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VITAL TRUTH SUPPRESSED IN UNLIKELY PLACES

Fr. Francis E. Fenton

Since Communism denies the existence of God and His moral law, it is hardly surprising that the concept of truth and the obligation to be honest mean nothing to its adherents. The Communist has absolutely no regard for truth whatsoever except insofar as being truthful may happen to serve his diabolical objectives in a particular situation. Otherwise, whatever furthers his immediate or long-range goals is "good" and "right"; whatever impedes these goals is "bad" and "wrong." Truth, honesty, honor, integrity—such concepts, as we understand them, are totally alien to the Communist mentality. And so his spoken or written word is worthless, a fact proven so many times and in so many ways in the sordid record of Communism over the years. Nor has the nature of Communism and its ultimate aims changed in the slightest despite all apparent signs to the contrary. Mikhail Gorbachev is every bit as evil a man and as totally dedicated a Communist as his predecessors ever were. It was but little more than a year ago (on November 2, 1987) that Gorbachev very plainly declared in a speech delivered in Moscow: "We are moving toward a new world, the world of Communism. We shall never turn off that road."

But, as all intelligent and informed men and women know very well, disregard for truth is by no means a Communist monopoly. Falsehoods, half-truths, distortions of fact are an increasingly common characteristic of today's American mass news media. I, for one, seldom listen to a national news broadcast which does not contain one or more untruths in one form or another. 'Tis no wonder that multitudes of the American people do not know the horrendous truth about Communism when they are being regularly fed pro-Communist, anti-American propaganda by the so-called American press (TV, radio, newspapers, mass circulation magazines). No better friend does the satanic conspiracy of Communism have in the USA than the American controlled news media—except, that is, the American government.

The term, American government, is really a misnomer. Rather it is the pro-Communist government of America. Such has been the case for many years now, the only difference being that today the alliance between Communism and Washington is becoming ever more open—and terrifying. And yet, as obvious as this unholy alliance is to many of us, the vast majority of Americans do not recognize it or have little or no notion of its ultimate consequences. While this widespread ignorance is certainly due in no small part to the suppression of the truth by the American news media, it is likewise due to the gross deception of the rank and file of the American people by their alleged leaders and the powers that be who manipulate and control those leaders. The USA is being sold out to the Reds by lying, hypocritical, traitorous politicians in high places masquerading as loyal Americans. This sellout has indeed been in progress for the past several decades but it is now moving at an ever accelerating pace—and multitudes of the American people are oblivious to the tragic betrayal taking place. The prime culprit in all this, of course, is that preeminent hypocrite and "master of deceit," Ronald Reagan—the Great Betrayer. If the atheistic and tyrannical New World Order becomes a reality (and that appears more likely with each passing day), true history (if there will be such) will surely record Ronald Reagan, Mikhail Gorbachev and John Paul II among the principal architects of that potential nightmarish monstrosity.

(While no better example of massive duplicity on a world-wide scale can be given than that in which the Conciliar Church has been engaged for the past 25 years or so, the subject—already discussed directly or indirectly a number of times in previous issues of this newsletter—will not be given any detailed attention here. Reference, however, will be made further on to John Paul II.)

As the reader may well have noticed by now, the title of this article does not apply to what has thus far been written herein. The American news media, the American government and the Conciliar Church most certainly cannot be described as *unlikely* places where one would find truth suppressed. Quite the contrary. What, then, are those unlikely places? Two examples I particularly have in mind.

As a result of all of the reading I have done on the subject for quite some time, I have long since come to the conclusion that Freemasonry is every bit as profound an evil as is Communism. Both are conspiracies; both deny the one true God; both have as their ultimate objective the destruction of civil government and organized religion (especially the Roman Catholic Church); both are satanic. Some 10 Popes have emphatically condemned the secret society of Freemasonry over the past two and a half centuries. Pope Leo XIII wrote an entire encyclical letter on Masonry (*Humanum Genus*), describing it as "a deadly poison circulating...in the veins of human society"...whose "ultimate aim is to uproot completely the whole religious and political order of the world..."

