

THE ATHANASIAN

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(The Conciliar Church and John Paul II are once again the topics of the following article. Since this matter has been discussed a number of times in recent years in the pages of this newsletter, it has certainly been given sufficient attention and the position of the author has been made crystal clear. With the appearance of this particularly outspoken article then, we will put aside this subject for a while. If future circumstances warrant, we will, of course, return to it.)

NO OTHER EXPLANATION IS ADEQUATE

Fr. Francis E. Fenton

The Conciliar Church is not the Roman Catholic Church and the man who is its head, John Paul II, is not a valid pope. As regular readers of this newsletter well know, this is my absolute conviction, a conviction, of course, likewise shared by other Roman Catholics, both priests and laymen. Further, it is my contention that it is this clear-cut, unqualified position on these two subjects which, more than anything else, identifies the truly traditional Roman Catholic and separates him from all the rest who call themselves such and who think they are.

The proof, I submit, is overwhelming that the Conciliar Church is nothing more than another heretical non-Catholic denomination. While, admittedly, the case for the invalidity of John Paul II is far less obvious, yet the evidence is there—and it is conclusive—that he is not a true pope. (As noted in the September 1, 1985 issue of *The Athanasian*, the booklet by Father Noel Barbara of France contains the best treatment I have seen on the subject of the invalidity of John Paul II.) Incidentally, if it were readily apparent that the current occupant of the papal throne was a non-pope, the game would long since have been up for the destroyers of the Church, would it not? But that would never do. Those whose satanic task and purpose has been and is the total destruction of the Roman Catholic Church are brilliant operators and expert subverters, as the record of the past few decades very clearly shows. And because those primarily responsible over the years for the destruction of the Church have been so strikingly skillful and clever, they have been able to continue their nefarious work right up to the present moment without effective exposure.

It is not the purpose of this article to present again the case against the Conciliar Church and John Paul II. That has been done sufficiently in a number of issues of this newsletter, most recently in the issues of June 1 and September 1, 1985. My concern here has to do with the question as to why it is that conservative "Catholics" and so many self-styled traditional Catholics fail to see the Conciliar Church for what it is and fail to see John Paul II for what he is. How explain this? Is it that I and those traditional Roman Catholics who share my convictions on

these matters are smarter or more perceptive than they? Hardly. But what is the explanation? How can something of this sort be so obvious to me and others and yet apparently anything but obvious to those conservative and "traditional" Catholics to whom I refer? Could it be that they actually see the picture every bit as clearly as I do but refuse to face up to it and its consequences for one reason or another? Perhaps this is the case in some instances but I would be reluctant to believe that this applies to the generality of such individuals because this would be to question their honesty and courage, many of whom, in other respects, give every indication of sincerity and devotion to truth.

What is the answer? How can so many conservative "Catholics" and so-called traditional Catholics behold the pathetic Conciliar Church and still believe it to be the one true Church? And how can this same category of people believe John Paul II to be a valid pope in view of, among other things, his public, persistent, heretical position on the subject of false religious liberty previously condemned by the Church? How can they possibly excuse or justify this in a man supposedly the Vicar of Christ? Do they imagine that he's in good faith and really just doesn't know the truth of the matter? Preposterous!

John Paul II, actor *par excellence*, champion of "ecumenism," idolized by millions—he is the one person who is, far and away, the one responsible here and now for the tragic state of the Church. (There are, to be sure, others in the Vatican and elsewhere who share that responsibility in various degrees, not the least of whom is the number two man in the Vatican, the Freemason Secretary of State, Cardinal Agostino Casaroli. Incidentally, not only has John Paul II never once publicly mentioned, much less condemned, Communism throughout the entire course of his "pontificate"—an observation made in previous issues of this newsletter—but the same can be said regarding Freemasonry. If he has ever condemned it, or even so much as uttered the word on any occasion, I certainly am not aware of it.

