Instant of Cooperation (WIC).

A TV special, tentatively named "One Moment in Time," was to be shown on network television (if syndicators have their way) and be shown worldwide via satellite. The Soviet Union has contributed one million dollars, announced the Chicago WIC. In the U.S., arenas and stadiums such as Dodger Stadium in Los Angeles and the Astrodome in Houston were secured by WIC organizers for the New Year's Eve event. John Randolph Price, author of *The Planetary Commission,* a book that blueprints the event, writes that it marks "the true beginning of the New Age," but Pat and Marnie Weeks, WIC international networking coordinators and officers of the Human Unity Institute, hope that no one finds out. *The Forum* quotes the Weeks as saying that it would be good if "grandmothers, mothers, fathers and children (are) involved, just like Hands Across America, *without them knowing this is a New Age event.*" (emphasis added)

The materials we have seen regarding WIC give no clue as to whether Conciliar groups or individuals intend to take part. However, given the well-documented propensity we've seen from those quarters to embrace such causes and in view of their connections with some WIC sponsors, we believe we can safely expect involvement.

## The One World Church Scheme

Many Christians, Catholic and Protestant alike, have viewed these East-West encounters with more than a little concern—and with good reason. Despite denials, such as the one by John Paul II cited above, the fact is that there is clearly an ever growing motion by Conciliarists and "mainstream" Protestants towards collaboration and, to use a New Age code word, *interdependence* with pagan religions and cult groups, the ultimate goal of which would seem to be the establishment of a world government and a world religion in which Christian dogmas are submerged, distorted and, finally, dissolved.

The expressions most often used to describe this entity are Super Church, Global Religion and One World Church. Proponents of it generally are too cautious to come right out and call for it in such terms. Rather, they speak of "ecumenism, not only in the Christian, but in the larger world-religion dimension" (Father Theodore Hesburgh), "a fruitful differentiated unity that sees beyond contesting mythic styles" (Frederick Ferre), and the "ultimate union" that will cut "across all denominations" to "transform our values" (Father Pierre Teilhard de Chardin).

In the past century this concept has been promoted by the Bahis, the Lucis (formerly Lucifer) Trust, the Rosicrucians and the Theosophical Society, but the modern impetus comes directly from the Freemasons. Pope Leo XIII may have been alluding to this in *Humanum Genus* when he wrote that Masonry teaches that "in the various forms of religion there is no reason why one should have precedence and that they are all to occupy the same place."

This Masonic aim has been noted by a number of scholars earlier this century. The Cardinal of Chile, Jose Marie Caro y Rodriguez, in *The Mystery of Freemasonry Unveiled,* writes: "...Masonry says that it proposes to establish in the world a new universal religion. It has indeed everything to be desired in the way of rites and ceremonies. It is then also a religion." Father E. Cahill, S.J., confirms this with the quote of a Masonic scholar:

*Brother A.G. Mackey writes—and all Masonic authors corroborate his words—"Masonry is undoubtedly a religious*

*institution . . . its religion being of the universal kind in which all men agree." Hence, Masonry as a religion is the very antithesis of dogmatic Christianity, which is Catholicism. It is at best some kind of common denominator which belongs equally to all religions (except the true one) and none—a religion in which Protestants, pagans, idolators, Mohammedans, Hindus, Parsees, Theosophists, Mormons, etc., may all meet on common religious grounds. Catholics, however, are excluded, for the true religion cannot vary or contradict itself. Hence, both Catholic and Masonic authorities are agreed that the two systems are mutually exclusive.* ***(Freemasonry and the AntiChristian Movement,*** *Gill, 1959, 5th printing)*

Cardinal Caro and Father Cahill both cite the works of M. Eckert, a German Protestant, who wrote: "From the explanation of the ritual as well as from the history and confession of the Order, one rightly concludes that Freemasonry is a conspiracy against the altar, the government and property rights, with the objective of establishing over all the face of the earth a social and theocratic reign whose religio-political government would have its See in Jerusalem! . . . The indispensable condition to this realization is the destruction of three obstacles which are opposed to it, namely, the Church, the government and property." (For anyone who studies the New Age in any detail, the similarities of objective here are too pronounced to attribute to chance.)

