

January/February 2002

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MAGAZINE

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January 22, 2002



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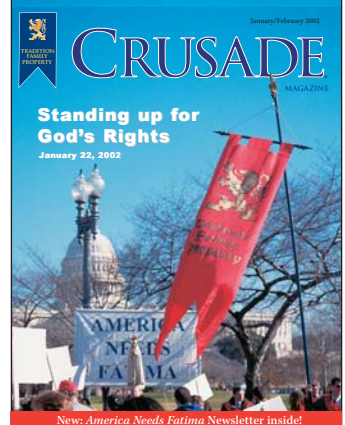
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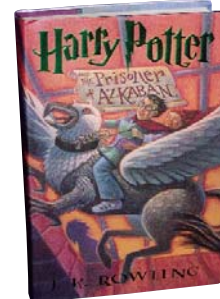


Cover: March for Life, January 22, 2002



Courtesy of Doreen LaRue

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CRUSADE

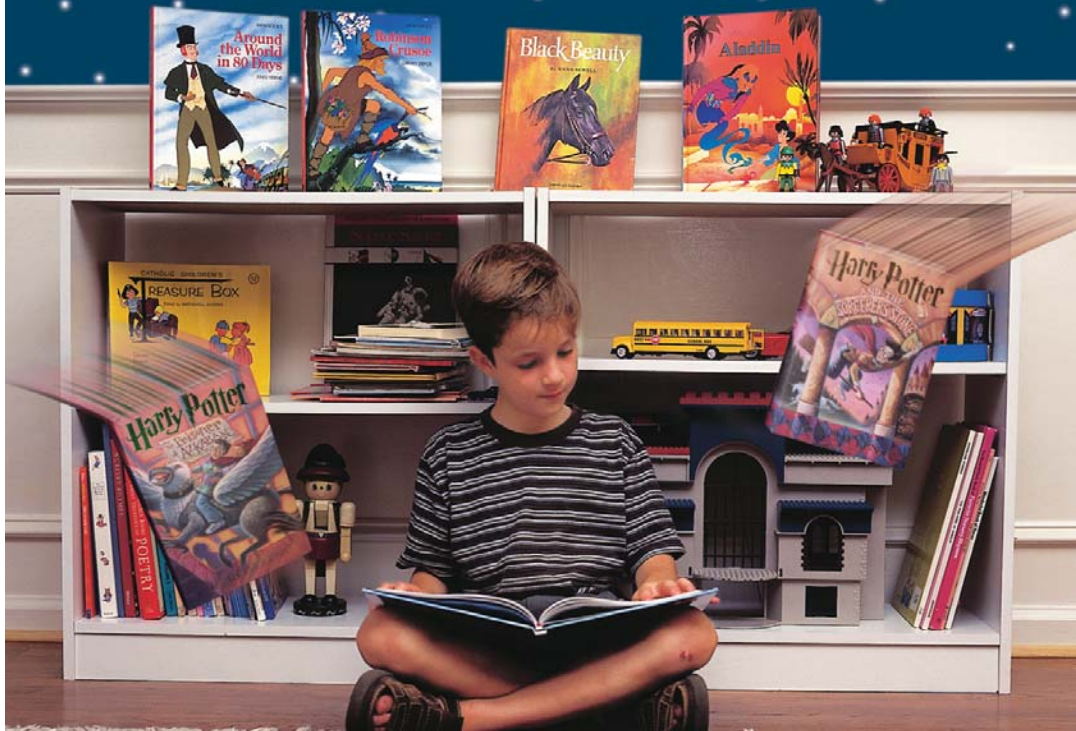
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The American TFP

The American Society for the Defense of *Tradition, Family and Property* (TFP) was founded in 1973 to confront the profound crisis shaking the modern world. It is a civic, cultural and nonpartisan organization which, inspired by the traditional teachings of the Supreme Magisterium of the Roman Catholic Church, works in a legal and peaceful manner in the realm of ideas to defend and promote the principles of private ownership, family and perennial Christian values with their

twofold function: individual and social. The TFP's words and efforts have always been faithfully at the service of Christian civilization.

The first TFP was founded in Brazil by the famous intellectual and Catholic leader Prof. Plinio Corrêa de Oliveira in 1960. His work has inspired the formation of other autonomous TFPs in 26 countries across the globe, thus constituting the world's largest anticommunist and antisocialist network of Catholic inspiration.



Harry Potter

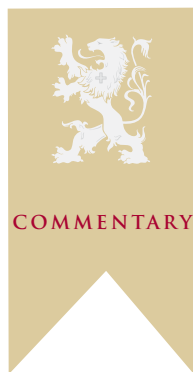
BY GARY J ISBELL

Since the beginning of the Harry Potter phenomenon, the great jubilation of middle class America has been to marvel at Little Johnny reading instead of watching TV or playing video games. The fact that he is reading is considered such a moral triumph that it covers a multitude of sins. Yes, there is a lot of weird stuff in Harry Potter, but how is it different from C.S. Lewis or J. R. Tolkien?