Are those "traditional" and conservative "Catholics" of the Conciliar Church going to grope for excuses and

grasp at straws forever to defend that Church and to explain away the words and deeds of John Paul II? Or will the day come when they will finally face up to the stark fact that the one logical explanation for the tragic Church situation is what authentic traditional Roman Catholics have been saying for quite some time now—and that is, once again, that the Conciliar Church is not Catholic and that the man who is its head, John Paul II, is not a valid pope? They blame anyone and everyone for the chaotic mess except the one primarily responsible. The bishops are at fault, for example, but most of those bishops are the appointees of John Paul II or of the one he is so fond of calling his mentor, Paul VI. Or it is the fault of those Modernists and “liberals” in the Vatican who give John Paul II bad advice. Why doesn’t he dismiss them then? The “Holy Father” is really a traditionalist at heart, you know, but just can’t get the Church back on track because of all the obstacles confronting him. Nonsense! The Conciliar Church is what it is today as a result of the deliberate destructive efforts of John Paul II and his predecessors and allies.

Such is my absolute conviction. The enemies of the true Church are in control of the Conciliar Church—and John Paul II is at least the most prominent of those enemies. Mainly because of his heretical position over the past several years on the subject of religious liberty he has long since ceased to be a valid pope. (Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre makes an excellence case against John Paul II on this religious liberty issue but stops short of drawing the logical conclusion.) How long more will conservative “Catholics” (as exemplified by *The Wanderer*) and “traditional” Catholics (as exemplified by *The Remnant* and *The Angelus*) continue to refuse to face up to the reality of the situation? How long more, if ever, before they conclude that the stand of the *real* traditional Catholic is the only logical answer? The Conciliar Church is *not* the Roman Catholic Church and John Paul II is a *non*-pope. No other explanation is adequate. No other answer makes sense.†

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The date on the envelope address label indicates the month and year in which the recipient’s subscription is due for renewal. At the proper time, a subscription envelope will be enclosed with the newsletter. One may enter a new subscription at any time, of course, and will then receive the eight following newsletter issues.†

A Couple of Notes

As of this writing I have a total of 90 Mass intentions to be fulfilled. Hence, in order that I may not have too large a backlog of Masses to which I am committed, I am reluctant to accept any more Mass requests until I can satisfy those I presently have. I would be grateful, then, if no further Mass requests were sent to me during the next several weeks, say, until May 1. After that date I will be pleased to accept them again.

† † † † †

Very noticeable by its absence from this issue of *The Athanasian* is an article by Mr. John Weiskittel. The reason is a simple one: it arrived too late for inclusion. He will return to these pages in the April 15 issue. Liberation theology and cremation are among the topics likely to be discussed by Mr. Weiskittel in future issues.

— Fr. F. Fenton

Pray The Rosary Daily

“The Church is like the moon; it may wane but never be destroyed; it may be darkened but it can never disappear.” (Saint Ambrose)

“I know not what the future holds but I know Who holds the future.”

Religious Indifferentism

“**W**e all worship the same God”; “we’re all on different roads that lead to the same place”; “it’s deeds not creeds that count.” These are a few of the sayings expressive of the false doctrine of religious indifferentism, that doctrine which holds that all religions are equally good and acceptable before God.

Religious indifferentism is, in a word, heresy for it is an implicit denial of the One True Church. If all religions are equally good, then obviously the Roman Catholic Church is no better, and essentially no different, than any or all of the others. If it is really of little or no importance what a person believes just so long as he lives what he honestly thinks is a morally good life, it follows that the doctrines of the Church—contained, for example, in the Apostles Creed—may readily be rejected without endangering one’s salvation. What a monumental waste of time and effort, then, on the part of the Son of God to preach and to teach a body of doctrine and a code of morality if, in fact, man can actually believe what he pleases in matters of religion! And what a colossal tragedy that countless multitudes have given their lives as martyrs down through the centuries in testimony to the Catholic Faith when, according to the advocates and practitioners of religious indifferentism, it’s quite insignificant to what Church one belongs or what religious creed, if any, one accepts!