The Masonic push for a single planetary faith is also exposed in our own day. In *From Rome Urgently,* traditional Catholic researcher Mary Martinez writes:

*The late Yves Dupont, whose life was devoted to the study of Masonic influence within the church, pointed to the fact that Freemasonry has for some time now renounced direct confrontation and replaced it with a policy of infiltration. He quotes the organ of the French Grand Orient: "Basically, Freemasonry proposes a Super-Church, the Church that will unite all Churches." Yves Marsaudon, member of the Masonic Supreme Council of France, however, warns that Christian unity is only one part of the goal, which is "total ecumenism." He dedicates his work on the subject, which was published in Paris in the 1960's, "to the memory of Angelo Roncalli (John XXIII—JKW) who deigned to give us his benediction, his understanding and his protection" and "to his august continuer, Pope Paul VI."*

From the foregoing, and we scarcely need remind our readers that all of this applies equally to American masonic lodges as well, it becomes obvious that this "global faith" is a counterfeit Church and that we may rightly speak, then, of a One World *Masonic* Church.

## Catholic Doctrine vs. Conciliar Syncretism

The wholesale rejection of Roman Catholic dogma manifested at Assisi is but another example of the pernicious effect of the Second Vatican Council. That a document such as *Nostra Aetate* (the *Declaration on the Relationship of the Church to Non-Christian Religions)* was ever permitted to be promulgated in the name of the Church is a strong indication of just how deep the penetration of the Enemy was, even at that time, and how ineffective the small but loyal group of cardinals was at stemming the modernist tide.

*Nostra Aetate,* like many Vatican II decrees, carefully avoids any overt errors; instead, it selects those parts of Church doctrine that bolster its position and deftly sidesteps the rest. Thus we read therein: "The Catholic Church rejects nothing which is true and holy in these religions." Although this is, of course, accurate, it is, in the context, a distortion. Why? Because it is made in a way that is totally unqualified. Nothing follows to tell us that even the truths found in paganism are tainted by their being intertwined with a far greater proportion of errors. Satan, Christ teaches us, has no truth in him and, when he lies, *"he speaketh of his own"* (John 1:44), but he will use, as his modus operandi, *a false rendering of truth* to deceive, as he did by quoting Scripture in the temptation of Our Lord. (Matthew 4:6) Fathers Rumble and Carty note in their *Radio Replies* (Vol. 3, Tan ed., 1979) that "...not every particle of truth is 'the' truth. Non-Christian religions are wrong because, side by side with such natural truth as they have, they contain many errors: and because they say they are from God, whereas they are not."

Even more glaring, however, and bordering on the heretical, is the part of the quote that refers to that which is "holy" in these faiths. In Donald Attwater's *Catholic Dictionary* (Macmillan, 1942) we read: "Holiness or Sanctity denotes union with God." Now, we know of faith that "...*all the Gods of the Gentiles are devils: but the Lord made the heavens."* (Psalms 95:5) and "...*the things which the heathens sacrifice they sacrifice to devils, and not to God. And I would not that you should be made partakers with devils."* (I Cor. 10:20) No verses in Scripture are any plainer in sense than these; nor any more resistant to misinterpretation. And Saint Francis Xavier, perhaps the greatest missionary since Saint Paul, knew well the pagan horrors and depravities from his tireless journeys through Asia, and he personally supervised the destruction of idols. "All the invocations of the pagans are hateful to God because all their Gods are devils, "wrote our saint in a letter, and of the Hindu priests called Brahmans, whom he calls the "mainstays of heathenism," he remarks that they "do not know what it is to tell the truth but plot forever how to lie subtly and deceive their poor ignorant followers."