What is the appeal of this dumber version of *Lord of the Rings*? There is obviously some greater lure for the mind of a child than the profane attraction to the disgusting (vomit flavored jelly beans, etc.) and the occult that is the destination the child ultimately arrives at on the train with Harry Potter.

Abstract for a minute from the obvious objections to the initiation in magic that is clearly a danger to the soul of a child enmeshed in the web of Harry Potter novels. This done, there are two elements that jump out at once from the Harry Potter story.

First, there is the alluring theme of vocation. Harry lives an ordinary life. His stepparents do not understand him and he is downtrodden by their preference for their own son. He does not fit in. He is different.



As he reaches a certain age, he begins to receive mysterious letters that are an invitation to follow another path and escape from the tedium and futility of everyday life. His stepparents do everything in their power to prevent the message from getting through. It is, however, too powerful. They cannot prevent him from choosing the vocation that has chosen him.

He will come to understand his real nature and the nature of the world by answering this call. He leaves home to be educated at a mysterious boarding school for witches. But he must first make a leap of faith through a wall that will lead him from the world of ordinary people to the world of witches and wizards.

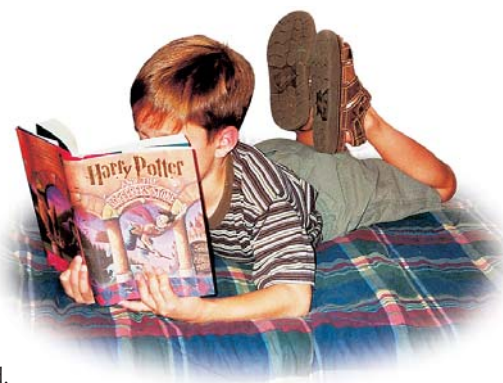
Here, the second point comes into focus. The world is not one-dimensional. There is another world hidden just behind the visible world that Harry is about to discover. It is a marvelous world where the normal rules of life do not apply. The possibilities are unbounded. There he will learn many things and he will be challenged to do great things.

It is a world steeped in medieval imagery. There is ceremony, ritual and the invitation to the mysterious. The gothic structures of the boarding school seem at times ominous and at times warm and invit-

ing. There is structure here and there is a certain hierarchical paternalism in the way Harry is cared for. The introduction to the mysterious, accompanied as it is with the "miracles" of magic, give Harry an element of certainty that he did not possess in the real world. Here there is a reality that the common people (the muggles) do not perceive or care about. Trapped as they are in their one-dimensional world, they seem inferior in every respect to those called to the mysterious world of magic.

For the child reading the books or seeing the movie, these elements of the marvelous have a powerful appeal. The trick is that they are paired with the horrendous. There is a constant transshipment from the appeal to the marvelous to the grotesque and to the occult.

Parents are duly lulled to sleep by the all powerful "At least he is not watching TV." The child is enticed by the marvelous and the invitation to live life on another plain. He eventually understands that perhaps that other dimension he is looking for is in fact horrendous. He now knows where to look to satisfy that yearning for another world. He has found it in the occult; a substitute for what has been taken away from his world with the disenchantment of his reality and especially the de-mys-



tification of religious ritual.

Our modern world has taken away the mystery. Even at church, the common practice is to try to make ritual as ordinary and close to the "real" world as possible. This has perhaps left a void in the child's soul. The success of Harry Potter is an indication that this tendency to make reli-

gion as close an approximation to everyday life with a view to making it accessible is a mistake. The Catholic Church tells us that there is both a visible and invisible world, that our universe is not a closed materialist one but has a supernatural dimension that is not seen by ordinary people. Harry Potter offers children a glimpse at an invisible world; unfortunately, it is not the supernatural world of the Heavenly Kingdom, but a dangerous substitute.

It is perhaps not the content of the books which is so upsetting, but the lack of viable alternatives. The answer to the problem of disenchantment that Harry Potter gives results in the deviation of good instinct. The series' popularity, which took the world by surprise, is an indication that there is a healthy reaction to the prosaic and materialistic aspect of our world in the youngest generation. That quest unfortunately leads to a trap. ■



FORGOTTEN
TRUTHS

Exorcist Comments on Harry Potter

BY PAUL SLOBODNIK

In a recent interview, with the Italian news agency ANSA, Father Gabriele Amorth, author of *An Exorcist Tells His Story*, spoke out against J. K. Rowling's book and the subsequent movie, Harry Potter. While pointing out that the book has serious moral flaws (it promotes lying and disobedience), his most serious criticism was regarding the way Harry Potter promotes magic. Harry Potter created a fight between good and bad magic, which makes the reader feel sympathy for the "good" magic personified in Harry himself.

