

SS. Peter and Paul Roman Catholic Mission

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To Restore and Defend Our Ecclesiastical Traditions of the Latin Rite to the
Diocese of Harrisburg

SS. Peter and Paul Roman Catholic Chapel

129 South Beaver Street, York PA 17401

...this missal is hereafter to be followed absolutely, without any scruple of conscience or fear of incurring any penalty, judgment or censure, and may freely and lawfully be used... **Accordingly, no one whatsoever is permitted to infringe or rashly contravene this notice of Our permission, statute, ordinance, command, precept, grant, direction, will, decree and prohibition. Should any person venture to do so, let him understand he will incur the wrath of Almighty God and of the Blessed Apostles Peter and Paul.** Pope St. Pius V, Papal Bull, *QUO PRIMUM*, Tridentine codification of the immemorial "received and approved" Roman rite of Mass



Third Sunday of Lent St. John of God, Confessor March 8, 2026

The Station today is made at St. Lawrence-without-the-Walls, one of the five patriarchal basilicas of Rome, where are buried the bodies of the two deacons Lawrence and Stephen. In the Collect for St. Lawrence's feast on August 10th, we pray that the flame of our sins may be quenched within us as the saint overcame the fire of his torments; while in that for St. Stephen's Day, we undertake to love our enemies like this saint who prayed for his persecutors. Here are two virtues, chastity and charity which were especially practiced by the patriarch Joseph whose history the Church gives us in this week in the Breviary. For Joseph resisted the evil solicitation of Potiphar's wife, while on the other hand he loved his brethren to the extent of rendering them good for evil.

When Joseph told his brethren the dreams which foreshadowed his future greatness they became filled with hatred against him, and at the first opportunity got rid of him by throwing him into a disused pit. After which, they sold him to some Ishmaelites who took him to Egypt and after, sold him to an Egyptian noble named Potiphar. It was in this man's house that he strenuously resisted the advances of his wife, thus becoming a great model of purity. St. Ambrose says: "Today it is the history of the pious Joseph which invites our attention. He possessed many virtues, yet he shone especially by his conspicuous chastity. Rightly therefore, is this holy patriarch set before us as a mirror of chastity." (Matins).

When Joseph was cast into prison, having been unjustly accused by Potiphar's wife, turning to God in prayer, he asked to be freed from his bonds. In similar terms we say in the Introit: "My eyes are ever towards the Lord; for He shall pluck my feet out of the snare." And the Tract continues: "Behold as the eyes of servants are on the hands of their masters, so are our eyes unto the Lord our God until He have mercy on us." And in the Collect we speak of almighty God who regards the desires of those who humble themselves, as stretching forth in our defense the right hand of His majesty. In this event Pharaoh took Joseph from his prison, made him sit on his right hand and entrusted to him the government of his whole kingdom; and when through his gift of foreknowledge he predicted the famine which should last seven years, Pharaoh gave him the title "Savior of the people." Then Joseph's brethren came to Egypt and he told them, "I am Joseph whom you sold. Be not afraid; God has brought everything to pass that I may be the means of preserving you from death." Jacob's happiness at seeing his son again was unbounded; and he came and lived with his sons in the land of Gessen which Joseph gave them.

St. Ambrose says: "The jealousy of Joseph's brethren is at the bottom of all the facts which make up his history. Besides, it is recorded to teach us, that a perfect man does not give the rein to his desire to avenge an outrage or to render evil for evil" (Matins).

Surely in all this we can recognize a type of Christ and His Church. Jesus, the blessed Virgin's Son, is in the highest degree the model of virginal purity; and in today's Gospel we see Him contending in a special way with the unclean spirit; for so do St. Matthew and St. Luke describe the devil whom our Lord cast out of the dumb man by the finger of God, that is by the Holy Ghost. So does the Church drive out the same unclean spirit from the souls of the newly baptized. Lent was a time of preparation for Baptism and in administering this sacrament the priest breathes three times on the person to be baptized with the words: "Go out of the child, unclean spirit, and give place to the Holy Ghost." St. Bede in his commentary on this Gospel says: "What then took place visibly is every day accomplished invisibly, in the conversion of those who become believers. First the devil is driven out of their soul, then they perceive the light of faith; and finally their mouth, until then dumb, opens to praise God" (Matins).

In the same sense in today's Epistle St. Paul says: "No fornicator or unclean or covetous person...hath inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. Fornication and all uncleanness, let it not so much as be named among you." And it is especially at this season of combat against Satan that we must imitate Christ of Whom Joseph was only the type.

With regard to the virtue of charity, of which this patriarch has set us an example, the likeness to Christ and His Church is obvious enough. Our Lord, too, was hated by His own people and sold by one of His apostles, and when He was dying on the cross He prayed for His enemies. He had recourse to God and God glorified Him, making Him sit on His right hand in His kingdom. As Joseph distributed the corn of nature, so at Easter Jesus will distribute the wheat of the Eucharist. We know that as a condition of receiving Holy Communion, the Church requires that charity, of which an example was set by St. Stephen when he pardoned his enemies, and whose relics are kept in the Church where today's station is held, the same charity above all, which our Lord practiced in an heroic degree when He "delivered Himself for us" on the cross, of which the Eucharist is the constant memorial.

Thus Joseph, as a type of our Lord, and today's station perfectly illustrate the Paschal mystery for which the liturgy prepares us at this season.

INTROIT:

Ps. 24. My eyes are ever towards the Lord: for He shall pluck my feet out of the snare: look thou upon me, and have mercy upon me, for I am alone and poor.

Ps. To Thee, O Lord, have I lifted up my soul: in Thee, O my God, I put my trust; let me not be disappointed. Glory be, etc. My eyes are ever towards the Lord, etc.

COLLECT:

We beseech Thee, almighty God, look upon the desires of Thy humble servants, and stretch forth the right hand of Thy majesty to be our defense. Through our Lord, etc.

O God, who didst enkindle with Thy love the heart of Thy blessed servant Saint John, that he was thereby enabled to walk unhurt amid the flames of fire, and hast through him enriched Thy Church with a new offspring: grant that by the help of his merits our sins may be purged with the fire of Thy charity, and our souls healed to the attainment of everlasting salvation. Through our Lord, etc.

EPISTLE: Eph. 5, 1-9

Brethren, Be ye followers of God, as most dear children: and walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us and hath delivered Himself for us, an oblation and a sacrifice to God for an odor of sweetness. But fornication, and all uncleanness or covetousness, let it not so much as be named among you, as becometh saints: or obscenity, or foolish talking, or scurrility, which is to no purpose: but rather giving of thanks. For know you this, and understand, that no fornicator, or unclean, or covetous person, which is a serving of idols, hath inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the anger of God upon the children of unbelief. Be ye not therefore partakers with them. For you were heretofore darkness: but now light in the Lord. Walk then as children of the light: for the fruit of the light is in all goodness, and justice, and truth.

EXPLANATION The apostle requires us to imitate God, as good children imitate their father in well-doing and in well-wishing; besides he declares that all covetousness, fornication, all disgraceful talk and equivocal jokes should be banished from Christian meetings, even that such things should not be so much as mentioned among us; because these vices unfailingly deprive us of heaven. He admonishes us not to let ourselves be deceived by the seducing words of those who seek to make these vices appear small, nothing more than pardonable human weaknesses; those who speak thus are the children of darkness and of the devil, they bring down the wrath of God upon themselves, and all who assent to their words. A Christian, a child of light, that is, of faith, should regard as a sin that which faith and conscience tell him is such, and must live according to their precepts and not by false judgment of the wicked. Should any one seek to lead you away, ask yourself, my Christian soul, whether you would dare appear with such a deed before the judgment-seat of God. Listen to the voice of your conscience, and let it decide, whether that which you are expected to do is good or bad, lawful or unlawful.

ASPIRATION Place Thy fear, O God, before my mouth, that I may utter no vain, careless, much less improper and scandalous words, which may be the occasion of sin to my neighbor. Strengthen me, that I may not be deceived by flattering words, and become faithless to Thee.

GRADUAL:

Ps. 9. Arise, O Lord, let not man prevail; let the Gentiles be judged in Thy sight. When my enemy shall be turned back, they shall be weakened and perish before thy face.

TRACT:

Ps. 122. To Thee have I lifted up my eyes, who dwellest in heaven. Behold, as the eyes of servants are on the hands of their masters. As the eyes of the handmaid are on the hands of her mistress: so are our eyes upon the Lord our God, until He have mercy on us. Have mercy on us, O Lord, have mercy on us.