“For this I was born, and for this came I into the world; that I should give testimony to the truth.” (John 18, 37) So spoke the Son of God to Pilate on Good Friday. The contention that one religion is just as good as another makes a mockery of truth, in this case, divine truth, and contradicts the record of history as well. (It was the distinguished convert from Anglicanism, John Cardinal Newman, who stated that “to be deep in history is to cease to be a Protestant”). To present the standard proofs that the Roman Catholic Church is the One True Church is, however, beyond the scope of this article. That is here taken for granted. Because it is the One True Church though, unique among all the world’s religions, certain obligations are incumbent upon its members as a consequence of this. Regardless of the circumstances, a Catholic, for example, may never verbally deny that he is a Catholic nor take any action which is equivalent to a denial of the Faith or of the One True Church. For a Catholic to say, then, either in so many words or in effect, that one religion is just as good as another is a clearly implicit denial of the Roman Catholic Church as the One True Church. The same holds true of any *action* on the part of a Catholic, be he priest or layman, which

could readily give the impression that all religions are equally good and acceptable to God.

Any Catholic worthy of the name knows and believes, unless his religious education has been woefully deficient, that, among all the religions and denominations and sects in the world, there is but One True Church—and that is the Roman Catholic Church. That being understood, a Catholic must always and everywhere speak and act accordingly, never even implicitly conveying the erroneous notion that one religion is as good as another. Loving our non-Catholic fellowman in Christian charity is one thing; explicitly or implicitly condoning his religious errors is something else. Although we may hold this or that non-Catholic in high regard for one reason or another, this must not mean approval of his religious errors or the false religion he professes. If we are true followers of Christ, it is our duty to be intolerant of error, and especially of error in the form of false religions and religious beliefs. True brotherly love in relation to our non-Catholic friends and acquaintances consists, among other things, in our striving, tactfully and with the grace of God, to lead them into the household of the Faith.

To hold, then, that one religions is more or less as good as another, or to talk or act in a manner which conveys the clear implication that one believes this, is known as religious indifferentism. But since religious indifferentism is, in effect, a denial of the Roman Catholic Church as the One True Church, it is, in fact, heresy. Since Vatican Council II, however, it is no longer considered such by many of the clergy and laity of the Conciliar Church and its practice has become ever increasingly widespread. Words and actions which were once heretical or bordering on heresy are now quite acceptable to, if not even encouraged by, the Conciliar Church. What was formerly condemned as religious indifferentism is now approved as “ecumenism.” Whatever it’s called though, it’s still heresy!

If religious indifferentism was condemned in the past because it was an implicit denial of the Roman Catholic Church as the one and only true religion, then “ecumenism” is every bit as condemnable today for the same reason. The difference, of course, is that in the past all truly Catholic bishops and priests believed in the uniqueness of the Church as the One True Church and as the Mystical Body of Christ, whereas today many, if not most, of the clergy of the Conciliar Church simply do not believe this. Put another way, the difference is between the logical po-

(continued on page 4, column 2)

Prayer, Knowledge, Action

In whatever nation the Communists have gained adequate control, religion and patriotism have been systematically destroyed to the extent possible and feasible under the particular circumstances. If, God forbid, the long-planned Communist conquest of America fully materializes, the same will happen here and no stone will be left unturned to eliminate every last vestige of religion and patriotism. Love and service of God and of country—the destruction of these fundamental loyalties of a nation's citizenry is an absolute prerequisite of the Communists for the total conquest of that nation.

To prevent the tragedy of a Communist America, it is increasingly imperative that all true and, therefore, anti-Communist Americans do their full part. But so many of them are not, including many traditional Roman Catholics. While admitting the Communist threat, they contend that prayer alone will do the job. Despite what is overwhelming evidence to the contrary, such people seem quite convinced that, as long as we pray, keep the Commandments, practice our Faith, the Communist conspiracy will be stopped and ultimately defeated or, perhaps, disintegrate. This position is not substantiated by the experience of other once-free nations now under Communist control, the faith and devotion of whose citizens were well-known, Poland, Hungary, Lithuania, for example.