Harry looks like a nice little boy who, compared to his evil enemies, is almost virtuous. In reality, Fr. Amorth explains that, good magic or a good magi-

cian "does not exist, because magic is always a turn to the Devil...magic is the satanic art par excellence. Behind Harry Potter hides the signature of the king of darkness, the Devil."

Born in Modena, Italy in 1925, Fr. Amorth has been an exorcist most of his priestly life and is Rome's chief exorcist as well as the president of the International Association of Exorcists. After the publication of his best seller, *An Exorcist Tells His Story*, Fr. Amorth is considered one of the world's foremost authorities on diabolical possession and the occult. ■





ONLY IN
AMERICA

"Icon of the Heavenly Jerusalem"

BY NORMAN J. FULKERSON

Priests, architects, members of liturgical councils and parishioners gathered in Mundelein, Illinois to discuss how a Church will look in 2010. What most people want is beauty!

Building a Domus Dei

"I was in awe. In every direction I looked, I saw images that reminded me that I was standing at the meeting place of Heaven and earth," said 13 year old John Schulte as he entered Assumption Cathedral in Covington, Kentucky. Everything seemed to "draw me up," he continued, "and away from the ordinary, and into the realm of the sacred."¹

The year was 1965 and a lot has changed in Church architecture and renovation since then. John Schulte, however, was so moved by what he saw that day that he decided to become a priest. Now, over 30 years later, he is pastor of All Saints Parish in Walton, Ken-

tucky and is building his very own "Domus Dei" or House of God with the enthusiastic support of his parishioners.

His love for beauty and attraction to the sacred is not unique amongst Americans. That could have been the reason for the large and enthusiastic turnout at the "Building the Church for 2010 Conference" in Mundelein, Illinois this last October.

"The response was much greater than we expected," said Denis MacNamara, the organizer. "Our attendance was 300% of what we planned." One of the goals of the conference, he continued, was "to provide a forum for discussion about the role of traditional architecture and iconography in current day church building."

Denis is the Assistant Director at St. Mary's of the Lake University, the host for the conference. St. Mary's was the ideal setting for such a seminar on architecture with its magnificent colonial revival style buildings placed within a sprawling 800-acre estate. "One of the themes [throughout the conference]," Denis said, "was that the church building is not simply a gathering hall, but...an icon of the Heavenly Jerusalem."

Beauty:

"That which when seen pleases"

Duncan Stroik, author of "Reconquering Sacred Space" was one of the speakers at the



One of the main stained glass windows of the Cathedral of Covington, Kentucky.

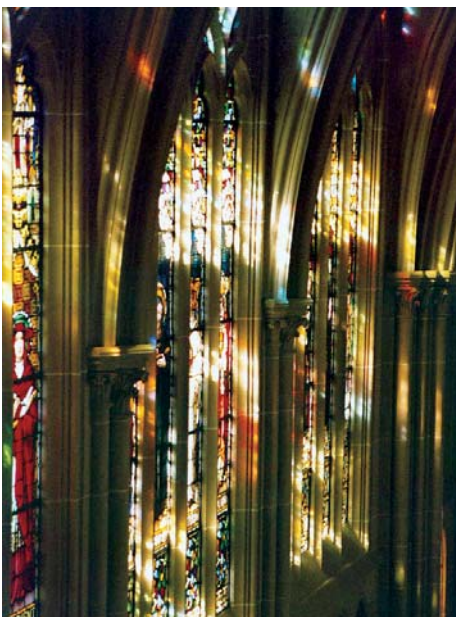
Courtesy of Doreen LaRue

conference. He is also a Professor at Notre Dame University and the architect who designed Fr. Schulte's House of God in Walton. "Why the revival of Classical and Gothic Architecture?" he asked the attentive audience. His answer was simple, "People are tired of their modernist buildings from the 60's and 70's which in some cases are actually falling apart. O'Hare airport is more beautiful than some of our churches," he affirmed. "Laymen and pastors are again demanding that churches look like churches."

Such talk of traditional architecture and a heavenly Jerusalem was very refreshing for me since I have heard my share of complaints from dissatisfied Catholics regarding the bizarre structures some people call churches. Take St. Clare of Assisi in Ballwin, Missouri for example. Friends of mine refer to this place of worship as the "potato chip church." The sad thing is, that is exactly what their church looks like. This may seem disrespectful to some, but I see it as an obvious association of ideas. If it looks like a potato chip, that is what people will call it.

While members of St. Clare complain about the present, others mourn the past. Many were the beautiful churches destroyed to make room for architectural monstrosities that replaced them. And all of this was done in the name of modernity.

According to the simple definition of St. Thomas Aquinas, beauty is "that which when seen, pleases." Now that which formally was very pleasing to the eye is sadly dis-



Courtesy of Doreen LaRue

A inside picture of the stained glass windows of the Cathedral of Covington, Kentucky.

carded in favor of cost, comfort and convenience. Such is the mentality of our utilitarian world, which places the material above the spiritual, and ends up losing both.