GOSPEL: Luke 11, 4-28

At that time Jesus was casting out a devil, and the same was dumb. And when He had cast out the devil, the dumb spoke, and the multitudes were in admiration by it. But some of them said: He casteth out devils by Beelzebub, the prince of devils. And others, tempting, asked of Him a sign from heaven. But He, seeing their thoughts, said to them: Every kingdom divided against itself shall be brought to desolation, and house upon house shall fall. And if Satan also be divided against himself, how shall his kingdom stand? because you say that through Beelzebub I cast out devils. Now if I cast out devils by Beelzebub, by whom do your children cast them out? Therefore they shall be your judges. But if I by the finger of God cast out devils; doubtless the kingdom of God is come upon you. When a strong man armed keepeth his court, those things are in

peace which he possesseth. But if a stronger than he is come upon him and overcome him, he will take away all his armor wherein he trusted, and will distribute his spoils. He that is not with Me, is against Me: and he that gathereth not with Me scattereth. When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through places without water, seeking rest: and not finding, he saith: I will return into my house whence I came out. And when he is come, he findeth it swept and garnished. Then he goeth and taketh with him seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and entering in they dwell there. And the last state of that man becomes worse than the first. And it came to pass, as He spoke these things, a certain woman from the crowd, lifting up her voice, said to Him: Blessed is the womb that bore Thee, and the paps that gave Thee suck. But He said: Yea, rather, blessed are they that hear the word of God and keep it.

Can a man be really possessed of a devil?

It is the doctrine of the Catholic Church that the evil spirit most perniciously influences man in a twofold manner: by enticing his soul to sin, and then influencing his body which he often entirely or partially possesses, manifesting himself by madness, convulsions, insanity, etc. Many texts of Scripture, and the writings of the Fathers speak of this possession. St. Cyprian writes: "We can expel the swarms of impure spirits, who for the ruin of the soul, enter into the bodies of men, and we can compel them to acknowledge their presence, by the force of powerful words." Possession takes place by the permission of God either for trial or as a punishment for sin committed (I Cor. 5, 5), and the Church from her Head, Jesus, who expelled so many devils, has received the power of casting them out as He did (Mark 16, 17; Acts 5, 16, 8, 6-7, 16, 18). She however warns her ministers, the priests, who by their ordination have received the power to expel the evil spirits, to distinguish carefully between possession and natural sickness, that they may not be deceived (Rit. Rom. 3, 5-10), and the faithful should guard against looking upon every unusual, unhealthy appearance as an influence of Satan, and should give no ear to impostors, but in order not to be deceived, should turn to an experienced physician or to their pastor.

What is understood by a dumb devil?

The literal meaning of this is the evil enemy, who some times so torments those whom he possesses that they lose the power of speech; in a spiritual sense, we may understand it to mean the shame which the devil takes away from the sinner, when he commits the sin, but gives back again, as false shame, before confession, so that the sinner conceals the sin, and thereby falls deeper.

How does Christ still cast out dumb devils?

By His grace with which He inwardly enlightens the sinner, so that he becomes keenly aware that the sins which he has concealed in confession, will one day be known to the whole world, and thus encourages him to overcome his false shame. - "Be not ashamed to confess to one man," says St. Augustine, "that which you were not ashamed to do with one, perhaps, with many." Consider these words of the same saint: "Sincere confession subdues vice, conquers the evil one, shuts the door of hell, and opens the gates of paradise."

How did Christ prove, that He did not cast out devils by Beelzebub?

By showing that the kingdom of Satan could not stand, if one evil spirit were cast out by another; that they thus reproached their own sons who also cast out devils, and had not been accused of doing so by power from Beelzebub; by His own life and works which were in direct opposition to the devil, and by which the devil's works were destroyed. - There is no better defense against calumny than an innocent life, and those who are slandered, find no better consolation than the thought of Christ who, notwithstanding His sanctity and His miracles, was not secure against calumny.

What is meant by the finger of God?

The power of God, by which Christ expelled the evil spirits, proved himself God, and the promised Redeemer.

Who is the strong man armed?

The evil one is so called, because he still retains the power and intellect of the angels, and, practiced by long experience, seeks in different ways to injure man if God permits.

How is the devil armed?

With the evil desires of men, with the perishable riches, honors, and pleasures of this world, with which he entices us to evil, deceives us, and casts us into eternal fire.

Who is the stronger one who took away the devil's armor?

Christ the Lord who came into this world that He might destroy the works and the kingdom of the devil, to expel the prince of darkness (John 12, 31), and to redeem us from his power. "The devil," says St. Anthony, "is like a dragon caught by the Lord with the fishing-hook of the cross, tied with a halter like a beast of burden, chained like a fugitive slave, and his lips pierced through with a ring, so that he may not devour any of the faithful. Now he sighs, like a miserable sparrow, caught by Christ and turned to derision, and thrown under the feet of the Christians. He who flattered himself that he would possess the whole orbit of the earth, behold, he has to yield!"

Why does Christ say: He who is not with me, is against me?

These words were intended in the first place for the Pharisees who did not acknowledge Christ as the Messiah, would not fight with Him against Satan's power, but rather held the people back from reaching unity of faith and love of Christ. Like the Pharisees, all heretical teachers who, by their false doctrines, draw the faithful from communion with Christ and His Church, are similar to the devil, the father of heresy and lies. May all those, therefore, who think they can serve Christ and the world at the same time, consider that between truth and falsehood, between Christ and the world, there is no middle path; that Christ requires decision, either with Him, or against Him, either eternal happiness with Him, or without Him, everlasting misery.

Who are understood by the dry places through which the evil spirit wanders and finds no rest?

"The dry places without water," says St. Gregory, "are the hearts of the just, who by the force of penance have drained the dampness of carnal desires." In such places the evil-one indeed finds no rest, because there his malice finds no sympathy, and his wicked will no satisfaction.

Why does the evil spirit say: I will return into my house?

Because he is only contented there where he is welcomed and received: those who have purified their heart by confession, and driven Satan from it, but labor not to amend, again lose the grace of the Sacraments by sin, and thus void of virtue and grace, offer a beautiful and pleasant dwelling to the devil.

Why is it said: The last state becomes worse than the first?

Because a relapse generally draws more sins with it, and so it is said: the devil will return with seven other spirits more wicked than himself, by which may be understood the seven deadly sins, because after a relapse into sin conversion to God becomes more difficult, as a repeated return of the same sickness makes it harder to regain health; because by repetition sin easily becomes a habit and renders conversion almost impossible; because repeated relapses are followed by blindness of intellect, hardness of heart, and in the end eternal damnation.

Why did the woman lift up her voice?

This was by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost to shame the Pharisees who, blinded by pride, neither professed nor acknowledged the divinity of Christ, whilst this humble woman not only confessed Jesus as God, but praised her who carried Him, whom heaven and earth cannot contain. Consider the great dignity of the Blessed Virgin, Mother of the Son of God, and hear her praises from the holy Fathers. St. Cyril thus salutes her: "Praise to thee, Blessed Mother of God: for thou art virginity itself, the scepter of the true faith!" and St. Chrysostom: "Hail, O Mother, the throne, the glory, the heaven of the Church!" St. Ephrem: "Hail, only hope of the Fathers, herald of the apostles, glory of the martyrs, joy of the saints, and crown of the virgins, because of thy vast glory, and inaccessible light!"

Why did Christ call those happy who hear the word of God and keep it?

Because, as has been already said, it is not enough for salvation to hear the word of God, but it must also be practiced. Because Mary, the tender Mother of Jesus, did this most perfectly, Christ terms her more happy in it, than in having conceived, borne, and nursed Him.

SUPPLICATION O Lord Jesus! true Light of the world, enlighten the eyes of my soul, that I may never be induced by the evil one to conceal a sin, through false shame, in the confessional, that on the day of general judgment my sins may not be published to the whole world. Strengthen me, O Jesus, that I may resist the arms of the devil by a penitent life, and especially by scorning the fear of man and worldly considerations, and guard against lapsing into sin, that I may not be lost, but through Thy merits maybe delivered from, all dangers and obtain heaven

OFFERTORY:

Ps. 18. The justices of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart, and His judgments are sweeter than honey and the honeycomb: for Thy servant keepeth them.

