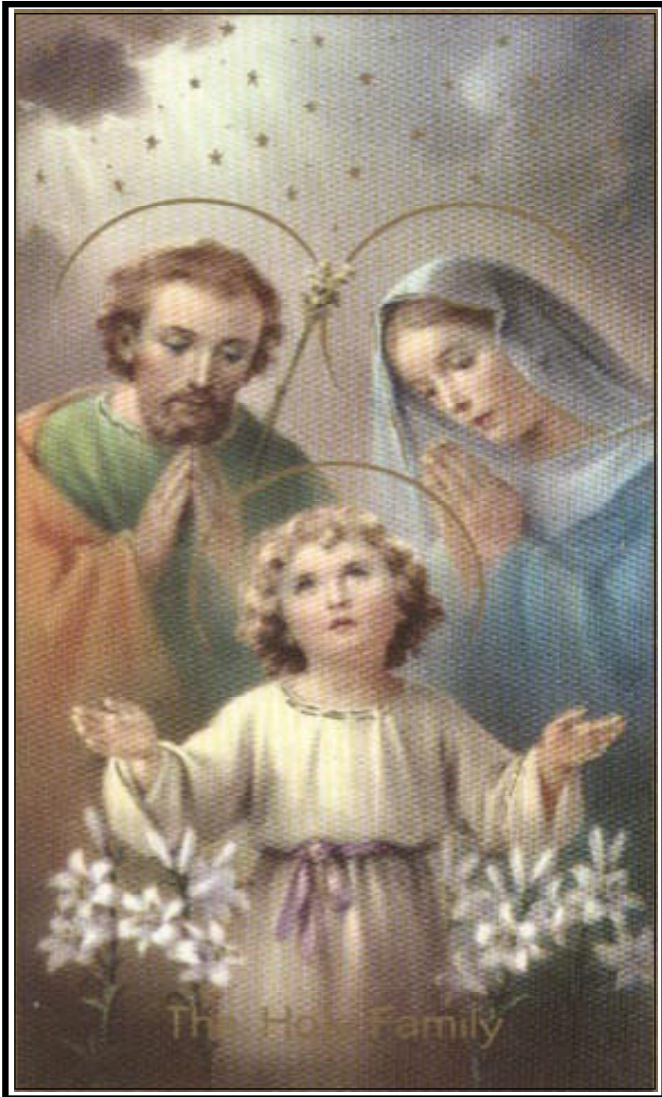


THE SERAPH

January 2010

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EDITOR
Bishop Louis Velzelis, O.F.M.

PRODUCTION
Mr. Francis Y. No
Bishop Giles O.F.M.

CONTRIBUTORS
Rev. S.O. Park

CIRCULATION
Bishop Giles Butler, O.F.M.

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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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The SERAPH
3376 MOUNT READ BLVD
ROCHESTER, NEW YORK 14616
Tel. (585) 621-1122
e-mail: friars@friarsminor.org

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In essentia - Unitas. In dubio - Libertas.
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EDITORIAL

The Great Apostasy spoken of by St. Paul in 2 Thessalonians is already here. In particular, we might ponder the words of St. Paul in the light of our own current experiences.

The coming of the Antichrist will be **“according to the workings of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders and with all wicked deception to those who are perishing. For they have not received the love of truth that they might be saved. Therefore God sends them a misleading influence that they may believe falsehood, that all may be judged who have not believed the truth, but have preferred wickedness.”** (2 Thess. 2, 9-12).

We are certainly in the “latter times” and the wise will take heed of all that is spoken of concerning the Blessed Virgin Mary.

And because the Blessed Virgin “must shine forth more than ever in mercy, in might and in grace in these latter times. In mercy, to bring back and lovingly receive the poor strayed sinners who shall be converted and shall return to the Catholic Church; in might against the

enemies of God, idolators, schismatics, Muslims, Jews and souls hardened in impiety, who shall rise in terrible revolt against God to seduce all those who shall oppose them, and to make them fall by promises and threats, and finally, she must shine forth in grace, in order to animate and sustain the valiant soldiers and faithful servants of Jesus Christ who shall battle for his interests.” (True Devotion to Mary, St. Louis de Monfort).

“Because the devils themselves have confessed through the mouths of the possessed that they fear one of her sighs for a soul more than the prayers of all the saints, and one of her threats against them more than all other torments.” (Ibid).

“What Lucifer has lost by pride, Mary has gained by humility. What Eve has damned and lost by disobedience, Mary has saved by obedience. Eve in obeying the serpent has destroyed all her children together with herself and has delivered them to him.” (Ibid).

For these reasons and many more, we would wish to make this year of 2010 in particular the “Year of the

Rosary” so that we may all prove ourselves to be worthy children of so august a Mother. We must let our Blessed Mother form in us those great saints of the latter days.

The true apostles of the latter days will be “walking in the footsteps of Jesus Christ in His poverty, humility, contempt of the world, charity, teaching the narrow way of God in pure truth according to the holy Gospel and not according to the maxims of the world....” (Ibid).

Furthermore, these genuine devotees of the Blessed Virgin will unmask and denounce the myriads of false devotees of the Blessed Virgin. The most odious to the Blessed Mother are those who make a profession of promoting her apparitions while living lives saturated with pride rather than Marian humility. Praise of Mary devoid of obedience to the Church is the work of Satan.

**THE MAKING OF A GOOD WILL OR TRUST:
HAVE YOU REMEMBERED GOD?**

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The Bishop Speaks

Bishop Louis Vezelis OFM

THE REMNANT ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH AGAINST THE DEMONIC DISORIENTATION OF TRADITIONALISTS McKenna the “Theologian”

(January 2010)

“What’s in a name,” you may ask. The answer is very important to consider. After all, our society is built on labels, good or bad, true or false. The mass media is today the handmaid of detraction, on the one hand, and the presumptuous promoter of false “saints” on the other.

Anyone with a computer and access to the internet can witness the most crass expressions of detraction and/or canonization of pet “heroes.”

Pontius Pilate, that unfortunate Roman official caught in a Judaic dilemma, asked the woeful question of Our Lord: “What is truth?”. Remember that Jesus said of Himself, “I am the way, the truth and the life.”

Pontius Pilate received the answer to his question, but it was an answer that caused him more grief than gladness.

The Communist believes in “constant war for constant peace”. Whatever the name, it is always reduced to Satanic influences. What most people do not understand, especially among the clergy, is that the same Hegelian-Marxist dialectic is at work to destroy the only possible source of right order in all of nature – animate and inanimate, and that is the Roman Catholic Church.

How many “Catholics” remember when Montini (AKA “Pope Paul”) went to the atheist organization publicly known as the “United Nations” and in full view of millions of people unabashedly proclaimed it (referring to the UN) as “Mankind’s last hope.” Such a blatant blasphemy vanished in thin air shortly after being aired on television.

What did all this mean? It simply meant that to the unthinking masses this was the highest visible representative of Jesus Christ saying to the whole world that the Roman Catholic Church approves of the Communist-instituted United Nations.

Politics is not the purpose of these articles. Their purpose is to expose the errors of certain individuals in

matters of Catholic doctrine and discipline.

What may be perceived by the superficial mind as personal invective is not so. It is unfortunate, however, that at times the character of the one holding false notions for perhaps personal reasons enters into the equation.

After all, Martin Luther who was supported in his theological errors by “Catholic” nobles, was still a specific human entity through which Satan and human pride entered the world of thought and consequent action.

