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The **SERAPH** seeks to serve and unite in spirit all Roman Catholics faithful to tradition and all men of good will for the betterment of society according to the Gospel of Jesus Christ and in the spirit of St. Francis of Assisi.

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In essentia - Unitas. In dubio - Libertas.
In omnibus - Caritas.

EDITORIAL

On Derision

Before dealing with derision, it is necessary to make a correction in the Editorial of the December issue of *The Seraph*. Because of a typographical error, the last two important words in the Editorial somehow did not appear. The short paragraph was meant to read: **More will be said of these things in the following articles regarding McKenna's "exorcisms" the likes of which gave fuel to the enemies of the Church to subtly ridicule Her.**

Mankind has not changed much since God foreclosed on Adam and Eve for breaking their contract. Thus began the age that divided all creation between pre-original sin and post-original sin. It was from that time on that the human nightmare began. Everyone of good will groaned and travailed at the abuses heaped upon them from fellow-creatures who served and continue to serve the fallen angels. They all awaited that Someone Who would redeem them from themselves and from their enemies.

Yet another form of destroying one's neighbor is by *derision*. St. Thomas Aquinas has this to say about derision: **Sins of word should be weighted by the intention of the speaker, whereas these sins are differentiated according to the various intentions of those who speak against another. Now the railer intends to injure the honor of the person he rails, the backbiter to depreciate a good name, and the tale-bearer to destroy friendship, so too the derider intends to shame the person he derides. And since this end is distinct from the others, it follows that the sin of derision is distinct from the foregoing sins.**

How does the derider do this? That is, how does he deride his neighbor? He does this by imputing to him evil and shameful things for the purpose of depriving his neighbor of his good name and reputation in the eyes of others. St. Thomas says that derision is a mortal sin: **the derision of good persons is grievous, because honor is the reward of virtue, and against this it is written (Job 12, 4)**

The simplicity of the just man is laughed to scorn.

St. Thomas points out that such derision causes much harm and quotes St. Gregory (Moral. 20): **Who, when they perceive any good points appearing in the acts of others, directly pluck them up with the hand of mischievous reviling.**

St. Thomas says (quoting from Isaiah 37, 23) that deriding God and the things of God is an exceedingly grievous sin: *Whom hast thou reproached, and whom hast thou blasphemed, and against whom hast thou exalted thy voice?*

And he answers: **AGAINST THE HOLY ONE OF ISRAEL.**

True bishops, priests and Religious are certainly “things of God” and those who deride them are guilty of blasphemy; for the Holy Ghost has said: **Do not touch my anointed one.** These persons have been anointed by God. It is likewise certain that only those devoid of supernatural grace gladly do the work of Christ’s enemies. Such people are truly cursed by God.

Only one of two kinds of people

shamelessly deals in derision: Those suffering from narcissistic personality disorder or those possessed by devils. It is not unusual that mental disorders are in reality the result of demonic possession or obsession.

One common tactic of Satan is to suggest that he does not exist or that the Church is “obsessed with the demonic.”



The Bishop Speaks

Bishop Louis Vezelis OFM D.D.

THE REMNANT ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

Against the Demonic Disorientation of Traditionalists

WARNING TO ALL ROMAN CATHOLICS!

There are many self-appointed “teachers” – Our Lord calls them “false prophets” –who brazenly project themselves upon the faithful as if having a mission from the Church to teach in Her name. The internet is overflowing with them. They enter into the homes via the internet; they publish their newsletters and even books. Some travel around the country as if they were “experts” in the problems assailing the Church. They live off those who foolishly give them a hearing. They cannot provide a viable solution to anything except the lamentable undermining of the faith of others. They are the “loan sharks” of religion.

What is their real purpose? Whether they will admit the truth or not, their purpose is to lead

people astray so as to deprive them of the means instituted by Jesus Christ for their salvation. That is to say: Their ultimate goal is to keep people away from the Sacraments that are the sources of supernatural grace. In this, they serve Satan under the guise of religion. What better way for Satan to destroy religion if not in the name of religion?

They quote Church Law against the true teachers in the Church – valid and legitimate Bishops. While ignorant of the meaning and application of the law, they avoid those laws of the Church that condemn them. In this, they resemble Protestants. In effect, they are Protestants. Let us consider some very pertinent laws of the Church. And then let us examine the claims of these false teachers.

It may be more than useful to point out that every properly trained and ordained priest is a Canon lawyer by the mere fact of four years in the study of Canon Law (Church Law). To be sure, anyone can pick up a book of canon law and attempt

to “interpret” what the words mean.

The same is true of theological matters. Anyone can obtain books on theology and without guided instruction read words and give them whatever distorted significance they care to give them. They are incapable of understanding many things because they lack authentic guidance.

This is where Satan finds his most eager slaves. Blind guides leading the blind – the Scriptures would say.

In their consummate pride, these false teachers seem to imply that those who have been appointed by the Holy Ghost know nothing about religious matters. Only they, the false teachers, see themselves as authentic and authorized teachers of the rest of us.

THIS IS THE BASIS FOR ALL THE CHAOS AND ANARCHY IN THE NAME OF RELIGION AND THE CHURCH: The words of St. Paul to Timothy are as true today as they were when he wrote them to Bishop Timothy:

I charge thee, in the sight of God and Christ Jesus, who will judge the living and the dead by His coming and by His kingdom, preach the word, be urgent in season, out of season; reprove, entreat, rebuke with all patience and teaching.

For there will come a time when they will not endure the sound doctrine; but having itching ears, will heap up to themselves teachers according to their own lusts, and they will turn away from the truth and turn aside rather to fables.

But do thou be watchful in all things, bear with tribulation patiently, work as a preacher of the gospel, fulfill thy ministry. (2 Tim. 4, 1-5).

Observe that the Epistle was directed to a bishop – not to any layperson. St. Paul further instructs and guides this young bishop to avoid and likewise have the faithful avoid and “**not to dispute with words, for that is useless, leading to the ruin of the listeners**”. (Ibid. 2, 14).

