

THE SERAPH

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*In essentia - Únitás. In dúbio - Libertas.
In ómnibus - Cáritas.*

AUTHORITY

All the authority that is exercised by the Church and Her ministers, is exercised in virtue of the commission of Christ. He is the One Prophet Who has given the world the revelation of truth and by His Spirit preserves in the Church the faith once delivered to the saints. He is the One Priest, ever pleading on behalf of the Church, the sacrifice of Calvary. And He is the one King – the chief Shepherd. (I Peter v, 4) He rules and guides through His providence His Church's course. However, He has chosen to exercise His power through earthly representatives – the apostles and their successors, the true bishops of the Church.

“A (true) pope has a universal jurisdiction (over both clergy and laity) by Divine Right. The government of the faithful by bishops possessed of ordinary jurisdiction (i.e. a jurisdiction that is not held by mere delegation, but is exercised in their own name) is likewise of Divine ordinance. But the system by which the Church is territorially divided into dioceses, within that district, is an ecclesiastical arrangement capable

of modification.” (See THE CATHOLIC ENCYCLOPEDIA, 1913 volume 3, pg. 755)

In civil governments, we see how authority comes from and through the people. It is the people (especially in democracies and republics) that empower or give authority to the government and rulers over the people. The complete opposite is the case with the Church. Her power comes directly from God and not from the people. The Protestant view that ecclesiastical authority is ministerial only, and derived by delegation from the faithful, was expressly condemned by Pius VI (1794) in his Constitution “Auctórem Fidéi.” (q.v) St. Pope Pius X repeated this condemnation in the Encyclical on the errors of the Modernists.

The Apostles used the authority committed to them while they lived and before they died they took measures to perpetuate the government of the Church. From that day to this the hierarchy thus established has claimed and has exercised the threefold office of : teaching, sacrificing (sanctifying), and governing.

What the bishops (the Church) teach is what God has revealed. It is not the personal thoughts or wishes that bishops must preach, but rather, the unsullied doctrine that has been handed down from the apostles. The bishop is actually sworn to maintain this doctrine that was given to him and to neither add to it nor take away from it. The doctrine that has been given to us by God through the Church cannot change because it is from God, Who is unchangeable. We cannot bring the teachings of the Church into conformity with ourselves or the world; rather, we must bring ourselves and the world into conformity with the teachings of the Church.

For example: the Church clearly teaches that the abominations of same sex unions are evils that must be avoided or overcome. St. Paul in his letter to the Romans (1, 25-28) informs us that these sins are reprobate, unnatural, etc. These sins have come upon the people because they had practiced idolatry. Because they turned away from God, they had removed themselves from the presence of God's grace. In the absence of God's grace they began to follow all their per-

verse passions. "For their women have changed the natural use into that use which is against nature. And in like manner, the men also, leaving the natural use of the woman, have burned in their lusts one towards another, men with men, working that which is filthy, and receiving in themselves the recompense which was due to their error." This teaching of St. Paul is the teaching of an apostle; it is the teaching of the Church; and is therefore the teaching of God. There is no denying this or changing it. The Church cannot mitigate it in any way.

The Protestants (false Christians) and Modernists have set out to change the teachings of God and of the Church so that it will conform to the evil desires of men. They would have us believe that God accepts, and even blesses, these perverse unnatural sins. This is blasphemy – that God should promote evil. This god that is believed in and worshiped by the promoters and justifiers of the sin of sodomy is none other than the devil. They may use the name of Jesus and speak of God, but ultimately they have denied the true God and placed devils in His place.

We must therefore conclude that all who would claim to be bishops yet condone, endorse or promote that which has definitely been condemned are not true bishops and successors of the Apostles. All those who preach a different doctrine than that which has been given us by the Apostles (the Church) should be re-

jected, even if they appear as an angel of light. (Confer: Galatians 1, 8) We must, therefore, reject these teachings that contradict the established teachings of the true Church. We must reject those who teach such falsehoods as false bishops. We must reject the churches that are in union with false bishops and false teachings, as likewise false churches.

The true bishops and the true Church have the obligation to preserve and transmit through their teaching all the doctrines of Jesus, Christ. The rest of the world is under obligation to listen and believe or else be lost. The world has no power

to modify or lessen anything that the true bishops teach. In the same vein, the bishops have been commissioned by God to offer sacrifice for the people so that they may be sanctified. This sacrifice has been instituted by God and it is not in the power of anyone, the true bishops included, to

We see that the true bishops, in exercising their authority to teach and to sanctify, do not do so by their own commission, but rather by the commission of God.

change the sacrifice, or to re-interpret the sacrifice to make it more in conformity with the world and the times. It is the world and the times that must conform to the sac-

rifice and also the sacraments that have been given by God for the sanctification of men.

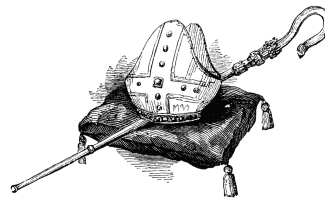
We see that the true bishops, in exercising their authority to teach and to sanctify, do not do so by their own commission, but rather by the commission of God. They are not therefore free to do as they please but must faithfully preserve and transmit what has been faithfully given to them.

The last of the three-fold powers of the bishops is that of rul-

ing or governing. This also they do in the name of God and of the Church. They may make rules for their children, and may impose penalties for any infractions to these laws they have made. Often, the children of the Church will find fault with their true bishops, and murmur or rebel against their authority. We often tend to forget that we must obey in all things that are not sinful. Obviously if we are commanded to do something offensive to God we must not obey, and we may then even question if the one issuing such a command has legitimate power or authority to do so. If the command of a true bishop is not sinful, we must obey to the best of our ability, even if it appears unfair or unjust. He will have to give an account of his actions to God. We, however, in suffering patiently and humbly obeying cannot go wrong. God, Himself, will reward us both here in this life, and most importantly in the next. Often, however, we will soon discover that what at first appeared unfair was actually what was most needed for our own souls as well as many others. God, can and does make greater good come from the faults and failings of our supe-

riors, if we follow Him in humility, meekness, obedience, etc. The power is, in a sense, in our own hands to make good come from all things.