When English Bishops condemned St. Joan of Arc for political reasons, they were masking their crime under the guise of religion. All of human history may be traced to this nefarious influence of evil spirits whom we know by name and by specialty.

We must face the stark reality: Either the “salvation of souls” is paramount in the mission of the Church, or, this is just a clever pretext to exploit the misguided credulity of the masses. What is your choice? Do you think it worth exposing error to protect trusting souls who see themselves as Catholic, or, do you think it “practical” to “close one eye” as suggested by the leaders of one of those many false visionaries?

We should remind ourselves often that Satan is interested in *quantity* (*numbers*) while God is interested in *quality* (*numbers do not count*). Or, as one dedicated Franciscan professor of Franciscan History poignantly stated: “One drop of holiness is worth more in the eyes of God than an ocean of tepidity.”

It is the conviction of this writer that nothing is more important in our human existence than the love of truth; that the mission of the Church is to sanctify its members within the only possible framework of Her doctrine and discipline. We have been given certain doctrines (dogmas); principles of right morality, and Canon Law promulgated to protect the right order to which every Catholic is bound in conscience to obey.

Properly understood, there is no salvation outside the Catholic Church. There is no membership in the Mystical Body of Jesus Christ outside Baptism or its desire. Both of which are the work of divine grace and not that of any individual. St. Thomas Aquinas treated of this subject at great length and referred his teaching to St. Augustine who is the doctor *par excellence* on divine grace.

And so, with these few observations to keep in mind, the question based on what the Scripture say “Ex ore

tuo, judico” (It is from your own words that I judge) must be asked: “Is Fidelis McKenna a “Catholic forever” priest?

When Bishop Musey and his shadow, Mr. Thomas Fouhy (laicized priest) were setting up their process to establish Musey as the “Primate of the United States” by consecrating every priest in the Eastern half of the United States, McKenna was contacted with the hope of finding a way to avert the impending mockery of the Church.

I find it uniquely peculiar that those who entertain secret delusions of grandeur always find words to insult those whom they should respect and obey.

When a priest promises obedience to the bishop ordaining him, or, if done with authorization of another bishop in whose territory the priest will work, one plainly expects that the bishop has the right to ask a priest to come to a meeting to discuss serious questions affecting more than just one person.

This is what the world would rightly consider loyalty to one’s superior. Instead of acting as a loyal priest would and hastening to come to his bishop’s aid, this man heaped scorn and insult upon the man whom he had not long ago considered his bishop. Here it may be necessary to remind all Catholics of the sacred

structure in the Church: The priest is neither equal to nor higher than the bishop. Furthermore, it is not the bishop who has to be “accepted” by the priest, but *the priest must be accepted by the bishop.*

After profuse pietistic protestations of respect and obedience, McKenna just as quickly repudiated everything the bishops stood for. How bizarre! With one side of his mouth he insists that he respects the jurisdiction of the bishops, and on the other side with tilted head in a pious angle, he not only repudiates all that he has said, but what is far worse, he publicly encourages the faithful to disobey their true shepherd, the divinely appointed bishop.

If there are those who would doubt this, perhaps the very words from the mouth of this disloyal priest will suffice to make the point:

In a letter in response to a request (not a demand) to come to the bishop’s office to discuss the machinations of Musey and Fouhy, we find his typical self-contradictions. For example, he states: “As I said to the community (What ‘community’?) in my reply to the initial invitation to the ordination, I prefer in the wake of the recent unpleasantness surrounding the latest consecrations, to avoid further

involvement with the bishops for the time being.”

Observe what this man is saying: He has apparently no regard for objective reality and substitutes his own ambitions for those of the Church. He was correct when he said he “preferred to avoid further involvement with the bishops for the time being.”

It would appear that he chose to become involved when he secretly accepted Bishop Musey’s invitation to be consecrated. At first, he had agreed not to get involved with the mockery associated with the consecration of two impossible candidates.

As we will see in good time, McKenna was throwing up all kinds of obstacles to his impending “consecration” – not by Bishop Musey, but by the “French Garden Dwarf” (As Archbishop Ngo described him), Mon. Guerard des Lauriers, O.P. And for des Lauriers’ philosophic and theological acumen, the Archbishop said: “Il a une graine dans la tête” – “He has a screw loose,” we would say in English. But, we shall see his absurd theory based on a false understanding of philosophic terminology.

For a man who is vaunted as a “great exorcist” who admits his lack of success in casting out devils, he certainly manifests dangerous

ignorance of demonic activity. He seems to see devils where they are not and does not see them where they are. He does not appear to be knowledgeable of demonic tactics to destroy what is left of the Church. As the saying goes: He did not become a part of the solution, he became a part of the problem.

He seeks to blame the bishops for the fact that no priests came together to work with and under the bishops. He avows that it was “bad enough as it is that we have labored in vain to rally the priests and faithful of the remnant behind their leadership, but that they themselves should so suddenly be divided – is scandalous, to say the least.”

He does not even make a flimsy attempt to learn what really caused almost immediate division among the bishops. For one thing, he himself has been the greatest cause for scandal if there would be anyone capable of being scandalized in these days of disorder and almost total anarchy (Fostered by priests like McKenna).

If McKenna were as informed as he would like to appear of Catholic doctrine and especially of discipline, he would have been more than silent in his “praise” of the defrocked clergyman, Thomas Fouhy. This was a very serious matter as far as

I am concerned and was most certainly a strong cause in refusing to be a party in the absurd ambitions of Musey, Carmona and Fouhy enterprises to be Primates of Mexico and the United States respectively. Since their greatest obstacle was myself (Mr. Fouhy and Bishop Musey knew my position regarding Fouhy) it was necessary to force me out of the picture as was also the case of Bishop Zamora in Mexico.

In an official letter from the Archdiocese of Wellington, New Zealand, written on 17 May 1984, and signed by the Cardinal Archbishop the following sad information is presented:

“Dear Father,

I am happy to reply to the questions you asked in your letter of 25 April, which Bishop Denis Browne of Auckland has passed on to me.

- Thomas Condon Fouhy was ordained priest in Wellington on 30 November 1943.
- In 1969 he applied for laicization.
- In July 1969, without dispensation, he married in a civil ceremony in the Registry Office in the town of Bulls,

New Zealand, a Mrs. Jacqueline Lorraine Grant, the mother of two children, a widow since June 1967

- On 13 March, 1970, the petition for laicization was granted by the Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, Prot. N. 1908/69. The laicization was notified to him at Te Puke in 1970.
- I have heard that the marriage, a civil one only, was terminated by divorce.
- Thomas Fouhy traveled overseas after separating from his wife, and has sought to minister as a Tridentine Rite priest in Scotland, England and the United States.
- I would be astonished if the Tridentine Rite hierarchy were unaware of Thomas Fouhy's sad history. Certainly Archbishop Lefebvre was informed of it by the Bishop of Hexham and Newcastle, England on 5 June 1978.
- The Apostolic See, I am certain, has never

readmitted him to
priestly ministry.

Please do not hesitate to
contact me again if further
information is required.

Signed: +Thomas Cardinal
Williams

Archbishop of Wellington

I have searched throughout Canon
Law (Church Law) looking for a
Canon on censures, etc, where it
might exonerate and return a laicized
clergyman to priestly ministry by
simply presenting a self-chosen
“penance” for all of New Zealand
to see by pulling a cross of some sort
across the country. Perhaps a
document authorized by a Pope
imposing such an absurd display
might help the intelligent Catholic to
view Mr. Fouhy’s “return” to priestly
ministry. Despite all this, Mr. Fouhy
not only “returned” to the ministry,
but someone claims to have made
him a “bishop”.