St. Paul also advises Timothy to avoid foolish and ignorant controversies, knowing that they breed quarrels. He points out

the manner in which the servant of the Lord must act: **“But the servant of the Lord must not quarrel, but be gentle towards all, ready to teach, patient, gently admonishing those who resist, in case God should give them repentance to know the truth, and they recover themselves from the snare of the devil, to whose will they are held captive.”** (Ibid. 2, 23-26).

For those who would present themselves before others as if having authority for their errors, St. Paul does not hesitate to name the source of their errors: the Devil! St. Paul’s words are so apt for our days that one would think he was living among us: **“Some going astray from these things have turned aside to vain babbling, desiring to be teachers of the Law, when they understand neither what they say nor the things about which they make assertion.”** (1 Tim. 1,7).

Now this is not meant by St. Paul to remain silent in the face of error. On the contrary, in the very next chapter, Chapter 3, we find him describing the new false teachers who would come in the future and are here now:

But know this, that in the last days dangerous times will come. Men will be lovers of self, covetous, haughty, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, criminal, heartless, faithless, slanderers, incontinent, merciless, unkind, treacherous, stubborn, puffed up with pride, loving pleasure more than God, having a semblance indeed of piety, but disowning its power.

AVOID THESE! (emphasis added).

For of such are they who make their way into houses and captivate silly women who are sin-laden and led away by various lusts: ever learning yet never attaining knowledge of the truth.

Just as Jamnes and Mambres resisted Moses so these men also resist the truth, for they are corrupt in mind, reprobate as regards the faith. But they will make no further progress, for their folly will be obvious to all, as was that of those others. (Ibid. 3, 1-9).

We can find equally expressive thoughts similar to those of St. Paul in the entire Epistle of

St. Jude which is especially so apt for our times, that it would be enough to quote the entire Epistle.

And, what is the gist of his entire Epistle? Nothing less than a **warning against false teachers**. He starts with a sincere expression of greetings. But, he almost immediately goes to the purpose of his letter:... **Beloved, while I was making every endeavor to write to you about our common salvation, I found it necessary to write to you, exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith once for all delivered to the saints. (St. Jude, 1, 3).**

Why must the faithful “contend earnestly for the faith?” This faith was once and for all given to us and cannot change over time. It is for US to change according to the truth revealed to us. We must “contend for the faith” because the spiritual realities expressed in words are the target of deceiving devils. These devils are the teachers of heretics and these heretics are in human form as St. Jude says:

For certain men have stealthily entered in who long ago were marked out for this

condemnation, ungodly men who turn the grace of God into wantonness and disown our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ.(Ibid. 1, 4).

Just because Our Lord does not smite these heretics immediately is not a sign of approval. Heretics and schismatics are permitted by God to roam free, withholding punishment until the day of wrath in order to test the faithful. Just because we are uncertain of the ways of God dealing with such disreputable people does not mean that retribution will not be made. Divine judgments are often puzzling to us mortals. St. Jude brings this paradox out clearly when he writes concerning divine judgments:

But I desire to remind you, though once for all you have come to know all things, that Jesus, who saved the people from the land of Egypt, the next time destroyed those who did not believe. And the angels also who did not preserve their original state, but forsook their abode, he kept in everlasting chains under darkness for the judgment of the great day. Just as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the neighboring cities which like them committed sins of

immorality and practiced unnatural vice, have been made an example, undergoing the punishment of eternal fire. (Ibid 1, 5-7).

Can there be a better way to describe all those priests and laity whomsoever they may be, who shamefully ignore the successors of the Apostles and usurp their divinely given authority and imprudently throw themselves before the world pretending to be “teachers” in the Church than to say of them:

In like manner do these men also defile the flesh, disregard authority, deride majesty.... these men deride whatever they do not know; and the things they know by instinct like the dumb beasts, become for them a source of destruction. Woe to them! For they have gone the way of Cain, and have rushed on thoughtlessly into the error of Balaam for the sake of gain, and have perished in the rebellion of Core.

These men are stains on their feasts, banqueting together without fear, looking after themselves; clouds without water, carried about by the winds; trees in the fall,

unfruitful, twice dead, uprooted; wild waves of the sea, foaming up their shame; wandering stars, for whom the storm of darkness has been reserved forever. (Ibid. I, 8-13).

This short but instructive Epistle firmly condenses the entire question regarding heretics and schismatics, what our attitude towards them should be and how they will all eventually end up if they do not repent.

What will be their judgment? Henoah prophesied of them as follows so that we ought not take lightly the punishment awaiting all those who have “defiled the flesh, disregarded authority and derided majesty:” Behold the Lord has come with thousands of his holy ones to execute judgment upon all, and to convict all the impious of all their impious works, and of all the hard things that impious sinners have spoken against him.

St. Jude continues: **These are grumbling murmurers walking according to their lusts. And haughty in their speech, they cultivate people for the sake of gain.**

How must the faithful Catholic act in the face of all these heretics and schismatics? St. Jude reminds them (And us): **But as for you, beloved, be mindful of the words that have been spoken beforehand by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ, who kept saying to you that at the end of time there will come scoffers, walking impiously according to their lusts. These are they who set themselves apart, sensual men, not having the Spirit. (Ibid. St. Jude).**

We often encounter the phrase “sensual men” in the Holy Scriptures. This phrase refers to the general mentality of heretics and schismatics to mean the spirit of the world which is dominated by the senses - that which is external, superficial, opposed to the supernatural. St. Paul refers to them as “carnal”, unable to grasp what is “spiritual”. The “carnal man” cannot judge the “spiritual man,” but the “spiritual man” judges all things. However, being dominated by the senses, there should be no surprise that such individuals are also “sensual” in their inability to be chaste.

There are many places in Sacred

Scripture where false teachers are constantly rebuked and where the faithful are frequently reminded to be watchful. Their protection is in their obedience to their Shepherds – the true successors of the Apostles.

Doctrine, discipline and law are three pillars of our Faith and the genuine spiritual life of grace. The doctrine comes first; discipline comes next as a consequence of what we believe; law comes as a clarification of certain points to protect doctrine and discipline. “Law” is a norm for our guidance. Like all law, it cannot cover every possible situation. That is why a competent visible authority is necessary to interpret (explain) the law. The irony of misguided individuals is that while they search the law to justify themselves, they fall under the censure of the law itself. That is to say, they break the law in their pretended observance of the law.