When we obey the true bishops we are obeying the Church, but more importantly, we are obeying Jesus Christ. The compliance and conformity of our intellects and wills to the teaching of the true bishops illustrates our love for the Word of God. The respect and reverence that we have for the Sacrifice of the Mass as well as the Sacraments, manifests further and greater love of God. The denial of our self-will, in humbly submitting to the rules and rulings of the bishops, opens up for us the opportunity to become true followers of Christ. Jesus came not to do His own will, but the will of Him Who sent Him. He was obedient even unto death. We can never go wrong in following this example.



THE SERAPH



BAPTISM

The Solemn Duties of Godparents

Bishop Giles Butler, OFM

The sacrament of Baptism, when it is solemnly administered, requires at least one godparent. The single godparent must be of the same sex as the person being baptized. If there are two godparents, then it is required that one be male and the other female. There cannot be two godparents of the same sex.

Godparents contract a spiritual relationship to their godchildren. This relationship is one of “affinity.” The relationship of affinity is an obstacle to marriage. Therefore, a godfather cannot marry his god-

daughter; nor can a godmother marry her godson. Baptism only confers a relationship between the godparents and the godchild. It does not confer a relationship between godparents, so the godparents can be married to each other. Neither is there a relationship contracted between the parents of the child and the godparents.

The godparents answer for an infant that is not able to answer for himself during the baptism. They make the vows on behalf of the infant. They offer support and encouragement to an adult or child who

is able to make these vows himself. This, however, is just the beginning of the responsibilities of the godparents. Many think that after this, their only obligations are material ones. Perhaps, to provide a gift or card on birthdays, Christmas, etc. Some, believe that their obligations are only to take up the care and support in the raising of the child should something unforetold happen to the child's parents. Neither of these are strict obligations of godparents.

What is required of godparents is assisting the parents in the spiritual instruction and training of the child; especially if the parents become remiss in their obligations. The godparents are under obligation to do all that they can to assure that this child becomes a saint in Heaven. Becoming a saint is no easy task and the child will need all the help that he can get.

In philosophy, it is stated that one cannot give what he does not have. Godparents, then must first be in the process of obtaining their own salvation, otherwise, they have nothing to offer their godchild. The best way to teach or train is by

example. Children, naturally, follow the example of those around them, or those whom they look up to. It is the duty of godparents to give the example of regular reception of the sacraments, especially the sacraments of Penance and Holy Eucharist.

It is a most beautiful, satisfying, and pleasing thing to teach children their prayers, and to instill within them a true love of God and their fellow men. Children will readily pray with great fervor and devotion if they are shown the way. Tragically, most children are given a very negative instruction and example of devotion by the very people who have taken upon themselves this duty. As children mature, they are taught either directly or by insinuation that devotion and prayer is only for women and children. Piety is undermined and destroyed in the child more easily and quickly than it was built up.

We have seen children with all proper respect and decorum, piously make their First Holy Communion, and then in a short while, appear to have forgotten everything. Because the adults in their lives do not

frequent the Communion Rail, they come to believe that they should not do so either. Or, when they do come to receive Holy Communion, they gaze about distractedly, apparently unable to even fold their hands properly. They seem to not know what to do with their hands, so they end up in their pockets or hanging by their side; both approaching and returning from the Communion Rail. The impression of Who they are receiving and how they should receive Him, seems to have been lost. Familiarity has bred contempt. The contempt, however, is against God Himself. It is time for godparents to step in and remind them of the True Presence; the necessity of proper preparation for the reception of the Sacrament; the proper decorum in receiving Him; and the necessary thanksgiving afterward. Godparents should show the child, that he must try to maintain Jesus Christ's presence with them as long as possible. They should carry Him with them out into the world in their daily lives.

If, however, the godparents are not doing these things themselves, they are nothing

more than hypocrites. Children have a natural ability to discern hypocrisy, and all instruction for good turns into scandal or evil instruction. We well know what Our Lord thinks of those who scandalize His children. Woe to those who scandalize the little ones. It would be better for them, that they be dead or never have been born than to have offered scandal to His children. Godparents therefore must be serious in the practice of the true Catholic Faith. Non-Catholics or non-practicing Catholics can never be godparents. One cannot give what he does not have!

We, therefore, encourage parents to be very cautious in whom they ask to become godparents for their children. Godparents must, likewise, take their obligations most seriously. All will have to answer to God on judgment day for the soul of this child that has been placed in their care. Both parents and godparents need to be striving seriously to obtain Heaven for themselves, so that they can lead the children entrusted to them to God.

They can best do this by practicing what they must preach.

They should go to Confession frequently and receive Our Lord in Holy Communion as often as they can. They must maintain all proper manner and decorum in God's House, especially, when they receive Holy Communion. Let us not be afraid, to properly fold our hands and bow our heads as we approach and return from the Communion Rail. We should never neglect to make a true and proper thanksgiving once we return to our place, especially asking Jesus at that time for the graces and help we need to fulfill our duties as

parents and godparents. We must not concern ourselves with what others may think or say. If we are ridiculed for having a childlike faith, piety, devotion, modesty, etc., let us remember that Jesus has said: "Unless you become as these little children, you shall not enter the Kingdom of Heaven." If we can overcome the derision of those who have no faith or whose fervor is grown cold, we will truly have given a priceless treasure to all those looking up to us for an example of how to live in this world.



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COMMUNISM IN 2014

Father Joseph Noonan, OFM

Part II

Revolutions such as Communism don't simply occur on their own. They need men and a philosophy or cause to move them. Once such a movement is put into motion, the result is as obscure as the false philosophy itself.

The following is a quote from an explanation of Marx and Engels' philosophy:

“Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels strove to put into practical effect the humanitarian concept of Feuerbach. In so doing, they founded a new economic movement called Socialism. According to Marx, the supreme end of man is an immanent and material one, and consists in happiness. This material happiness must be obtained through organized collectivism. In fact, according to Marx, reality is governed by economic needs (historical materialism). Economic reality develops according to Hegel's dialectical principles; that is, reality must deny itself in order to reach a higher degree of being.