Pope Pius IX called Freemasonry an "ultra-criminal Sect." Other terms employed by the Popes in their denunciation of Freemasonry describe it as "ill-famed," "full of the spirit of Satan," "vicious and criminal"—and so on.

Because five rather lengthy articles dealing with the conspiracy of Freemasonry have appeared in the pages of this newsletter over the past several years, there is no need to rehash that material here. It is a fact beyond dispute that Freemasonry is a worldwide secret society which is anti-God, anti-Church, anti-civil government; that its members (many of them of high rank in the Masonic Sect) occupy influential positions in both Church and State; and that the ultimate objective of this evil organization is the destruction of all civil and religious authority.

In view of the above then, why is it that the true nature of Freemasonry is not given the exposure it so richly deserves? Why is it that the average American knows little or nothing of the stark truth about this abominable organization? Although countless Americans remain to this day ignorant of the *full* truth about the hideous reality of Communism, many of them are at least aware of the fact that Communism exists and that it is evil while the satanic evil of Freemasonry is a nonentity to the average American. It is, of course, readily understandable why Masonry is not exposed by the civil government or by politicians or by the news media or by the Conciliar Church but—and this is the key question here: Why is the subject of Freemasonry practically (if not entirely) ignored by organizations and publications whose loyalty to God and country is otherwise beyond reproach? How many newsletters and articles I have read in recent years discussing and exposing and denouncing various subversive organizations and individuals—and not even the word Freemasonry (or Masonry or Mason) has been so much as mentioned. Assuredly, one would never know from a reading of such material that the conspiracy of Freemasonry even exists, much less that it is the worldwide anti-Church, anti-civil government, "ultra-criminal Sect" so roundly and forcefully condemned by the Roman Catholic Church.

And so, what is one to make of this? How can organizations or publications do a consistently very commendable job in varying degrees in opposing and exposing the grave menace of the Communist conspiracy and yet be silent or, at best, soft on the Masonic conspiracy? Here, certainly, is a striking example of the suppression of a vital truth that demands maximum exposure. There is, I submit, no justification for the concealment by honorable men of the truth about Freemasonry.

Now, while there are a number of anti-Communist organizations and/or publications to which the above would apply, I will single out but one for brief comment—and that is The John Birch Society (JBS). But why the JBS in particular? Because for many years I have firmly believed it to be the finest anti-Communist organization in the USA. In recent years, however, as I became more and more informed on Freemasonry, I have become increasingly disturbed by the failure of the JBS to speak out and to expose and to condemn the Masonic conspiracy with the same consistency and force and forthrightness as it has always done regarding Communism. But this has never happened. Why? Surely those men in positions of leadership in the JBS know every bit as well as I do the profound evil of Freemasonry and the very grave danger it presents to Church and State. Why, then, the near total suppression by the JBS of this vital truth?

Another instance of the suppression of vital truth is to be found in *conservative* publications associated with the Conciliar Church—and it relates to John Paul II. The weekly newspaper, *The Wanderer*, provides a good example of this. This publication acknowledges John Paul II as a valid Pope and regularly gives extensive and favorable coverage to his words and writings and travels. This, of course, is perfectly understandable, given the fact that *The Wanderer* unreservedly believes him to be the Vicar of Christ.

But, as readers of this newsletter are well aware, a number of the statements and actions of John Paul II over the past ten years have been such as to raise serious questions in the minds of some Roman Catholic priests and laymen as to whether he is actually a true pontiff at all. Indeed, there are those—and I am one of them—who have long since arrived at the absolute conviction that he is *not*. If, however, the concept and the knowledge which readers of *The Wanderer* have of John Paul II are limited to what they have acquired from that and similar *conservative* publications, those readers have little or no notion of the other side of "His Holiness." They are being given a very distorted picture of John Paul II because the stark truth about him is something else again—and that vital truth is suppressed by *The Wanderer*. Is that honest? †

Pray the Rosary Daily

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CATHOLIC ACTION IN AN AGE OF CRISIS

John Kenneth Weiskittel

If you are a traditional Catholic who grew up prior to Vatican Council II, the upheavals of the past twenty years or more must still remain a case of the impossible coming to pass. Had someone told you, say, in 1955, that the Immemorial Sacrifice of the Mass would be replaced by a Protestant-style "supper" service; that scores of altars and statues would be unceremoniously removed from churches and left for the trash collectors; and that a Vatican occupied by hirelings would permit pagans to desecrate once Catholic churches with ungodly rituals and would declare a truce with sworn (and unrepentent) enemies of Catholicism such as Freemasonry and Communism—you probably would have replied as discreetly as possible to that person that he or she might benefit from psychiatric help.