In contrast, Father Robert A. Graham, S.J., (in his notes on *Nostra Aetate; The Documents of Vatican II,* Abbott ed., Guild, 1966) alleges that Saint Francis and other missionaries—and, by implication, Sacred Scripture—are wrong to hold that "non-Christian religions were simply the work of Satan." He has the audacity to invoke the memory of Saint Justin Martyr, who died because of his noble opposition to

paganism, as a defender of the "traditional" view of heathen religions having God-given truth. "This Declaration," declares Father Graham, "marks an authoritative change in approach." What it does, in fact, is disregard Church teaching that any holiness in a pagan comes not because of his religion, but *in spite of it.*

One theologian who contributed substantially to this "change in approach" was the Jesuit, Teilhard. In his essay, "Building the Earth," this descendant (spiritual as well as natural) of the Mason Voltaire, outlines "a 'conspiracy' of individuals who associate themselves to raise to a new stage the edifice of life." Characteristic of this "new age" (Teilhard's term), will be the synthesis of the "best elements" of fascism, communism and democracy by "free-thinkers as well as believers." This new politico-religious order will produce "a synthetic act of adoration" in which all those, "(w)hether Christians or not, who are animated by this conviction (will) form a homogeneous category." (How far this is removed from the *One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church!)*

Carrying these themes into the post-Conciliar era is outgoing Notre Dame University president, Father Theodore Hesburgh, C.S.C., who tells us in his book, *The Humane Imperative* (Yale, 1974), that it is from Teilhard we learn: "(m)any paths lead to the ultimate . . ." (What happened to Christ being the only way to God? *See* John 14:6.) He proposes a "Christian humanism" that will rectify the "error" of seeing non-Christians as but "heathens or pagans," and concentrate on "the strong bridges of essentially religious belief that link us together." Elaborating on this premise, which sounds not unlike the Masonic "the religion in which all men agree," he explains how this would lead to global unity:

*...One way to begin this is to take these...beliefs and others that suggest themselves, and see what enlightenment we receive in discussing them with theologians of the other great world religions. This is starting to happen at our Christian Ecumenical Institute in Tantur (Israel—JKW). The important point is that mankind believing has been separated by its religious beliefs, and the very opposite should be true in the next millenium.*

Father Hesburgh is a committee chairman of the New Age Planetary Citizens and advocates that all people should seek dual citizenship—of their respective nations and of *the world* (at the present, the latter would only, presumably, be symbolic in nature).

Any similarities of belief between *revealed* religion, Catholicism, and any *natural* religion, which the pagans have, can be attributed to the natural religious instincts within us all and to the primordial unity of the human race, whereby the memories of certain truths were retained, only to be watered down and then twisted beyond recognition. Although both the prophet Elias and a group of 450 of Baal's false prophets each constructed altars on Mount Carmel and sacrificed upon them young bulls that they called upon their respective deities to consume by fire, the similarities end there. Baal could not heed his votary's prayers while the God of Elias sent flames from heaven to honor his holocaust. Then the people of Israel, who had been assembled by Elias to restore them to their God, slew all the impostors at the prophet's command. (III Kings 18:20-40) Besides the great faith of Elias, this tale of Old Testament justice makes it clear how meaningless surface resemblances are when comparing true and false religions.

The great pontiff, Leo XIII, in his 1885 encyclical "On the Christian Constitution of States" *(Immortale Dei),* tells us:

*Men who really believe in the existence of God must, in order to be consistent with themselves and to avoid absurd conclusions, understand that differing modes of Divine Worship, involving dissimilarity and conflict even on the most important points, cannot be all equally profitable, equally good, and equally acceptable to God.*

His Holiness was addressing Catholic indifferentism in the face of Protestantism, but the passage is perhaps even more apt when we consider the Conciliar syncretism that is the basis for the Assisi scandal.