In application, this principle means that the present organization of society must be destroyed (even through violent revolution, if necessary, because only through such destruction can a better political, economic, and social organization be achieved. To establish this new format of society, working men (the proletariat) must be organized and take up the struggle against the capitalists who defraud them. Thus the actors in this drama are the social classes -- the proletariat is arrayed against capitalism. This struggle, according to Marx and Engels, will end in victory for the proletariat, that is, in the triumph of universal Socialism.”

There would have been no real way at that time to know the results of these errors put into societal motion, since, as the author states, Marx and Engels founded a new economic movement called Socialism. For these two Jewish men, their ideas would have remained in the abstract had not Lenin and Trotsky shown a willingness to put such a revolution in motion.

Yes, it is true we can look at two aspects of what has been presented and conclude in a broad manner what the results would be. The philosophy was godless and based on a false philosopher, Hegel. Therefore, the results would not be an objective good for the common welfare of the people. This is clear enough for us to see now, but at that time Communism was nothing more than a social experiment of the 19th century.

Secret planning took place in the early years of the 20th century. Money from banks in Manhattan, NY; London, England; and Frankfurt, Germany was quietly sent into Russia. The government of Tsar Nicholas II had been failing for years and was now ripe for a revolution.

Once Nicholas II renounced the throne on March 15, 1917, it did not take the Communists long to take control of the government. It was also these same Communists who did not allow the Tsar's family to leave Russia where they would be safe, and murdered them in 1918.

The effects of World War I prevented Lenin from taking full control of Russia immediately. Eventually, though, Lenin gained more and more control

through force and political power. He died unexpectedly in 1924 with the "work of the revolution" incomplete.

Lenin was in power for only six years, but the evil character of the man can be seen through the "Red Terror" which was spread through CHEKA, his secret police; the work of the Communist Party and their goal of gaining control of local governments throughout Russia.

The Communists took on the harsh, dictatorial nature of Lenin, giving it a terrifying face for all who were willing to fight against them. Because of the manner in which Nicholas II governed (absolute rule), Communist rule was more readily accepted. Many others were duped when they joined the Communist military, in the civil war prior to 1917, and the revolution itself.

One must keep in mind that "Communism" was new to everyone and the average person could easily have been fooled into thinking this new political system was the answer to the ills of society, beginning in Russia. Once the face mask and white glove were removed, the truth of this godless government was unveiled. By then it was too late.

As often happens with men of this type, it became necessary for Trotsky to flee Russia because of the power struggle between him and Stalin after Lenin's death. Stalin would later have his men hunt down Trotsky in Mexico and murder him in 1940.

The goals and character of Stalin became quite evident in time. Stalin did not hesitate to use slave labor, mass unjustified executions, neglect and famine to carry out his plan of taking and maintaining control of Russia. Taking control of the churches, agriculture and the school systems furthered the plan to control all aspects of Russian life.

As we are able to witness now, many years later, Communism has two principle goals: the elimination of all religion and, therefore, a godless society; and total control (totalitarian) of society in Russia.

It is quite evident that good men do not take part in any type of behavior or activity which undermines and destroys the Catholic Faith. If one does not clearly understand this simple, yet profound idea, it is quite apparent they do not understand how men ought to primarily work toward the salvation of all

men. In holding a public office (through election, appointment or taking control), men ought to work for the common good of all. When this is not desired, the evil motives of the person are quite often publicly exposed.

During the 16 years Stalin was in power, he was responsible for the deaths of about 20 million people. For any leader, free or dictator, that is a number that is difficult to conceive. It is certainly not difficult, though, to conclude that leaders like Stalin are the worst of men. They are nothing more than human agents of Satan. They created Hell on earth for those who lived in Russia.

For men like Stalin, their reign as dictator was all about power and control. They continuously secured more power because they never felt secure with the absolute power they had. They were truly godless megalomaniacs.

As horrible as Stalin's butchery was, Mao-Tse-Tung was worse. This man's "legacy" was leaving a trail of blood twice that of Joseph Stalin, i.e., 40 million during his reign of terror.

I suppose those who were "comrades in arms" will want you to believe that Joe and Mao

were simply doing what was necessary to establish the “socialist paradise” upon this unfortunate world.

The debate of Communism, of course, does not stand up with reasonable men. They see through the lies and murders. The intrinsic evil of Communism is clear along with the evil men who were willing leaders in this modern-day tragedy.

The damage that has been done, and continues to be carried out, is not the result of good men wanting the best for men. It is true that these men have blinded themselves through their sins, but it certainly doesn’t negate the evil done.

Today, the world witnesses different degrees of Communism. Under so-called “democracy,” there exist various forms of socialism which is nothing more than “Communism-lite.” There are several countries which are still openly Communist. Russia, China, Cuba and Venezuela are the most notorious among them.

We live in a world of clever deception. Those who wish to deceive do not have good motives. They are evil men and any attempt to whitewash their actions is simply foolish. But then, the world is filled with fools ...

Marx and Engels devised a philosophy created in Hell. It is nothing less than a godless, totalitarian form of terror. To call it a “governmental system” is quite disingenuous. It stretches the limits of logic, reason and decency beyond those which are accepted by decent Christian people. Its goal is to undermine all Natural and Divine Law.

The most important and first fact of these observations is that Communism rejects God in society and our private lives. Therefore, as Holy Mother Church has guided us, it is intrinsically evil and must be rejected in all forms along with the evil persons who promote it.

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Franciscans and the Protestant Revolution in England

Francis Borgia Steck, O.F.M.

CHAPTER IX

BLESSED JOHN FOREST, O. F. M.