Sadly, the "impossible" is now a reality, and those who yesterday we thought ready for a rubber room would today be called prophets. Make no mistake, the current crisis in the Roman Catholic Church is the greatest it has ever faced. While the majority of fourth-century bishops held to the heresy of Arianism, we find that not only do most bishops today adhere to Modernism ("the synthesis of all heresies"—Pope Saint Pius X) but so does the bogus occupant of the Chair of Peter. Those faithful who accept and practice, fully and undefiled, the teaching of the Church have been reduced to a handful. And, if the total number of true Roman Catholics may well be only in the thousands, how piteously few are our orthodox priests! If ever there was a time for divine intervention, that time is *now*. But how is this to be accomplished, one might ask.

The whole of Sacred Scripture and Church history shows us, however, that God will not help His people *unless they move towards Him*. It is clear then that, for the Church to succeed in its mission, it is *absolutely imperative* that the laity join with the clergy in fulfilling this work. Such lay participation in the life of the Church is nothing new. Indeed, it has been with the Church in every age but a renewed wave of anti-Catholic activities in the past two centuries prompted popes (up to and including Pope Pius XII) to encourage it in a particular way.

Given the severity of the present difficulties, it is no exaggeration to say that lay Catholics must raise their activities for the Church to a level comparable to what their counterparts displayed in ancient Rome and in the mission fields for, despite differences of time and place, the parallels are clear: *an embattled Church fighting against seemingly insurmountable odds in a hostile environment*. What follows is a selection of papal quotes that show what the laity can and *must* do, how it can *best accomplish* these aims and why such action is so *urgently needed* in modern times (even more so in the 1980's). All page listings, unless otherwise indicated, refer to a collection of papal teachings from Benedict XIV to Pius XII contained in *The Lay Apostolate* (Daughters of St. Paul, 1961).

What Catholic Action Is

Pope Pius XI, in a 1926 letter to the Piedmontese Bishops, states that Catholic Action is an opportunity for the laity to "share in a certain sense in the sacerdotal ministry." (p. 279) The encyclical *Il fermo proposito* (1905) of Pope Saint Pius X forms the theological basis for Catholic Action. There he writes that "laymen are the principal supporters and promoters" of those works needed "to restore all things in Christ." It is worth our while to quote Saint Piux X on how the laity is expected to accomplish this in society for the same ills continue to plague the nations:

> To dwell only on this part of the desired restoration, you see well what support is given to the Church by those chosen bands of Catholics whose aim is to unite all their forces in order to combat anti-Christian civilization by every just and lawful means, and to repair in every way the grievous disorders which flow from it; to reinstate Jesus Christ in the family, the school, and society; to reestablish the principle that human authority represents that of God; to take intimately to heart the interests of the people, especially those of the working and agricultural classes, not only by the inculcation of religion, the only true source of comfort in the sorrows of life, but also by striving to dry their tears, to soothe their sufferings, and by wise measures to improve their economic condition; to endeavor, consequently, to make public laws conformable to justice, to amend or suppress those which are not so; finally, with a true Catholic spirit, to defend and support the rights of God in everything, and the no less sacred rights of the Church. (pp. 217-218)

How accurate was Pius XII when he spoke of his holy predecessor as "among the chosen souls" whom Catholic Action is to "invoke and venerate as the guides and promoters of their excellent movement..."