### Religious Revolution

Two months before the "Spiritual Summit" took place at Assisi, Archbishop Lefebvre sent a letter to eight cardinals in which he begged them to act "to save the honor of the Church (from) being humiliated." The First Commandment and the first article of the Credo "are being outraged in public by the occupant of the See of Peter," wrote His Grace. "Is John Paul II going to continue wrecking the Catholic Faith in public," he asked them, "especially at Assisi, where a procession of religions is due...to practice their worship in favor of peace as it is understood at the United Nations?"

The Assisi outrage is a major mobilization of that religious revolution called the New Age Movement. "Revolution is inspired by Satan himself. Its object is to destroy from top to bottom the edifice of Christianity, and to reconstruct on its ruins the social order of Paganism." (Pope Pius IX) And the chief brigand of this crew calls himself *John Paul II.* †

**Pray the Rosary Daily**

# Saint Francis Xavier: Apostle of the Indies

*Jill Wiesner*

We are surrounded by a barrage of "ecumenism" propaganda, touting the "good points" of various false religions. No Catholic should be misled, however, for we have the example of a saint who gave his life freeing souls from those false religions.

Born on Good Friday, 1506, in the Spanish kingdom of Navarre, Francis Xavier entered the University of Paris at age eighteen. Brilliant in his studies and outstanding in athletics, he was well on his way toward his goal of achieving "the credit of a great name upon earth" when he met a fellow student, Ignatius of Loyola, who persisted in asking the question, "What will it profit a man to gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" Under the influence of Ignatius, Francis' soul was filled with an all-consuming love for God and a desire to please Him in all things. Entering the Society of Jesus, he was ordained to the priesthood on Saint John the Baptist Day in 1537 and, four years later, was on his way to the Portuguese territories in the East Indies as Papal Nuncio.

Arriving at Goa, India, on May 15, 1542, Francis took up lodging in the hospital, according to Jesuit practice. He slept on the floor by the bed of any man who was seriously ill "so as to be able to help him at night." After his morning duties at the hospital he visited the prisons, "the nastiest and foulest places in the world," bringing to them alms from the wealthy and, more important, the consolations of the Faith. He also went outside the city to say Mass for the lepers and was able to write Ignatius: "Every one in the lazar-house has now made his confession to me and received Holy Communion."

From Goa, Francis went to the coast of Comorin and the pearl fisheries where, though a number of the Paravas had been baptized eight years before, they had been left without a priest or any instruction in the Faith. Francis, who disliked heat and had been miserable under the mild sun of Lisbon, now slept on the burning sands of Malabar coast, or in native huts teeming with rats, bats and snakes. After two or three hours of sleep, he spent the rest of each night in prayer or with those who needed him.

Language proved to be a barrier but Francis found several natives who spoke a little Portuguese and to them he carefully repeated the Sign of the Cross, the Creed, the Commandments, the Our Father, the Hail Mary, the Salve Regina and the Confiteor. They, in turn, repeated the prayers in Tamil, which Francis memorized and used to instruct the people. The children were his most devoted followers, learning eagerly the lessons he taught them.

The Faith spread rapidly among the Paravas in spite of the opposition of the pagans, who used their false religions to keep the people under their control. The most influential religion in India was that of the pantheistic Hindus who attributed godlike qualities to beasts. Birds, snakes and insects were honored by the Hindus and, in some areas, cows were worshiped.

The Hindu caste system insured the continuity of the ruling classes for the rajahs (nobility) inherited their status. Those born into the middle or low castes continued in the same state as that of their ancestors. The out-castes ("untouchables") were not allowed to touch anyone of a higher caste, even with their shadow. Hindus believed that the souls of people corresponded with the caste, giving the lower castes no hope of improving their lot in this life or the next.

The Brahmans (priestly caste) resented the success of Francis Xavier among the people and made several attempts on his life. But he eluded their traps and began to win conversions even among the rajahs.

Once the mission in India was well-established Francis left his Jesuit successor in charge, admonishing him to "learn to bear with and succour their frailties very patiently, holding to the hope that, if they are not good now, they will be someday." From India, Francis journeyed to Ceylon and Malaya where his gentle and pleasant manner won back to the Faith many of the Portuguese colonists in addition to the heathens.