Continued

During Lent, the commissary general arrived, and at a chapter held soon after he was recognized as provincial.¹ To ensure the removal of Forest from the vicinity of Greenwich and of the royal court, Lyst had resorted to base trickery. He drew up a lengthy statement containing all the calumnies his black heart could fabricate against his worthy fellow friar. Having sent this statement to Cromwell, he laid a copy of it before the new provincial. Thus the latter, no longer free to act as justice demanded, was in some way forced to sacrifice Forest, in order to avoid greater difficulties. "Indeed," says Camm, "so wrongly were things now ordered, that it would seem as though the destiny of the noblest father in the province were decided by the whim of the basest brother."²

In May, Lyst informed Cromwell that "Father Forest, your little friend and less lover, and mine also, for all his great cracks" had been removed from Greenwich. The worthless renegade added that his letter incriminating Forest had been duly considered by the new minister and by all the fathers of the house, who in consequence had removed Forest to a convent in the North. "This," Stone observes, "is so obviously the testimony of a false witness that we need be at no great pains to refute it. There is absolutely no evidence to show that Father Forest was ever out of favour with his brethren, but that, on the contrary, if we except the conduct of a few renegades such as Lyst and Laurence, we find the greatest unanimity among them with regard to Henry's marriage with Catherine."³

¹ Perhaps this was the chapter which Fr. Peyto attended as warden of Greenwich on the day after his sermon against the king's proposed marriage with Anne Boleyn.

² Camm, Vol. I, p. 250.

³ Stone, p. 12.

Bitter anguish rent the soul of Forest when he beheld to what a pass the king's "secret affair" had come. The storm of persecution, he felt, was inevitable. Soon it would spell death and destruction for the Order he loved so tenderly and for the Church for whose welfare he had labored so long. What pained him most was the thought that one of his own brethren had wantonly severed the ties that bound him to the law of God and to the Rule of St. Francis, and that he was bartering his immortal soul to gain the favor of a corrupt and godless court. As to his own removal from office, he looked upon it as a special favor from Heaven. Now he was free from weighty cares and responsibilities, and had ample time to devote himself entirely to prayer and penance. Many an hour he knelt before his hidden God in the tabernacle, wrapt in fervent prayer for the king, that he might leave the path of iniquity; for the queen, that she might carry her cross with patience and perseverance; for the unfortunate lay brother, that he might see his mistake and repent in time; for his other brethren and for himself, that they might remain

firm in the hour of trial when they should be called upon to choose between the holy law of God and the wicked demand of the king. What joy and pride must have thrilled his loyal heart on learning that FF. Peyto and Elstow had boldly upbraided the king for his lawless policy, and rather than deny their sacred trust, had gladly gone into exile.

It is not known for certain to which convent in the North Forest was transferred; nor how long he remained there. Perhaps it was at this time that he undertook to write his book in defense of the Church and of the Pope. Beginning with the words, "Let no man take the honor to himself, but he that is called by God, as Aaron was," the book is a strong invective against the king's usurping of the spiritual supremacy, which belonged to the Pope alone. Whether this had anything to do with the friar's imprisonment in 1534, is not clear.⁴ There is little

⁴ Bouchier, *Hist. Bede. de Mart. FF. Ord. D. Francisci*, pp. 81 seq. Though later historians say that Forest wrote this book in Newgate, Bouchier speaks of it rather as one of the causes that led to the martyr's imprisonment.

doubt, however, that Henry was enraged when he heard of it,⁵ so that, when late in the spring of that year, he determined to imprison the Franciscans and confiscate their convents, Forest was among the first to suffer. That he was in prison in 1534, seems quite certain from an official report in which the man of God is mentioned as being "there (London) in prison." To this Gasquet remarks, "Perhaps the most conclusive proof that he was probably in prison at this time is that we hear no more about him. Cromwell's 'remembrances' are silent about this formidable opponent."⁶ Neither is it certain whether he was in an ecclesiastical or a civil prison. Possibly, he was at first detained in the convent of the Grey Friars on the North Side of Newgate Street in London, and late in 1534 was cast into Newgate prison for again refusing to take the oath of supremacy, which, we know, became law on November 18 of that year.

Slanderous tongues did not scruple at the time to besmirch the name of Forest, so widely known for sanctity and learning. Hall's Chronicle was es-

pecially influential in spreading these libels and leading later historians into error.⁷ Thus Wood avers that Forest had taken the oath of royal supremacy, while Stow contends that the friar himself later admitted he had taken the oath only with the outer man, but never consented thereto in conscience.⁸ "If this were true," declares Stone, "it would be in such direct opposition to all that we know of Father Forest's firmness under trial, of his strength of character, his sincerity and fearlessness, that his life would be a hopeless tangle of contradictions. It would have been so poor a preparation for a martyr's death, that instead of the cry of jubilation with which he greeted the fire and gallows, we should expect to hear him bartering for his life at the stake. But one who had stood up and publicly denounced his brethren, for their resistance to the representative of the Pope, one who, in the face of the king's ruthless passion, had persisted in an attitude which

⁵ Stone, p. 56, on the authority of Wood.

⁶ Gasquet, *Bol.* I, p. 167.

⁷ Stone, pp. 49 seq.

⁸ See Parkinson, p. 243; Gasquet, *Vol. I*, p. 195, footnote.

said as plainly as words could say, 'It is not lawful for thee to have this woman to wife,' was not the man to condescend to a mean subterfuge, in order to save a life which he had repeatedly exposed with greatest indifference. He was by his position, by his acknowledged virtue, and by his talents, a leader of men. Through his influence, the friars of Greenwich had been guided safely through the shoals and quicksands of the divorce and the royal supremacy, and if he had succumbed with his outer man, he would have been the only member of his community to take the oath."⁹

We may take it for granted that the king's agents repeatedly visited Forest in prison and did all in their power to win him over to Henry's cause. The faithful and fearless friar was as staunch in his allegiance to God and to his Order as the royal commissioners were zealous in the service of Henry and of their own interests. He gloried in the thought

of dying for the faith, as FF. Rich and Risby had done but a twelvemonth before.¹⁰ Never, with the help of God, would he prove disloyal in a cause for which they had laid down their life. Cromwell fully realized this; he gave orders that the friar's durance be made more severe and at last had him condemned to death. Though for some reason the sentence was not immediately carried out, the fact that it had been passed on him, is sufficiently attested by the letter he wrote to Queen Catherine three days before his martyrdom was to take place.¹¹

During his confinement in Newgate, he received a letter from Lady Elizabeth Hammond, at one time his penitent and now lady in waiting on the queen. In his letter, he is told how the queen is grieved and alarmed over his impending doom; that he should try to escape from prison, if possible, lest the queen fall into an illness that would prove fatal. To this the holy man replied :

My Daughter, Elizabeth Hammond:—

I am, indeed, sorely grieved at

⁹Stone, p. 48, citing Canon Dixon's *Theory of the Church, of England*.