When faced with concrete situations demanding intelligent and courageous action it is imperative that we realize that God expects us to do our part. We must not, in effect, rely on His performance of a miracle to solve some grave problem. "God will provide" may well be a sincere act of faith in the power and goodness of the Almighty but it presumes that we likewise use our God-given abilities and talents to provide for ourselves and for those for whom we are responsible. Sacred Scripture tells us that faith without works is dead. So too, at least in this present context, prayer without knowledgeable action is insufficient. "Pray as if everything depended upon God and work as if everything depended upon yourself" is the sage advice often attributed to Saint Augustine.

No, prayer alone, apart from a miracle, will not stop or turn back or destroy the criminal Communist conspiracy. That it is absolutely essential, there is no question for, without God and His indispensable aid, we cannot conquer the militant atheism which is Communism. But together with prayer there must be joined adequate knowledge of Communism and intelligent, courageous, persevering action. Only in the combination of the three—prayer, knowledge, action—can we reasonably

and confidently look for ultimate victory, God willing, over the horrendous threat posed to freemen by the satanic conspiracy of atheistic Communism.

(With but few changes the above article is every bit as applicable to the conspiracy of Freemasonry.)

Pray The Rosary Daily

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"Religious Indifferentism" continued from page 3

sition on the subject of the real (traditional) Roman Catholic Church and the equally logical position of that Church which is no longer Catholic although it still retains the name. With the latter, one Church might very well indeed be just as good as another.

The Roman Catholic Church is not one of many. It is unique. It is the One, True Church whose history can be traced back to the Apostles and to Christ Himself, its Founder. So forceful and convincing are the arguments for its uniqueness among all the Churches of the world that untold millions have entered its fold over the course of some nineteen and a half centuries, included among them some of the greatest minds of every generation.

Of the many obligations, then, which being a Catholic entails is the positive one of professing the Faith when circumstances require it, and the negative one of never denying the Faith either explicitly or implicitly. Religious indifferentism or, as it is called today, "ecumenism," is an implicit denial of the Roman Catholic Church as the one and only true Church. And so no Catholic, however laudable his intentions may be, may talk or act in a manner which even conveys the impression that one religion is just as good as another. This is, in large part, the "ecumenism" so widely in vogue today in the Conciliar Church. Once known as the great American heresy, religious indifferentism is now practiced on a worldwide scale. Any and every genuine Catholic, however, must and will shun it like the plague which it most certainly is. †

The Middle Ages: Dark Ages or the Ages of Faith? (Part 1)

Jill Wiesner

Fifty years before the birth of our Lord the seeds of destruction of the Roman Empire were being sown. The Chinese Empire expelled a tribe called the Huns from its borders, beginning a movement known as the migration of nations. As the Huns moved westward they attacked all nations in their path. Fleeing the brutal Huns, these nations entered Europe in search of new lands.

From the time of Caesar Augustus the Roman legions guarded the frontiers of the Empire against the migrating nations, which they called barbarians. The first to arrive, the Goths, lived in peace with their Roman neighbors for some time. Their leaders even trained and served in the Roman army. Later, however, they became restive and revolted against the Empire, attacking Rome itself.

Soon after the arrival of the Goths the Franks invaded Gaul. The Vandals rode south through Spain and into northern Africa, conquering all the Roman provinces in their path. By the year 570, the Lombards had laid waste to most of Italy. The provinces in Britain were in the possession of the Angles, Jutes and Saxons. When the invasions ended all that was left of the vast Roman Empire was the small territory around Constantinople. The Western world was in the hands of new nations.

The immediate effects of the invasions were upheaval and disorder. The remains of Roman civilization were in ruins and the young Catholic Church had suffered terrible losses as well. Clergy and laity alike had defended their cities against the invaders and great numbers of them had lost their lives. Many monasteries and churches were destroyed.

However, the "barbarians" were not savages. Though rough and uncultured compared to the worldly Greeks and Romans, they were vigorous and unspoiled. Unlike the moral decay of the ancient pagans, the invaders had high ideals of self-respect and personal liberty. They were loyal to their tribes, devoted to their kin and had a great respect for womanhood.

Among these people the Church began the work of conversion. The primary instrument used to accomplish this task was the order of monks founded by Saint Benedict.