SECRET:

May this victim, O Lord, cleanse our offenses, and sanctify the bodies and souls of Thy subjects to celebrate this sacrifice. Through our Lord, etc.

In memory of Thy Saints, O Lord, we offer Thee the sacrifice of praise, by which we trust to be freed from both present and future evils. Through our Lord, etc.

PREFACE FOR LENT:

It is truly meet and just, right and profitable unto salvation, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks unto Thee, O holy Lord, Father almighty, everlasting God. Who by fasting of the body dost curb our vices, dost lift up our minds, dost give us strength and reward, through Christ our Lord. Through whom the angels praise Thy majesty, the dominions adore it, and the powers are in awe. Which the heavens and the hosts of heaven together with the blessed seraphim joyfully do magnify. With these, we pray Thee, join our voices also while we say with lowly praise: Holy, holy, holy, etc.

COMMUNION:

Ps. 83. The sparrow hath found herself a house, and the dove a nest, where she may lay her young: Thy altars, O Lord of Hosts, my King and my God; blessed are they that dwell in Thy house, they shall praise Thee forever and ever.

POSTCOMMUNION:

We beseech Thee, O Lord, mercifully absolve from all guilt and deliver us from all dangers whom Thou allowest to partake of so great a mystery. Through our Lord, etc.

We who are refreshed by heavenly meat and drink, humbly entreat Thee, O our God, that we may be defended by the prayers of him in whose memory we have received them. Through our Lord, etc.

Labour without intermission to do all the good works in your power, whilst time is allowed you.... Lord, thy thorns are my roses, and thy sufferings my paradise. St. John of God



Every kingdom divided against itself shall be brought to desolation, and house upon house shall fall.... He that is not with Me, is against Me: and he that gathereth not with Me scattereth.

PROPER OF THE SAINTS FOR THE WEEK OF MARCH 8th:

Date	Day	Feast	Rank	Color	F/A	Time
8	Sun	3 rd Sunday of Lent St. John of God, C	sd	V		Mass 9:00 AM; Confessions 8:00 AM; Rosary of Reparation 8:30 AM
9	Mon	St. Frances of Rome, W	d	W	F	Mass 8:30 AM; Rosary of Reparation before Mass
10	Tue	Forty Holy Martyrs	sd	R	F	Mass 8:30 AM; Rosary of Reparation before Mass
11	Wed	Ferial Day		V	F	Mass 8:30 AM; Rosary of Reparation before Mass
12	Thu	St. Gregory the Great, PCD	d	W	F	Mass 8:30 AM; Rosary of Reparation before Mass
13	Fri	Ferial Day <i>Five Wounds of our DNJC</i>		V	F/A	Mass 8:30 AM & 6:00 PM; Confession & Rosary of Reparation 5:00 PM; Stations of the Cross 5:25 PM
14	Sat	Ferial Day		V	F	Mass 9:00 AM; Confessions & Rosary of Reparation 8:30 AM
15	Sun	4 th Sunday of Lent (Laetare Sunday) (<i>St. Mary Clement Hofbauer, C</i>)	sd	V rose		Mass 9:00 AM; Confessions 8:00 AM; Rosary of Reparation 8:30 AM

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Ss. Peter & Paul Chapel is open to its members at any time of the day or night for visits to our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament.

Christians! Remember your baptismal vow; you have renounced Satan : take care, then, that by a culpable ignorance you are not dragged into apostasy. It is not a phantom that you renounced at the font; he is a real and formidable being, who, as our Lord tells us, was a murderer from the beginning... During this holy season, the Church is putting within your reach those grand means of victory – fasting, prayer, and almsdeeds. ...be not deceived; your enemy is not slain. He is irritated; penance has driven him from you, but he has sworn to return...the enemy of mankind never despairs of regaining his prey. His hatred is as active now as it was at the very beginning of the world... let us ever remember that our whole life is to be a warfare. Our soldier-like attitude will disconcert the enemy, and he will try to gain victory elsewhere. Dom Gueranger, *The Liturgical Year*, Third Sunday of Lent

The mercy which God commands us to show to our fellow-creatures, does not consist only in corporal and spiritual almsdeeds to the poor and the suffering; it includes, moreover, the pardon and forgetfulness of injuries. This is the test whereby God proves the sincerity of our conversion. With the same measure that you shall mete withal, it shall be measured to you again. If we, from our hearts, pardon our enemies, our heavenly Father will unreservedly pardon us. These are the days when we are hoping to be reconciled with our God; let us do all we can to gain our brother; and for this end, pardon him, if needs be, seventy times seven times. Surely, we are not going to allow the miserable quarrels of our earthly pilgrimage to make us lose heaven! Therefore, let us forgive insults and injuries, and thus imitate our God Himself, who is ever forgiving us.
Dom Gueranger, *The Liturgical Year*, Third Week of Lent

There is but one tie which can make men love one another: that tie is God, who created them all, and commands them all to be one in Him. To serve mankind for its own sake, is to make a god of it; and even viewing the workings of the two systems in this single point of view- the relief they afford to temporal suffering- what comparison is there between mere philanthropy, and that supernatural charity of the humble disciples of Christ, who make Him the very motive and end of all they do for their afflicted brethren? Dom Gueranger, *The Liturgical Year*, Feast of St. John of God

I never heard anything bad said of me which I did not clearly realize fell short of the truth. If I had not sometimes – often, indeed – offended God in the ways they referred to, I had done so in many others, and I felt they had treated me far too indulgently in saying nothing about these.... O Lord, how can a person like me, who deserves to be tortured by demons for eternity, be insulted? If I am badly treated in this world, is it not just? Really, Lord, I have nothing to offer You in this regard... I know that I am so guilty in Your eyes that I feel that those who insult me are treating me too well, although they think they are offending me, not knowing me as well as You do. St. Teresa of Avila

Amen, amen, I say to you, unless the grain of wheat falling to the ground die, itself remaineth alone. But if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit. He that loveth his life shall lose it : and he that hateth his life in this world, keepeth it unto life eternal. If any man minister to Me, let him follow Me : and where I am, there also shall My minister be. If any man minister to Me, Him will My father honour. John 12, 20-36

Invincible ignorance is a punishment for sin. St. Thomas Aquinas (*De Infid. q. x., art. 1.*)

Oh! How truly can we see that pride dishonors God and is very displeasing to Him, since it was necessary for You, the Son of God, to be so humiliated in order to atone for such dishonor! We can truly say also that vanity is a monstrous thing, since in order to destroy it, You were willing to be reduced to such humiliation! Oh! How firmly must we believe that in the eyes of God humility is an infinitely precious treasure and a jewel most pleasing to Him, since You, His divine Son, willed to be so humiliated to make us love this virtue, and to urge us to imitate You in the practice of it, and thus merit the grace to perform its works! St. John Eudes

"Be careful not to depend or rely much upon the friendship and protection of men. For they cannot sustain us by themselves; and when the Lord sees us leaning upon them, He withdraws from us." St. Vincent de Paul

Christian humility does not lower, it elevates; it does not cast down, but gives courage, for the more it reveals to the soul its nothingness and abjection, the more it moves it toward God with confidence and abandonment. The very fact that in everything – in essence as in act, in the natural as in the supernatural order – we depend on Him, and that we can do nothing without Him, shows us that God wants to sustain us continually by His help and His grace... "Amen, I say to you, unless you be converted and become as little children, you shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, he is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven" (Mt. 18, 3-4). Fr. Gabriel of St. Mary Magdalen, O.C.D., *Divine Intimacy*

Whoever serves God with a pure heart, and, setting aside all individual and human interests, seeks only His glory, has reason to hope for success in all he does, and especially under circumstances, when, according to human judgment, there is no help; for the Divine works are above the sight of human prudence, and depend upon a loftier principle. St. Charles Borromeo

The Church will be punished because the majority of her members, high and low, will become so perverted. The Church will sink deeper and deeper until she will at last seem to be extinguished, and the succession of Peter and the other Apostles to have expired. But, after this, she will be victoriously exalted in the sight of all doubters. St. Nicholas of Fluh, 1417-1487, prophecy

Humility is to charity what the foundation is to a building. Digging the foundation is not building the house, yet it is the preliminary, indispensable work, the condition *sine qua non*. The deeper and firmer it is, the better the house will be and the greater assurance of stability it will have. Only the fool "built his house on the sand," with the inevitable consequence of seeing it crumble away very soon. The wise man, on the contrary, "built... upon a rock" (Mt. 7, 24-26); storms and winds might threaten, but his house was unshakable because its foundation was solid. Humility is the firm bedrock upon which every Christian should build the edifice of his spiritual life. Father Gabriel of St. Mary Magdalen, O.C.D., *Divine Intimacy*

When one puts all his care on God, and rests wholly upon Him, being careful, meanwhile, to serve Him faithfully, God takes care of him; and the greater the confidence of such a one, the more the care of God extends over him; neither is there any danger of its failing, for God has an infinite love for those souls that repose in Him. St. Francis de Sales

THE POWER OF JESUS

THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT

Presence of God: O Jesus, divine Strength, I come to You to seek support for my weakness, and infirmity.