There are plenty of people upset with this utilitarian approach to sacred buildings, but little did I realize that an intelligent defense of the spiritual and sacred—in architecture—is being waged right here in America.

Dominican nuns and their trusty architect

Many Americans attending the conference are fed up with the “recoventions,” as they are commonly called, going on in the Church today. Conspicuous among them were a group of Dominican nuns from St. Cecilia’s Congregation in Nashville, Tennessee, dressed in the black headdresses and flowing white habits of their spiritual father, St. Dominic. Of the 192 nuns currently in their convent, 119 are 39 years or younger.

They are getting ready to build a new chapel, renovate their motherhouse and add a new wing to the convent because of the influx of new vocations.

“We are in a position where we have to make bed space for them,” said Sister John Mary Fleming. “But we have to renovate it in such a way that is appropriate to their spiritual formation.” She was alluding to the positive effect a beautiful building has on the soul. Traditional architecture, a nice match for their wonderful Dominican habits, is, at the same time, very compatible with their rapidly growing order.

To insure they got what they wanted, they brought along their architect, Marion Fowlkes. “You have to keep the customer happy,” was how he explained his reason for attending. It was amusing to see this man sitting amidst his customers, a group of Dominican nuns, during the meetings. He was the trusty architect protecting St. Dominic’s daughters from architectural absurdities.

“It was not a historical renovation, it was trendy.”

Timothy Ehlen of the *Saint Francis Xavier Guild* in Petoskey, Michigan also brought his architect and good friend Steve Wiseman. They are opposed to the renovation of their parish church of St. Francis and explained how a neighboring church had previously gone through the same process. That historic church was ruined, causing tremendous divi-

Friends of mine refer to this place of worship as the “potato chip church.”



Saint Clare of Assisi Catholic Church, Ballwin, Missouri

sion within the parish. They hoped to prevent a similar catastrophe. Monthly guild meetings have attracted as many as 250 concerned members of the parish and of the 1100 families who previously called St. Francis home, over 900 were opposed to this renovation.

Steve Wiseman presented a restoration plan, which the parish loved. The liturgical “experts,” however, did not. His plans were summarily rejected with no specific reason given, in favor of the modern approach. The desires of the parishioners were completely ignored. “It was not a historical renovation,” Ehlen said, “but one which was fashionable and trendy.”

Mr. Wiseman is a convert from Lexington, Kentucky. As an architect he admits it was the beauty in church buildings, which played a big part in his conversion over fifteen years ago. He quit going to church five years later when his church in Lexington went through a similar “renovation.” Missing the beauty of the Faith, he eventually returned. “I came back after studying what the Church really taught,” he said. “Now I know our faith is as solid as ever and we just have to keep fighting.”

“The liturgists shrugged their shoulders”

Ben Coggeshall, a student at the University of Illinois showed the same dogged determination. He decided that he was going to be an architect when he read a book on Versailles. “I want to build buildings like that,” he categorically affirmed, “and if they (modern day architects) don’t want to build them, then, by gosh, I will.”

The parishioners of Fr. Schulte’s House of God echoed the same message to Duncan Stroik. “They insisted from the beginning that they wanted a traditional church and the first thing on their list was for the tabernacle to be in the center,” he said, “which comes up a lot in parishes today.”

In order to reconcile the desires of the parish and that of the diocese—who wanted a Blessed Sacrament Chapel off to the side—they ended up doing both. “The people were elated,” Stroik continued, “and the liturgists shrugged their shoulders.”

Many people might also shrug their shoulders in bewilderment to hear about such a conference concerned with building a true “icon of the heavenly Jerusalem” being held in the United States of America. They might also wring their hands in frustration when they realize that this desire for traditional architecture in the most modern nation on earth is just one more paradox that exists only in America. ■

Notes:

1. A “Domus Dei” in Northern Kentucky, by Father John Schulte *St. Catherine Review*. (Sept./Oct. 2000)

The pictures of Covington Cathedral used in this article and on the Contents page may be purchased from:

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The Challenges We Face

Message of the American TFP to those who marched against abortion on January 22, 2002, Washington D.C.



Since September 11, the winds of war have swept the nation, reawakening in Americans a healthy sense of unity and patriotism. We have united around a common cause, focusing with heroic and white-hot resolve on defeating an elusive enemy.

In our intense desire for justice and in response to fears of further attacks, we have found points of affinity among ourselves and with the world community. We do well to pursue our common enemy with all the tact, resources, and power at our command.

However, the scope of such a unity is limited. In our passionate zeal to find shared principles we cannot allow this affinity to overshadow principles not shared.

Principles cannot be sacrificed, reduced to irrelevancy or traded for sympathy. A common enemy does not change the reality of our political, cultural and even religious differences. Nor does it negate the moral ills that undermine the Nation.