¹⁰ See chapter IV.

¹¹ See the foregoing chapter.

the sorrow which you and your mistress feel about the pains I am enduring, just as if there were no resurrection unto glory. These are certainly not principles which among other lessons of piety I have frequently impressed upon you; if they are, however, then know that at the time I was erring wide of the true road. Were I willing to barter my faith and deliver myself to the devil, from fear of suffering or from a desire for the riches of this world, I could without doubt easily escape; do thou, however, not entertain such thoughts. Learn, therefore, to suffer for the true teaching of Christ and for his spouse and thy mother, the Church, and do not attempt to turn me from those torments by which I hope to obtain eternal happiness.

*Follow, I beseech you, in the footsteps of the Queen, your mistress, imitating the glorious example you see in her, and pray for me, that they may increase the severity of the torments which they intend to inflict on me, since they are but small when compared with the glory of God which they are to further.*¹²

About 1536, as we have already heard, a number of events combined to cool for a time at least Henry's rage against the first opponents of his tyrannical and bloody measures. Possibly at this juncture, Fr. Forest, like other members of the province, was permitted to leave Newgate and to take up his abode with the Grey Friars in London.¹³ Mental and bodily sufferings had greatly enfeebled him, and the king perhaps was still in hopes that clemency on his part and the influence of others less faithful would in the end triumph over the aged friar. How Forest lived in the London convent we learn from the memorandum of Lord Mordaunt who, in 1537, made his Easter confession to him.¹⁴

¹² Bourchier, pp. 61 seq.

¹³ This, we think, accounts for Forest's liberation from Newgate and for his subsequent sojourn in the London friary as satisfactorily as the supposition, made by some historians, that he took the oath with the saving clause, as far as Christ's law allows, a supposition entirely irreconcilable with the friar's previous and subsequent conduct regarding the oath.

¹⁴ The memorandum is quoted in full by Camm, Vol. I, pp. 293 seq. It is dated February 23, 1538. This date, however, "must not be taken as that on which the incident happened, but as that on which the memorandum was written." Thaddeus, p. 15.

Subject to the Conventual warden, a nominee of the king, Forest led a life of seclusion and prayer. Most conscientiously he observed the vow of poverty. He refused to take any remuneration from Lord Mordaunt, referring him to the porter, who had charge of all money matters. He was not allowed to preach, but said the Lady's Mass every day and was much engaged in the confessional. On the question of the king's usurped supremacy, he was silent except where duty forced him to speak.

Though the friar's outward conduct gave his enemies little chance for accusations, at heart he was as loyal and zealous as ever. Cromwell was anything but satisfied with Forest's condition in the London friary. Wholly bent on bringing him to the scaffold, he not only engaged spies to watch him, but even went so far as to abuse the Sacrament of Confession. The aforementioned memorandum of Lord Mordaunt is nothing less than a deposition regarding

Forest's procedure in the sacred tribunal of Penance.¹⁵ Previous to the spring of 1538, however, nothing but vague and incoherent rumors could be gathered, until finally Cromwell struck upon a diabolical plan. One day, while Forest was hearing confessions, a certain Waferer entered the sacred tribunal. After making some sort of confession, the vile wretch complained that his conscience was troubling him ever since he had taken the oath of supremacy. Exhorted by the man of God to repent of his sin and to trust in the mercy of God, the hypocrite asked the unsuspecting friar whether he, too, had taken the oath. "No," came the ready reply, "I would rather burn than swear such a thing." This was enough. "Thank you," replied Waferer, "I do not wish to know more." With this he rose from his knees and reported the matter to headquarters.¹⁶

Now Cromwell and his clique had positive proof that Forest was dissuading penitents from taking the oath. Without delay, the priest was summoned before the Privy Council, over which Cromwell presided.

¹⁵ Camm, Vol. I, p. 295.

¹⁶ Stone, p. 52.

With great courage and skill he again defended the papal supremacy, at the same time maintaining strict silence on all matters that pertained to the seal of confession, lest he unwittingly implicate his penitents. "He succeeded in saving others," remarks Camm, "though his bold confession of the Faith, the boldest perhaps that we have of any martyr of this period, cost him his life."¹⁷ Cromwell in his blind fury was not satisfied with having him die the death of a traitor; he would have him convicted of heresy and burned at the stake.¹⁸

For the present, the helpless victim of base deceit was lodged in a solitary dungeon in Newgate. Here he underwent all the horrors and hardships that hatred and cruelty could devise. His hands and feet were bound with iron chains, and for several days he was left there suffering the greatest misery.¹⁹ His condition must have been most pitiable. He was now sixty-seven years of age, and his health was much impaired by the sorrow and worry of the last few years. He greeted his solitude, however, as a special favor from above

and employed his time preparing for the final struggle.

On May 8, after a month of woeful durance in Newgate, Forest was arraigned before Cranmer's court at Lambeth. He realized that this was the beginning of the "greater combat," as he chose to call it in a letter to Bl. Thomas Abel,²⁰ one of his former penitents. Raising his eyes to heaven he prayed with all the ardor of his soul, "I give thee thanks, Lord God, who hast deigned to call me, a most miserable sinner, to the singular privilege of professing to-day, here in the presence of all, the true faith

¹⁷ Camm, Vol. I, p. 297.

¹⁸ This is evident from the Excerpts of Forest's so-called Confessions, i.e., the examination he was subjected to before the Privy Council. Cromwell's mind in this regard is further clear from Cranmer's letter written to him on April 6, 1538. See Camm, Vol. I, p. 301.

¹⁹ See Bourchier, p. 39.