It is not enough, however, to think that this apostolate is something to be viewed casually or as primarily political, as though simply being a *concerned* lay person is sufficient. It engages "the cream of the laity" (Pius XI) and is "a veritable army" (Pius IX). Those who consider themselves nominal Catholics must reexamine their inner lives and resolve to take membership in the Mystical Body of Christ more seriously if they seek to serve in this army. That every soldier in this army must be inwardly strong is essential for "the spiritual life is at the very heart of the Christian apostolate" (Pius XII). In an allocution to Italian Catholic Action in 1940, Pope Pius XII pointed out that "(t)he life of prayer...(is) the great law and condition of success in the apostolate." (p. 434)

Although the crisis in today's Church would seem to make such groups impossible in areas where only a few of the faithful reside near one another, this need not be the case. It

was, again, Pius XII who, addressing parish priests and Lenten preachers in a 1951 allocution, noted:

> ...We know that certain lay Catholics—under the inspiration and guidance of their priests—have formed small societies or circles, in which professional colleagues, parents or friends meet once or twice a month, according to circumstances, to deal with and discuss, among others, religious subjects. We are assured that it is surprising to note how many conversions have already been effected in these circles. And with the head of the family, or his wife too, the whole family is usually won at the same time. (p. 522)

Those mentioned above are but one form of small group. Others can center around the recitation of the rosary or other prayers, meetings to organize pro-life rallies and other public actions for the Kingship of Christ, discussions on selected reading assignments of Catholic books, etc.

Individuals that are even more isolated from other Catholics can still share in this apostolate by working for conversions and by getting the truth to others however they can. One point that several popes have stressed is the need to counteract the lies of the Church's enemies by lay support of solid Catholic reading matter (and, in recent times, film, radio and television). To cite just one example, Pope Leo XIII, in an 1892 letter to the Italian people regarding the evils of Freemasonry, wrote: "They (the Masons—JKW) maintain a press which is anti-Catholic in both the religious and social spheres; you must, with your personal influence and with your money, aid and assist the Catholic press." (p. 158)

Now Is The Time For Action!

The following stirring words (so *unlike* John Paul II) are those of Pope Pius XII:

> The lay apostolate has, as every apostolate has, moreover, two functions: conservation and conquest, and both are urgently needed in the Church today. And, to speak very plainly, the Church of Christ is not thinking of giving ground without a struggle to her declared enemy, atheistic Communism. This struggle will be pursued to the end, but with the weapons of Christ! (*Directives to Lay Apostles;* Daughters of St. Paul, 1963, p. 260)

Today, over 30 years later, this struggle has moved into the Church itself. The enemy believes that its victory will be soon at hand and, regrettably, very few Catholics are doing much to prove otherwise.

We must, therefore, do all that is in our power to rally the forces of Christ and stem the tide of evil. God is not deceived. Let us not be counted with the Pharisees whom our Lord rebuked, saying: "This people honoureth me with their lips: but their heart is far from me." (Matthew 15:8) Nor with the lukewarm, whom Christ will vomit from His mouth. (Apocalypse 3:16)

Again, we appeal for your aid. *The Athanasian* is committed to providing Catholic truth to the widest number of people possible and to remain affordable at the same time. Subscription rates are actually *lower* in cost than what is needed to produce and mail the issues. Here is where you, the reader, can help by making a donation (a regular monthly one for those able) to keep operations running smoothly. *The Athanasian* is an apostolate and your much appreciated support constitutes a crucial part of it. With Pope Leo XIII we urge you to "aid and assist the Catholic press."

Catholic Action is a cause that should deeply concern us all. How must our Lord's Sacred Heart be pierced anew when He beholds the daily ingratitude of so many millions to His Divine Mercy. Let us strive to see that this *can*, in some small way at least, be countered if only our hearts were to burn with the same charity that animates the Sacred Heart of Our Savior Who declared: "I am come to cast fire on the earth: and what will I, but that it be kindled." †

FREEMASONRY

(The following is a passage from *Humanum Genus*, the 1884 encyclical letter of Pope Leo XIII addressed to the Catholic bishops, "Venerable Brethren," of the world.)