But, then, among those
Traditionalists, Pope-making has
become a common thing.

It seems that McKenna is not aware
of the words of Our Lord concerning
scandal. It would be well to
remember His words when such
occasions arise.

While I painstakingly was forced to
submit to this man’s, Fouhy, presence

at the altar during my consecration
and equally morally forced to allow
him to preach the sermon, the taste
has never left my mouth.

Kindly note the important difference
in attitudes in relation to an objective
serious matter.

McKenna writes of his “mini-
conclave” (A “conclave” is called to
elect a pope) held in Monroe, CT.
Regardless of proper terminology, the
fact is this: McKenna publicly and
in print stated:

“Fr. Thomas Fouhy himself
having urged this second
attempt of our organized
movement to gather more
than fifty independent
traditionalist priests in
this country with a view to
better mutual understanding
and coordinated effort, it
seems but fitting that he
should be the first to
address our gathering, small
as it has proved to be. ...I
daresay I speak the mind
also of the other priests
here when I tell Fr. Fouhy
that it was all I could do
to restrain myself from
standing up and cheering at
his words this morning. They
were little short of
inspired, I think, and could
not have been better said
or anything better said, on
this occasion.”

Besides always “speaking the mind” of all those sitting silently who never seem to have a chance to speak and be quoted, the outrage is in the fact that Mr. Fouhy has been excommunicated from the Roman Catholic Church because he attempted a civil marriage (Canon 2388 §1). He was reduced to the lay state based on his own request. This was granted. He was not permitted, therefore, to engage in priestly functions.

He was the “hatchet man” for Bishop Musey who had a knack for getting other people to do his ill-advised work.

It was this same Fouhy who had been dismissed from a Religious congregation well before Vatican II. It was this same Fouhy who, while enjoying the hospitality of the Franciscan Friars attempted to dissuade them from their vocation. It was this same Fouhy – so lavishly praised by McKenna – who went to the Schuckardt Sect in the West to purportedly “teach” in the seminary of that bogus group. It was this same Fouhy whom I refused to allow into our Seminary because I already knew the havoc he would create.

If there is any truth to the dictum that “Birds of a feather flock together,” I would have no reservations in understanding

McKenna’s praise of this man whom the German professors described – and I quote: “Fouhy is the kind of man you would take if you were going to steal horses.”

This is the man who was eventually “consecrated” a bishop. It is not nice to speak of the dead for the simple reason that they are now in a position to harm no one anymore.

We have all heard of or read of the fantastically extravagant projects of McKenna. We will see the lamentable legacy he has created for the Church.

McKenna is the man who sought to place himself between the bishop and the flock. Disobedient himself, he does everything possible to urge others to follow his demonic disorientation.

It should be observed by the objective reader that there is no intention of damning Mr. Fouhy for any moral failings. The entire point here is that he was reduced to the lay state at his own request and that he cannot function as a priest without the express authorization of the Apostolic See. Besides this, his excommunication for attempted marriage is reserved to the Apostolic See. No bishop can lift that excommunication. The same holds true for any possible readmission to active ministry: *ONLY THE*

APOSTOLIC SEE (THE POPE) CAN READMIT HIM TO THE ACTIVE MINISTRY. Furthermore, it is the policy of the Church not to readmit those who have been laicized.

It is the duty of the Bishop to uphold the laws of the Church and it is for the Bishop to be the judge in matters within his competency.

At this point, I would like to give Mr. Fouhy some positive credit. When the two passionate candidates for the episcopacy saw their efforts go down like a plane in flames because of their disappointment in trying to force the bishops to consecrate them, Vida Elmer fumed and snarled like a midget monster upon his return to Albany, NY. In his propaganda paper he denounced the bishops from whom he had expected consecration by saying that he would only accept them if they could provide him with a papal mandate (Authorization from a Pope) or perform a first class miracle.

It was Mr. Fouhy who wrote the following letter to Vida Elmer”

“Dear Father Elmer,

In September 1982. you were hoping for ‘peace among traditionalists.’ (Mono. 55) Less than six months later (63, 64) you continue to add to the confusion by a

vast outpouring of verbiage. Just exactly whose side are you on, the Church’s or her enemies? As time proceeds, it seems more like the latter.

‘Pontificating’ seems to be the only word to describe the tone of your recent letters especially. There are two good Bishops in the U. S. at the moment, validly and lawfully consecrated (I believe my view to be just as good as your own) and possessing full authority. You are only making things difficult for them by your imprudent distinguishing and questioning, and you are clearly doing Satan’s work for him, not God’s.

Bishops Musey and Vezelis should be left alone to work things out their way. They are the men who have the heavy responsibility of office – that of ‘teaching, ruling and sanctifying the faithful committed to their care.’ So please leave the difficult task to them, and cease offering public advice and creating harm at the same time. This amounts to scandal – creating unrest.

The question of the seminary is not in any way a serious

one, if you only knew something about the situation. It needs prayer, not criticism.

I would like to know how you think candidates for the episcopacy should be selected. By priests? Father, the only case I am aware of where this system has been used could hardly be called successful. Quite the reverse in fact. I find difficulty imagining you with your rather dictatorial manner getting along harmoniously with other men. Moreover, your reaction to the rejection of the odd and ill-considered demand that two (at least) bishops should be consecrated at Baton Rouge, using if necessary some short form (incredible), has hardly been creditable.

The question to be resolved is very clear – where is the true Church, the Catholic Church? The N. O. Church is 'out'. It must be found in the traditional movement. But where? Which remnant of the 'remnant'? The correct one must surely be that which is clearly Apostolic, has successors of the Apostles, Bishops who are recognized by an

indefinite number of priests and laity, no matter how few. The Bishops are Musey and Vezelis, O. F. M.

The cause of all the disturbance and confusion today is precisely- lack of divinely given authority. In the U. S. A, no true bishops for 15 years because they have all followed Vatican 2 and Paul VI, and now the greatest disaster yet, JP2. Meanwhile, everyone is talking, pontificating, and no one is listening. Over the years it has produced a crazy scene. Catholics have become their own popes and bishops, filled with infallibility, pride, rebellion – the diabolic spirit of democracy, real protestants. They have lost the understanding of the authority Christ left in His Church, and when at last it reappears in the person of two good bishops, they resist and rebel and find fault. Too bad for them of course. They are rejecting Christ Himself.

If the Bishops fail to exercise their authority, they sin grievously. By divine law they, as successors of the Apostles,

are given the office of teaching, ruling and sanctifying the faithful committed to their care – in this instance, the priests and laity who humbly submit to their authority. There may be (in fact, has there not been already?) a prudent and reasonable period granted for reflection and wise decision. But, ultimately they must act in the name of Christ and demand submission and respect. When that day comes, those who resist, priests included, are outside the Church; they have cut themselves off from the Mystical Body of Christ.

I have no doubt whatever that the Bishops have the power to excommunicate dissidents. They have the right to the ‘curriculum vitae’ of every priest who claims to be traditional, and the right to refuse faculties. And since the reappearance of genuine bishops in the U. S., priests without faculties from one of the bishops is committing grave sin in exercising his priesthood, and renders himself liable to excommunication.

This line of thinking may not appeal to everyone, but to me it looks more logical and orthodox than any alternative. So there is an important ‘mark’ of the true Roman Catholic Apostolic Church in the United States – apostolicity, i. e., authority stemming very obviously from the Apostles.