²⁰ He was a secular priest, a man of eminent sanctity and learning, and from the start a staunch advocate of Queen Catherine's rights, who had appointed him her chaplain and director of music. In 1533, when the case of the Holy Maid of Kent came up, he was imprisoned, but later set free. He openly defended the papal supremacy, for which he was again cast into prison and finally, on July 30, 1540, martyred at Smithfield. His name was on the list of those whom Pope Leo XIII enrolled among the Blessed on December 9, 1886.

that I cherish, and of freely declaring what I hold regarding thy pure, unsullied, and only spouse, the Roman Catholic Church. For the threats of the king, I fear not, nor consider the torments that, no doubt, are awaiting me on account of my faith; and so far am I from seeking and striving after earthly honors that I will not accept them, but will gladly suffer death.”²¹

After the usual court preliminaries, Forest was ordered to abjure as "most abominable heresies" four articles which on Cranmer's suggestion had been drawn up with a view to indicting him for heresy. The four articles read:

1. That the Holy Catholic Church was the Church of Rome, and that we ought to believe out of the same;
2. That we should believe in the Pope's pardon for the remission of sins;
3. That we ought to believe and do as our fathers have done aforetime fourteen years

²¹ Bouchier, p. 45.

²² Camm, Vol. I, p. 302, quoting from Wriothsley's *Chronicle*.

²³ For a copy of this letter see Camm, Vol. I, p. 312.

past;

4. That a priest may turn and change the pains of hell of a sinner, truly penitent, contrite of his sins, by certain penance enjoined him in(to) the pains of purgatory. — Which said articles be most abominable heresies, blasphemy against God, and contrary to Scripture and the teaching of Christ and His Apostles, and to abhor any true Christian heart to think.²²

Although he clearly foresaw what the sequel would be, the fearless friar declined to make the required abjuration. He was convinced that the first three articles embody Catholic doctrine; and as to the fourth, he readily detected its insidious character and firmly refused to forswear it in its proposed form. Accordingly he was remanded to Newgate. His confinement now became less severe, if Latimer's suspicions are correct. Latimer writing to Cromwell, on May 18,²³ claimed he had heard that Forest was permitted to confer with others imprisoned for the faith and even to hear holy Mass and receive the sacraments. Probably, the jailer admired and felt for the feeble old friar bearing his sufferings

so patiently, and allowed him such liberties as were compatible with his own safety. Perhaps, too, it was only a last attempt on the part of Forest's enemies to cajole him into submission. Be this as it may, prayer and meditation strengthened the man of God in his determination bravely to fight the good fight to the end. In vain, therefore, the royal officials came to him in prison and demanded that he sign the abjuration of the four articles. Neither threats nor promises could shake his constancy. With equal intrepidity he turned a deaf ear to Cromwell

directing that he attend Latimer's sermon at St. Paul's Cross, on May 12, and do public penance for his heresies.²⁴ Needless to say, this uncompromising attitude of the loyal friar infuriated his enemies. He was forthwith pronounced a confirmed heretic and sentenced to die at the stake. In his aforementioned letter to Cromwell Latimer consented "to play the fool" and preach the sermon at Forest's burning.

To be continued

²⁴ See Camm, Vol. I, pp. 310 seq.

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FRANCISCAN SAINTS

January 9th

The Servant of God

Paschaline of Foligno

Virgin, Third Order

Paschaline, a young noblewoman, born at the end of the thirteenth century in the city of Foligno, despised the goods of this world at a very early age in order to gain Christ. In the year 1290 she left her parents and her relatives and took the habit of the Third Order. She joined the ranks of her friend and guide on the way to perfection, the blessed widow Angela of Foligno, who had already been wearing the garb of the Third Order for some time.

United as sisters these two women practiced acts of piety and charity with extraordinary zeal. In order to honor Christ in His poor, they used to spend Holy Thursday housecleaning the hospital at Foligno, making up the beds of the sick and washing their hands and feet. They rendered this service even to the lepers without so

much as a sign of dread.

Once when they had nothing to give to the poor, they removed their veils and outer garments and gave them to the superior of the hospital to distribute among the needy. The superior naturally did not want to accept the articles, fearing that the charitable donors would be jeered at by the rabble if they went through the street without being fully dressed. Then Paschaline said: "Why should we be ashamed to be laughed at for Christ's sake, who allowed Himself to be despoiled of His garments and to be mocked for our sakes? That is why we want to give Him our garments through the poor."

With these words they departed, and behold, a devout person met them and furnished them with new garments. This

association in doing good made the friendship of the two ladies daily more intimate.

Angela entrusted Paschaline with conducting her correspondence, took her with her on her pilgrimages to Assisi, Loreto, and Rome, and revealed to her all the graces and inspirations which were vouchsafed to her by God. Even after Angela died a blessed death on January 4, 1309, Paschaline continued this intimate friendship. She visited her tomb in the Franciscan church daily and sometimes spent whole nights there in prayer. After carrying out the wish of her friend and mistress to found convents of the Third Order for women at Foligno and Spoleto, she followed her into eternity in the year of the Lord 1313. Her mortal remains were placed by the side of Blessed Angela, and God glorified both with many miracles.

HOLY FRIENDSHIP

1. How edifying and fruitful of blessing was the holy friendship between the servant of God Paschaline and Blessed Angela. What is said of the friendship between St.

Augustine and Alypius, and between St. Basil and St. Gregory, could readily be said of these two saintly women: "There appeared to be but one soul in the two bodies." It is as if two flames joined and shone forth in a greater glow. When truly pious souls are joined in intimate friendship, the fire of the love of God and neighbor as well as zeal for virtue are increased. Therefore Holy Writ says of the soul of a faithful friend: "He that hath found him hath found a treasure; no weight of gold and silver is able to countervail; it is the medicine of life and immortality" (Ecclus. 6:14).

2. Consider the path that leads to such friendship. "They that fear the Lord," the Wise Man says again, "shall find a faithful friend; and he that feareth God shall likewise have good friendship" (Ecclus. 6:16). Genuine and holy friendship can exist only where the fear of the Lord reigns; and if you are God-fearing, you will also prove a true friend. Do not choose your friends only according to their natural good qualities and what you like in them; such friendship will not pass the test and there often results nothing

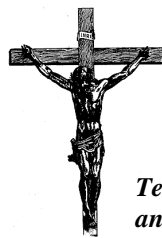
but bitterness. Of all, therefore, that are dear to thee, let Jesus be thy special Beloved" (Imit. 2:8). Then you will never trust too securely to human friendship no matter how good it may be, and if you find that you have been deceived, you will not be too disappointed.