We pray and beseech you, Venerable Brethren, to join your efforts with Ours, and earnestly to strive for the extirpation of this foul plague, which is creeping through the veins of the State. You have to defend the glory of God and the salvation of your neighbor; and with this object of your strife before you, neither courage nor strength will be wanting. It will be for your prudence to judge by what means you can best overcome the difficulties and obstacles you meet with. But as it befits the authority of Our office that We Ourselves should point out some suitable way of proceeding, We wish it to be your rule first of all to tear away the mask of Freemasonry, and to let it be seen as it really is; and by sermons and Pastoral Letters to instruct the people as to the artifices used by societies of this kind in seducing men and enticing them into their ranks, and as to the depravity of their opinions and the wickedness of their acts. As Our predecessors have many times repeated, let no man think that he may for any reason whatsoever join the Masonic sect, if he values his Catholic name and his eternal salvation as he ought to value them. Let no one be deceived by a pretense of honesty. It may seem to some that Freemasons demand nothing that is openly contrary to religion and morality; but, as the whole principle and object of the sect lies in what is vicious and criminal, to join with these men or in any way to help them cannot be lawful.

SAINT CLOTILDE

Jill Wiesner

Countless souls have been converted to the true Faith through the prayers and good example of Catholics. Saint Clotilde, Queen of the Franks in the fifth century, brought about the conversion of an entire nation through faithful adherence to Christian virtues and complete trust in God.

The fifth century was a time of sorrow for the Church as many of the barbarian nations which grew out of the ruins of the Roman Empire were infected with the Arian heresy. Having migrated from the East, where they had been taught a false Christianity by Arian "missionaries," the fierce barbarian tribes of Goths, Lombards and Vandals forced Arianism on all the peoples they conquered.

A few souls, having been converted by Catholic missionaries, held on to their Faith. Chilperic, King of Burgundy and the father of Clotilde, was a devout Catholic, though all of his relatives were Arian. He and his wife carefully instructed their children in the truths of the Faith, giving them a firm knowledge of their religion at an early age. Clotilde, born about 474, had already acquired a deep love for her Faith when tragedy struck her family. Her father, mother and brothers were killed by her Arian uncle Gondebad, who then usurped her father's kingdom. Clotilde and her older sister, Chrona, posing no threat to Gondebad's ambitions, were spared. Chrona was allowed to enter a convent and little Clotilde was taken to live at Gondebad's court.

Though she lived among Arians, Clotilde was able to continue her instruction in the Catholic Faith. She learned to despise the world and to love God above all things. Thus armed against the seductive influences which surrounded her, Clotilde remained pure amidst corruption.

As she grew up, she was greatly admired for her beauty, intelligence and modesty. Clovis I, King of the Franks and conqueror of Gaul, heard of her many attributes and sent an emissary to ask for her in marriage. His petition was granted on the condition "that the princess should be at liberty to profess her religion."

Clovis and Clotilde were married at Soissons in 493. Clovis, a pagan with a warlike temper, was in awe of his Christian wife. She fulfilled all of her royal duties flawlessly but, whenever she had a free moment, she hurried to the little oratory which she had made for herself and bowed her head in fervent prayer. She practiced many private mortifications but she did so prudently so as not to fail in any of the duties of her state in life. Out of humility and charity she conformed herself to her husband insofar as her conscience permitted and, in this way, she won the heart of Clovis.

Clotilde then sought to win her husband to Christianity by discussing with him the vain worship of idols and the beauty of the true Faith. Clovis listened to her words with great interest but concern about offending his subjects, all of whom were pagan, delayed his conversion.

Clovis, conqueror as well as king, was an able military commander who led his troops to many victories. However, in battle against the Alemanni near Cologne, he found himself hard-pressed, with his men on the verge of surrender. After calling upon his pagan gods in vain, Clovis remembered his discussions with his wife and turned to God, begging His help. The tide of the battle turned miraculously and the forces of Clovis were victorious. He sent a courier to inform Clotilde of his victory and she hastened to meet him at Rheims.

At Rheims, Clovis asked Saint Remigius, the bishop of the city, to give him religious instruction. No longer hesitant about conversion, Clovis assembled his soldiers and urged them to follow his example by renouncing their idols and embracing the true Faith. His men, filled with fervor, cried out, "We renounce mortal gods. We are ready to adore the true God, the God whom Remigius preaches."