Meditation:

1. On the first Sunday in Lent, the Church showed us Jesus in His Struggle with the devil, but while she presented Him to us then in an attitude of humble defense before the devil's temptations, today we see Him in an attitude of attack which culminates in a glorious victory.

The Gospel (Lk 2, 14-29) tells us that there was a poor man possessed by the devil and he "was dumb." By a single act of His divine power Jesus "cast out the devil," and when he went out, "the dumb spoke, and the multitudes were in admiration at it." But the enemy, as if to avenge his defeat, insinuates into the minds of the Pharisees the shameful calumny: "He casteth out devils by Beelzebub, the prince of devils." Jesus is accused of being possessed by the devil and of having received from the devil power to free the possessed man. Our Lord, however, wills to completely unmask the enemy and with clear logic replies that Satan cannot give Him such power, because thereby Satan himself would be helping to destroy his own kingdom. No, it cannot be so: Jesus drives out devils by "the finger of God," by divine virtue. If Satan is powerful and his satellites join with him in the struggle to rule over man, Jesus is still more powerful and will overcome him and snatch away his prey. He has come to destroy the kingdom of Satan and to establish the kingdom of God.

If in these days God still permits the devil to carry out his evil work against individuals and society, Jesus by His death on the Cross has already paid the price of our victory. This treasure is at our disposal. Through the virtue and grace of Christ, every Christian has the power to overcome the enemy's attacks. The triumph of evil should not disturb us, for it is only an apparent victory. The might of Jesus is stronger and He is the one and only victor.

2. We must work in union with Jesus that His victory over evil may be our own. In today's Gospel the Master Himself shows us several aspects of this collaboration.

"Every kingdom divided against itself shall be brought to desolation"; in these words Our Lord tells us that union is the secret of victory-union with Him above all, for without Him we can do nothing, but also union with our neighbor. If we would work for the triumph of good, let us collaborate - one heart and one soul - with our superiors and our fellow religious. We can often labor with much more efficacy in achieving good if we give up our own personal ideas and act in perfect harmony with others. It may even be necessary sometimes to renounce opinions, plans, and ways which are better in themselves. Let us not be deceived; unity is always to be preferred. Division never leads to victory.

"He that is not with Me is against Me," Jesus adds. Christianity does not tolerate indifference. He who is not firmly on Christ's side, working with Him for the extension of His kingdom, by this very fact is opposed to Him and to what is good. He is an enemy of Christ and a partisan of evil. To omit the good one could do and ought to do is evil, and is consenting to the extension of evil.

The first condition necessary for victory over evil is active cooperation in the work of Christ in union with our brethren. The second condition is vigilance. Jesus warns us that the enemy of good is lying in wait. Even after he leaves a soul, he is ready to return, more powerful than before, "with seven other spirits more wicked than himself" if he finds the soul empty and open to his snares. To halt the approach of evil we must watch in prayer, filling our heart with God so that there will be no place in it for the enemy. And there is no place when the soul is wholly united to God through the acceptance and observance of His word, of His will. In fact, Jesus answered to the woman who praised His Mother: "Yea rather, blessed are they who hear the word of God and keep it." Of course, the Virgin Mary is blessed because she gave birth to the Redeemer, but she is still more blessed through her perfect union with Him in the observance of His word. This blessedness is not reserved for Mary alone; it is offered to every soul of good will and constitutes the greatest guarantee of victory over evil, for one united to God becomes strong with His strength.

Colloquy:

"My eyes are ever toward the Lord, for He shall pluck my feet out of the snare. Look Thou upon me, and have mercy on me; for I am alone and poor. Keep Thou my soul and deliver me: I shall not be ashamed, for I have hoped in Thee" (Ps 24,15-20).

"O eternal Trinity, O most high and eternal Trinity, You give us the Word, full of sweetness and love. O sweet and loving Word, Son of God, if our nature is weak and capable of every evil, Yours is strong and disposed to good, because You have received it from Your eternal, all-powerful Father. O sweet Word, You have strengthened our weak nature by uniting it to Yourself. Our nature is fortified by this union, for the power of Your Blood takes away our weakness. We are also strengthened by Your doctrine, for he who follows it in truth, perfectly clothing himself with it, becomes so strong and capable of good, that he loses, as it were, the rebellion of the flesh against the spirit and can overcome every evil. So You, O eternal Word, substituted for our human weakness the strength of Your divine nature which You received from the Father; and this strength You have given to us by Your Blood and Your doctrine.

"O sweet Blood, You fortify and illumine the soul; in You it becomes angelic, because You cover it with the fire of Your charity so that it forgets itself entirely and can no longer see anything except You.

"O divine Truth, You give so much strength to the soul which clothes itself with You, that it never falters under the weight of adversity or beneath the burden of troubles and temptations, but in every struggle it gains a great victory. I am wretched because I have not followed You, O eternal Truth; hence I am so weak that in every least tribulation I fall" (St. Catherine of Siena).

Defamation: Both Detraction and Calumny are the same Species of Sinfulness

Good esteem is the opinion which men express in words regarding the excellence of another. This esteem is violated by defamation whereby one *secretly blackens the good name of another*. Modern theologians usually distinguish defamation into *detraction* and *calumny*. Detraction is the unjust revelation of another's genuine but hidden fault; calumny is the untruthful imputation of some fault not actually committed. Older theologians spoke of calumny, detraction, and defamation, without making any distinction between them so far as their morality was concerned. In this category must also be included *tale-bearing* which is a form of detraction that sows discord between friends.

Unjust defamation whether it be simple detraction or calumny is a grave sin contrary to justice and charity which admits of slight matter. This is evident from the words of St. Thomas: "It is a serious matter to take away the good esteem of another, because amongst man's temporal possessions nothing is more precious than his good name; if he lacks this he is prevented from doing many good things. Therefore it is said: 'Take care of your good name; for this will be a more lasting possession of yours than a thousand valuable and precious treasures.' And therefore detraction considered in itself is grievously sinful."

Rev. Dominic Prummer, O.P., *Handbook of Moral Theology*

The Tridentine Profession of Faith of Pope Pius IV, *Iniunctum Nobis*, prescribes adherence to the "received and approved rites of the Catholic Church used in the solemn administration of the sacraments." The 'received and approved rites' are the rites established by custom, and hence the Council of Trent refers to them as the "received and approved rites of the Catholic Church customarily used in the solemn administration of the sacraments (Sess. VII, can XIII). Adherence to the customary rites received and approved by the Church is an infallible defined doctrine: The Council of Florence defined that "priests.... must confect the body of the Lord, each one according to the custom of his Church" (*Decretum pro Graecis*), and therefore the Council of Trent solemnly condemned as heresy the proposition that "the received and approved rites of the Catholic Church customarily used in the solemn administration of the sacraments may be changed into other new rites by any ecclesiastical pastor whosoever"

Fr. Paul Kramer, *The Suicide of Altering the Faith in the Liturgy*

"Endeavor to acquire the virtues in which you believe your brother to be wanting; then you will no longer be sensible of his defects, because they will have ceased to exist in yourself." St. Augustine

Pride may yield resentment rather than gratitude for gifts

Let us now consider the first case, namely: gratitude toward someone with whom we are not linked by an intimate relationship. An example would be receiving financial assistance or help in a dangerous situation or being defended by someone when we are wrongly accused. If someone refuses to acknowledge such a debt of gratitude and finds it difficult to admit this dependence on another, it indicates an alarming degree of pride. If the generosity of the other does not move and gratify the recipient, then his heart is still hardened and imprisoned in pride.