March for Life,
January 22, 2002



The Cultural War Continues

We enter the 2002 March for Life united as Americans but greatly concerned about the moral issues that divide our Nation, especially the continued slaughter of innocents.

In the quest for internal consensus on fighting terrorism we cannot suspend what is called the "cultural war." We must continue our struggle not only against abortion but also against violence, promiscuity and blasphemy, which create the cultural climate wherein abortion flourish-es.

September 11 has taught us that there are causes that are worthy of every form of dedication and sacrifice. Ours is certainly one such cause.

Indeed, we must continue this struggle since those who promote abortion are relentless in putting their agenda in place. There is no ceasefire on the abortion killing fields, for there is no lull in the efforts of those who would destroy all Christian morality.

On the contrary, pro-abortion forces are on the offensive, pulling down the barriers of horror and proceeding yet further into new frontiers of the unimaginable.

A Biogenetic Tower of Babel

On the horizon looms an ominous development whose dark shadow races forward at breakneck speed to engulf us. In a cynical but logical progression, the culture of death is now bent on engendering human life so as to destroy it.

Its new frontier is embryonic stem-cell and human cloning research. In the name of science and health, we are now asked to destroy human life at its very inception. We are asked to accept "limited" cloning to produce usable cells that can be manipulated and harvested to aid the living.

In short, the remaining ethical barriers that pre-



Flier distributed
at the March.

If we are faithful to this just cause, we can be assured that God, through the special intercession of the Mother of all mothers, the Blessed Virgin Mary, will bless our efforts and fulfill the hopes of so many who gather each year to implore an end to the slaughter of the innocent.



Our Lady of Fatima is carried aloft during the mile long march.



His Imperial and Royal Highness, Prince Bertrand of Orleans-Braganza distributes fliers during the March.

we must unite with renewed resolve. We must continue the “cultural war,” employing all legal and peaceful means to defend our Christian order. We must stand firm against all destructive embryonic research by uncompromisingly maintaining the sanctity of innocent and defenseless human life, knowing that the least opening of a Pandora’s box can bring about unimaginable ruin.

If we are faithful to this just cause, we can be assured that God, through the special intercession of the Mother of all mothers, the Blessed Virgin Mary, will bless our efforts and fulfill the hopes of so many who gather each year to implore an end to the slaughter of the innocent.

From this hope we may see the rebirth of a nation based not on the false promises of science but upon a concern for the greater glory of God. ■

serve human dignity and God’s rights in creation are steadily coming down.

In their place is a biotech revolution that has as its avowed goal not just curing disease but the construction of a brave new world of genetic engineering, changing the very makeup and design of man himself.

A biogenetic Tower of Babel is rising, challenging God the Creator.

From the Tower of Babel to Pandora’s Box

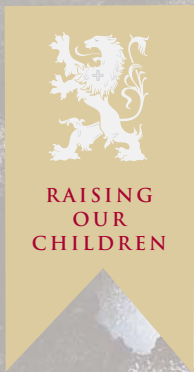
The American Society for the Defense of Tradition, Family and Property (TFP) calls upon all Americans to reject this latest attack on human life and God’s order of creation. We cannot accept the deceptive, unproven and — in any case — immoral argument that embryonic stem cells are needed to save adult lives. We cannot permit the completion of this new Tower of Babel, which will be like another Pandora’s box, unleashing untold ethical and moral havoc on a nation already visited by tragedy.

We believe the key to our national well-being will never be found in choices that violate the moral and natural order. The end never justifies the means, and such efforts can only result in tragedy.

Thus, as we participate in this 29th March for Life,



The American TFP band plays while thousands march towards Capitol Hill against abortion.



The Missing Ingredient

BY MICHELLE TAYLOR

Part III — Beauty

In the last article pertaining to this series of the “Missing Ingredient,” I broached the subject of the intemperance of our modern culture and the need for temperance in shaping the inclinations and tendencies of our children. *

Although many of us may no longer perceive it, everything screams at us: colors, sounds, posters, television commercials, movies, video games and so much more. Either life is lived on the fast lane or we are made to feel we are missing something vital. We have the impression of our children’s souls, minds and hearts pressed into a furious blender, which instead of helping them affirm and define their own personalities robs them of the capacity to think, analyze, and choose better paths for themselves.

We need balance and the virtue for the job is temperance. According to the great catholic leader of our times Professor Plinio Corrêa de Oliveira, temperance is the cardinal virtue on which hinges the balance of life.

Here we run into a problem. Usually, when we hear the word “temperance,” our minds’ eye many times tends to see empty plates, stripped walls, drab clothes, old cars, scant hugs, and a general withdrawal from life altogether to achieve “detachment” from material things. In reality, the virtue of temperance should encourage us to “detach” from bad things, as much as it should encourage us to “attach” to good things.