In the Moluccas, on the Island of Amboina, he tramped through the sweltering jungle, singing hymns in Malay to attract timid natives from their huts. Against the advice of Portuguese settlers he ventured alone among the Moro headhunters. After three months he returned, saying the islands should not be called islas de Moro but rather "islands of hope in God." Twenty years later he was proved right as Jesuit Fathers, continuing the work he had begun, converted the inhabitants of those islands into fervent Catholics.

In April of 1547, at Malacca, Francis was approached by a Japanese murderer named Yajiro who, filled with remorse, had been advised by some Portuguese sailors to talk to the priest. From Yajiro he learned of the Land of the Rising Sun (Japan) which had been discovered by Europeans only six years before. Francis made arrangements to go to Japan, arriving at Kagoshima on the Feast of the Assumption in 1549. As in India language was a barrier. "Now we are among the people like statues, silent, while they talk and discourse at large around us," he wrote to the Society of Jesus. "We must become as little children to learn the language, and God grant that we may imitate the little ones too in simplicity and purity of soul." Once more, he

painstakingly translated prayers into the language of the country. As most of the Japanese were literate he hoped the Faith would spread even more rapidly than in India—but conversions were far fewer.

Though Japan was ruled by a "Divine Emperor" or Dairi, he had been reduced to a figurehead. The real rulers of the nation were the Daimyos (tribal chieftains) who were influenced by the Buddhist bonzes, a haughty, semi-military priestly caste. Like the Hindus of India Buddhism thrived on the caste system. Teaching that man is essentially like the animals, Buddhists believed in the transmigration of souls from beasts into human bodies. Buddha ("The Enlightened"), a man who had left his wife and infant son to wander about seeking the cause of misery in the world, had supposedly gone through various transmigrations himself, including that of a begger, a lion, a bird, an elephant and a king. Buddhism taught that every form of conscious existence is evil and that perfection is only to be found in the unconscious state of Nirvana. Suicide was encouraged as worthy of honor.

Perceiving Father Francis as a threat to their influence, the bonzes sowed suspicion of him among the Daimyos, causing several of them to issue edicts forbidding the further spread of Christianity under pain of death. The Daimyo of Yamaguchi allowed him to continue preaching but the people received him coldly. However, they watched with increasing sympathy as he bore with insults, jeers and threats, accepting all with equanimity and proving by his actions the "sweetness of suffering for Christ." After a Japanese nobleman who had been one of his worst antagonists was converted, "there began to be Christians," said Francis.

The Japanese had no proper word for God for their religions were filled with numerous idols or "pagods." Explaining that, since they had no knowledge of the true God, they were unable to express His name, Francis gave them the Portuguese word Deos, pronouncing it with such love and respect that they understood the honor which is due to the holy name of God.

One question that was continually asked of Father Francis was why the Chinese did not know of the Christian Faith. As Japan looked to China for guidance in all matters of importance, Francis saw that the conversion of China would facilitate the conversion of Japan. So he resolved to enter the forbidden kingdom of China, hoping that, "by means of the Society of Jesus, both the Chinese and the Japanese will abandon their idolatry and adore God and Jesus Christ, Saviour of all nations."

Francis returned to India to prepare for the journey. As the Chinese only allowed ambassadors of foreign monarchs to enter the "Celestial Empire," Francis obtained permission from the king of Portugal for James Pereira, captain of the Santa Croce, to serve as Portuguese Ambassador to China. Accompanying Ambassador Pereira would be Father Francis Xavier. Recognizing the significance of this enterprise, the Portuguese officials were eager to help, with the exception of Alvaro da Gama, the harbormaster at Malacca. Resentful of the possible financial gain for Pereira, he refused to let the Santa Croce leave the harbor. No one could persuade him to change his mind and he instigated acampaign of insults and threats against Francis, who spent his nights in prayer in the church at the foot of the statue of Our Lady, and each morning said Mass for Alvaro.