But there is another ‘mark’, also very weighty and impressive, it is – persecution – one of the signs of His Church given us by Our Lord Himself. Who is Satan, through his agents, hurling his abuse at today? Obvious, isn’t it? The Bishops! In Satan’s eyes. Archbishop Thuc is the most hated man in the world, precisely because he has perpetuated the Apostolic succession which came close to extinction. Consequently he and the other bishops he has consecrated directly or indirectly are in the firing-line; the object of calumny and detracton and insinuation and flak of all kinds. And who are his agents, Father? Angelus, Matt, Davies, “Roman Catholic” – all traditionalists – plus the laity they lead astray with them. And yourself? Once

again I ask, where do you stand? You are not clearly on the side of the Bishops.

I don't propose to write to you again. I have made myself as clear as I wish, and have more pressing work to attend to. But I do say that I would be very happy to see you very clearly in support of the Bishops, not finding fault with them.

Sincerely in Our Lord,
Father Thomas C. Fouhy”

It is unfortunate that Thomas Fouhy's natural talent could not have served the Church better in later years when he and Musey gave in to the demonic desire for a power

that was like a big bubble – to ambition to see oneself as the “Primate of the United States.” It was this demonic ambition that blinded him and Bishop Musey to depart from the way of sound doctrine and good order.

My suggestion would be for McKenna to attentively read these words from the pen of the man whose words he considered almost divinely inspired. It all goes to prove that it is easy to talk the talk, but an entirely different thing to walk the walk..

(To be continued)

**THE MAKING OF A GOOD WILL OR TRUST:
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Sermons and Addresses
OF
HIS EMINENCE
WILLIAM CARDINAL
O'CONNELL
ARCHBISHOP OF BOSTON



THE EARLY CHURCH
A SERIES OF FIVE
CONFERENCES

DELIVERED AT THE
CATHOLIC SUMMER
SCHOOL,

PLATTSBURGH, N. Y., 1895.

THE APOSTLES THE
FOUNDATIONS

THE Gospels tell us that from among those who followed the Lord, Christ chose twelve, and called them Apostles. These were Simon, whom He called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James and John; Philip and Bartholomew; Matthew and Thomas; James and Simon, called

Zelotes; Jude, the brother of James, and Judas Iscariot who also betrayed Him. To them He entrusted the mission which He Himself had received from His Divine Father; to represent on earth the person of Christ, to be partakers of His power, to lead the world to the knowledge of the Savior, and to persuade Jew and Gentile, Greek and Roman, that He was the Son of God, the true Redeemer.

Thus He entrusted to them this arduous task: "All power is given to Me in Heaven and on earth; going, therefore, teach all nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you, and behold, I am with you always, even unto the consummation of the world" (Matt. xxviii). Consider for a moment the import of these words. Christ, who speaks them, was soon, as He Himself knew, to be taken away from the eyes of His faithful followers, ascending up beyond all Heavens to be with the Father as He had been "before all worlds," and, like some great ruler of a conquered nation addressing his generals, He gives them His commands to complete the conquest of that realm He had bought with

His Blood, and govern it for Him till He should come again.

It would seem, according to human wisdom, that this great commission might only be entrusted to men who by talent and known ability were fitted to carry it out. Yet Christ acted otherwise: and for the unspeakably great work of preaching the Gospel, against which forces most obstinate and strong arrayed themselves in opposition, chose men who seemed of all others least fitted to perfect this work; men of the lowest class of society, ignorant, timid, inexperienced, and who even in their own country were looked down upon and despised as mere fishermen. Kings must choose their ministers from among the ablest, wisest, boldest, and most enlightened of their subjects; for in imparting to them authority, they cannot with that impart talent and ability, but must presuppose it. But Christ, with the authority which He communicated to His representatives, communicated also the wisdom, the knowledge, the power and strength necessary to extend and enforce it.

It was evidently the design of Christ to prove from the very beginning the divinity of the Church's origin, and His own omnipotence; since it

would be plain to all that, humanly speaking, the means He chose were the least fitted to compass the end proposed. For, behold, on one side a handful of men of lowly birth, of no authority, unlettered, uncultured, and despised; and on the other, the whole world, Jewish and Pagan, emperors, high priests, philosophers, and all that is rich, powerful, and great. Count the forces arrayed for battle on either side, and who will doubt as to which would naturally belong the victory? Picture these twelve standing before the wisest and most learned of their age, and proclaiming to the world in the very face of kings and rulers: "Till now you have all gone astray. You are ignorant of the first rudiments of true philosophy. Wise, as you pretend to be, you are less than children in the knowledge of truth. And truth, what is that? It is Christ Crucified, whom you, oh Jewish nation, repute a scandal, and you, Gentiles, consider folly, but who is to us, who have been called of God, Wisdom and Power."

Fancy this picture, and then ask who will listen to these twelve or obey their teaching? if, therefore, notwithstanding, the world listens and obeys, it must be plain that not by human means, but by the power of God, this wonder, this greatest

of all miracles is accomplished.

The same power which brought the universe out of nothing transformed these humble instruments into an almost omnipotent agency in the completion of its designs; and made of the lowly fishermen, timid, weak and ignorant as they were, fearless champions, sublime philosophers and most intrepid warriors, who feared not the frown of kings, disputed with great intellects, and challenged the teachings of the most learned scholars. This wondrous transformation came upon the apostles on the day of Pentecost, which is, therefore, considered the Birthday of the Church.

On that great day, the Apostles and disciples were all gathered in the same place, and there came of a sudden from Heaven the sound as of a great whirlwind, and it filled all the house where they were assembled and there appeared to them divided tongues as of fire, and they rested upon each of them, and they were filled with the Holy Ghost: and they began to speak various tongues, according as the Holy Spirit gave them to speak. And there dwelt in Jerusalem, Jews, religious men of every nation under heaven, and as the word went abroad there assembled a great multitude, and

they were all astonished, each one to hear them speaking, his own tongue: and they wondered saying: Are not all these who speak Galileans, and how is it that, each of us hears the language in which we were born. Parthians and Meades and Elamites and the inhabitants of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphilia, Egypt and the countries of Lybia which is near Cyrene and strangers from Rome; Jews also and proselytes the inhabitants of Crete and Arabia: we have heard them speak in our tongues the greatness of God. And all wondered among themselves, saying: What may this be?

It was by this means that Christ infused into the Apostles wisdom of mind and strength of heart to commence the difficult work of preaching to every nation the divine word. The Holy Ghost, who on that day descended upon them in the cenacle, was sent to them as a confirmation and consolation flooding their intelligence with light, illumining their minds whereby truths invisible before, or vaguely seen, became to their vision clear as the day; animating their very tongues to marvelous eloquence, and firing their souls with a zeal that made them burn to carry to the ends of the

world the doctrines of the new faith. Before, they were, as we know from the Gospels, timorous, almost puerile: always misunderstanding the words of their Divine Master who even after repeated explanations, still found them incapable of grasping His meaning. Now, all is changed: the deepest mysteries are plain to them, and henceforth, no power on earth can move them from their loyalty,

See, how on that very day, without waiting for the night to pass, they begin the work which they already yearn to complete. Is it not significant that before they could travel to the ends of the world, the world had come to them? — “Men of every nation under heaven,” To that assembly, Peter, chief of the Apostolic senate, first spoke, and preached the doctrine of Christ Crucified whose Divinity he confirmed by the facts of His Resurrection and Ascension. As a result, three thousand souls received the light and professed Christ, the first fruit of the Apostolic mission.