Born in 480, the son of a noble family, Benedict was sent to school in Rome at age 14. The immorality he saw

there caused him to devote his life to God, offering purity and humility as reparation for the worldliness of others. Withdrawing for awhile to the solitude of a cave, he began his lifelong practice of prayer and penance. He then went to Monte Cassino where he constructed two chapels. He was joined there by other young men who also wanted to devote their lives to the service of God. This was the beginning of the Benedictine Order.

The Rule with which Saint Benedict guided his monks stressed silence, solitude, prayer, humility and obedience. The soul was to concentrate on God and avoid thoughts of the world so that solitude was "interior as well as exterior." Thoughts of the imperfections of others were to be banished and only the imperfections of oneself were to be brought to mind. Saint Benedict laid down twelve degrees of humility in his Rule:

1. Deep compunction of heart and holy fear of God and His judgments.
2. The perfect renunciation of our own will.
3. Ready obedience.
4. Patience under all sufferings and injuries.
5. The manifestation of our thoughts and designs to our superior or director.
6. To be content, and to rejoice, in all humiliations; to be pleased with mean employments, poor clothes, etc.; to love simplicity and poverty and to judge ourselves as unworthy and bad servants in everything that is enjoined us.
7. Sincerely to esteem ourselves base and more unworthy than everyone, even the greatest sinners.
8. To avoid all love of singularity in words or actions.
9. To love and practice silence.
10. To avoid dissolute mirth and laughter.
11. Never to speak with a loud voice, and to be modest in our words.
12. To be humble in all our exterior actions...

Saint Benedict promised that faithful application of the twelve degrees would, with God's help, elevate the soul to perfect charity.

The Benedictine motto, "Ora et labora" (Work and pray), was followed in all the monasteries that were established throughout Europe. Wherever they went, the monks drained marshes, cleared forests, tilled barren fields, and built monasteries and schools. The monasteries became centers of learning so that a number of the great universities of Europe had their beginnings as monasteries. The monks also carefully recorded history, preserving the memory of Greek and Roman culture; and copied Scriptures, decorating the pages with the beautiful designs called illumination.

The Rule of Saint Benedict became the model for every other monastic rule written since his day. In addition, men and women living in the world, but trying to live holy lives, chose it as their guide, as did Christian princes in writing constitutions for their states.

Conversions grew through the holy influence of the monks. However, missionaries also came from the Eastern Roman Empire who preached the false doctrine of Arianism. Arian priests came with the invading Vandals who persecuted the Church in Africa, took her property and turned it over to the Arian clergy.

Though Arians sowed confusion among a number of "barbarian" nations, the Franks, who entered Gaul in 485, had not been exposed to Arianism. On Christmas Day 496, their warrior-king Clovis, with 3,000 of his nobles and warriors, received Baptism from Saint Remigius, Bishop of Rheims. His kingdom, France, became a Catholic nation and is regarded as the "eldest daughter" of the Church in Europe.

Under the Franks the slaves of the Roman Empire became serfs and acquired more personal freedom. They did, however, still belong to the land of the local lord. The Church opposed serfdom and, when she could not prevent it, did everything possible to make the burden of the serfs easier. Bishops were required to protect serfs against violence from their masters; a special religious ceremony accompanied the granting of freedom to a serf; the priests attending lords at their deathbeds were instructed to encourage them to free their serfs.

In the year 540, three years before the death of Saint Benedict, one of his greatest followers was born. Gregory (whose name means "watchman" in Greek) was a bright, eager student who became well-versed in both civil law and the canons of the Church. At age 34 he was chosen Praetor (governor and chief magistrate) of Rome by the Emperor Justinian the Younger. Though this was a position of great honor, Gregory's chief pleasure was conversation with the holy monks. He espe-

cially loved the Rule of Saint Benedict and, after one year as Praetor, he joined the Benedictine Order.