Temperance is therefore a virtue to help us *deny* ourselves from those things that draws us away from God, and to *attach* ourselves to those beautiful things that elevate our souls to God. To every virtue, there is a negative and a positive application. It is like the virtue of Justice. Most people when they think of the virtue of Justice, they immedi-

ately think of punishment of the evildoers. However, Saint Thomas Aquinas defines Justice as the virtue that gives to each one that which he or she deserves, punishment or reward.

In fact, today, faced with a neo-pagan cultural revolution that attacks morals and good customs from all sides, we are either steeped in materialism or some other “ism” or we have a tendency to swing to the other extreme.

Most of us belong to a generation that is only now feeling the unbearable oppressiveness of living without God Who is balance

You can almost “see” their thoughts rising from the waves to the horizon, from the horizon to the sky, and from the sky to God in a continuous line.

itself. As we wake up to this fact and veer away from Godlessness, we search for understanding of who God is and how to imitate Him in our daily lives.

Perhaps as a reaction to the former excesses of materialism, we think we must adopt a somewhat rigid way of being, which we misunderstand as temperance or balance. Many families will go as far as stripping their

homes and their wardrobes of anything beautiful. Perhaps, this may be useful as a corrective and temporary measure but not, necessarily as a permanent way of life.

This is especially true when we have children to bring up. What applies to Franciscans who have the specific and most admirable vocation for complete poverty so as to counter social excesses in luxury, does not necessarily apply to our innocent children whose souls and imaginations thrive on beautiful things as a means to better understand God. **

In my last article, I spoke of tendencies or inclinations and how important it is to provide our children with the cultural ambiance that will support their tendencies and inclinations in their quest for God.

Again, the great Saint Thomas Aquinas, Doctor of the Church, teaches us that God’s attributes are Truth, Goodness and Beauty. For some reason, we easily understand that our children need to learn all about Truth and all about what is Good, but we tend to disregard the role of Beauty in their lives. Yet, in the years of their infancy, childhood and adolescence, it is the language most easily understood by them as opposed to doctrinal truths that may still be difficult for their young minds.

Of course, this does not preclude the teaching of sound doctrine but only stresses the need for it to be accompanied by beauty.

In fact, beauty is the language most easily understood by adults as well. How many times have I stood before a roaring ocean and thought almost immediately of God? How many times I have watched other people do the same? As they stand there, you can almost “see” their thoughts rising from the

Continued on page 15



New!

America Needs Fatima®

January-February, 2002

PROGRESS REPORT

Bringing the *Morning Star* into Homes

BY BYRON M. WHITCRAFT

I always wondered why the Statues of the Pilgrim Virgin of Our Lady of Fatima show her with a beautiful star on the hem of her dress. After a year coordinating the work of the Fatima Custodians, bringing Our Lady to tens of thousands of homes across America, I think I know.

From the earliest times of the Church, stars were used by sailors and travelers everywhere to guide them and to stay on course. Compared to a guiding star, Our Lady became known as *Stella Maris*, the Star of the Sea. An invocation in the Litany of Loreto calls her the *Morning Star*. Our Lady brings sure direction, but more preciously, she brings hope.

As one Fatima Custodian left a home in Louisiana, the man of the house was at the door holding back his emotion. Looking straight into the Custodian's eyes, he said: "Your visit tonight changed my life." Our Lady stirred up new and vibrant hope in this man's troubled life.

In days gone by, when piety ruled in hearts, innocent minds compared Our Lady to the evening star, the planet Venus. They noticed that this planet was the first reassuring light to appear at dusk, the last to grow faint and eventually disappear at dawn. They drew a parallel between this phenomenon and Our Lady's motherly zeal for souls. When trials set in, she was always the first on hand offering hope and

strength to make it through the night. When morning finally came, the soul found peace again, for she was always the last to leave. They gratefully invoked her maternal help as the *Morning Star* throughout life, but particularly when the darkness of night descended upon their souls.

So, it is in many of the Fatima Home Visits. Unfortunately, a large number of the people we meet have drifted away from the practice of the Faith. Many, in fact, learn how to say the Rosary



Above: Joseph Ferrara, a long time Fatima Custodian, is ready for a new series of home visits for 2002.

Below: Fatima Custodian Marlin Duncan says goodbye to his family before leaving for the 2002 Fatima visit Apostolate.



during the visit itself. Most have never heard of Mary under the title of *Morning Star*, but there is no mistaking the sentiments in their hearts. They latch onto her as a shipwrecked sailor to a saving rope. She is their only real hope.

Currently the *America Needs Fatima* campaign has eight Fatima Custodians who dedicate themselves to this labor of love. My only wish is that we had eight more. For this, dear reader, I ask that you pray earnestly in accordance with Our Lord's words: "Pray to your Father in Heaven to send laborers to the harvest, for the harvest is great, but the laborers are few."

The harvest being so vast, there was no time to lose as we moved on to the new calendar. Fatima Custodians were driving and flying to their areas of apostolate on January 2. Home visits began on January 4.