It is almost impossible to understand in the face of this direct and clear narration, recorded in the Acts, how men can credit the childish imaginations of Renan, who dares to affirm that the fact of Pentecost

never took place; declaring that the Apostles were deceived or deluded in fancying the apparition of tongues, and the rush, as it is described, of the Holy Spirit. “These ignorant men,” he says, “credulous and imaginative, had come together to wait the coming of the Holy Ghost, with this preconceived idea in their minds, any extraordinary natural phenomenon, happening at the time, would have passed as a supernatural sign. Just at that time, a terrible whirlwind arose and a storm passed over the city, accompanied by thunder and lightning. The windows of the cenacle were naturally blown open, and the terrified apostles, at this sight, believed that they had received the Holy Ghost. Filled with this delusion and thus excited to a sudden exaltation of mind, they ran out of the house, talking confusedly, whatever came to their lips, and so they believed they had received the gift of tongues.”

To what depths of folly will not men go in attempting to discredit the supernatural? But all the world knows that literary style rather than bogie and historical accuracy, is to be found in the writings of Renan. By what law, of criticism does Renan, prove that the Apostles and the disciples, to the number of one

hundred and twenty, were deceived in the matter they personally experienced, mistaking for the coming of the Holy Ghost tin noise and thunder of a passing storm? How can he prove that the Apostles imagined themselves possessed of the gift of tongues when, in reality, they only prattled in fear of the thunder and lightning? How can he demonstrate that the great mass of people who listened to the Apostles thus muttering unintelligible sounds, mistook their ravings for words of their own language so different from the mother tongue of the Apostles? Would the miracle be less or easier to explain, to suppose that inarticulate and confused mutterings should, by chance, form complete and distinct sentences in a language unknown? But to Ronan proof counts for nothing. Any theory, however fanciful and unfounded, seems valid if only he can explain away the supernatural.

It is an established rule of criticism that a fact narrated by a trustworthy author must be admitted as related unless it involves an intrinsic repugnance, or is attested by witnesses unworthy of credence.

Now who is it that narrates this fact of the descent of the Holy Ghost? It is the Evangelist St. Luke who, in

the beginning of his Gospel, affirms that he relates the things that happened as they were told him by those who had seen them with their eyes. This miracle of Pentecost, among the rest, St. Luke had heard from the Apostles and disciples themselves. They therefore, must be considered as the victims of the illusion. But read critically the speech of St. Peter on this occasion delivered to that vast multitude, and judge whether it was likely to be the result of fantasy or imagination. It is a masterpiece of calm reasoning and persuasive logic, full of most solid argument, methodically sustained; not a sign or trace that could indicate, even remotely, anything, of mental illusion or fanciful deception and the result strengthens and proves that those who listened to him, heard no raving dreamer but a profound and cogent reasoner, deeply stirred, if you will, to enthusiasm of his subject, but always, nevertheless, deliberate and conclusive. Moved by his discourse, three thousand people gave their assent to the truths he preached. Can Renan explain this fact by the theory of illusion and imagination? If so, he only adduces one miracle to disprove another.

The witnesses to the fact of Pentecost were not a few people, but were an immense multitude of

three thousand souls, strangers to the Apostles and even their enemies. If such testimony may be waived aside in proof of a historic fact, then let us close forever the pages of history and bid good-by to truth and certainty in all science.

From that day, began the spreading of the knowledge of the new faith. Filled with zeal for their mission, the Apostles, from that time, ceased not day or night in their labors to bring to most distant peoples the knowledge which makes men free. In a short time, the number of believers increased, and many of the priests even, who a little while before had clamored for the blood of Christ, became subject to the faith. "And they were all of one heart and one mind," At once, the Jewish rabbis and leaders, seeing this sudden growth of The Church and fearing for their own position and influence, arose against the Apostles and their followers, and began a virulent persecution by the stoning of Stephen, who full of grace and strength, had worked many and great wonders: and the disciples of Christ, seeing the danger, fled throughout Judea and Samaria, while the Apostles remained in Jerusalem to comfort and console the infant Church.

It was at this time that Christ called to His service one who had distinguished himself among the bitterest enemies of the Cross, and from a merciless persecutor, became a very "Vessel of Election," Saul, the persecutor, became Paul, the Apostle, preaching the mysteries of the new faith with all the zeal that had distinguished his former hatred of it. Filled with the love of Christ, who had appeared to him, on the road to Damascus, and convinced of the truth of the Gospel, he hurried from place to place and before Jew and Gentile spent himself in preaching, exhorting, writing, and suffering for his zeal and labors the greatest trials, the fiercest persecution, the direst opposition. Beginning the work of his apostolate in Damascus, he continued it in Tarsus and Antioch with such results, that in the last named place those converted were the first to be called Christians, We read of his travels and labors, and wonder how it was possible for a single man to accomplish such deeds. When we consider the difficulties of travel which then existed, the perils by sea and by land that beset the wayfarer, and then follow this champion of the Faith from one city to another, over hill and mountain, through strange lands, and across stormy seas. we are awestruck at the hardships he

endured and the dangers he underwent.

From Antioch, where, with Barnabas, he received the imposition of hands, he set out, first, to Seleucia, and thence to Salamina, the capital of the Island of Cyprus, the birthplace of St. Barnabas. Thence, passing over the whole island to Paphos, on he went to Perge, in Pamphilia: to Antioch in Pisidia at each place addressing the multitudes and gaining many to the faith. Next we find him at Iconium, whence driven by the Jews, who threatened to stone him, he flies to Lystra, and from there to Derbe in Lycaonia, where, on account of his wondrous eloquence, the people believed him to be a god, and thought that Mercury had come among them. Pamphilia is the next scene of his labors. From there he passed to Macedonia, and on still to Thessalonica, and then, by sea, to Athens, where he disputed in the Synagogue and addressed the philosophers in the Areopagus with such conviction and force of argument that some of them adhering to him believed, among them was Dionysius, the Areopagite.

We see him next at Corinth, where, for a year and a half, he labored incessantly, preaching and baptizing.

Over the sea he passes into Syria, arriving at length at Ephesus, thence down to Cæsarea and Jerusalem, returning again to Antioch. Nor did he remain long in this city among the friends who welcomed him back. He still could not rest from his labors till in other lands and among other peoples he had carried the knowledge of Christ. Pontus, Galati and Phrygia next hear his voice, on his way to Ephesus, where his labors promised so rich a harvest that the pagan priests feared that their temples would be deserted. Although foreseeing the dangers that awaited him in Jerusalem, he returned to the holy city, where he was, at length, cast into prison. Condemned to be scourged, he escapes this punishment in, appealing to the emperor to whom he is sent to be tried. Soon the great Apostle of the Gentiles arrives at the very capital of the pagan world, Rome, where, for two full years, he dwelt in comparative freedom, laboring day and night for the conversion of the Roman people.

Unable now to continue his travels, nevertheless, he contrives by writing and letters to hold communication with the Christian world and with the churches which he had founded, instructing, correcting and exhorting them in the Faith they had received

from him. Into the distant regions where his voice could no longer reach, his pen still carried the message he yearned to deliver.

Acquitted in Rome of the crimes with which he was charged, again in distant regions he carried this same message, and never wearied in the work of his glorious apostolate until under Nero, in the city of Rome, he offered up his very blood and life for Christ.

Let me conclude these words upon the preaching and labors of St. Paul with the words of St. Clement: "God's messenger. Paul, preaching in the east and the west, taught the whole world, reaching in his zeal to the very ends of the earth. He fought the good fight, suffering till the end. In prison, banished, stoned, he ceased not from his labors till by his glorious martyrdom he was called from earth to Christ's own kingdom, leaving for us in his life a model of zeal, patient endurance, and noblest suffering."