While attacking the teaching authority of the Church, heretics necessarily must claim this authority for themselves. If they say they do not have any authority to teach, why do they teach? If they insist on quoting the law (assuming, of course,

that they are able to do so correctly) why do they not apply the same rigor to themselves? The only honest answer to this question is that they dare not because the law would expose them and condemn them.

Since the first visible passion of heretics is to teach, let us consult the Church law regarding those who alone are the teachers – those who have been anointed by the Holy Spirit for this purpose. There are fifty-five pages dealing in teaching found in CANON LAW – Text and Commentary by Bouscaren and Ellis (Both are Jesuit Fathers specializing in the study and teaching of Canon Law). Might it be asked: You who so boldly quote the laws of the Church, where did you receive your formal training in Church law? And even if you did study in a recognized institution, what bishop has given you authority to present yourself as a teacher in religious matters in the Roman Catholic Church?

Ex ore tuo, judico.- I judge you from your own words. You have never even seen a text of the Code of Canon Law; and if you did, it is most likely that this took place in a community that does not exist in the Roman Catholic

Church, e.g. the community founded by Francis Schuckardt and now run by a man possibly ordained *twice*.

Simply stated, not a single one of those who use the modern means of communication have any authority or permission from a legitimate source to open their mouths or pen their false ideas. As we will presently see, the teaching of the Catholic doctrine is the responsibility of a genuine successor of the Apostles: the Bishop. And so, let us proceed to see what the law of the Church has to say on this subject. This is the practical law that every Catholic holds to and observes.

It is essential to the correct application of canon law to keep in mind that the Roman Catholic Church is suffering the Great Apostasy from the true faith as foretold by St Paul in the his second letter to the Thessalonians: **Let no one deceive you in any way, for the day of the Lord will not come unless the apostasy comes first. (2 Thess. 2, 3).**

THE PRESENT CRISIS
AND ITS CHAOTIC
CONSEQUENCES ARE SEEN
AS THE RESULTS OF THE

GREAT APOSTASY FROM THE TRUE FAITH.

The laws of the Church were made for the particular situations in the Church prior to the Great Apostasy. That is why many of the laws cannot be observed. Those that can be observed must be observed. Furthermore, our Lord promised that He would not leave us as orphans – that He would remain with us until the end of time. **I will not leave you orphans (John 14, 18).** Our Lord promised the Paraclete – the Holy Ghost- who would guide them. To whom is our Lord speaking? Also, to whom did our Lord give His power to forgive sins?

Jesus spoke to His Apostles and through them to their successors. This is the reason that one of the four marks of the true Church is Apostolicity.

Anyone who would dare to usurp the position of a successor of the Apostles risks eternal damnation.

Among these are to be counted those who have come to be known as “Home aloners” – these think they are Catholic by staying home and saying the

Rosary. They fail to understand that even their Rosary is an affront to the Mother of God because of their demonic pride. Besides this, they should be instructed that any grace that comes through the Rosary must first come through the Sacrifice of the Mass. We will consider false miracles worked at Lourdes as we continue to expose the Devil’s tactics to deceive the proud.

I would like to present a little quiz. Who was it that preached, publicly and privately, denouncing this individual as a seducer and deceiver of souls; preaching that in order to defend their flock, the wolf had to be killed; that fear of God or shame before men were of little concern to the point that anyone who would kill this evil man would undoubtedly have his sins forgiven?

The answer to the question will appear in the next issue of The Seraph (February issue). I am sure many readers will be surprised to learn the answer.

Meanwhile, let us look more closely at the laws of the Church.

THE TEACHING OFFICE

OF THE CHURCH

Dogmatically, the power to teach Catholic doctrine comes to the Church from Jesus Christ. This truth is encapsulated, as it were, in Canon 1322 where it is stated: **Our Lord Jesus Christ entrusted the deposit of faith to the Church, that under the constant guidance and assistance of the Holy Spirit, she might sacredly guard and faithfully explain this divine revelation. The Church has therefore the right and the duty, independently of any civil power, to teach all nations the full evangelical doctrine; and all men are bound by the law of God to learn this doctrine properly and to embrace the true Church of God. (C.1322).**

Here we come to a key point in regard to all those who have usurped the teaching authority of the Church. It is necessary to understand the meaning of the term “Church” in order to avoid the error of the misinformed and the spirit of rebellion. The term “Church” as used in the Code does not mean every member of the Church, in so far as each member is a part of the Mystical Body of Jesus Christ which is the Universal Church. In this case,

the word refers to the sacred authority (the “hierarchy”) in the Church, namely, the Bishops.

Thus, the power to teach in the Roman Catholic Church pertains in a general way to *jurisdiction*. Jurisdiction is the power to govern. It is acquired by means of a canonical mission. This is explained in cc. 109, 1328. It may also be withdrawn in the same way. It binds the free will of men by precept just as other exercises of lawful jurisdiction.

The law protects the doctrine, that is, the deposit of faith, which is already stated by St. Paul: **Now therefore you are no more strangers and foreigners; but you are fellow citizens with the saints and the domestics of God, built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets; Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone: In whom all the building, being framed together, groweth up in a holy temple in the Lord. In Whom you also are built together into a habitation of God in the Spirit. (Ephesians 2, 19-22).**

Canon 1382 §2 states: **Ordinariis locorum jus et officium est vigilandi ne in quibusvis scholis aut territoriis**

quidquam contra fidem vel bonos mores tradatur aut fiat.

What this canon states is that it is the local Ordinaries who have the right and duty to watch that in the schools of their territory nothing contrary to faith and morals be taught or done.

The laws of censorship are the right of the Church and it was Pope St. Pius X who urged a strict censorship on all things pertaining to the teachings and discipline of the Church.

This is where almost everyone who writes, preaches, teaches etc. falls under a censure. This would include in our day every web site that is not approved by the Bishop in whose territory it originates.

Perhaps more than at any other time has there been an explosion of disregard of the laws of the Church in these matters.

