THE ATHANASIAN

Founder: Fr. Francis E. Fenton, STL † Volume XVI, No. 1 † Jan.-Feb. 1995 † Editor: John K. Weiskittel

STILL HOLDING FAST

John Kenneth Weiskittel

Some twenty years after the Resurrection of our Lord, Saint Paul preached the Gospel in Macedonia, gaining a multitude of converts to the Faith. The first two of his epistles are addressed to Catholics in that nation's capital, Thessalonica. In those letters, after giving counsel on the manner of life pleasing to God, the Apostle warns against false doctrines then being spread: "But prove all things; hold fast [to] that which is good" (I *Thess.* 5:21) and "[to] the traditions which you have received." (II 2:15)

During the Arian revolt three centuries later, we find the patron of this newsletter, Saint Athanasius, choosing very similar words to encourage those faithful who resisted that widespread and powerful heresy. Despite the fact that Arian bishops and their followers had forced them from the churches, he writes to the banished that the true Catholics are not found with the usurpers who unlawfully seized the buildings, but with those "who hold firmly to the foundations of the Faith which has come down to you from Apostolic Tradition."



Domenichino

St. Athanasius

At the beginning of twentieth century a new adversary appeared—*Modernism*—whose leaders deceitfully called themselves "Catholic," while secretly striving to destroy the Church from within. So pervasive was this "synthesis of all heresies" that in 1910 Pope Saint Pius X ordered that all newly ordained priests recite an oath against Modernism's errors. In language echoing the above citations, it begins: "I, [name], firmly accept and embrace each and every doctrine defined by the Church's unerring teaching authority and all that she has maintained and declared, especially those points of doctrine which directly oppose the errors of our time...." (As should come as absolutely no surprise, the Modernist Conciliar "Catholic" Church does *not* require this oath of its "priests.") And so through the ages, even down to our own day, such has been the Catholic response to heretical innovations disguised as "reforms"—cling as immovably to the infallible magisterium as little childen clutch their parents at the first sign of danger.

An Ongoing Commitment

When Father Fenton started *The Athanasian* in 1980, he followed in spirit the commitment these great saints had in defending Catholic orthodoxy at times of profound crisis. The newsletter was to provide the Catholic remnant with, among other things, forthright, level-headed, and well-researched articles upholding

the Church's moral and doctrinal teachings, exposing the forces aligned against her, and stimulating Catholics to resistance. In short, its purpose was to help them *hold fast* to their faith in the midst of an increasing faithless world.

And so it continues today. We will not allow the hallowed name *Catholic* to be disgraced by the Modernist Conciliar Church nor by some in the traditional movement (no matter how good their intentions may be in many instances) who attach themselves to pseudo-Popes (such as "Gregory XVII" in Canada) or otherwise cast prudence aside through the reception of doubtful sacraments obtained from equally dubious groups. In 1984 *The Athanasian* carried an article, "Exposing the Conciliar Con Game," that relates some of the typical deceptions used by that sect to manipulate the faithful. A decade later we remain just as dedicated to warning Catholic "consumers" about these "scam artists" who prey upon the uninformed.

[Here let me pause to answer the countless questions I anticipate concerning Fr. Fenton. While weakened by his illness, it will come as no surprise at all to regular readers of *The Athanasian* that Father is holding as staunchly as ever to his beliefs. I am quite certain, in fact, that were God to restore Father's health substantially, he would again be making his usual powerful contributions in these pages. Let us pray so, if it be the divine will—*hope springs eternal.* Many of you have expressed to me in letters and phone calls how desperately the Church needs Father and more priests of his caliber, his courage, and his conviction. I heartily concur. And how could I do otherwise? After I saw the abject emptiness of the Conciliar Church around 1980, Fr. Fenton was the first *truly* Catholic priest with whom I made contact. This was surely providential, as he has given me a rock-like support for my faith and countless inspirations for my writing And how very fortunate I've been to benefit from his considerable theological knowledge. He has, needless to say, awaited the resumption of *The Athanasian* as anxiously as anyone. And as always, he thanks you for your prayers and kind thoughts in his behalf and remembers you all in like fashion.]