Let us turn now from this champion of Christ to consider the labors of him, whom Christ had chosen as the Prince of the apostles, the Primate of His Church on earth. We have seen already, in the story of the day of Pentecost, that the work of the

apostolate was inaugurated by Peter, who, on that occasion, commenced his labors as head of the Church by preaching to the multitude in Jerusalem, and gathering- to the fold of which he was now chief shepherd three thousand souls. Next, we see him healing, in the Name of Jesus of Nazareth, the poor cripple who, at the Beautiful Gate of the temple, asked alms of those that went in. At the sight of this miracle the people gathered in great crowds, and St. Peter again taking advantage of the presence of this multitude, filled with wonder at his power, addressed them; and as a second fruit of his preaching, many of them who had heard the word believed, and the number of the men was made five thousand. Stirred to anger and jealousy the priests and Sadducees seized him and cast him into prison. No sooner was he released than he again applied himself to preaching the word of God and to confirming his doctrines by wonderful miracles.

Nor were his labors confined to Jerusalem alone. In the Acts, we read of his miracles performed at Lydda and in Joppa. In the last named place, by a supernatural vision given to him while rapt in ecstasy, he saw that it was the will of God and of Christ that the Church

was intended to be truly Catholic, opening its doors not only to the tribes of Israel, but to all the world: and that not only the Jews, but the Gentiles; also, had been redeemed by the blood of Christ, and recognizing that God is not a respecter of persons, but that in every nation he that feareth Him and worketh justice is acceptable to Him. He went to Cæsarea, and it received into the faith Cornelius, a centurion of the Italian cohort, who with all the members of his house, was baptized in the Name of Christ. These were the first-fruits of the Gentile world. He returned to Jerusalem, then went to Antioch where he ruled the Church for seven years.

Stirred by the constant increase and growth of the infant Church, the Jews arose in persecution. Herod Agrippa, not content with putting to death the apostle St. James, sought also to please the Jews by condemning to a like fate St. Peter. He seized the Apostle, whom he cast into prison, bound with chains, expecting to entertain the Jews by the spectacle of his death, after the days of the Passover. But the angel, of God delivered Peter from the hands of the tyrant and the expectations of the Jews; and God, who draws good from evil, sent this

Prince of the Apostles to preach to other nations.

Question has been raised as to whether Christ had entrusted to St. Peter the apostolate of the Jews only, or whether it extended to the Gentiles also. Doubtless, the origin of this discussion arose from the words of St. Paul, in his epistle to the Galatians: "To me was committed the gospel of the uncircumcised as to Peter was that of the circumcision." But how can there be any doubt about this question, that to St. Peter was committed also to preach the gospel to the Gentiles, when we know that by Christ Himself he was ordered, in Joppa, to receive into the Church Cornelius, the centurion, and his family. And again, when as we see, that at the Apostolic council of Jerusalem, he himself attests that the mission to the Gentile, as well as Jew, was delivered alike to all the apostles; and when, moreover, we consider that St. Peter occupied the primacy of the whole church, the absurdity of such a question becomes manifest. While St. Peter remained in the east, he especially addressed himself to the Jews, following thus in the footsteps of our Lord, but no one may suppose from this that he preached to the Jews alone.

Liberated from prison and delivered out of the hands of Herod, it would seem as though the writer of the Acts feared to indicate the place to which he fled, saying simply “and he went elsewhere.” “Abiit in alium locum.” And what was this place? Some authorities say that by that is meant Rome. Others, however, think that before reaching the Eternal City he went to evangelize the Hebrews who were dispersed throughout Pontus, Galatia, in Asia and Bithynia.

Having sown the seed of the Gospel over these provinces, he came finally to the capital of the Roman empire, there to continue his apostolic labors, and found the Roman Church, thus leaving to his successors in the see of Rome, as an inheritance, the primacy of the Universal Church, which he had received from Christ, together with the gifts and prerogatives necessary to the perpetual conservation of the unity of the faith, and of the Church.

To quote the words of Saint Cyprian “*Primatus Petro datur ut una Christi ecclesia, et cathedra una monstretur.*”

The critics dispute among themselves as to the exact time when the head of the Apostolic College

first came to Rome. Some place the date at the time of the second year of the reign of Claudius, the year 42 of the Christian era. Others place it in the reign of Nero. From Mammachi we learn that till the times of Scaliger, the common opinion was that St. Peter made a first visit to Rome, in the time of Claudius, and after an absence of a short period, returned during the reign of Nero, and thus the two other opinions are not contradictory, but supplementary the one of the other. Nor can we here ignore the fact that some writers have denied altogether the coming of St. Peter to Rome, and that in consequence the claim of the Roman Church to the primacy is utterly unfounded; inasmuch as the Roman Pontiffs cannot be considered the successors of St. Peter.

Among others, Gavazzi, standing on this ground, calls the Popes usurpers of Peter’s authority, false and lying pretenders, their prerogatives merely grounded on fables without any real historical foundation. Permit me therefore, in this place, briefly to notice this assertion, which though again and again refuted with the most substantial and forcible historical arguments, even by Protestants and infidels, who cannot be suspected of favoring the claims of the Popes

or the Church in this matter, is nevertheless constantly repeated as if it had never been answered, and were, indeed, unanswerable. It is not surprising to us that the calumniators of the Church should refuse to consider fairly, and with the impartiality that ought to be the first characteristic of the true historian, the incontestable arguments that settle completely and definitively this important question. They value little the testimony of witnesses the most convincing, unless they make for the proof of their own pet theory. But I confess to feeling somewhat astonished and disappointed to find a man of the supposed erudition and breadth of view of Canon Farrar, casting suspicion upon a fact so freely admitted by all reliable historians. We may not here linger over the long list of arguments, each one of them sufficient in itself to establish this fact of history beyond all possible doubt. Let me simply indicate briefly a few of the chief. And first let me ask, upon what grounds do our opponents base their denial, and then we must endeavor to weigh the force of their argumentation upon these premises.

Their best argument is at most only a negative one. They assert that we do not find in Holy Scripture any mention of St. Peter being in Rome.

To this we might reply: granted. The Scripture is not a universal history, and we are treating now, not of a fact of revelation as such, but a purely historical fact. If, therefore, our position can be established and confirmed by other incontestable documents, the silence of the Scriptures proves nothing. But we do not concede this assertion. On the contrary, in Holy Writ sufficiently clear mention is made by St. Peter himself of his presence in Rome, for in his first epistle he writes to those whom he addresses: "The church in Babylon salutes you." Now we maintain that by Babylon is meant the Eternal City. If, therefore, we can prove that this very Epistle of St. Peter was written while he was at Rome, and that by Babylon is meant Rome, it is manifest that the Scriptures are not silent on this point.

(To be continued)



The Dialogue of Saint Catherine of Siena

Translated by Algar Thorold

A TREATISE OF DISCRETION

(Continued)

How the Devil gets hold of souls, under pretense of some good: and, how those are deceived who keep by the river, and not by the aforesaid Bridge, for, wishing to fly pains, they fall into them; and of the vision of a tree, that this soul once had.