So many today do not know what is good or bad on these web sites or think that there is a kind of right to publish anything whatever in virtue of what is called the freedom of the press. This most certainly applies with equal force to what may properly be called the “virtual

press” because the publication of the most destructive ideas boast of this “freedom.” The “virtual press” refers to any and all electronic means of communication.

Just as an aside, people of good will must realize that there are more sins of adultery and fornication committed *online* than in actual fact. Should this surprise anyone? Satan is the first to use whatever technology is available to drag souls into Hell. There is little difference between the sins of the flesh and sins of the spirit. In fact, the more deadly are the sins of the spirit: heresy and schism.

No one has the “right” to publish anything that is contrary to Catholic doctrine and morals. No one has a “right” to poison wells or to sell foul food – despite the fact that this is being done with the “blessing” and backing of government agencies.

Because of the seeming “authority” of the Modernist Church – the Apostate Church – many have taken to the internet to expound their personal views as if they were the teaching of the Church.

The Church has the right to forbid the publication of books by the faithful unless she has officially examined them in advance, and for just cause to prohibit books, by whomsoever they may have been published (Canon 1384,§1). Although there are more canons on this subject, let this one example suffice.

As for preachers, the law states: **The Ordinary of the place alone grants the faculty to preach in his territory to clerics of the secular clergy and to nonexempt religious (c. 1337).**

Those who would appeal to the “law” to condemn the true remnant Church and her bishops, have the same mentality of their forerunners, the Pharisees:

At that time Jesus went through the standing grain on the Sabbath; and his disciples being hungry began to pluck ears of grain and to eat.

But the Pharisees, seeing it, said to him, “Thy disciples are doing what is not lawful for them to do on the Sabbath.”

But he said to them, “Have you not read what David did

when he and those with him were hungry?

How he entered the house of God, and ate the loaves of proposition which neither he nor those with him could lawfully eat, but only the priests?

Or have you not read in the Law, that the priests in the temple break the Sabbath and are guiltless?

But I tell you that one greater than the temple is here.

But if you knew what this means, “I desire mercy , and not sacrifice,” you would never have condemned the innocent.

A commentary explains this incident as follows: The Pharisees did not accuse the disciples of stealing; it was permitted to take from another’s field as much grain as could be rubbed in one’s hands (Deut. 23, 25). But they did accuse them of violating the Sabbath rest.

They wrongly regarded the conduct of the disciples as the act of reaping forbidden in Exodus 34, 21. By means of the example of David, who ate the

loaves of proposition reserved to priests (1 Kgs 21, 1-6), and priests themselves engaged in the work of sacrificing on the Sabbath (Num. 28, 29), our Lord proved that such ceremonial law did not oblige in cases of real necessity.

There are many more examples where the law cannot be obeyed and is set aside because of cases of real necessity.

We will continue this article in the next issue of *The Seraph* by showing the errors of those who

refuse the necessary obedience to the genuine successors of the Apostles.



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THE TRIALS OF A MIND IN THE PROGRESS TO CATHOLICISM

In this treatise by Silliman Ives, we are given an insight into the trials and tribulations of his mind as he found his way back to the true Church of his fathers – The Roman Catholic Church.

This letter of his to his friends and relatives pours out his heart and mind in the hope that they too will find the consolation of the true Faith. In the introduction he begins with these words:

“Dear Brethren and Friends, It is due both to you and myself, as it is more especially to the cause of God, that I yield, without loss of time, to the promptings of my heart and conscience, and lay before you, as best I can, the reasons which have constrained me to take so serious, and to many dear ones, as well as to myself, so trying a step as that of abandoning the position in which I had acted as a Minister of Protestant Episcopal Church for more than twenty years, and of seeking, at my time of life, admission, as a mere layman, into “the Holy Catholic Church,” and with no prospect before me but simply peace of

conscience, and the salvation of my soul.”

He gives us insights into the difficulties inherent in the Protestant religion. Things that can not be reconciled with historical facts, sound reason, and the Faith espoused in the early Church. We are given an insight into the temptations that Protestants must overcome if they are to come to the true faith. An understanding of their prejudices and the obstacles that they must overcome may prove to be just what we need to help those who have had the misfortune to be raised in a false religion. There is not only much that is of use to the traditional Protestant sects but even those who have been raised in the Modernist Novus Ordo will, if they are humble and honest, find grounds for them too to return to the Church of their fathers.

This book is available for a small donation of \$15. If you would like a copy write to:

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**CONFERENCES ON THE
BLESSED TRINITY.
BY
THE REV. DR. J. J:
O'CONNELL, O.S.B.,
ST. MARY'S COLLEGE,
GASTON CO., N. C.**

TO THE
Most Holy and
Undivided Trinity,
ONE GOD
IN THREE DIVINE
PERSONS,
THE FATHER,
AND THE SON,
AND THE HOLY GHOST,
WHO ARE REALLY
DISTINCT AND EQUAL IN
ALL THINGS,
THIS HUMBLE TRIBUTE IS
REVERENTLY OFFERED,
THROUGH THE
Immaculate Virgin Mother,
AS AN ACT OF THE MOST
FIRM FAITH IN THE
ADORABLE MYSTERY,
BY
THE LAST AND LEAST OF
HIS CHILDREN,
JEREMIAH JOSEPH
O'CONNELL, O.S.B.
*"THESE THREE ARE ONE" -I
JOHN v. 7,*

PREFATORY EPISTLE TO

JAMES MCMAHON, ESQ,
BROOKLYN, N. Y.
MY DEAR AND ESTEEMED
FRIEND :

This treatise embraces lectures and sermons delivered frequently during a period of thirty-eight years in the holy ministry, and varying in length, style, and form to suit the characters of the different audiences. Honored with the chair of theology in this college, the class recitations and doctrinal discussions have given the theses their present title and shape. At the request of several friends I now offer them for perusal to the American people, and in fact to all serious readers, whether Catholic or non-Catholic.

At one time it was hoped that after the turbulent so-called Reformation should have spent itself, and after people should be disabused of the errors brought about by the "Reformation," the greater number would return to the faith of their fathers — to THE ONE TRUE FOLD. Such, unfortunately, has not been the case. It is true the masses of the people of Western Europe did not formally apostatize; their faith was stolen from them; they

were in reality cheated of their bright inheritance. And this was an additional ground for hope. Never deciding for themselves, only a national revolution could convert them. But the more recent upheavings of society wear their face in a different direction.