Pride struggles against the bond that is implied in being indebted to another. The notion that one owes something to another, that one might even have to reciprocate if a similar situation would arise for the other, is felt as a restriction of freedom and independence. The situation of the helper in relation to the one he helps clearly includes a form of ascendancy on the part of the helper. It is deeply characteristic of pride that the beauty of the helper's generosity is ignored and only a resentment against his formal superiority is felt.

There are still other distinctions to be made. For example, the worst kind of ingratitude exists when the very generosity of the helper incurs resentment. The help is indeed accepted, because there is no other way out of the difficult situation, but one already takes offense at the superiority implied by the moral value of the benefactor. This is followed by the desire to misinterpret, to repress, or to deny the generosity involved.

In another case, the... person would "swallow" this formal superiority if it did not put him under obligation to the other. This person is not so ungrateful that he cannot grasp the debt of gratitude arising from his acceptance of the benefit. He feels the reality of this bond. But in his perverted urge for freedom, in his need for unconditional independence, his primary perception of the debt of gratitude is that it is oppressive. A Hindu saying clearly expresses this form of resistance against gratitude: "Why are you persecuting me? I have never done you a favor." Dietrich and Alice von Hildebrand, *The Art of Living*

Contemplate that ignominious cross upon which your God expired. Look at His poor head crowned with thorns, falling inert upon His breast. Consider those candid eyes and the pale countenance whereon the precious blood coagulates. Look at the pierced feet and hands and at the mortally wounded body. Pay attention, above all, to the most loving Heart that was opened by the soldier's lance; from it flows a few drops of bloodstained water. All this He gave you! How is it possible to distrust this Saviour?

Fr. Thomas de Saint Laurent, *Book of Confidence*

After the Second Vatican Council, the impression arose that the pope really could do anything in liturgical matters, especially if he were acting on the mandate of an ecumenical council. Eventually, the idea of the givenness of the liturgy, the fact that one cannot do with it what one will, faded from the public consciousness of the West. In fact, the First Vatican Council had in no way defined the pope as an absolute monarch. On the contrary, it presented him as the guarantor of obedience to the revealed Word. The pope's authority is bound to the Tradition of faith, and that also applies to the liturgy. It is not "manufactured" by the authorities. Even the pope can only be a humble servant of its lawful development and abiding integrity and identity . . . The authority of the pope is not unlimited; it is at the service of Sacred Tradition. Pope Benedict XVI, *Spirit of the Liturgy*

However, the term *disciplina* in no way applies to the liturgical rite of the Mass, particularly in light of the fact that the popes have repeatedly observed that the rite is founded on apostolic tradition (several popes are then quoted in the footnote). For this reason alone, the rite cannot fall into the category of 'discipline and rule of the Church.' To this we can add that there is not a single document, including the *Codex Iuris Canonici*, in which there is a specific statement that the pope, in his function as the supreme pastor of the Church, has the authority to abolish the traditional rite. In fact, nowhere is it mentioned that the pope has the authority to change even a single local liturgical tradition. The fact that there is no mention of such authority strengthens our case considerably.

There are clearly defined limits to the *plena et suprema potestas* (full and highest powers) of the pope. For example, there is no question that, even in matters of dogma, he still has to follow the tradition of the universal Church—that is, as St. Vincent of Lerins says, what has been believed (*quod semper, quod ubique, quod ab omnibus*). In fact, there are several authors who state quite explicitly that it is clearly outside the pope's scope of authority to abolish the traditional rite.

Msgr. Klaus Gamber, *The Reform of the Roman Liturgy*

... at the end of the 19th Century and for a large part of the 20th, various heresies will flourish on this earth which will have become a free republic. The precious light of the Faith will go out in souls because of the almost total moral corruption in those times there will be great physical and moral calamities, in private and in public. The little number of souls keeping the Faith and practicing the virtues will undergo cruel and unspeakable suffering; through their long, drawn out martyrdom many of them will go to their death because of the violence of their sufferings, and those will count as martyrs who gave their lives for Church or for country. To escape from being enslaved by these heresies will call for great strength of will, constancy, courage and great trust in God, all of which are gifts from the merciful love of My Divine Son to those He will have chosen for the work of restoration ... there will come moments when everything seems lost and paralyzed, and just then comes the happy beginning of the complete restoration. Blessed Virgin Mary, Our Lady of Good Success, to Mother Mariana de Jesus Torres

"Envy conceals itself under every possible pretext, and takes pleasure in secret and treacherous schemes. Hinted slanders, calumnies, betrayal, every kind of fraud and deceit, are its work and portion." Bishop Jacques-Bénigne Bossuet

Envy is the most dangerous of our passions and the worst of evils; and the fact of its being a domestic evil only adds weight to its gravity. Rust consumes iron, and envy consumes the heart. The viper when born rends the entrails of its mother, and envy in like manner destroys the soul that gives it birth.... The envious and the jealous are easily recognized by their physiognomy. Their eyes are dull and heavy, their jaws drooping, their brows contracted, their mind agitated and wanting judgment in their appreciation of others. They can see no good in acts of virtue, nor in eloquent words, nor in anything which the world admires. Vultures leave sweet-smelling meadows for the attraction of putrid carrion, and flies throng round festering wounds. In like manner the envious man does not stop and dwell on the beauty and greatness of good deeds, but turns to their defective aspect; and as imperfection is to be met with in everything, he delights in divulging it, and seeks to make this imperfection the characteristic mark of his neighbor... Besides this, envious men are very skilful in giving a bad appearance to what is good in itself, and in calumniating virtue by speaking of it as bordering on vice. They call a determine man audacious and rash, and a temperate one cold-blooded; with them justice is cruelty; prudence, cunning; liberality, prodigality; and a wise administration, parsimony... We may say that every species of merit is an offence to envy, as every kind of light hurts weak eyes. St. Basil the Great, *On Envy*

Know, moreover, that Divine Justice releases terrible chastisements on entire nations, not only for the sins of the people, but especially for those of priests and religious persons. For the latter are called, by the perfection of their state, to be the salt of the earth, the masters of truth and the shields to hold back Divine Ire. Straying from their sublime mission, they degrade themselves in such a way that, before the eyes of God, they increase the rigor of the punishment... Alas, if they knew, if they were convinced of how much I love them and desire to enter into the very depths of their souls! Then, without a doubt, they would find Me and would necessarily live the life of love, light and continuous union to which they were not only called, but chosen! Jesus Christ to Mother Mariana de Jesus Torres, Our Lady of Good Success, prophecies for our times

One of the scarcely examined principles from which our age's governing image of humanity is drawn asserts that it is not fitting for man to be afraid. In this attitude the waters from two sources are mingled. The one is Enlightenment liberalism, which relegates fearfulness to the realm of the unessential, and, in its view of reality, room and place are assigned to fear only in an unessential sense. The other source is an un-Christian stoicism with a concealed link to impudence as well as to despair; it opposes the fearful things of existence, which are clearly seen, with defiant immovability, without fear, but also without hope. Josef Pieper, *A Brief reader on the Virtues of the Human Heart*

The virtue of fortitude protects a person from loving his life so much that he loses it.
Josef Pieper, *A Brief Reader on the Virtues of the Human Heart*

Nothing shows the way to a correct understanding of humility so clearly as this: that humility and magnanimity not only are not mutually exclusive but also are near to one another and intimately connected; both together are in opposition to pride as well as to faintheartedness. What indeed does magnanimity mean? Magnanimity is the expansion of the spirit toward great things; one who expects great things of himself and makes himself worthy of it is magnanimous. The magnanimous person is to a certain extent "particular": he does not allow himself to become concerned with everything that comes along, but rather only with the great things that are suitable for him. Magnanimity seeks above all great glory: "The magnanimous person strives toward that which is worth the highest glory." In the *Summa Theologica* it is stated, "If one disdains glory in such a manner that he makes no effort to do that which merits glory, that action is blameworthy." On the other side, the magnanimous one is not broken by disgrace; he looks down on it as unworthy of himself. In general the magnanimous man regards with disdain anyone who is narrow-minded. He would never be able to esteem another so highly that he would do anything improper for that person's sake. According to Thomas, the words of the Psalm (15:4) apply to the magnanimous "disdain for men" by the just man: "He looks with contempt on the reprobate." Undaunted uprightness is the distinctive mark of Magnanimity, while nothing is more alien to it than this: to be silent out of fear about what is true. One who is magnanimous completely shuns flattery and hypocrisy, both of which are the issue of a mean heart. The magnanimous person does not complain, for his heart does not permit him to be overcome by any external evil. Magnanimity encompasses an unshakable firmness of hope, a plainly defiant certainty, and the thorough calm of a fearless heart. The magnanimous person submits himself not to the confusion of feelings or to any human being or to fate - but only to God.