3. Consider that if after mature deliberation you have entered upon any friendship, you should also assume certain responsibilities. You owe it to your friends in true charity to encourage them in all that is good and to preserve them from harm. To flatter their faults is really to be a traitor to them. You must stand by your friend in time of need and be willing to make sacrifices for him after the example of our best Friend, Jesus

Christ, "who gave His life for His friends" (John 15:13). True friends will also pray for one another frequently and fervently that their mutual friendship may always become holier and that they may steadily grow in the love of God.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

O God, who by the grace of the Holy Ghost didst pour the gifts of charity into the hearts of Thy faithful, grant to Thy servants and handmaids, for whom we entreat Thy mercy, health of mind and body; that they may love Thee with all their strength and by perfect love do what is pleasing to Thee. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.



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OUR BEST FRIEND

Christian Pesch, S.J.
Translated from the German
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CHAPTER XIX

Grief of the Heart of Jesus at
the Blindness of Men

*"If thou also hadst known . . .
the things that are for thy
peace" (Lk. 19:42).*

1. *Jesus is the Light of the world.* When we wish to express the idea that something is very disagreeable to us, we say that it is against our nature, that it is at variance with our inmost being. This is the relation that the willful blindness of men bears to the inmost nature of our Saviour.

St. John sums up for us the nature of the Son of God in these words: "In Him was life,



and the life was the light of men . . . It was the true Light that enlightens every man who comes into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world knew Him not" (Jn. 1:4, 9, 10). The life of the spirit is knowledge and the love which springs from knowledge. Whatever is a source of knowledge is called the light of the spirit, just as the sun is the light of the visible world, because it makes all things visible. The Son of God is the spiritual and eternal

Word by which God the Father enunciates His perfect comprehension of Himself. God is Truth. The Father is the knowing and speaking Truth; the Son is the consubstantial Truth spoken by the Father. Because He is the Truth, He is the Light, pure, undimmed Light without blemish or admixture of darkness.

This Light, since time first was, has shone upon every man who was of good will, just as the sun shines for all who do not hide themselves from its rays. The sun shines only by reason of its nature; the divine Light shines not only because of Its nature, but also because of Its will; for It is not only Truth but Love. It was love which prompted this divine Light to appear in our midst clothed with our nature, thus to become in an entirely new sense the Light of the world.

The world is illumined by the eternal Light when it is turned toward It; it is in darkness when it is turned away from this eternal Light. The parallel here with our earth is perfect; the hemisphere turned toward the sun is illumined, that turned away from it is in dark-

ness. When the sun has set, we light all manner of lamps; but these are but poor substitutes which illumine only a few points of the darkened earth and would not be able to prevent the universal extinction of men, animals, and plants if the sun did not rise again with its life-giving rays. When men turn away from the eternal Light, they die a spiritual death, an eternal death, no matter how many other lamps they may light; these artificial lights may indeed serve as substitutes for a short time and within narrow limits; but all of them together cannot become a life-giving sun. He who trusts to them alone remains in the night of death.

What is the source of the light which we use at night? Its source is, after all, ultimately the sun, which has stored for us in wood, coal, rainfall, animal and plant substances, potential light which we use when the sun does not directly dispel the darkness. In like manner all spiritual light has its origin in the eternal Light of God. Even the clearest human insight and the keenest intelligence do not owe their existence and excellence to

themselves. All of them were made, made by the eternal Word, without whom nothing was made. The source of all human knowledge is untreated Truth. It has created each human soul according to Its own image and endowed it with the faculty to know truth; It has given man the visible creation as an object on which to exercise his intellect and thus to enrich it with truth. However much infidels may pride themselves on their scientific attainments, all their knowledge and all their ability is a gift which they owe to the eternal Wisdom, and to the only-begotten Son of God. Christ in His divinity is the source of their light; He has given them this light through love even though He foresaw that they would use it against Him.

When the world with its participated wisdom did not recognize in creation the wisdom of God (cf. 1 Cor. 1:21), but rather detained the truth of God in injustice (cf. Rom. 1:18), the eternal Wisdom again had compassion on men and personally appeared in their midst to lead them back to the light by teaching them the truth.

Jesus came as the Orient from on high to enlighten a world sitting in darkness and in the shadow of death (cf. Lk. 1:78, 79). He said: "I am the Light of the world. He who follows Me, does not walk in the darkness, but will have the light of life" (Jn. 8:12). The Light of Life is God Himself. Christ has shown us by His preaching the way that leads to this Light. After He had restored vision to the man born blind, He said: "As long as I am in the world, I am the Light of the world; hence, I restored sight to this man born blind that all may conclude that I am really the spiritual Light of the world for all those who wish to have their spiritual blindness cured." The man born blind was one of those who sought this spiritual Light; for when Christ asked him after the cure of his physical blindness: "Do you believe in the Son of God?" he answered: "Who is He, Lord, that I may believe in Him?" Jesus answered: "It is He that talks with you." At once he fell on his knees before Him and adored and said: "I believe, Lord." Then Jesus said to the multitudes: "For judgment I am come into the world. All

who are spiritually blind, but, like this man born blind, desire the light will see. And they who see, who pride themselves on their wisdom, and would fain believe that they no longer stand in need of enlightenment, will become blind" (cf. Jn. 9:5, 35 ff.).

2. Jesus laments the deliberate blindness of men which is inimically opposed to His nature as light and to His love as the dispenser of light. When Jesus had explained that His revelation was a judgment for those who presumed that they saw, some Pharisees asked Him: "Are we also blind?" Our Saviour answered: "If you were blind through no fault of your own, you should not have sin. But now you say: 'We see,' and self-sufficiently reject the light which I offer. Therefore, you remain hardened in your unbelief; you 'are of the number of those who see and become blind" (cf. Jn. 9:5, 35 ff.).