The newsletter enters its sixteenth year of publication with this issue (I came aboard in 1981 and have been a regular contributor ever since). If one counts a half dozen or so supplements, this marks *The Athanasian's* 140th issue. Through the years many writers—priests, religious, and laity alike—have contributed hundreds of articles spanning more than a thousand pages on various topics. But whatever the different styles and interests evidenced in them, there has been an underlying theme unifying them all: *to defend the Church and her teachings no matter the cost.*

Where We've Been

For the last six months the newsletter has been in a state of "suspended animation." This hiatus was as much thrust upon me as chosen. In the past year I moved three times and was twice sick enough to be unable to write. Not long after the last issue (Spring 1994) was mailed I sent a four-page fundraising letter to approximately one-quarter of our subscribers. The response was promising, and some supporters sent, along with donations, their encouragement and support in letters To quote from a few:

> "I hope and pray you can keep *The Athanasian* operating. It is the best Traditional paper. We surely need it."—J.D., Kentucky

> "I can truly say that *The Athanasian* has done more to help me keep my sanity and my Faith than anything else I have read pertaining to these troubled times. For this I owe you and Father a debt of gratitude....I will do all that I can to help keep *The Athanasian* afloat as I consider it the most important publication in existence in these times."—R.D., Illinois

> "As far as *The Athanasian* is concerned we hope that, with God's help, you will be able to continue its publication without bankrupting yourself."—F.B., Florida

Any number of similar sentiments could be cited, but perhaps it was a Canadian reader who best sums them up, calling *The Athanasian* "indispensible." I can honestly write that without the support of these good people and others like them you would not be reading this newsletter. (On the other hand, it would have

gotten out *much* sooner had other readers, some who have been equally generous in their praise [but *only* in praise], also heeded the appeal. Praise is nice, but it doesn't pay the bills.). Again, my warmest thanks to all benefactors of *The Athanasian*. Here I must pay special tribute to Saint Filumena—or Philomena, as her name is popularly spelled—for her prompt intercession in this regard. (Truly a saint for our times, her remarkable life and gifts will appear in an upcoming feature.)

When the first wave of donations arrived, I took the steps to get the newsletter started. I had already rented a mailing address and registered with the state as a business. Now, I invested in office space, only to determine that the second wave of help was substantially less. *Trouble.*

Let me stop here long enough to clarify an important point. Over the course of my many years writing for Father Fenton, I was paid for my articles by the Traditional Catholics of America. In the last few years my salary had increased to $1000 per article. When Father took ill, the TCA dissolved; so, while I had been given editorship of *The Athanasian*, I no longer enjoyed a regular source of income. Not only that—to keep the newsletter going, I would be required to foot the considerable publishing bills myself. In a matter of months, my financial fortunes had turned 180 degrees. In fact, the contributor who expressed hope that I wouldn't bankrupt myself turns out almost prophetic!

Maintaining office space alone has set me back some $1500. When other newsletter expenses (printing, postage, supplies, etc.), books, rent on the mailing address, registration with the state, and long distance phone calls are added on, the amount almost doubles. All of this over and above my living expenses. As the situation stands, I am so deeply in debt that as I write (January 31th), to cite one example, my January rent hasn't been paid! (By the grace of God I have an understanding landlord, but for how long?) In short, I have sacrificed greatly to keep *The Athanasian* from extinction. Now, it is threatened with insolvency—*as am I*. So it is that I make the following crucial appeal.

The Catholic Journal: An Endangered Species?