It is with some amazement that one learns that this profile of magnanimity is traced line for line in the *Summa Theologica* of St. Thomas. It was necessary to bring this to mind, for in the *Treatise on Humility* it is stated several times that humility does not conflict with magnanimity. One can now consider what this sentence, unuttered as a warning and a precaution, truly means to say. It means nothing else than this: that a "humility" that would be too narrow and too weak to bear the inner tension of coexistence with magnanimity is indeed no humility. Josef Pieper, *A Brief Reader on the Virtues of the Human Heart*

"There is no surer sign that a man is on the way to modernism than when he begins to show his dislike for the [scholastic] system."
Pope St. Pius X

"By contrast [with St. Augustine], I had difficulties in penetrating the thought of Thomas Aquinas, whose crystal-clear logic seemed to be too closed in on itself, too impersonal and ready-made."
Cardinal Ratzinger, *Milestones: Memoirs 1927-1977*

The Catholic Church has a problem with homosexuals rather than pedophiles. Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone

The global network of the homolobbies and homomafias must be counterbalanced by a network of honest people. An excellent tool that can be used here is the Internet, which makes it possible to create a global community of people concerned about the fate of the Church, who have resolved to oppose homoideology and homoheresy. The more we know, the more we can do.

Fr. Dariusz Oko, Ph.D., Professor of Theology at the Pontifical Academy of Theology in Krakow, *With the Pope Against the Homoheresy*

We think it hazardous that its special honor should not always and everywhere remain, especially when it is established that daily experience, and the judgment of the greatest men, and, to crown all, the voice of the Church, have favored the scholastic philosophy. Pope Leo XIII, *Aeterni Patris*, On the Restoration of Christian Philosophy

I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd giveth his life for his sheep. But the hireling, and he that is not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and flieth: and the wolf catcheth, and scattereth the sheep: And the hireling flieth, because he is a hireling: and he hath no care for the sheep. I am the good shepherd; and I know mine, and mine know me. As the Father knoweth me, and I know the Father: and I lay down my life for my sheep. John 10: 11-15
He said to him the third time: Simon, son of John, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved, because he had said to him the third time: Lovest thou me? And he said to him: Lord, thou knowest all things: thou knowest that I love thee. He said to him: Feed my sheep. John 21:17

PEW POLL: 95% of Jewish Leaders support abortion and “same-sex marriage.”

The Jewish question of our time does not differ greatly from the one which affected the Christian peoples of the Middle Ages. In a foolish way it is said to arise from hatred towards the Jewish tribe. Mosaism in itself could not become an object of hate for Christians, since, until the coming of Christ, it was the only true religion, a prefiguration of and preparation for Christianity, which, according to God's Will, was to be its successor. But the Judaism of the centuries [after Christ] turned its back on the Mosaic law, replacing it with the *Talmud* (ii.), the very quintessence of that Pharisaism which in so many ways has been shattered through its rejection by Christ, the Messiah and Redeemer. And although Talmudism is an important element of the Jewish question, it cannot be said, strictly speaking, to give that question a religious character, because what the Christian nations despise in Talmudism is not so much its virtually non-existent theological element, but rather, its morals, which are at variance with the most elementary principles of natural ethics.

On the Jewish Question in Europe; *La Civiltà Cattolica*, Series XIV, Vol. VII, 23;10; October 1890

You can tell a book by its cover

"Of evil omen to me, were the tossings of his head, the shrugging up of his shoulders, the rolling about and wandering of his eyes, the fierceness of his looks, his unsteady and shuffling feet, his nose elevated so as to express disdain and contumely, the ridiculous contortions of his features (a mark of the same passions), his loud and unseasonable laughter, his unmeaning gestures, his broken and incoherent way of talking, his precipitate and silly questions, and his answers as foolish as the questions themselves."
St. Gregory Nazianzen, commenting on Julian the Apostate's character by observing his complete want of the virtue of modesty as seen when they were young students together in Athens.

"An interior disposition to humility puts its seal upon the words, gestures, and acts, by means of which that which is hidden within is manifested on the outside." St. Thomas Aquinas

This “Perverse Opinion” is the accepted ‘wisdom’ of the Novus Ordo World.

Now We consider another abundant source of the evils with which the Church is afflicted at present: *indifferentism*. This perverse opinion is spread on all sides by the fraud of the wicked who claim that *it is possible to obtain the eternal salvation of the soul by the profession of any kind of religion, as long as morality is maintained*. Surely, in so clear a matter, you will drive this deadly error far from the people committed to your care. With the admonition of the apostle that "there is one God, one faith, one baptism" may those fear who contrive the notion that the safe harbor of salvation is open to persons of any religion whatever. They should consider the testimony of Christ Himself that "those who are not with Christ are against Him," and that they disperse unhappily who do not gather with Him. Therefore "without a doubt, they will perish forever, unless they hold the Catholic faith whole and inviolate." Let them hear Jerome who, while the Church was torn into three parts by schism, tells us that whenever someone tried to persuade him to join his group he always exclaimed: "He who is for the See of Peter is for me." A schismatic flatters himself falsely if he asserts that he, too, has been washed in the waters of regeneration. Indeed Augustine would reply to such a man: "The branch has the same form when it has been cut off from the vine; but of what profit for it is the form, if it does not live from the root?" Pope Gregory XVI, *Mirari Vos*, On Liberalism and Religious Indifferentism, August 15, 1832

The Church has ever proved indestructible. Her persecutors have failed to destroy her; in fact, it was during times of persecution that the Church grew more and more; while the persecutors themselves, and those whom the Church would destroy, are the very ones who came to nothing. St. Thomas Aquinas

O Mary, my sweet love, you opened to the eternal Divinity the door of your will, and the Word immediately became incarnate within you. By this you teach me that God, who created me without my help, will not save me without it... but knock at the door of my will and waits for me to open it to Him. St. Catherine of Siena

The greatness of contemplation can be given to none but those who love....Whoever wishes to hold the fortress of contemplation must first of all train in the camp of action....We ascend to the heights of contemplation by the steps of action....He who would climb to a lofty height must go by steps, not leaps. Pope St. Gregory the Great

Custody of the Eyes

He who through these windows of the body, recklessly looks abroad, very often falls, even against his will, into the sweetnesses of sin, and being fast fettered by desires, begins to will what before he had never willed. St. Gregory the Great

The Fundamentals of the Spiritual Life Never Change

St. Oswald made quick progress in the path of perfect virtue, because he studied with the utmost earnestness to deny himself and his own will, listening attentively to that fundamental maxim of the Eternal Truth which St. Benedict, of whose holy order he became a bright light, repeats with great energy. This holy founder declares in the close of his rule, that, he who desires to give himself up to God, must trample all earthly things under his feet, renounce everything that is not God, and die to all earthly affections, so as to attain to a perfect disengagement and nakedness of heart, that God may fill and entirely possess it, in order to establish therein the kingdom of his grace and pure love for ever. And in his prologue he cries out aloud, that he addresses himself only to him who is firmly resolved in all things to deny his own will, and to hasten with all diligence to arrive at his heavenly kingdom. Fr. Alan Butler, Lives of the Saints, St. Oswald, O.S.B., Bishop of Worcester, d. 992

It is, therefore, a strict duty for every priest wanting to remain Catholic to separate himself from the Conciliar Church for as long it does not rediscover the Tradition of the Church and of the Catholic Faith.

Bishop Tissier de Mallerais, January 1, 2015

At Least One Cardinal Defends the Catholic Sacrament of Matrimony

If the Church admits [them] to the Eucharist, she must anyway grant a judgment of legitimacy to the second union. That is logical. But now - as I asked - what to make of the first matrimony? The second, it is said, cannot be a true second matrimony, considering that bigamy goes against the word of the Lord. What about the first one? Is it dissolved? But the Popes have always taught that the power of the Pope does not reach that point: the Pope has no power over a marriage that is *ratum et consummatum*. The proposed solution leads us to think that the first matrimony remains, but that there is also a second kind of cohabitation that the Church legitimizes. It is, therefore, an extramarital exercise of human sexuality that the Church legitimizes. But with this, the foundational pillar of the Church's doctrine on sexuality is negated. At this point, one could ask: so why are not free [extramarital or premarital] unions approved? And why not relations between homosexuals?