Infidelity and intellectual impiety are daily increasing more and more; and though, with some exceptions, not formally our national and characteristic sins, the common attitude in the United States towards God is worldliness and indifference. An insatiable thirst for wealth, humanitarianism, self-laudation, a growing tendency to free-love, and a merely outward respect for worship of some sort are striking features of non-Catholic society.

This treatise is published with the purpose of contravening these evils, and of serving as an antidote to the fast-increasing intellectual impiety of this otherwise happy land. The weakest barrier against irreligion, even the bare assertion of the truth, can scarcely fail to produce some though partial good; it will at least excite a good thought somewhere, the value of

which all the doctors of theology could never fully comprehend nor adequately explain.

Although they have been ably and more fully written by others, I have, at great pains, systematized some of the leading truths of religion, and I have compressed the proofs into a moderate-sized volume that will be accessible to most readers. I have presented the chief arguments in their simplest form and in an unbroken connection, one supporting the other or else flowing from it as a logical consequence and constituting a system that cannot fail to impress the mind of the serious and well-disposed reader in favor of our adorable faith, and perhaps subdue wandering thoughts in the mind of the Christian which tease if they do not assail his belief. This substantial abridgment of the principal proofs of THE MOST SUBLIME MYSTERY, though necessarily concise, is sufficiently comprehensive to be clear, and it enables the reader to take in at a glance the entire structure of the arguments.

There are eight Conferences on the Blessed Trinity: they

embrace the Existence of God the Father; the Divine Perfections; the Divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ; the Divinity and Procession of the Holy Ghost; the Trinity of Persons in the Divine Unity. Here, perhaps, the treatise might end; but I have added two other Conferences, one on the Creation and the other on the Blessed Eucharist — that is to say, on the greatest works of God, because of their inaccessible heights, closely allied to the mystery of the Most Holy Trinity and to the works of all the divine Persons combined, like all other operations, with this difference: that the Blessed Eucharist is God Himself and is what the Church styles in the Holy Mass THE MYSTERY OF FAITH by excellence.

To relieve the labor of pondering on arguments found in the region of pure truth I have interwoven moral reflections suggested by the mysteries, and no less for the instruction and edification of the student or pious reader. Without the safeguard of prayer St. Paul assures us that science puffs up.

I have studiously avoided all subtilities and school questions, which seldom edify, but

administer rather to curiosity, and which have often been formalized into heresies. Surely we should be contented with what has been defined by the Church as of faith and with what we certainly know. Every doctrine of the Church claims the homage and adoration of angels and saints for time and eternity.

All these Conferences are suitable for the pulpit, and have been preached by myself with much advantage to the people. Too long in their present shape, I have divided each and have numbered the points at which the enlightened clergyman can break off, to continue the argument on another occasion without detriment to the unity of the subject. This has been my plan.

I have taken great pains to secure accuracy, but if all the notes and quotations were exhibited the book would swell to an inconvenient bulk. I have, therefore, given without special references a summary of most of the authors consulted.

The volume is published with your co-operation and through

your zeal for the diffusion of the knowledge which is in Christ Jesus, and I trust, therefore, that you will reap an abundant reward.

I submit the volume without any reserve and in all respects to the judgment of the Holy Catholic Church and her Infallible Head, the Pope; and I disavow beforehand any propositions that may be at variance with the authorized teachings of our Holy Mother the Church.

I have the honor to be, my dear Mr. McMahan, your devoted friend in Christ,

J. J. O'CONNELL, O.S.B.

BENEDICTINE MONASTERY
OF ST. MARY'S HELP,
GASTON COUNTY,
NORTH CAROLINA,
FEAST OF THE MOST HOLY
TRINITY, 1882,

CONFERENCE I.

*ON THE EXISTENCE OF
THE ONE TRUE GOD
— THE FATHER, THE
FIRST PERSON OF THE
BLESSED TRINITY.*

God's Existence a Necessity
— If He is not, we are not —
The Consent of all Mankind,
Reason, Nature, Everything

— The Creation of Man —
Revelation — No Effect without
a Cause — From Nothing
Nothing comes — Who is
God? — Chance Second
Causes — Atoms, Numbers —
Nonsense — Sad End of Infidels
— The Blessed Trinity — One
God — Idolatry — Nobility
of Man's Origin — God came
and spoke to us in the Old and
New Testaments — We saw
Him, touched Him, and put
Him to Death — He arose
from the Dead and is with
us in the Catholic Church —
The Nineteenth Century has
greater Motives of Credibility
than the First — The Vocation
of Abraham — The Law and
the Prophets — The Catholic
Church a standing Miracle and
the Witness — Jesus Christ
as God — The Creator and
Redeemer — The Light of the
World — He is not the God of
the Stoics — Thabor and Calvary
— Practical Atheism — How is
Doubt possible? — Faith an Act
of the Will and Understanding
— Not acquired by human
Learning — Why are not all
learned people Catholic? — Foe
— Plato — Nihilism — The
absolute Absurdity — Prayer
— Moral Reflections, etc.

I.

I am who am. —*EXOD.* iii. 14.

MY BRETHREN :

You will merit an endless recompense as often as you recite the first article of the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds. They are the formula of the faith of the Catholic Church, and by them do we know the fact of God's existence unmixed with error.

“I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth. And of all things visible and invisible.” In order to condemn the recent theory of spontaneous production and brutal development, the Holy Ghost, in the Vatican Council, adds, “and in all their substance.”

Scientifically we all know that God is; by the virtue of Catholic faith we have the fact on a supernatural basis, in order, as Tertullian remarks, that there may be room for an eternal recompense.

This divine truth is the first known to be written in created language; and justly, because it is the foundation and cause of all religion, civilization, and knowledge, of all that is or can

be, and without which nothing can be.

The demonstration of the divine existence is the easiest and the most simple, the greatest and the most essential, act of human reason, which sound philosophy has analyzed, discussed, and confirmed with so much precision and detail for thousands of years that it has attained mathematical certainty, and it is indeed difficult to conceive how a sane man can doubt it.