The sight of several young Angles (English) for sale as slaves in the marketplace increased the young monk's missionary zeal. Learning that they were still heathens, he lamented that "so fine an outside should have nothing of God's grace to furnish it within." He applied to Pope Benedict I to send him as a missionary to Britain. Permission was granted but the Roman people prevailed upon the Pope, telling him, "In suffering Gregory to go away, you have destroyed Rome: you have undone us, and offended St. Peter." Gregory was recalled but was soon sent as ambassador from the Holy See to Emperor Tiberius in Constantinople where he opposed several nascent heresies. In Constantinople he continued the monastic way of life, unaffected by the opulence of the imperial court. Several monks accompanied him, at his request, in order that, through their example, he would not stray from the path of simplicity and prayer.

His mission completed, Gregory returned to Rome, which was once again under siege, this time by the plague. In January of 590, Pope Pelagius II died from it, and the clergy, senate and Roman people unanimously chose Gregory as the new Pope. Gregory, though unsuccessfully, opposed their choice with all his strength, writing to every bishop of influence as well as to the emperor, since it was the custom in a papal election to consult the emperor as the head of the senate and the people.

Throughout this period of time the plague continued to decimate the city, the number of deaths increasing daily. Pope Gregory exhorted the Roman people to repentance, and asked the faithful to assemble under the direction of their priests in each of the seven districts of the city. In solemn procession, chanting the *Kyrie Eleison*, they all approached the church of St. Mary Major where the holy Sacrifice of the Mass was offered. During the procession, which lasted for about one hour, a number of those who assisted fell dead in the streets. But, led by the example and prayers of Gregory, the people continued the procession. Soon after, the plague abated.

Throughout his years as Pope, Gregory continued the practice of solemn processions to one of the principal churches of Rome on the great festivals of the Church. Traces of this custom can be found in our missals today where, during Advent and Lent and on the festivals of Christmas and Easter, we read that the Station is at St. Peter's or St. Mary Major's or at one of the other great station churches.

Pope Gregory I reigned for thirteen and a half years and is better known today by the title, Saint Gregory the Great. He was a powerful force for unity and order

within the Church as well as an able instructor of the faithful.

Since the Emperor in Constantinople lacked the money and the troops to defend Rome against the Lombards, the protection of the city was left to the Pope. With the income from the lands which had been donated to the Church, he was able to buy off the Lombards while at the same time repairing the walls of the city and raising troops. During this time he passed laws concerning the proper treatment of slaves.

In the midst of temporal cares Saint Gregory's greatest concern was his spiritual mission. To the Angles he sent the great Benedictine missionary, Saint Augustine of Canterbury. Through the efforts of this first Archbishop of Canterbury that nation was converted. In Saint Gregory's lifetime the conversion of the Visigoths of Spain from Arianism was also accomplished, paganism in Corsica and Sardinia overcome, and the conversion of the Arian Lombards begun.

Saint Gregory's love for the beauty of divine worship led to the development and use of the incomparable Church music known as Gregorian Chant.

Saint Gregory the Great is one of the four Latin Doctors of the Church because of his writings, among which is the *Liber Regulae Pastoralis* ("The Pastoral Rule") which helped to regulate the life and manners of the clergy for centuries. This holy Pope was the first to use the title, "Servant of the Servants of God." Every Pope since has signed his letters to the faithful in this manner.

A conscientious follower of the Rule of Saint Benedict, Saint Gregory gained conversions, not by force but by mildness and charity. But his meekness did not dull his courage in defense of the Church. "You know me," he wrote to one of his bishops, "and that I tolerate a long while; but when I have once determined to bear no longer, I go with joy against all dangers."

Through example and prayer Saint Benedict, Saint Gregory the Great and those who followed them carried the light of Christian civilization into the new nations. We, who have the task of preserving that civilization, would do well to emulate them. Remembering the Rule of Saint Benedict and the perseverance of Pope Saint Gregory, we too can "go with joy against all dangers."†

The Saints On Baptism Of Desire And Of Blood

Saint Ambrose says in his sermon on the Emperor Valentinian II, who died a catechumen: "I hear you express grief that he did not receive the Sacrament of Baptism. Tell me, what else is there in us except the will and petition? But he had long desired to be initiated before he came to Italy, and expressed his intention to be baptized by me as soon as possible... Has he not, therefore, the grace which he desired? Surely he received it because he asked it." (De Obitu Valent., 51)