Though Alvaro prevented Captain Pereira from sailing he eventually allowed Francis to leave without the ambassador necessary to gain admission to China. Now "unmoored from all human help," Francis hoped to slip into China where he would present a letter from Bishop Albuquerque of Goa to the Governor of Canton.

He made it as far as the Island of Sancian, just off the coast of China, where, waiting for transportation to the mainland, he was seized with a violent fever. On December 2, 1552, Francis Xavier died at the age of 46, attended only by a young Chinese interpreter. His black hair had turned completely white from suffering and privation but he was unwaveringly "joyful and gracious," saying at all times, "May God be praised for everything."

Francis Xavier was canonized by Pope Gregory XV in 1662 and, in 1747, was given the title of patron and protector of the East Indies by Pope Benedict XIV. Japan, where he had labored so hard with so little apparent result, welcomed his successors and, within thirty years, more than 200,000 Japanese had become Catholics. However, in 1586, a general persecution of Christians began, continuing until the enemies of the Faith were convinced that every Christian had been killed.

In 1854, when Japan once more allowed foreigners into her ports, a French priest who had come to care for the foreign officials and merchants was approached by a group of Japanese who entered his chapel and, seeing the statue of Our Lady, asked if that was the mother of Jesus. When told that it was, they fell to their knees in tears, thanking God. They were Catholics, they told the astonished priest. For over 200 years these Catholics, though without any priest, had kept the Faith, baptizing and teaching their children. Despite all attempts to destroy the Faith of the Japanese people, 50,000 of them had remained steadfast for some two centuries!

Saint Francis Xavier, who inspired such loyalty and heroism, warned that, to defend the Faith, one must be "laborious, mortified, and patient" and "ready to suffer willingly and with joy... the severest persecutions." Through his example and his intercession may we also remain steadfast in the one, true and eternal Faith. †

# A MORAL OBLIGATION

*Fr. Francis E. Fenton*

With this 57th issue *The Athanasian* begins its eighth year of publication. From the beginning we have worked long and hard to make each issue a production which would reflect well upon sound traditional Catholicism. We have always strived to be completely honest and straightforward in all of our newsletter articles, being determined to present the objective truth as best we can in accordance with our beliefs and convictions. On basic subjects affecting both our Church and country, our position has been a strong and uncompromising one—and for that we make no apologies. While the forces of good and of evil have been at war since God created Adam and Eve, we firmly believe that the situation has never been more critical than it is here and now—and those on the side of God and morality are losing that war. Would any honorable person who knows the score deny that for an instant? And so we cannot ignore or soft-pedal any issue or refrain from identifying and exposing any evil individual or organization of substantial influence involved in the attempted destruction of our Church (or our nation). As for *The Athanasian*, we will continue to do our small part in its pages to defend our precious Faith and to expose its satanic enemies as best we can.

But if only we could double or triple or quadruple our circulation, how much more effective our efforts might be. But even the prospect of doubling that circulation is seemingly a remote one—with the result that we cannot so much as begin to make any significant impact upon the American scene. This is and has long been a source of considerable concern to me because I am very convinced that we are on the right track in terms of the stand we take in matters relating to Church (and country). Further, I believe that the vast majority of our newsletter subscribers agree with that stand. Why is it, then, that so few of those who give us moral and financial support seemingly do little or nothing to increase our newsletter circulation?

Or, to express the idea more pointedly: if our subscribers agree with what we write in *The Athanasian* on the extreme gravity of the current situation, why is it that most of them, to my knowledge, remain content to "enjoy" our newsletter and to bemoan the pathetic state of affairs we discuss therein? Why do traditional Roman Catholics, who have the strongest incentives of all to stand up and be counted and to be militant, continue to remain passive in the face of the anti-God forces so relentlessly on the march at the present time and so increasingly successful in their efforts to date?