The denial surpasses in infamy parricide, suicide, or any other crime in the dark roll of immorality. It is Deicide, the fountain of all iniquity. It is a sin against all that exists, for God's cause and His interests are common to all creatures, and the Holy Ghost assures us that the whole universe will avenge their contempt.

We trace the first sad origin of this denial to heaven. The angel through pride rebelled against his bountiful Creator, and was condemned with his forlorn hosts to darkness and endless torments. The once bright leader who shone like the morning star, had nevertheless perverted his intellect by denying, not, indeed,

the existence but the rights of his Maker, and was therefore changed into a creeping thing, the most hateful of all brutes. A transformation no less disastrous takes place in the soul of every man who unnaturally, and despite of reason, conscience, and religion, raises his hand against the Most High and in its worst form reasserts the frightful blasphemy. The very name of atheist is so hateful that the impious are ashamed of it and they retain the Holy Name of God while affecting to reject its substance.

God is the Creator and sovereign Lord of heaven and earth and of all things. He is eternal; He always was and always will be; He had no beginning and will have no end. The great First Cause, he is self-existent, infinite, absolute, free from the limitations and conditions of creatures. He is by the necessity of His being. It is impossible for Him not to be, or otherwise than as He is, with all his infinite perfections and in an adorable Trinity of Persons. The Blessed Trinity is God. The divine nature, one and indivisible, is in each Person in its infinite plenitude. He is One, One essentially, and is Oneness

itself. He is an unlimited ocean of being and embraces all things within Himself. In *Him we live and move and have our being*. He is a pure spirit, has no body, and makes no impression on our eyes. He sees and knows all things, even our most secret actions and thoughts. He can do all things, and nothing possible can be difficult to Him. He is infinitely good and great, and nothing good can be found in any creature which He does not possess and which does not emanate from Him.

He is the Father of all, and in Him are all paternities in heaven and earth. Every human being, Christian, Jew, Mahometan, or idolater, all are His children, whom He will judge singly, and He will render to every man according to his works. In His sight this world is a speck only in creation. He has made millions of starry worlds; each of these He could multiply millions of times over, yet He remains unchanged. Let them exceed angelic and human numbers, and they will no more than touch the borders of His infinite power and wisdom.

Such is the testimony of the

Catholic Church and her faith from the beginning; the belief of the synagogue and of the human race since its origin. The creature knows his Author almost by instinct and intuition. The All-Holy revealed Himself to man at the first instant of man's formation; of a divine necessity the existence of God was in the first thought of man or angel.

If, led by the hand of revelation and reason and in a spirit of prayer, I reverently draw aside the veil of the Sanctuary and exhibit the presence of God in some of His works, my sole object is to increase the love and reverence of my fellow-man for the Father of mercies, who called us out of nothing and bestowed upon us all that we possess. Holy Mary, seat of wisdom, obtain for us by thy prayers light and grace to know and love our Creator and thine, that we may hereafter see and enjoy Him in His bliss and glory whom we revere and contemplate in His works and especially in our own souls.

There never existed a nation or race of people who did not believe in the existence of God. Throughout the length and breadth of Asia, the cradle-land of the human race and where our

civilization had its origin; in mystic Egypt; in Africa; from Malabar to the Bight of Benin in all the populous cities and along the classic shores of Europe; in this young and yet old America, the secret of creation, like the prophet's hiding-place, from Kane's Sea to the headlands that lace the Antarctic ice, and among all the coral islands of the ocean, God is known. Civilized or barbarous, the forgotten myriads and the few who have left footprints on the shores of time, all have believed that they were made by Almighty God. Whoever denies this universal conviction is scarcely sane and should be sent for safe-keeping to one of our lunatic asylums. "Tell me," said an English sceptic, to an Arab chief, "how do you know there is a God?" The child of the desert, astonished, answered: "Does the sun want light to show himself?"

The opposition of China and Japan to our missionaries; the persecutions of Rome, and Greece, and Persia, and of all unchristianized nations, which deluged the world with the blood of Christian people, had no other grounds, and claimed no other, than that Catholicity was impious, opposed to the worship of the

gods, and that it denied religion.

The universal consent of all nations on any given point is conceded to be the voice of nature and the demonstration of truth. This universal persuasion, anterior to all reflection, undeniably establishes the existence of the one great and merciful God revealing Himself to every child of Adam and *enlightening every man that cometh into this world* (John i.)

In the lapse of time, and as our ancestors removed further away from the fountain of original truth and teachings, the notions of the people became less distinct and their ideas began to differ in regard to the nature and attributes of God. But they wore nevertheless in accord on one point — His existence — and it is in proof of this that I invoke their universal assent.

Blinded by their passions or seduced by a false literature, I know not which, some desperate men, to the horror of the world, have made profession of this vast impiety — though, thank God! little known in America — with what degree of sincerity I know not ; but their acts refute

their notions. They profess honor, justice, truth, all virtues, and affect to keep God's laws while denying that there is a God! Free-thinkers are generally free-livers, and, if I may say so, free-lovers. They are like the persecutors of the Church: their last end is frightful — like beacon-lights warning the world that their approach is dangerous and their contact death. We are all very brave until we are tried. Adversity is the test of sincerity. In the sorrows which come to us all, and at the dread moment of death, they call on God sincerely, whom they despised in their prosperity and in the sunshine of His favors. Some, like the philosopher of Ferney, gather the shattered strength of the spirit into one wild and desperate effort, curse, and die!

Holy Writ declares *that the heavens show forth, the glory of God, and the firmament declareth the work of His hands* (Ps. xviii. 1). In the shining page's of this golden book all mankind — the saint and the sinner, the savage and the sage — may read as they run the existence of the Creator and many of His perfections. An

admirable plan, a harmony, and an order prevail throughout, adapting with ineffable fitness the means to their proper end and purpose, and displaying infinite wisdom. Who that has any claim to common sense will assert that there can be an effect without a cause, or that nothing can produce something?