At the very beginning of His public life Jesus said to Nicodemus: "I come from heaven whence man has never yet ascended and am a messenger of God. He who believes in Me, will not be judged; for by faith

he is united to the eternal Light, whence man derives all supernatural vitality. But who does not believe is already judged, because he cuts himself off from the Light and chooses as his portion darkness." The Light came into the world, but men preferred the darkness to the Light. Thus they have judged: themselves and proved that they are devoted to the works of sin. One who does evil and perseveres in doing evil is kept from the Light by his evil conscience; because in the Light the evil of his acts would be reprov'd. But he who, does good works, is a child of the Light; his deeds are radiations of the divine Light. They are spiritually related to the eternal Light, they come from the Light and lead to the Light (cf. Jn. 3:13, 18 ff.).

With the prospect, sad indeed for His loving heart, that so few were prepared to receive the Light, our Saviour appeared in the midst of His people. He knew that most of His countrymen were far too deeply enmeshed in pride and worldliness to break their bonds and prepare themselves to receive the light. He re-

minded them that even John the Baptist had given testimony of Him. "But," He added, "although John was a burning and shining light, you did not permit that he show you the right way, and instead amused yourselves for a time with the novelty of his doctrine (cf. Jn. 5:33 ff.). Many, whom you despise as sinners, have listened to his words, done penance for their sins, and found the path of salvation; but you, because of your self-righteous justice, have remained in darkness" (cf. Mt. 21:31, 32).

All the admonitions of our Saviour were in vain. In a final attempt He warns them once more toward the end of His life: "Only a little while shall I remain with you as the Light. Use this opportunity and be enlightened by the Light that you may not fall a prey to darkness. While you have the Light, believe in the Light, that you may be the children of Light" (cf. Jn. 12:35, 36). The Evangelist adds sadly: "And whereas He had done so many miracles before them, they did not believe in Him that the saying of Isaias the prophet might be fulfilled: He

has blinded their eyes and hardened their heart that they be not converted and saved" (cf. Jn. 12:37 ff.). Deepening darkness of soul and incapacity to receive grace is the punishment meted out to those who resist the Light.

When Jesus saw that, despite all His efforts for the salvation of His people, Jerusalem and the Jews had fallen under the curse of God, His loving heart was filled with such grief that He wept and said: "If you only had known the things that are to thy peace. But now, through your own fault, they are hidden from your eyes. Therefore, days will come upon thee when your enemies will beat you and your children flat to the ground and leave no stone upon a stone, because you have not known the day of your visitation (cf. Lk. 19: 41 ff.). Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how often would I have gathered your children as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you would not. Behold your house will be made desolate" (cf. Mt. 23:37, 38). If even the prophet in the Lamentations (3:48 ff.) is at a loss for words to express his sorrow at the destruction of

Jerusalem, who can understand the grief of the heart of Jesus at the willful blindness of men, since His love is so much greater?

3. We must be children of the Light and so atone to our Lord for men's culpable rejection of the Light. The sin of deliberate rejection of the Light will continue to the end of the world and continually cause our Saviour new grief. The words of the Evangelist remain true when he says that many men love darkness rather than the Light (cf. Jn. 3:19). Their understanding is darkened, they are alienated from the life which comes from God, hedged about by ignorance and hardness of heart (cf. Eph. 4:18).

Jesus said to the unbelieving Jews: "I have come [as Messiah] in the name of My Father, and you do not receive Me. If another come in his own name, him you will receive" (Jn. 5:43). This prophecy was soon fulfilled. The Jews longed passionately for a messias after their own heart, one who would deliver them by the sword from the power of Rome. Hence they fell an easy prey to fomenters of sedi-

tion, revolted, and perished miserably in great numbers in the destruction of Jerusalem in the year A.D. 70. Those who survived did not, however, put aside their hatred for Christ, but persecuted the Christians whenever and wherever they could. This hatred flamed forth afresh when in the second century the false messias Bar Cochba incited the remaining Jews to the second war against the Romans. This uprising also was quelled in a bloody manner (A.D. 135); nevertheless, the Jews did not give up their vain hope for a messias. Christ has foretold that it will be thus to the end of time. Not only among the Jews, but also among the Christians, teachers of heresy will appear and say: "I am the Messiah"; and they will lead many astray.

As a consequence of the Reformation in the sixteenth century numerous new sects have arisen with new messiases as their leaders, beginning with the Anabaptists of Munster down to the hundreds of sects of our own day. Many of them wish to replace Christ's work with something better; others allow Christ to stand, but, as a matter of fact, separate men

from His truth by distorting His doctrine. The freethinkers of our day look upon every eloquent braggart as a leader in whom they confide more than in the Incarnate Wisdom of God. It is really incredible what miserable spiritual sustenance is good enough for them, provided only that they need not follow the light which Christ has brought us. They hear the praises of Buddha, Zoroaster, and Mohammed sung, and listen devoutly; only, away with Christ. Poor mortals! Atheism of all shades including Red, has raised up the materialistic state as the messias; it promises indeed a heaven — right here on earth; and after that nothing. Millions have embraced this new messias — millions more may yet do so. Their doctrine is simple enough: "The teaching of Christ is utterly false; it takes from man the joys of life and consoles him with the hope of a life to come. Follow us. We shall make you happy here below so that you shall want no other happiness."

And what happens when millions are deceived by this specious reasoning? They are promised wealth, and receive poverty; they are promised an abundance of food, and they

suffer hunger and want; they are promised a universal brotherhood, and they reap hatred; they are promised heaven on earth, and they get a foretaste of hell. Men cannot turn from the light with impunity; when they do, all human happiness languishes and dies.

Let us tell our Lord how much it grieves us that so many turn their backs on His light, which they deem of little importance, and prefer instead miserable seducers. Let us beg Him through the love of His divine heart to open the eyes of these unfortunates that they may see before it is too late the abyss toward which they are running. Let us tell Him that we, as children of the light, shall ever walk in His light; let us ask Him to enlighten the eyes of our souls more and more in order that we may see clearly what a treasure we possess in Him here below, and what immeasurable happiness He will be to us in the life to come.



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