On Christmas Eve, 496, the king and a large number of his men approached the holy bishop for Baptism:

> ...the church and the baptistry were hung with the richest drapery, and thousands of exquisitely scented tapers were lighted, so that the holy place seemed full of a heavenly perfume. Nothing more magnificent than the march of the new catechumens! The streets and public places were richly ornamented, and the procession advanced with the Holy Gospels and Cross from the palace of Clovis to the church. The air resounded with sweet hymns and litanies. St. Remigius held the king by the hand. The queen followed with two princesses, the sisters of Clovis, and more than three thousand men belonging to his army, whom his example had won to Jesus Christ. (Msgr. Jean Joseph Gaume, *Catechism of Perseverence*, Dublin, Ireland, M.H. Gill & Son, 1878, pp. 332-333)

Upon reaching the baptistery the king asked for Baptism. Remigius, speaking with the authority which belongs only to the Church, told Clovis, "Become meek, and bow thy head, Sicambrian; adore what thou hast burned, and burn what thou hast adored." With deep humility Clovis submitted to the reign of Christ.

From the time of his baptism Clovis was an ardent defender of the Church. Historians have called him a "second Constantine" and "the most Christian king." He defeated the

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FREE WILL AND INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITY

John Kenneth Weiskittel

Throughout the Christian centuries a cornerstone of civilization has been the doctrine that the Creator has invested man with free will to guide his actions and that with this gift comes the duty to exercise it in a manner consistent with God's law. That individuals are free moral agents accountable for their acts is a fundamental tenet of Roman Catholic teaching.

But more and more in recent times there have been efforts to challenge this teaching. Proponents of this new *determinism* (any theory that holds that human behavior is subject to uncontrollable forces) have succeeded in obscuring it by advancing other explanations. The young mugger, they tell us, turned out bad because he grew up in a poor neighborhood. Drunkards and drug abusers are said to suffer from one or another "illness." Gluttony is refashioned into an "eating disorder." The lustful fall under the heading of "sexaholic." Homosexuality, when not defended as an acceptable lifestyle that is genetically predetermined, is classified as a treatable mental illness. In short, there is not one of the deadly sins—pride, envy, anger, gluttony, lust, sloth or avarice—that determinists have neglected to somehow redefine as a condition curable by either therapy, social engineering, behavior modification or federal tax dollars.

How important is it that people believe in free will over determinism? Profoundly so for, writes Monsignor John K. Ryan:

> The entire system of human law depends upon the assertion that man is by nature a free and responsible agent. The man in the street, the woman in the home, and even the child in its concerns will adapt their personal conduct to their theory of will. (*Basic Principles and Problems of Philosophy,* Newman Press, 1954, p. 150.)

The difference lies between viewing a person as a being whose acts are accountable before God or as a soulless beast whose behavior can be shaped as easily as Pavlov conditioned dogs to salivate at the sound of a bell.

A battle line has been drawn and this fact has not been lost on the determinists. B. F. Skinner, the most prominent spokesman of the movement and a signer of Humanist Manifesto II, finds it "particularly troublesome" that most thinkers still view man as having an autonomous nature, worthy of being praised for meritorious deeds and punished for wrongdoing. As a behavioral psychologist who feels that control must be taken from the individual and placed in the hands of behavioral "programmers," Skinner obviously sees free will and responsibility as unacceptable concepts. In his bestseller, *Beyond Freedom and Dignity,* he admits that his view of human nature finds staunch opposition in some quarters:

> A scientific analysis shifts the credit as well as the blame to the environment, and traditional practices can no longer be justified. These are sweeping changes, and those who are committed to traditional theories and practices naturally resist them. (Bantam/Vintage, ed., 1972, p. 19)

This struggle represents nothing less than a war of ideas—a conflict over how we perceive ourselves and others—and we do well, then, to defend our position as strongly as possible.

Freedom And The Faith

In upholding the psychological freedom of the individual we also defend the teaching of the Church and the Church herself. For if, as Skinner and his followers would have us think, man is nothing more than "a member of a species shaped by evolutionary contingencies of survival," (pp. 201-202) then the Church and her doctrines are meaningless. Sin, repentance, forgiveness, confession, sanctity, the Redemption, the Judgment and the Church become dusty remnants of an outmoded worldview if determinism is a fact.