If such a person has not quite lost his senses I call his attention to a watch and to its complicated workmanship, and to the fact that each separate piece performs a distinct function, and that all combine to produce the desired effect — that is, to tell the daily hours, minutes, and seconds. He admits it is remarkable, but — it happens by chance.

I accompany him to St. Peter's in Rome, "sole temple worthy of God;" its dimensions, its ornaments, the plan and the materials, like the pyramid of Cheops, are the wonder of the world. He tells me it all happened by chance! I now inform him that the world is spherical and many thousand miles in circumference ; that it has two motions — one the diurnal, by which it revolves on its axis a thousand miles an hour in an easterly direction, causing

the wonderful succession of day and night; the other its annual motion in its orbit round the sun, in which it speeds with a velocity of sixty-eight thousand miles an hour, producing the wonderful variety of seasons, making the earth the vestibule of heaven were it not for our sins. I prove to him that this motion is so uniform that from the day of creation until now there has not been one moment's difference in the length of the days and the years. Well, it all happened by chance! Merciful God, how less than human are all who forsake thee! Such, you reply, is the extreme of folly; the watch must have had a maker, St. Peter's an architect, and the world a creator.

To be continued.



Could You Explain Catholic Practices?

Rev. Charles J Mullaly, S.J.

SCAPULARS

I was removing the cope after Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament, when a gentleman, a recent convert, requested to be invested in “all the scapulars.”

“You are asking something rather remarkable,” I replied. “Have you any idea how many scapulars there are and what they mean?”

“I haven’t the slightest idea, Father; but my wife suggested that I be invested in all I can get; so here I am.”

I could not repress a smile.

“There are eighteen different kinds of scapulars. You have seen, no doubt, a small scapular; it consists of two small rectangular segments of woven woolen cloth, connected with each other by two bands or strings. We trace its origin to the large scapular of the Religious Orders of the Church. The word is from the Latin scapula, meaning shoulder, and is the name of a part of the habit of many Religious Orders and

Congregations. You may have noticed the dress of the priests who recently gave a mission in the neighboring parish. They wore a large piece of wide cloth, of the same color as the habit, and it hung down in front and in back from the shoulders almost to the feet. This was the large scapular of their Religious Order.

“A few centuries ago, many people who could not join a Religious Order begged to be allowed to share in certain privileges, and were permitted to wear the habit, or a part of the habit. Thus, today, we have ‘Third Orders’ where members wear under the clothing the large scapular in a reduced size. Confraternities also were formed by various Religious Orders, and people were invested with a scapular of a very small size. Only a member of the Order, or a priest having a special faculty, can invest with the scapular of the particular Order. The names of those invested are inscribed in a register of the Confraternity. Some Religious Orders and congregations, though they have no Confraternity, have a faculty

of blessing small scapulars and of investing with them.”

The visitor was interested.

“My wife tells me she was invested with the ‘Five Scapulars’.”

“Frequently five of the best known of the scapulars are worn attached to the same strings or bands. These five are: the brown scapular of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, the blue of the Immaculate Conception, the black of the Seven Dolors, the red of the Passion, and the scapular of the Most Blessed Trinity, white with a small blue and red cross. However, the scapular most used is the brown of the Carmelites. A pious tradition refers its origin to a vision granted to Saint Simon Stock by the Blessed Mother, who promised her special protection to those who wear it. While the privilege of investing with the brown scapular was originally restricted to the Carmelite Fathers, it is now shared with all priests having the faculties of a diocese in the United States.

“To gain the special privileges and Indulgences, a scapular must be worn suspended by the bands

over the shoulders, one part on the breast and the other on the back.”

“If scapulars are lost or wear out, does one have to be again invested ?” asked the visitor.

“No; a new scapular may replace the old one without any investing or blessing. Also, a scapular medal may be used instead of a small scapular, provided it is blessed by a priest who has the faculty to bless and invest with the corresponding scapulars in which the person has been enrolled. If the medal is to be worn in place of a number of different scapulars it must receive as many blessings as the number of scapulars it is to replace.

“An exception is made for soldiers who, even though they have not been invested in the scapular or had their names inscribed in a Confraternity, may share in the privileges and Indulgences, if they carry on their person a scapular medal validly blessed. A scapular medal must bear on one side a representation of Christ with His Sacred Heart and on the other side an image of the Blessed Mother.”

The Dialogue of Saint Catherine of Siena

Translated by Algar Thorold

A TREATISE OF PRAYER

(Continued)

Of the dignity of the priest; and of the Sacrament of the Body of Christ; and of worthy and unworthy communicants.

“Now I will reply to that which you asked Me concerning the ministers of the holy Church, and, in order that you may the better understand the truth, open the eye of your intellect, and look at their excellence and the dignity in which I have placed them. And, since one thing is better known by means of contrast with its contrary, I will show you the dignity of those who use virtuously the treasure I have placed in their hands; and, in this way, you will the better see the misery of those who today are suckled at the breast of My Spouse.” Then this soul obediently contemplated the truth, in which she saw virtue resplendent in those who truly taste it. Then said the Eternal God: “I will first, dearest daughter, speak to you of the dignity of priests, having placed them where they are through My Goodness, over

and above the general love which I have had to My creatures, creating you in My image and similitude and re-creating you all to the life of grace in the Blood of My only-begotten Son, whence you have arrived at such excellence, through the union which I made of My Deity with human nature; so that in this you have greater dignity and excellence than the angels, for I took your human nature and not that of the angels. Wherefore, as I have said to you, I, God, have become man, and man has become God by the union of My Divine Nature with your human nature. This greatness is given in general to all rational creatures, but, among these I have especially chosen My ministers for the sake of your salvation, so that, through them, the Blood of the humble and immaculate Lamb, My only-begotten Son, may be administered to you. To them have I given the Sun to administer, giving them the light of science and the heat of Divine Love, united together in the color of the Body and Blood of My Son, whose Body is a Sun, because He is one thing with Me,

the True Sun, in such a way that He cannot be separated or divided from Me, as in the case of the natural sun, in which heat and light cannot be separated, so perfect is their union; for, the sun, never leaving its orbit, lights the whole world and warms whoever wishes to be warmed by it, and is not defiled by any impurity on which it shines, for its light and heat and color are united.