If you have been a reader of *The Athanasian* for any length of time the answer to this question will be obvious—you already *know* that the war against the Church has also inflicted crushing wounds against the Catholic press. *How crushing?* Well, I invite you to take a moment and count the number of *truly* Catholic publications on the fingers of your hands. I will be surprised if anyone can get to ten, unless they include foreign journals. It is tough enough to think of even *five* such publications. And of these special few, *The Athanasian* has been at the forefront of the effort to "tear away the mask from Freemasonry" (Pope Leo XIII) and to defend the sedevacantist perspective.

Such is the sorry state of affairs developing over the past three decades that the wholly undeserved title "Catholic" is applied to *once-Catholic* weeklies like *The Wanderer*, which, in addition to its regular support for "Pope" John Paul II and the Conciliar Church, last year went so far as to carry a column defending *artificial birth control* in certain instances! (More on this scandal in a future article.)

While *The Wanderer* and others of its ilk thrive (surely a symptom of the ongoing spiritual sickness of our time), those journals like *The Athanasian*, which are *truly* dedicated to defending the Faith handed down from Saint Paul, Saint Athanasius, and Saint Pius, can barely survive. Hence the present issue has been limited to six pages. These financial limitations also explain why the least expensive printing process is being used here. Yet despite all this cost-cutting, it is still extremely difficult for me to pay for this mailing. As I stated above, at the moment I am without a secretary, so much of my time is also spent doing many of the tasks normally left to someone in that capacity.

All subscriptions have been extended: Those who are paid up at the $16 rate will receive the next eight issues, while those at the $20 rate will be sent the next nine. Assuming I get ample backing, I intend to return to an eight-page format starting next issue. Until the newsletter can get back on firm financial footing, I cannot vouchsafe the frequency of issues; thus I refrain from saying so many *per year*. For additional revenue, back issues of *The Athanasian* will be available, as will advertising (please write for rates).

It is abundantly clear from what Pope Leo XIII teaches on the subject (see "Rome Has Spoken"), that Catholic writers and readers

alike are obliged to assist the Church in this life-and-death struggle ("writings must be opposed by writings") against her mortal enemies. The truly dedicated Catholic, he notes, will aid their journalists and "let everyone, in proportion to his income, support them by his money and influence." Please help *The Athanasian* to continue fighting for those truths to which we all hold fast. Fr. Fenton is very hopeful that I am able to keep publishing. We are counting on your generosity in this urgent matter. Regular *monthly pledges* (even small ones) are greatly needed to help meet ongoing office expenses and, as such, especially appreciated. But *all* our benefactors are particularly remembered in our prayers.

Today, as we see the Church being viciously assailed from all sides, dare any of us pretend to have the luxury of doing nothing? Can we honestly call ourselves *Catholic* in the truest sense of that glorious name, yet remain mute as we see her being gravely and repeatedly wounded. Of course not—not if we have interest in following the mind of the Church as expressed by Pope Leo. We are only really worthy to be counted as members of the Church Militant when we stand up for her in our thoughts, words, and deeds.

One day each of us without exception must appear before Almighty God to account for the way we used the time, gifts, and talents He has given us. Did we employ them to defend His Church at a time of unparalleled crisis or find excuses to fritter them away on empty amusements? I, for one, do not want to appear empty-handed on the Judgement Day and intend to continue fighting to defend her; I urge you to do your part to help. In this I am reminded of a brief but profound proverb told to me by a dear friend and loyal patron of the newsletter from Philadelphia: *Only one life which soon will pass; only what's done for God will last.* †

When making your donations, please remember that since the TCA is defunct, your checks and money orders should now be made directly payable to *The Athanasian*. at the address given below. Thank you and God bless you.

THE ATHANASIAN
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Upcoming articles in THE ATHANASIAN

- GUIDELINES FOR TRADITIONAL CATHOLICS—In this reprint from 1980 Father Fenton outlines twelve rules that are every bit as timely in 1995. Excerpt: "We cannot keep one foot in the Conciliar Church and the other in the true Church....Either we are traditional Roman Catholics or we are not. If we are, then our stand must be a total and unwavering one on behalf of the entirety of our God-given Faith!"