Pope Leo XIII, in his encyclical, *Libertas,* writes that "freedom of choice is a property of the will." The will is that faculty in man that is inclined towards or strives after some object the mind holds to be good, whether that object is necessary (for example, water to the thirsty) or freely sought. In moral matters, the will, if it is to please God, must choose not only the proper ends but also the proper means needed to reach those ends. The Commandments clearly show this to be the case, for they would be *unnecessary* if man could will only good and *impossible to keep* if he could will only evil. Hence, Father Frederick Coppleston, S.J., examining Saint Augustine's moral theory, writes:

> The necessary basis of obligation is freedom. The will is free to turn away from the immutable Good and to attach itself to mutable goods, taking as its object either the goods of the soul, without reference to God, or the goods of the body...(*A History of Philosophy,* Vol. 2, *Mediaeval Philosophy,* Part 1, Image Books, 1962, pp. 97-98)

The liberty of the will leads to salvation or damnation. "When man tries to live justly by his own strength," teaches Saint Augustine, "without the help of the liberating grace of God, he is then conquered by sins; but in free will he has it in his power to believe in the Liberator and to receive grace." (cited, ibid, p. 99)

And examples we may take from Sacred Scripture are plentiful. One must defy logic to explain why God commanded Adam not to partake of a certain fruit and then punished him for disobeying, if He had not given him the capacity for obedience. In addressing Cain, God clearly indicates our in-

nate freedom to choose good over evil:

> If thou do well, shalt thou not receive? but if ill, shall not sin forthwith be present at the door? but the lust thereof shall be under thee, and thou shalt have dominion over it. (Genesis 4:7)

The Lord, speaking through His prophet Josue, tells the tribes of Israel that they can serve Him or the pagan gods. In the book of Ecclesiasticus we read: "God made man from the beginning, and left him in the hand of his own counsel... Before man is life and death, good and evil, that which he shall choose shall be given him." (Ecclesiasticus 15:14, 18) Christ, in rebuking the Pharisees, left no doubt as to the individual responsibility for sin when He said:

> For within out of the heart of men proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness. All these evil things come from within, and defile a man. (Mark 7:21-23)

In another telling passage, Our Savior declares that judgment has come upon those who *loved darkness rather than the light*. (John 3:19) And at least twice Christ admonished those who had been the object of His mercy with the words *sin no more* (John 5:14, 8:11), a statement that would be absurd if His hearers were not free to act upon it.

The Church has always taken the occasion to defend the teaching of free will whenever necessary. The heretical Semi-Pelagians of the sixth century, Luther and Calvin during the "Reformation," the seventeenth-century Jansenists and modern materialists in the past hundred years have all been anathematized for advancing errors of one sort or another concerning man's free will.

Other Arguments Supporting Free Will

While proofs of free will taken from Church teaching and the Bible can be used to demonstrate the fact satisfactorily to Catholics and other believers, how may we convince the skeptic? It so happens that there are a number of strong points that can be made without using theological appeals.

Monsignor John K. Ryan lists several arguments that have either psychological or philosophical bases. First he gives those that stem from our consciousness, from our deeply-felt *awareness* of this freedom. We are able to voluntarily keep our *attention* focused on a certain object, despite outside attractions or pressure, and this ability, he writes, is "an instance of the will as the power of self-determination." (p. 158) *Deliberation*, or the weighing of options, is another, and "(t)he more deliberation that precedes an important action, the more free that choice is when it is actually made." (pp. 158-159) Next comes *decision*, the acting out of that which has been considered. Finally in this category is, perhaps, the most telling proof—*adhesion to resolution under temptation*. The force of this argument may be attested by anyone who has held fast to a good resolution, for "no amount of deterministic philosophy can persuade a man that it was impossible for him to break his resolution and that the only thing fixed and determined for him from all eternity was his adhesion to the course of action that he had chosen." (p. 160)

From the field of moral concepts, Monsignor Ryan notes man's sense of *obligation* to do that which is right, his *remorse and repentance* over deliberate misconduct, the notions of *merit and desert, responsibility* and *justice*. Commenting on the last of these concepts, Monsignor Ryan asks: "If in every instance I do only what I must do and if I cannot help doing what I do, as the determinist claims, where is the possibility of there being either justice or injustice?" (p. 165) Free human action is readily evident in *real life situations*, while determinism is found only in experiments with laboratory animals. Then, too, he points out that people in every age and land have sought political freedom. Determinism would make heroes out of slaveowners and tyrants, and despots out of saints, martyrs and patriots!