Cardinal Carlo Caffarra, Archbishop of Bologna, Comment on Cardinal Walter Kasper's proposal to permit divorced and remarried Catholics to receive Holy Communion, interviewed by Matteo Matzuzzi, *Il Foglio*, March 15, 2014

More and More Continue to Recognize the Apostasy

One can observe at all levels of the Church an obvious decrease of the 'sacrum.' The 'spirit of the world' feeds the shepherds. The sinners give the Church the instructions for how she has to serve them. In their embarrassment the Pastors are silent on the current problems and abandon the sheep while they are feeding themselves. The world is tempted by the devil and opposes the doctrine of Christ.... In our days the voice of the majority of the bishops rather resembles the silence of the lambs in the face of furious wolves, the faithful are left like defenseless sheep." [.....]

It will not be superfluous to remind my brothers in the episcopacy of an affirmation made by an Italian masonic lodge (*Alta Vendita*) from the year 1820: "Our work is a work of a hundred years. Let us leave the elder people and let us go to the youth. The seminarians will become priests with our liberal ideas. We shall not flatter ourselves with false hopes. We will not make the Pope a Freemason. However liberal bishops, who will work in the entourage of the Pope, will propose to him in the task of governing the Church such thoughts and ideas which are advantageous for us and the Pope will implement them into life" (quote taken from *The Permanent Instruction of the Alta Vendita*).

This intention of the Freemasons is being implemented more and more openly, not only thanks to the declared enemies of the Church but with the connivance of false witnesses who occupy some high hierarchical office in the Church. It is not without reason that Blessed Paul VI said: "The spirit of Satan penetrated through a crack inside the Church". I think that this crack has become in our days quite wide and the devil uses all forces in order to subvert the Church of Christ.

Archbishop Emeritus of Kazakhstan, Jan Pawel Lenga, Open Letter

Today Satanic ritual has openly entered the Church

It has recently come to our ears, not without great pain to us, that in some parts of upper Germany, as well as in the provinces, cities, territories, regions, and dioceses of Mainz, Koln, Trier, Salzburg, and Bremen, many persons of both sexes, heedless of their own salvation and forsaking the Catholic Faith, give themselves over to devils male and female, and by their incantations, charms, and conjurings, and by other abominable superstitions and sortileges, offences, crimes, and misdeeds, ruin and cause to perish the offspring of women, the foal of animals, the products of the earth, the grapes of vines, and the fruits of trees, as well as men and women, cattle and flocks and herds and animals of every kind, vineyards also and orchards, meadows, pastures, harvests, grains and other fruits of the earth; that they afflict and torture with dire pains and anguish, both internal and external, these men, women, cattle, flocks, herds, and animals, and hinder men from begetting and women from conceiving, and prevent all consummation of marriage; that, moreover, they deny with sacrilegious lips the Faith they received in holy Baptism; and that, at the instigation of the enemy of mankind, they do not fear to commit and perpetrate many other abominable offences and crimes, at the risk of their own souls, to the insult of the divine majesty and to the pernicious example and scandal of multitudes.

Pope Innocent VIII, *Summis desideranter affectibus*, 1484, condemnation of Witchcraft

Modesty of the Blessed Virgin Mary - The Guard of her Virginal Purity

Mary was lowly of heart, considerate in her words, prudent in her resolutions, sparing of her speech, assiduous in reading, intent on her work, modest in her discourse; repelling none, kind to all, respectful to her elders. Never could an angry look be discovered in her eyes, nor a rash word be heard to escape her lips, nor did anyone ever witness in her an act which was wanting in perfect modesty, or a gesture too free, or a mode of behaviour too little restrained, or a tone of voice showing the slightest petulance. When did she ever offend her parents by a look? or repel her acquaintance? or cast a reproachful glance at those beneath her? or mock the weak and disabled? or show herself above dealing with the poor? In a word, her whole exterior was a lively image of the perfect inward order that reigned in her soul, a most vivid expression of her peerless sanctity.

St. Ambrose, on the Modesty of the Blessed Virgin Mary

For as many of you as have been baptized in Christ, have put on Christ (Galatians 3:27).

"Saint Paul insists: 'If we have been planted together with Christ in the likeness of His death, we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection' (Romans 6:5). And he is right in saying this; for now that the True Vine has been planted, we have also been grafted into His death by participation at Baptism." St. Cyril of Jerusalem

"By Baptism we are incorporated into the Passion and Death of Christ, as St. Paul says: 'If we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live together with Christ' (Romans 6:8). From which it is clear that the Passion of Christ is communicated to the baptized person... as though he himself had suffered and died" St. Thomas Aquinas

For there is no damnation to those who are truly buried together with Christ by Baptism unto death. Council of Trent

VATICAN II COUNCIL: WHAT IS ITS AUTHORITY?

Vatican II Council was a "pastoral council." It was a council of churchmen teaching by their grace of state. At no time before, during or after the council did anyone ever teach anything by virtue of the Divine Magisterium of the Church, that is, teach by the Holy Ghost. Every Catholic is obligated to reject anything from this council that so much as equivocates or undermines any Catholic dogma. The Vatican II Council is to be judged by its pastoral success or failures. The implementation of the pastoral corruptions of this council have directly led to the greatest apostasy in the history of the Catholic Church. Those that claim that the "teaching of Vatican II" is good are those whose intention is to destroy the Church.

On Penance

St. Paul says: I beseech you to offer your bodies to God as a sacrifice of mortification and penance, but in such wise that this sacrifice may be holy and acceptable in His sight. That it may become so, he adds, this painful sacrifice of mortification must be reasonable, that is, made with discretion and without excess....

However, to the effect that penance may be discreet and reasonable, conformably with the instruction left us by the Apostle of the Gentiles, it must fulfill two conditions, according to the rules which the Holy Fathers have prescribed for its practice. First, it should mortify the body, but not injure the health. Secondly, it must not hinder our fulfillment of the duties attached to our state of life. St. Basil expresses himself clearly in his Constitutions as to the former of these conditions; he will have penance taken in a measure proportioned to the strength of the body. Notice that by continence the holy Doctor here means bodily austerities. We should imitate the camel, which kneels to receive its burden, but which, when sufficiently laden, rises to its feet, and refuses to take more. As St. Bernard says, the body must be afflicted by penance in such degree as to prevent its unruly turning against the spirit; but it is not to be disabled or annihilated, so as to hinder it contributing to the exercise of the inner virtues, which are by far the most useful. St. Gregory the Great is of the like mind, when he says that in the use of penance we should keep within these bounds: we should not slay the flesh, but only its unruly passions. Rev. John Baptist Scaramelli, S.J., *Guide to the Spiritual Life*

A prelate, who had been plunged into deep desolation by the grievous state of his affairs, had written to Ignatius in the hope of obtaining from him some little relief in his trouble, and the Saint replied : "Very Rev. Sir, The things of this present life are only real blessings in so far as they serve us to acquire future beatitude which is eternal, and they are only a real misfortune in so far as they are a hindrance to the happiness which is prepared for us hereafter. When adversity tries us, it enlightens our soul with superior light, it detaches us from earth, and rouses us to seek a higher dwelling in Heaven, it takes from us every wish which has not Jesus, and Jesus crucified, for its object, Whose grace fastens us to the Cross now, that we may afterwards rise with Him." Fr. Xavier De Franciosi, S.J., *The Spirit of St. Ignatius*

"No matter what may happen, since no one may justifiably command another to sin, and since no one is permitted to obey such a command, no one may ever blame another—even an errant pope—for his sins. Conversely, the failure of any person—even the pope—to keep God's law or to preserve his own faith, does not excuse any other person for his failure to do the same. Ignorance of the law or ignorance of the Faith is never an excuse for sinning; one is bound to know when he is being commanded to sin." - Fr. James F. Wathen, *The Great Sacrilege*

"Man in his ignorance often deceives himself as to ends and means, as to forces and resistance, as to instruments and obstacles. Sometimes he tries to cut down an oak with a pocket-knife, and sometimes he throws a bomb to break a reed. But Providence never wavers, and it is not in vain that it shakes the world. Everything proclaims that we are moving towards a great unity which, to use a religious expression, we must hail from afar. We have been grievously and justly broken, but if such eyes as mine are worthy to foresee the divine purpose, we have been broken only to be made one." Joseph de Maistre, quoted by Christopher Dawson