Saint Augustine says: "I find that not only suffering for the name of Christ can supply the defect of Baptism, but even faith and conversion of heart, if there be no time for celebrating the Sacrament." (De Bapt., iv., 22)

Saint Augustine writes: "To all those who die confessing Christ, even though they have not received the laver of regeneration, martyrdom will prove as effective for the remission of sins as if they were washed at the baptismal font." (De Civ. Dei., xiii, 2)

Saint Thomas Aquinas (SUMMA THEOLOGICA, Vol. II, Pt. III, Qt. 68, Art. 2: "Whether a Man Can be Saved Without Baptism?"): "I ANSWER THAT... Secondly, the Sacrament of Baptism may be wanting to anyone in reality but not in desire: for instance, when a man wishes to be baptized, but by some ill-chance he is forestalled by death before receiving Baptism. And such a man can obtain salvation without being actually baptized, on account of his desire for Baptism, which desire is the outcome of 'Faith that worketh by charity,' whereby God, Whose power is not tied to visible sacraments, sanctifies man inwardly. Hence Ambrose says of Valentinian, who died while yet a catechumen: "I lost him whom I was to regenerate: but he did not lose the grace he prayed for."

And, "REPLY OBJ. 3—The Sacrament of Baptism is said to be necessary for salvation in so far as man cannot be saved without, at least, Baptism of desire; 'which, with God, counts for the deed' (August., ENARR. in Ps. lvii)."

Christian Joy

Ever since the fall of our first parents sorrow and suffering have been and, until the end of time, will continue to be the lot of every human being born into this world. They are part and parcel of human life. As always, so now, some people experience more difficult trials than others, some live lives of almost continual hardship, some endure their troubles unknown to any but God—but everyone suffers in one form or another. Such is life.

Now, is genuine happiness possible despite all this? Indeed, not only is it possible but the cultivation of such happiness is our Christian duty. And how can this be? Simply because our Catholic Faith is a Faith of joy because its sources of joy in Christ are completely independent of human sorrow and pain and misery and wretchedness.

Take the New Testament. It opens with a burst of joy over the birth of the Savior. It closes with a picture of countless multitudes singing in the heavenly courts of the just. Almost anywhere you open it, amid all kinds of circumstances, you can nearly always find some note of happiness. Even at the Last Supper, on the eve of His Passion and Death, the Apostles hear Jesus saying to them: "These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and your joy may be filled." (John 15, 11) After Christ had ascended into Heaven and His Apostles were left alone to carry on His work, we read that they continued daily in the temple and "took their food with gladness and simplicity of heart." (Acts 2, 46) And when the Apostles were scourged and tortured for preaching the doctrines of Christ, Holy Scripture describes them as "rejoicing that they were accounted worthy to suffer reproach for the name of Jesus." (Acts 5, 41) No matter how sad and distressing were the condi-

tions in which they found themselves, so often the disciples of Christ would inject some note of joy. And why? Because there is no room for prolonged sorrow in the Catholic Faith because behind it and within it is the divine personality of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the ultimate source of all true happiness.

And so, any Catholic who has a real and strong faith and who firmly believes in the goodness and mercy of God will be joyful even under the most trying conditions, for such a person has perfect confidence that Almighty God will bring forth victory in His own good time. It is a contradiction that any genuine follower of Christ become discouraged and lose heart because of the sufferings which are his. The servant is not greater than the Master and the Master first suffered and died for us.

Ideally, then, we Catholics should be joyful always, with a joy arising from the conviction that this short life is merely a period of probation and trial and that eternal happiness in God's glorious Kingdom awaits those who remain faithful. We Catholics should cultivate an abiding spirit of joy as our Christian duty, a joy which is beyond the world and the hardness of circumstances as was that of our divine Model, He Who could say to His beloved followers on the eve of His crucifixion: "These things I have spoken to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you shall have distress: but have confidence, I have overcome the world." (John 16, 33) And whenever we tend to become sad and depressed, Christ's words of encouragement to His Apostles at the Last Supper should renew in us a joyful spirit: "So also you now indeed have sorrow; but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice; and your joy no man shall take from you." (John 16, 22)†

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