Bringing Mary into homes has been the focus of this particular apostolate since its inception in 1995, yet the Fatima Custodians have always made time to include hospitals, churches, nursing homes, schools, businesses, and prisons. During 2002, we feel very strongly that we must expand this extra effort. With the nation under attack, we must reach out to our brave soldiers selflessly sacrificing themselves for the common good.

Wherever they go in 2002 though, the goal of our eight Fatima Custodians remains unchanged: to work without rest to bring Mary, the *Morning Star*, and hope, to the very heart and soul of America. ■

Marc Lascelle will begin his Fatima visits this year in the state of New Mexico.



Currently the America Needs Fatima campaign has eight Fatima Custodians who dedicate themselves to this labor of love. My only wish is that we had eight more.



Bringing Mary to every home



Nicholas Mac leaves for Florida on January 2nd.



Roger Louis is our youngest Fatima Custodian



John C. Costa is on his way to Kentucky.



Fatima Custodian Jose Walter says goodbye to his family before leaving for Puerto Rico.



Right: Matthew Shibley an ANF volunteer, holds a box full of Books of Confidence. **Top:** America Needs Fatima 2002 Calendar



During the months of October and November 2001, America Needs Fatima mailed 220,000 free Fatima Calendars and, in view of the September 11 attacks, 80,000 free Books of Confidence by Fr. Thomas de Saint-Laurent.

Our Readers Write

Your letter thanking me for my donations to you was very encouraging. I am going to try to say 5 decades (at least) of the rosary every day now. This is a very sick and sad world and we need more people like you and organizations like "America Needs Fatima." I will pray for you and ANF and the rest of our world.

M.F. — Los Gatos, CA

Has brought me much hope

As a contributor to your organization, I would like to thank you for the great work being done — specifically with the rosary. I am a sincere believer in praying the rosary and I am trying to make others do the same. I would like to share a very extraordinary event that just occurred: Recently, I was asked for a rosary by my ex-husband. We have just been through a bitter separation. He is a non-Catholic and does not belong to any faith. He claimed that he has not been able to sleep at night. Since he has been wearing the rosary, he feels much better.

This has brought me much joy and hope.

L.B. — Email

I received in the mail from ANF a booklet called *The Book of Confidence*. This small but wonderful little book was what I needed all the time and forever. I am sure many people would benefit from it and renew their faith, trust and confidence in God.

F.M. — Waltham, MA

This book can change lives!

Please mail to me at least 5 copies of *The Book of Confidence* by Father Thomas de Saint-Laurent — this book can change lives!

L.M., — Munster, IN

You just don't know how happy I was when I received this Christmas gift of yours — Thank you so much! It came just in time when I was almost losing confidence in everything, in everybody — with all the problems in life, in the family and with my illness. If it will not be too much to include

me in your prayers and Masses, I should appreciate that very much.

R.C. — North Hollywood, CA

Strong and consistent stand

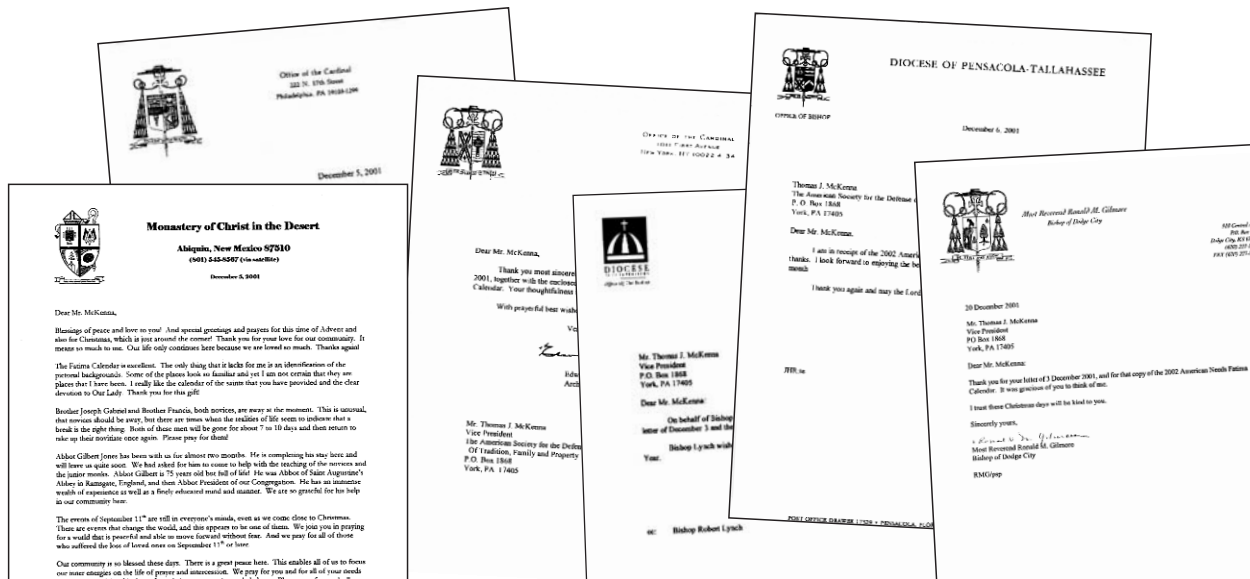
I wish to congratulate you and the ANF/TFP for the strong and consistent stands that you have taken opposing blasphemy in your country. Here in Malta, when the "film" *Dogma* was screened, nobody protested and our clergy simply ignored the whole issue.