Recently, Dr. Garth Wood, a young British psychiatrist, has offered us even more support in his book, *The Myth of Neurosis: Overcoming the Illness Excuse*. (Harper & Row, 1986) While not denying serious mental illness (or psychosis), Dr. Wood contends that within his profession there is "a conspiracy to extend indefinitely the boundaries of mental illness." (p. 1) We live in a time when it is claimed that "everyone" is a bit neurotic, and when those criminals who have smothered their consciences (psychopaths or sociopaths) are now frequently called "psychologically diseased." But, of this latter type Dr. Wood writes:

> ...We already have a perfectly good concept to explain and define their moral bankruptcy. It is the notion of evil. Extreme wickedness is no surer indicator of mental illness than is extreme goodness, and we would do well not to confuse evil with disease. (p. 2)

Many people, he argues, who are in no way ill but merely unhappy, are receiving medication or extended sessions on psychiatric couches from "experts." According to such psychiatric specialists, guilt is a bad thing and must be removed. Not so, says Dr. Wood:

> ...Insofar as we disregard our moral imperative we must suffer the psychological pain of guilt. If we use the guilt mechanism properly and recoil from those actions which cause it to operate, it will serve us well. In the absence of disease, then, guilt is good for us. (p. 5)

In most instances, "individuals...are responsible for their predicament, slaves to neither their environment nor their brain biochemistry," and they will be better served when "family, friends, priests, neighbors, husbands, wives and children" reclaim their "rightful role" that has been "usurped by impostors." (ibid)

The Fight For Freedom

The importance of upholding the principle cannot be overstated. More and more we are told that Communism—a form of political and economic determinism—isn't *evil*, merely different. This, we firmly believe, is a form of psychological warfare being used in preparation for the merger of the USA and USSR that will end in the One World State against which Pope Benedict XV warned. The irony is that at this stage of the plan Americans are subtly being asked to *voluntarily* relinquish their freedoms. Tomorrow, the iron determinism of totalitarianism will be the result if the process isn't reversed. †

"There is a huge, extremely powerful conspiracy at work in the world to achieve absolute and brutal rule over the whole human race. This conspiracy is made up of a small group of individuals who control wars, revolutions and depressions like people control chessmen on a chessboard. These individuals operate, in part, through secret societies that are created for specific purposes or for specific events. The objective of these societies is to abolish all human institutions, such as religion, the family and all morality. The secret within the secret...is that they worship Lucifer or Satan, the devil." (Ralph Epperson, author of *The Unseen Hand*)

"Grace: God's riches at Christ's expense."

"It is good to have things that money can buy, but better to have the things that money cannot buy."

"If you don't have everything you want, be thankful for the things you don't have that you don't want."

"St. Clotilde" continued from page 5

Arian tyrants in Gaul and Burgundy, allowing Catholics to practice their Faith without persecution and permitting missionaries to work freely among the people. The vast territories under Frankish control became a united Catholic kingdom and the influence of Arianism was destroyed.

At Clotilde's request Clovis also built a number of religious institutions within his dominions, including the great Church of Saints Peter and Paul in Paris (now called the Church of Saint Genevieve), which was completed in 511.

In November of the same year Clovis died after having reigned for thirty years. After her husband's death Clotilde went to live at Tours so that she might be near the tomb of St. Martin. In addition to her daily practices of prayer, fasting, penance and almsgiving, Clotilde suffered the mortification of violent dissension between her two youngest sons. Her fervent prayers prevented them from going into battle against each other; their quarrels enabled her to become thoroughly detached from the world. For the remainder of her life, "Eternity filled her heart and employed all her thoughts."

On the third of June, 545, the day which she had foretold, Clotilde died after receiving the Last Sacraments. As she had requested, she was buried beside her husband in the Church of Saints Peter and Paul.

Saint Clotilde won souls from paganism and heresy by obedience to God in all things. Through her intercession and example may we hasten the conversion of our pagan world. †

Pray the Rosary Daily

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