- MORE LIGHT ON THE MASONS—Perhaps you've seen the slogan on some car bumper: *Freemasonry Helped Build America.* This new public relations campaign will be examined, along with evidence of the Lodge's ongoing political and social influence. Material taken from several new books on the subject.

- THE STRENGTH OF POPE SAINT PIUS X—In 1912 a book was published that shows how Catholics saw the Church's struggle with the early Modernists. *Lances Hurled at the Sun* is a series of "essays on current evils" written by Fr. James H. Cotter. Concerning Saint Pius' heroism, he asserts: "To Modernism he declared the right and true against the wrong and false and, with one fell blow, in the words of our greatest dramatist, said: 'Down! Down to hell! and say I sent thee thither!' He left no middle course made up of a little bit of this and a taste of that....Truth will have nothing to do with falsehood, no more than God almighty Himself would touch the devil, save to punish him from a distance."

- QUESTIONING THE THUC APOLOGISTS: A MATTER OF TRUST—Traditional Catholics left Conciliar churches because of unreliable teachings and sacraments. Now, their confidence is being shaken by writers promoting the "episcopacy" of Fr. Daniel Dolan. Omissions, distortions, faulty research, and misleading or inflamatory language abound in their disinformation. Even Fr. Fenton's remarks have been twisted to imply he no longer objects to the "consecration." Father's response appears in this detailed refutation, and decisive evidence will show, once and for all, why Catholics must avoid the "Thuc bishops" *regardless* of that prelate's mental state from 1976-1984.

We implore Thee, O Lord, accept graciously the prayers of Thy Church. Destroy all hostile attacks and errors, that the Church may serve Thee with freedom and without disturbance. Through our Lord. Amen. ✠ 3 years indulgence; plenary when recited once a month.



Test your knowledge of the Faith with the following true and false quiz. Score ten points for each one you know. (Answers are on page six.)

① The gifts of the Holy Ghost are Wisdom, Understanding, Counsel, Fortitude, Knowledge, Piety, and Fear of God.

② The sacramentals are signs containing the santifying and sacramental grace they signify.

③ Among acts forbidden by the Seventh Commandment are merchants using false weights, public officials accepting bribes, and employers defrauding workers of pay.

④ The Mass solemnly commemorates Christ's death on the cross, but it is a different sacrifice.

⑤ Only those who have been faithful to Christ will rise from the dead.

CAPSULE COMMENTS

❑ **" 'THE POPE': A MYSTERY & A SCANDAL"** The heading here sounds rather like a typical *Athanasian* comment on the sorry state of the Holy See, doesn't it? Surprisingly, it is the title of first chapter in John Paul II's international best-seller, *Crossing the Threshold of Hope*. The difference of meaning is enormous, however, as his is a discussion of the Papacy that (typically for him)"defends" it in an utterly Modernistic way. Although a in-depth examination of his book, and of his well-deserved recognition as *Time* magazine's 1994 "Man of the Year," must wait until a future issue, it is worth noting that he states (among other things) that purgatory pertains to an interior purification that takes place *before* death, that we have no proof Judas is in hell, that the alleged "fall of Communism" is a fulfillment of Our Lady's promise at Fatima ("Russia will be converted"), that the Catholic Church "rejoices when other Christian communities join her in preaching the Gospel" and (echoing the Old Catholic heresy) that the dignity of the Pope cannot be considered apart from that of the other bishops,.†