Why is it that most traditional Roman Catholics, however commendable their personal and family lives may be, are such failures when it comes to "Catholic Action" and militancy and fighting for the Faith? Do they suppose that they are doing the will of God solely by attending Mass and receiving the Sacraments and saying the rosary and keeping the Commandments? Assuredly, that is not enough—and especially in these days. Or perhaps they just don't want to "get involved" or "rock the boat." If their Roman Catholic Faith means what it is supposed to mean to them, namely, everything, then it's high time they got involved—and they have *a moral obligation* to get involved! As for not wanting to rock the boat, that boat is sinking while they're on the sidelines watching it sink! Some "Church Militant"! Or could it be that the traditional Catholics to whom I refer are merely biding their time in prayer and waiting for God to perform a miracle to straighten things out? But such an expectation is not in accord with the mind of the Church. Yes, I believe in miracles but, in the present circumstances, even the possibility of divine intervention on our behalf would appear to be out of the question unless traditional Roman Catholics begin to do their full part, unless, that is, they become activists, warriors, crusaders, fighters for the Faith. Prayer alone is not enough. "God made us without us but He will not save us without us." (Saint Augustine)

Of all the wars in which the human race has been engaged since the dawn of civilization, one only has been perpetual: the war between good and evil. And that war continues today. There is one major difference though and that is that this perennial conflict now gives the distinct appearance of soon approaching a climax. Have Satan and the forces of evil ever held sway more widely than they do at the present time? Have those on the side of God and truth and morality ever been more ineffective than they are here and now? Has the moral law of God ever been more blatantly and contemptuously violated? Has the Kingship of Christ ever been ignored and scorned more universally?

But why? The answer, I believe, is to be found, at least in large part, in the apathy, the indifference, the passivity of those who claim to be on the side of God. The good and the honorable have allowed this to happen—and they continue to do so. Unprecedented moral evil prevails today in our land and worldwide through default on our part. The most crucial war being waged today is that which involves the souls of men—and the stakes are eternal. Satan and his cohorts are winning that war hands down, a stark fact which no believer in God and follower of Christ can possibly deny. For this paramount tragedy the vast majority of traditional Roman Catholics must bear the brunt of the blame for they should be in the vanguard of the Christian forces. Although many traditional Catholics do not likely even think in such terms, we *are* at war and we are losing that war because of our inertia, our timidity, our hesitancy to get involved, our reluctance to become militant.

How long more before traditional Roman Catholics come to

a realization that it is *not* enough for them merely to live morally good lives, to attend Mass, to receive the Sacraments, to recite the rosary, etc. Their Faith demands much more of them. It always has, of course, but especially in this our day. While most of them are well aware of how bad things are and have been bemoaning the sad state of affairs for years, what are they *doing* about it? With but a few exceptions, little or nothing. That being the case, they are delinquent in the fulfillment of their duty as Roman Catholics. The massive abandonment of God and rejection of His moral law is the fundamental reason for the spiritual and moral decadence that currently pervades our nation and the world. The solution, the only solution is "to restore all things in Christ," the restoration and the recognition of the Kingship of Christ among men and nations. To do his part towards the ultimate attainment of that grand and glorious objective is a *a moral obligation* incumbent upon every Roman Catholic worthy of the name.

(The Vexilla Regis Association is *the* organization for traditional Catholic men sincerely interested in becoming activists in defense of the Faith and in the restoration of the Kingship of Christ. Information on the Vexilla Regis Association may be obtained from: Father Donald Sanborn, St. Pius X Church, 23310 Joy Road, Redford, Michigan 48239, PH. 313-534-6063.)†

## 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.†

## HELP SPREAD THE TRUTH!

The October 15, 1986 issue of *The Athanasian* contained a four-page article on Martin Luther King, Jr. The sordid record of this man is in marked contast to the glowing picture of him given to the American public by the news media. We appeal to our newsletter subscribers to help us to get the true story of Martin Luther King, Jr., as widely circulated as possible through the distribution of the King article. That there is a national holiday in his honor is a national disgrace!


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