"We see many of the Euro-Atlantic countries are actually rejecting their own roots, including the Christian values that constitute the basis of Western civilization. They are denying moral principles and all traditional identities: national identity, cultural, religious--and even sexual. They are implementing policies that equate large families with same sex partnerships, belief in God with a belief in Satan." Vladimir Putin, Davos Conference –World Economic Forum

The (iconoclast) emperor revenged himself on St. John Damascene by accusing him to the Caliph of treason; and the enraged Caliph ordered the Saint's right hand to be struck off. In the evening St. John knelt before an icon of our Lady, and prayed thus: 'O stainless Mother of God, in defense of holy images I have lost my hand; help me, heal me, that I may still write of thy praises and those of thy Divine Son.' Sleep came over him, and he heard in vision our Lady say: 'Thy hand is whole; be it as thou hast said, as the pen of one who writeth swiftly.' He awoke; his hand was restored; only a thin red line showed that it had been severed. The Caliph recognized his innocence, and restored him to his office... The icon from that time hence was painted with the image of St. John's hand and is now known as the 'Icon of the Three Hands.' Fr. Henry Bowden, St. John Damascene, *Lives of the Saints*

Synod Office releases first two Final Reports of the Study Groups

The General Secretariat of the Synod publishes the first two Final Reports of the Study Groups established by Pope Francis following the First Session of the XVI Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops: that of Study Group No. 3 on 'The mission in the digital environment' and that of Study Group No. 4 on 'The revision of the Ratio Fundamentalis Institutionis Sacerdotalis in a missionary synodal perspective.'

Vatican News | March 3, 2026



The General Secretariat of the Synod has today released the first two Final Reports of the Study Groups established by Pope Francis following the First Session of the XVI Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops.

The reports published were that of Study Group No. 3 on 'The Mission in the Digital Environment' and Study Group No. 4 on 'The Revision of the Ratio Fundamentalis Institutionis Sacerdotalis in a Missionary Synodal Perspective.'

Pope Leo XIV has directed the publication of these Final Reports to share with the entire People of God the fruits of the reflection and discernment undertaken during the Synod, in a spirit of transparency and accountability. The Final Reports are published in English and Italian, with an indication of the original language and the working translation.

A summary, available in various languages, accompanies each Report to facilitate access. With the presentation of their Final Reports, Study Groups No. 3 and No. 4 conclude their mandate and are therefore to be considered dissolved.

The General Secretariat will continue to release the Final Reports progressively, with the next publication scheduled for 10 March 2026.

Cardinal Mario Grech, Secretary General of the Synod, said that the Reports, "beyond the value of their content," "testify to the shared journey undertaken with the Dicasteries.

"It is not the first time that the Dicasteries have collaborated on a common project, but here," he added, "there is something more: an authentic exercise of shared listening, reflection, and discernment. It is synodality put into practice, not merely bureaucratic cooperation."

The Mission in the Digital Environment

The Report of Study Group No. 3 addresses a central question that emerged during the XVI Assembly, namely how to live the Church's mission within a culture increasingly shaped by the digital sphere.

The Group, drawing on a broad consultation involving pastoral workers, experts, and ecclesial realities from all continents, gathered experiences, analyzed challenges, and formulated concrete recommendations.

Key themes include the need to integrate digital mission into the Church's ordinary structures, an in-depth analysis of territorial jurisdiction in light of online communities, and the formation of pastors and pastoral workers in digital culture.

The Report concludes with a series of operative proposals articulated at three levels: the Holy See, Episcopal Conferences, and dioceses. It also includes an extensive section on the methodology adopted and the entities consulted.

Formation to the Priesthood

Rather than proceeding with a revision of the Ratio Fundamentalis Institutionis Sacerdotalis (2016), which is still considered valid in its fundamental principles, Study Group No. 4 opted to elaborate a Proposal for a Guiding Document for its implementation in a missionary synodal key, in line with the Final Document of the XVI Assembly.

The document is structured in two parts. The Preamble offers an ecclesiological-pastoral framework and identifies a series of necessary conversions in priestly formation: relational, missionary, toward communion, toward service, and toward a synodal style. At its heart lies a central insight: the identity of the priest is formed "in and from" the People of God, not in separation from it.

The Guidelines in the second part translate these conversions into concrete operative pathways.

Some of the most significant proposals include alternating residence between the seminary and parish communities or other ecclesial contexts; shared formative experiences and moments with lay faithful, consecrated persons, and ordained ministers, starting from the propaedeutic stage; the inclusion of qualified and competent women as co-responsible at all levels of formation, including within formation teams; and the acquisition of skills for co-responsibility and communal discernment.

The Group also proposed a pathway for the dissemination and implementation of the operative directions offered.

Nature and publication of the Final Reports

Along with the Final Report of Study Group No. 3, the General Secretariat also published a Note outlining the origin and mandate of the Study Groups, the nature of the Reports, and the envisaged operational follow-up.

In the note, it highlights that the Final Reports are the fruit of a structured process: the listening to diverse competencies and professional expertise, the analysis of numerous contributions, academic research, dialogue with various ecclesial bodies, from Episcopal Conferences to Catholic universities, and, above all, discernment and prayer.

They are to be understood as working documents.

Pope Leo XIV, has directed that the Final Reports be published progressively, as they are presented to the General Secretariat of the Synod, in a spirit of transparency.

In order that the content that has emerged may be translated into concrete orientations, decisions and processes, the Holy Father has requested the competent Dicasteries and the General Secretariat of the Synod to draw up, on the basis of the Final Reports, operative proposals, also giving an account of the choices made and of any elements not received.

This joint effort, the General Secretariat's note continues, ensures coherence with the synodal dynamism and rootedness in the Church's missionary perspective.

The operative proposals thus formulated will be submitted to the Holy Father, who will evaluate and may approve them.

With the submission of the Final Report to the General Secretariat of the Synod, the Study Groups that have delivered it conclude the mandate entrusted to them and are therefore to be considered dissolved.

COMMENT: This article is reproduced as a penitential offering for Lent. It is a collection of bureaucratic drivel but its purpose is in fact malignant. Vatican II, the pastoral council, that from a faithful Catholic's perspective is a pastoral failure because since its implementation the Church has suffered the greatest apostasy in the history of the Church. For Leo, the Vatican II Council is in fact a wonderful success because his purpose is the destruction of the Church. That is why for the Novus Ordites, Vatican II Council "cannot be questioned." The important point of this publication on Synodality is the fundamental change in the conception of the priesthood. The heart of the Catholic priesthood is nicely summed up by St. Paul:

For every high priest taken from among men, is ordained for men in the things that appertain to God, that he may offer up gifts and sacrifices for sins: Who can have compassion on them that are ignorant and that err: because he himself also is compassed with infirmity. And therefore he ought, as for the people, so also for himself, to offer for sins. Neither doth any man take the honour to himself, but he that is called by God, as Aaron was. So Christ also did not glorify himself, that he might be made a high priest: but he that said unto him: Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.

As he saith also in another place: Thou art a priest for ever, according to the order of Melchisedech. Who in the days of his flesh, with a strong cry and tears, offering up prayers and supplications to him that was able to save him from death, was heard for his reverence. And whereas indeed he was the Son of God, he learned obedience by the things which he suffered: And being consummated, he became, to all that obey him, the cause of eternal salvation. Called by God a high priest according to the order of Melchisedech (Heb 5;1-10).

There is nothing from St. Paul that calls for a "necessary conversions in priestly formation: relational, missionary, toward communion, toward service, and toward a synodal style." Don't forget that the Novus Ordo "missionary" believes that proselytism is "solemn nonsense" and therefore, a Novus Ordo "missionary" has no mission from God. There is nothing from St. Paul that calls for "inclusion of qualified and competent women as co-responsible at all levels of (priestly) formation, including within formation teams; and the acquisition of skills for co-responsibility and communal discernment" What is entirely absent from the Novus Ordo synodal priest is his *essence* and that is the power in "offering up gifts and sacrifices for sins." The Novus Ordo priest is not "called by God, as Aaron was." He is not called upon to share in the sacrificial priesthood of Jesus Christ that is in its *essence* is a sacrificial and sacrificing priesthood. This synodal intent in ordination cannot make a man a priest any more than it can make a lady priestettes.