“So this Word, My Son, with His most sweet Blood, is one Sun, all God and all man, because He is one thing with Me and I with Him. My power is not separated from His wisdom, nor the fiery heat of the Holy Spirit from Me, the Father, or from Him, the Son; for He is one thing with us, the Holy Spirit proceeding from the Father and the Son, and We together forming one and the same Sun; that is to say, I, the Eternal God, am that Sun whence have proceeded the Son and the Holy Spirit. To the Holy Spirit is attributed fire and to the Son wisdom, by which wisdom My ministers receive the light of grace, so that they may administer this light to others, with gratitude for the benefits received from Me, the Eternal Father, following the doctrine of the Eternal Wisdom,

My only-begotten Son. This is that Light, which has the color of your humanity, color and light being closely united. Thus was the light of My Divinity united to the color of your humanity, which color shone brightly when it became perfect through its union with the Divine nature, and, by this means of the Incarnate Word mixed with the Light of My Divine nature and the fiery heat of the Holy Spirit, have you received the Light. Whom have I entrusted with its administration?

“My ministers in the Mystical Body of the holy Church, so that you may have life, receiving His Body in food and His Blood in drink. I have said to you that this Body is, as it were, a Sun. Wherefore, you cannot receive the Body without the Blood, or the Blood or the Body without the Soul of the Incarnate Word; nor the Soul, nor the Body, without the Divinity of Me, the Eternal God, because none of these can be separated from each other, as I said to you in another place that the Divine nature never left the human nature, either by death or from any other cause. So that you receive the whole Divine Essence in that most Sweet

Sacrament concealed under the whiteness of the bread; for as the sun cannot be divided into light, heat, and color, the whole of God and the whole of man cannot be separated under the white mantle of the host; for even if the host should be divided into a million particles (if it were possible) in each particle should I be present, whole God and whole Man. When you break a mirror the reflection to be seen in it is not broken; similarly, when the host is divided God and man are not divided, but remain in each particle. Nor is the Sacrament diminished in itself, except as far as may be in the following example.

“If you have a light, and the whole world should come to you in order to take light from it — the light itself does not diminish — and yet each person has it all. It is true that everyone participates more or less in this light, according to the substance into which each one receives the fire. I will develop this metaphor further that you may the better understand Me. Suppose that there are many who bring their candles, one weighing an ounce, others two or six ounces, or a pound, or even more, and light them in the

flame, in each candle, whether large or small, is the whole light, that is to say, the heat, the color, and the flame; nevertheless you would judge that he whose candle weighs an ounce has less of the light than he whose candle weighs a pound. Now the same thing happens to those who receive this Sacrament. Each one carries his own candle, that is the holy desire, with which he receives this Sacrament, which of itself is without light, and lights it by receiving this Sacrament. I say without light, because of yourselves you can do nothing, though I have given you the material, with which you can receive this light and feed it. The material is love, for through love I created you, and without love you cannot live.

“Your being, given to you through love, has received the right disposition in holy baptism, which you receive in virtue of the Blood of the Word, for, in no other way, could you participate in this light; you would be like a candle with no wick inside it, which cannot burn or receive light, if you have not received in your souls the wick which catches this Divine Flame, that is to say, the Holy Faith, which

you receive, by grace, in baptism, united with the disposition of your soul created by Me, so fitted for love, that, without love, which is her very food, she cannot live. Where does the soul united in this way obtain light? At the fire of My Divine love, loving and fearing Me, and following the Doctrine of My Truth. It is true that the soul becomes more or less lighted according to the material which it brings to the fire; for although you all have one and the same material, in that you are all created to My image and similitude, and, being Christians, possess the light of holy baptism, each of you may grow in love and virtue by the help of My grace, as may please you. Not that you change the form of what I have given you, but that you increase your strength in love, and your free-will, by using it while you have time, for when time is past you can no longer do so. So that you can increase in love, as has been said, coming with love to receive this Sweet and Glorious Light, which I have given you as Food for your service, through My ministers, and you receive this Light according to the love and fiery desire with which you approach It.

“The Light Itself you receive entire, as I have said (in the example of those, who in spite of the difference in weight of their candles, all receive the entire light), and not divided, because It cannot be divided, as has been said, either on account of any imperfection of yours who receive, or of the minister; but you personally participate in this light, that is in the grace which you receive in this Sacrament, according to the holy desire with which you dispose yourselves to receive it. He who should go to this sweet Sacrament in the guilt of mortal sin, will receive no grace therefrom, though he actually receive the whole of God and the whole of Man. Do you know the condition of the soul who receives unworthily? She is like a candle on which water has fallen, which can do nothing but crackle when brought near the flame, for no sooner has the fire touched it, than it is extinguished, and nothing remains but smoke; so this soul has cast the water of guilt within her mind upon the candle which she received in holy baptism, which has drenched the wick of the grace of baptism, and, not having heated it at the fire of true contrition and

confession, goes to the table of the altar to receive this Light with her body, and not with her mind, wherefore the Light, since the soul is not disposed as she should be for so great a mystery, does not remain by grace in that soul, but leaves her, and, in the soul, remains only greater confusion, for her light is extinguished and her sin increased by her darkness. Of the Sacrament she feels nothing but the crackling of a remorseful conscience, not through the defect of the Light Itself, for that can receive no hurt, but on account of the water that was in the soul, which impeded her proper disposition so that she could not receive the Light. See, therefore, that in no way can this Light, united with its heat and its color, be divided, either by the scanty desire of the soul when she receives the Sacrament, or by any defect which may be in the soul, or by any defect of him who administers it, as I told you of the sun which is not defiled by shining on anything foul, so the sweet Light of this Sacrament cannot be defiled, divided, or diminished in any way, nor can it be detached from its orbit.

“If all the world should receive

in communion the Light and Heat of this Sun, the Word, My only-begotten Son, would not be separated from Me — the True Sun, His Eternal Father — because in His mystical Body, the holy Church, He is administered to whoever will receive Him. He remains wholly with Me, and yet you have Him, whole God and whole man, as I told you, in the metaphor of the light, that, if all the world came to take light from it, each would have it entire, and yet it would remain whole.”

To be continued:



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