“I have told you that the Devil invites men to the water of death, that is, to that which he has, and, blinding them with the pleasures and conditions of the world, he catches them with the hook of pleasure, under the pretense of good, because in no other way could he catch them, for they would not allow themselves to be caught if they saw that no good or pleasure to themselves were to be obtained thereby. For the soul, from her nature, always relishes good, though it is true that the soul, blinded by self-love, does not know and discern what is true good, and of profit to the soul and to the body. And, therefore, the Devil, seeing them blinded by self-love, iniquitously places before them diverse and various delights, colored so as to have the appearance of some benefit or good; and he gives to

everyone according to his condition and those principal vices to which he sees him to be most disposed — of one kind to the secular, of another to the religious, and others to prelates and noblemen, according to their different conditions. I have told you this, because I now speak to you of those who drown themselves in the river, and who care for nothing but themselves, to love themselves to My injury, and I will relate to you their end.

“Now I want to show you how they deceive themselves, and how, wishing to flee troubles, they fall into them. For, because it seems to them that following Me, that is, walking by the way of the Bridge, the Word, My Son, is great toil, they draw back, fearing the thorn. This is because they are blinded and do not know or see the Truth, as, you know, I showed you in the beginning of your life, when you prayed Me to have mercy on the world, and draw it out of the darkness of mortal sin. You know that I then showed you Myself under the figure of a Tree, of which you saw neither the beginning nor the end, so that you did not see that the roots were united with the earth of your humanity. At the foot of the Tree, if you remember well, there

was a certain thorn, from which thorn all those who love their own sensuality kept away, and ran to a mountain of Lolla, in which you figured to yourself all the delights of the world. That Lolla seemed to be of corn and was not, and, therefore, as you saw, many souls thereon died of hunger, and many, recognizing the deceits of the world, returned to the Tree and passed the thorn, which is the deliberation of the will. Which deliberation, before it is made, is a thorn which appears to man to stand in the way of following the Truth. And conscience always fights on one side, and sensuality on the other; but as soon as he, with hatred and displeasure of himself, manfully makes up his mind, saying, 'I wish to follow Christ crucified,' he breaks at once the thorn, and finds inestimable sweetness, as I showed you then, some finding more and some less, according to their disposition and desire. And you know that then I said to you, 'I am your God, unmoving and unchangeable,' and I do not draw away from any creature who wants to come to Me. I have shown them the Truth, making Myself visible to them, and I have shown them what it is to love anything without Me. But they, as if blinded by the fog of disordinate love, know neither Me nor themselves. You see how deceived they are, choosing rather to die of hunger than to pass a little thorn. And they cannot

escape enduring pain, for no one can pass through this life without a cross, far less those who travel by the lower way. Not that My servants pass without pain, but their pain is alleviated. And because — by sin, as I said to you above — the world germinates thorns and tribulations, and because this river flows with tempestuous waters, I gave you the Bridge, so that you might not be drowned.

"I have shown you how they are deceived by a disordinate fear, and how I am your God, immovable, who am not an Acceptor of persons but of holy desire. And this I have shown you under the figure of the Tree, as I told you."

How, the world having germinated thorns, who those are whom they do not harm; although no one passes this life without pain.

"Now I want to show you to whom the thorns and tribulations, that the world germinated through sin, do harm, and to whom they do not. And as, so far, I have shown you the damnation of sinners, together with My goodness, and have told you how they are deceived by their own sensuality, now I wish to tell you how it is only they themselves who are injured by the thorns. No one born passes this life without pain, bodily or mental. Bodily pain My servants

bear, but their minds are free, that is, they do not feel the weariness of the pain; for their will is accorded with Mine, and it is the will that gives trouble to man. Pain of mind and of body have those, of whom I have narrated to you, who, in this life, taste the earnest money of hell, as My servants taste the earnest money of eternal life. Do you know what is the special good of the blessed ones? It is having their desire filled with what they desire; wherefore desiring Me, they have Me, and taste Me without any revolt, for they have left the burden of the body, which was a law that opposed the spirit, and came between it and the perfect knowledge of the Truth, preventing it from seeing Me face to face. But after the soul has left the weight of the body, her desire is full, for, desiring to see Me, she sees Me, in which vision is her bliss; and seeing she knows, and knowing she loves, and loving she tastes Me, Supreme and Eternal Good, and, in tasting Me, she is satisfied, and her desire is fulfilled, that is, the desire she had to see and know Me; wherefore desiring she has, and having she desires. And as I told you pain is far from the desire, and weariness from the satisfaction of it. So you see that My servants are blessed principally in seeing and in knowing Me, in which vision and knowledge their will is fulfilled, for they have that which they desired to have, and so are they satisfied.

Wherefore I told you that the tasting of eternal life consisted especially in having that which the will desires, and thus being satisfied; but know that the will is satisfied in seeing and knowing Me, as I have told you. In this life then, they taste the earnest money of eternal life, tasting the above, with which I have told you they will be satisfied.

“But how have they the earnest money in this present life? I reply to you, they have it in seeing My goodness in themselves, and in the knowledge of My Truth, which knowledge, the intellect (which is the eye of the soul) illuminated in Me, possesses. This eye has the pupil of the most holy faith, which light of faith enables the soul to discern, to know, and to follow the way and the doctrine of My Truth — the Word Incarnate; and without this pupil of faith she would not see, except as a man who has the form of the eye, but who has covered the pupil (which causes the eye to see) with a cloth. So the pupil of the intellect is faith, and if the soul has covered it with the cloth of infidelity, drawn over it by self-love, she does not see, but only has the form of the eye without the light, because she has hidden it. Thus you see, that in seeing they know, and in knowing they love, and in loving they deny and lose their self-will. Their own will lost, they clothe themselves in Mine, and I will nothing

but your sanctification. At once they set to, turning their back to the way below, and begin to ascend by the Bridge, and pass over the thorns, which do not hurt them, their feet being shod with the affection of My love. For I told you that My servants suffered corporally but not mentally, because the sensitive will, which gives pain and afflicts the mind of the creature, is dead. Wherefore, the will not being there, neither is there any pain. They bear everything with reverence, deeming themselves favored in having tribulation for My sake, and they desire nothing but what I desire. If I allow the Devil to trouble them, permitting temptations to prove them in virtue, as I told you above, they resist with their will fortified in Me, humiliating themselves, and deeming themselves unworthy of peace and quiet of mind and deserving of pain, and so they proceed with cheerfulness and self-knowledge, without painful affliction. And if tribulations on man's account, or infirmity, or poverty, or change of worldly condition, or loss of children, or of other much loved creatures (all of which are thorns that the earth produced after sin) come upon them, they endure them all with the light of reason and holy faith, looking to Me, who am the Supreme Good, and who cannot desire other than good, for which I permit these tribulations through love, and not through hatred. And they that love Me recognize this,

and, examining themselves, they see their sins, and understand by the light of faith, that good must be rewarded and evil punished. And they see that every little sin merits infinite pain, because it is against Me, who am Infinite Good, wherefore they deem themselves favored because I wish to punish them in this life, and in this finite time; they drive away sin with contrition of heart, and with perfect patience do they merit, and their labors are rewarded with infinite good. Hereafter they know that all labor in this life is small, on account of the shortness of time. Time is as the point of a needle and no more; and, when time has passed labor is ended, therefore you see that the labor is small. They endure with patience, and the thorns they pass through do not touch their heart, because their heart is drawn out of them and united to Me by the affection of love. It is a good truth then that these do taste eternal life, receiving the earnest money of it in this life, and that, though they walk on thorns, they are not pricked, because as I told you, they have known My Supreme Goodness, and sought for it where it was to be found, that is in the Word, My only-begotten son."

How this soul was in great bitterness, on account of the blindness of those who are drowned below in the river.