❑ **HEREDITARY SIN?** Speaking of *Time*, a special report featured in the August 15 issue is sure to raise some eyebrows. Accompanied by a picture of a broken wedding band, the cover headline asserts: "Infidelity: It May Be In Our Genes." Inside the magazine is a instructive look at the humanistic mindset would put God utterly out of the picture. How else to explain writer Robert Wright's attempts to put human sexuality in the context of gorilla "harems" and the mating habits of indigo buntings? "Evolution not only invented romantic love," he argues, "but from the beginning corrupted it." Later (without referencing to God in the slightest) he calls man "a moral animal," but then states that "much of human nature boils down to genetic self-interest." Wright is only the latest to suggest that immorality can somehow be waived aside by chromosomes. This goes along with the absurd "born 'gay'" argument. (What will researchers discover next—a *shoplifting* gene?) What all of this boils down to is a secular distortion of the doctrine of *Original Sin*. The corruption of human nature is conceded, but instead disobedience causing estrangement from God, it is simply argued as an unfeeling evolutionary mechanism; instead of a spiritual sickness with eternal implications, it is seen, at worst, as a behavioral problem that can have a negative impact on society; instead of a dilemma of the soul that requires the Saviour's intervention, it is made into a psychological disorder that can be solved by visits to a therapist. When one considers that it is precisely this atheistic philosophy that pervades the media, films, television, sex education classes, the rantings of the former Surgeon General, and, less obviously, the "mainstream" liberal churches, there should be no surprise at the high rates of divorce, abortion, self-abuse, unwed mothers, birth control, prostitution, pornography,, homosexuality, AIDS and other venereal diseases, etc. When such concepts as free will and moral accountability are thus cast aside, sinful (and even unnatural) acts are reduced to virtually uncontrollable urges ("the DNA made me do it!"). Society will continue its downward spiral as long as those in positions of power and influence make such destructive views part of their public policy.For, writes the emminent Irish Archbishop M. Sheehan in his *Apologetics & Catholic Doctrine:* "It is only by accepting the revealed doctrine of Original

Sin that we can understand why the world is marred by so much wickedness and unhappiness. Because of the frustration of God's purpose by the sin of Adam, man is burdened with a corrupt human nature, and is at feud even with the material surroundings in which he lives; within him, he feels the strong pull of evil passions, and in the course of this life 'in this vale of tears,' he has to bear much sorrow and suffering." †

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Answers to *Catholic puzzler*

① True.
② False. Sacraments and sacramentals are signs used by Catholics, but only the *sacraments* contain the graces they signify.
③ True.
④ False. Although the manner is different, the Mass is the same sacrifice because the victim is the same, and the main priest is the same—Jesus Christ.
⑤ False. All will rise from the dead, but only the faithful will share in His glory (John 5:28-29).

You cannot be half a saint. You must be a whole saint or no saint at all.

-Saint Thérèse of Lisieux

Most certainly God will not condemn those sinners who have recourse to Mary, and for whom she prays, since He Himself commended them to her as her children.

-Saint Alphonsus Liguori



Now that we have learnt by experience in what times we live, nothing could be more fatal than to endure in cowardly inertness the malice of the wicked which never tires, and to leave the field open to them to persecute the Church to the full satisfaction of their hate....It is of very great importance that writings of a healthy character should be published and circulated far and wide. Those who, with a deadly hatred, dissent from the Church, are wont to contend by means of publications, and to make use of these as arms best adapted for inflicting injury....Writings must be opposed by writings, so that the same art which can effect the most destruction, may in turn be applied to the salvation and benefit of mankind, and remedies be supplied from that source whence evil poisons are now obtained....For these reasons it is necessary that those who have devoted themselves to writing should observe further that they all keep the same end in view, that they should clearly ascertain what is most expedient and carry it out; that they omit none of those things the knowledge of which seems useful and desirable; that, with gravity and moderation of speech, they reprove errors and vices; in such a way, however, that their reproof may be without bitterness, and with a respect for the individuals; lastly that they use a plain and clear manner of speech, which the multitude can easily understand. But let all other persons, who truly and *ex animo* ["heartily"] desire that religion and society, defended by human intellect and literature, should flourish, let them endeavor by their liberality to guard and protect these productions of literature and intellect; let everyone, in proportion to his income, support them by his money and his influence. For to those who devote themselves to writing we ought by all means to bring helps of this kind; without which their industry will either have no results, or uncertain and disappointing ones....

✠ *Pope Leo XIII* [*Etsi nos*, 1882]