Then that soul, tormented by desire, considering her own imperfections and those of others, was saddened to hear of and to see the great blindness of creatures, notwithstanding the great goodness of God, in having placed nothing in this life, no matter in what condition, that could be an impediment to the salvation of creatures, but rather arranged for the exercising and proving of virtue in them. And, notwithstanding all this, she saw them, through self-love and disordinate affection, go under by the river and arrive at eternal damnation, and many who were in the river and had begun to come out, turn back again, scandalized at her, because they had heard of the sweet goodness of GOD, who had deigned to manifest Himself to her. And, for this, she was in bitterness, and fixing the eye of her intellect on the Eternal Father, she said: “Oh, Inestimable Love, great is the delusion of Your creatures. I would that, when it is pleasing to Your Goodness, You would more clearly explain to me the three steps figured in the Body of Your only Son, and what method should be used so as to come entirely out of the depths and to keep the way of Your Truth, and who are those who ascend the staircase.”

How the three steps figured in the Bridge, that is, in the Son of GOD, signify the three powers of the soul.

Then the Divine Goodness, regarding with the eye of His mercy, the hunger and desire of that soul, said: “Oh, My most delightful daughter, I am not a Despiser, but the Fulfiller of holy desire, and therefore I will show and declare to you that which you ask Me. You ask Me to explain to you the figure of three steps, and to tell you what method they who want to come out of the river must use, to be able to ascend the Bridge. And, although above, in relating to you the delusion and blindness of men, tasting in this life the earnest-money of Hell, and, as martyrs of the Devil, receiving damnation, I showed you the methods they should use; nevertheless, now I will declare it to you more fully, satisfying your desire. You know that every evil is founded in self-love, and that self-love is a cloud that takes away the light of reason, which reason holds in itself the light of faith, and one is not lost without the other. The soul I created in My image and similitude, giving her memory, intellect, and will. The intellect is the most noble part of the soul, and is moved by the affection, and nourishes it, and the hand of love — that is, the affection — fills the memory with the remembrance of

Me and of the benefits received, which it does with care and gratitude, and so one power spurs on another, and the soul is nourished in the life of grace.

“The soul cannot live without love, but always wants to love something, because she is made of love, and, by love, I created her. And therefore I told you that the affection moved the intellect, saying, as it were, ‘I will love, because the food on which I feed is love.’ Then the intellect, feeling itself awakened by the affection, says, as it were, ‘If you will love, I will give you that which you can love.’ And at once it arises, considering carefully the dignity of the soul, and the indignity into which she has fallen through sin. In the dignity of her being it tastes My inestimable goodness, and the increate charity with which I created her, and, in contemplating her misery, it discovers and tastes My mercy, and sees how, through mercy, I have lent her time and drawn her out of darkness. Then the affection nourishes itself in love, opening the mouth of holy desire, with which it eats hatred and displeasure of its own sensuality, united with true humility and perfect patience, which it drew from holy hatred. The virtues conceived, they give birth to themselves perfectly and imperfectly, according as the soul exercises perfection in herself, as I

will tell you below. So, on the contrary, if the sensual affection wants to love sensual things, the eye of the intellect set before itself for its sole object transitory things, with self-love, displeasure of virtue, and love of vice, whence she draws pride and impatience, and the memory is filled with nothing but that which the affection presents to it. This love so dazzles the eye of the intellect that it can discern and see nothing but such glittering objects. It is the very brightness of the things that causes the intellect to perceive them and the affection to love them; for had worldly things no such brightness there would be no sin, for man, by his nature, cannot desire anything but good, and vice, appearing to him thus, under color of the soul’s good, causes him to sin. But, because the eye, on account of its blindness, does not discern, and knows not the truth, it errs, seeking good and delights there where they are not.

“I have already told you that the delights of the world, without Me, are venomous thorns, and, that the vision of the intellect is deluded by them, and the affection of the will is deluded into loving them, and the memory into retaining remembrance of them. The unity of these powers of the soul is so great that I cannot be offended by one without all the others offending Me at the same time, because the one presents to the

other, as I told you, good or evil, according to the pleasure of the free will. This free will is bound to the affection, and it moves as it pleases, either with the light of reason or without it. Your reason is attached to Me when your will does not, by disordinate love, cut it off from Me; you have also in you the law of perversity, that continually fights against the Spirit. You have, then, two parts in you — sensuality and reason. Sensuality is appointed to be the servant, so that, with the instrument of the body, you may prove and exercise the virtues. The soul is free, liberated from sin by the Blood of My Son, and she cannot be dominated unless she consent with her will, which is controlled by her free choice, and when this free choice agrees with the will, it becomes one thing with it. And I tell you truly, that, when the soul undertakes to gather together, with the hand of free choice, her powers in My Name, then are assembled all the actions, both spiritual and temporal, that the creature can do, and free choice gets rid of sensuality and binds itself with reason. I, then, by grace, rest in the midst of them; and this is what My truth, the Word Incarnate, meant, when He said: ‘When there are two or three or more gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them.’ And this is the truth. I have already told you that no one could come to Me

except by Him, and therefore I made of Him a Bridge with three steps. And those three steps figure, as I will narrate to you below, the three states of the soul.”

How if the three aforesaid powers are not united, there cannot be perseverance, without which no man arrives at his end.

“I have explained to you the figure of the three steps, in general, as the three powers of the soul, and no one who wishes to pass by the Bridge and doctrine of My Truth can mount one without the other, and the soul cannot persevere except by the union of her three powers. Of which I told you above, when you asked Me, how the voyagers could come out of the river. There are two goals, and, for the attainment of either, perseverance is needful — they are vice and virtue. If you desire to arrive at life, you must persevere in virtue, and if you would have eternal death, you must persevere in vice. Thus it is with perseverance that they who want life arrive at Me who am Life, and with perseverance that they who taste the water of death arrive at the Devil.”

An exposition on Christ’s words: “Whosoever thirsts, let him come to Me and drink.”

“You were all invited, generally and in particular, by My Truth, when He cried in the Temple, saying: ‘Whosoever thirsts, let him come to Me and drink, for I am the Fountain of the Water of Life.’ He did not say ‘Go to the Father and drink,’ but He said ‘Come to Me.’ He spoke thus, because in Me, the Father, there can be no pain, but in My Son there can be pain. And you, while you are pilgrims and wayfarers in this mortal life, cannot be without pain, because the earth, through sin, brought forth thorns. And why did He say ‘Let him come to Me and drink’? Because whoever follows His doctrine, whether in the most perfect way or by dwelling in the life of common charity, finds to drink, tasting the fruit of the Blood, through the union of the Divine nature with the human nature. And you, finding yourselves in Him, find yourselves also in Me, who am the Sea Pacific, because I am one thing with Him, and He with Me. So that you are invited to the Fountain of Living Water of Grace, and it is right for you, with perseverance, to keep by Him who is made for you a Bridge, not being turned back by any contrary wind that may arise, either of prosperity or adversity, and to persevere till you find Me, who am the Giver of the Water of Life, by means of this sweet and amorous Word, My only-begotten Son. And why did He say: ‘I am the Fountain of Living Water’?

Because He was the Fountain which contained Me, the Giver of the Living Water, by means of the union of the Divine with the human nature. Why did He say ‘Come to Me and drink’? Because you cannot pass this mortal life without pain, and in Me, the Father, there can be no pain, but in Him there can be pain, and therefore of Him did I make for you a Bridge. No one can come to Me except by Him, as He told you in the words: ‘No one can come to the Father except by Me.’

“Now you have seen to what way you should keep, and how, namely with perseverance, otherwise you shall not drink, for perseverance receives the crown of glory and victory in the life everlasting.”

(To be continued)



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