P.B. — Malta

Thank you so much for your card. Our Lady heard your prayers because I got a new job after I was laid off in November 2001. This job is for six months only, but it should, in principle, be renewed. I included a \$500 check to help you to spread the Fatima message and to support your anti-blasphemy work.

D.B. Atlanta, GA

America Needs Fatima received letters of commendation and thanks for its 2002 Fatima Calendar from Anthony Cardinal Bevilacqua, Archbishop of Philadelphia, Bernard Cardinal Law, Archbishop of Boston, Nicholas d'Antonio Ret. Auxiliary Bishop of New Orleans, and Most Rev. Ronald M. Gilmore, Bishop of Dodge City, among many others.



Interview with Australia Needs Fatima Director

Since May of 1996, over 1.7 million Fatima fliers have been distributed throughout Australia.

John Tucker, Australia Needs Fatima director



Crusade Magazine: Can you give us a bit of the history of the Australia Needs Fatima campaign?

Mr. John Tucker: America Needs Fatima inspired the Fatima Campaign in Australia. Robert Ritchie, ANF director, is a friend of mine and he insisted repeatedly that we make every effort possible to spread the message of Our Lady in the Land Down Under.

The *Australia Needs Fatima* campaign began on the 24th of May 1996, feast of Our Lady Help of Christians, patroness of Australia. Throughout the country we distributed over 1.7 million Fatima fliers, many of them by hand on the streets and corners of the major cities of Sydney, Melbourne, and Brisbane.

Crusade Magazine: Could you tell us what type of activities and events you promote to spread the Fatima message?

Mr. John Tucker: Talks, meetings and conferences on the Fatima message form a large part of our efforts. Just last year, we delivered over 100 public talks related to the Fatima message. I personally delivered talks in churches, schools, and homes throughout the country.

Our home visitation program with our pilgrim virgin statue of Our Lady is alive and well. The Statue's presence has graced thousands of homes.

Spreading the book *Our Lady of Fatima: Prophecies of Tragedy or Hope?* is also a vital part of our efforts as well as spreading devotion to the most Holy Rosary. In the last four years, we distributed over 15,000 Fatima Books and 10,000 Rosary kits.

It is important to remember that there are only six of us doing this work in Australia. Thus we constantly find ourselves in the situation mentioned by Our Lord in the Gospel "The harvest is great, but the laborers are few."

We also worked hard to spread the Fatima message throughout the Pacific. We visited New Zealand, Western Samoa, and American Samoa with Our Lady's statue. The receptivity towards the Fatima message in those places is overwhelming and we hope to continue

our activities there and other places as well.

Our Fatima Calendar was very popular throughout the Pacific. In fact, we sent out more than 14,000 calendars last year alone.

Crusade Magazine: What has been the receptivity of Australians to the ANF campaign?

Mr. John Tucker: It is a known fact that Australia has a weaker religious disposition than the United States. Thus, the results of our Australia Needs Fatima Campaign far exceeded all of our expectations. There are more requests for Fatima home visits than our volunteers can handle. Some of our friends have to wait more than a year to receive Our Lady's statue in their home.

The number of requests for talks and lectures about the Fatima message also exceeds our capacity. At one point, last year, I gave as many as seven talks a week.

Crusade Magazine: Concerning your anti-blasphemy campaigns, what are your accomplishments?

Mr. John Tucker: Thanks be to God, far fewer blasphemies reach Australian shores than occur in America. However, we are actively engaged in protests and preventing those blasphemies that do come to Australia. Last year, the film *Dogma* debuted in Australia. Our volunteers and friends protested in writing and in person in front of cinemas throughout the country.

Crusade Magazine: What are your future plans for the Australia Needs Fatima campaign?

Mr. John Tucker: For this year, we hope to expand our home visitation program and our Fatima talks at schools. We are also planning another trip to New Zealand and Samoa. Plus we hope to reach Tonga and Tahiti this year. We will also be engaging in a project to spread the Book of Confidence. ■





Like Mr. and Mrs. Jay Duncan of Conyngham, PA, many want America Needs Fatima to be around for their grandchildren...and beyond. So, please consider making a charitable bequest to America Needs Fatima when you write or amend your will.

You will be deeply satisfied to know that your generosity will help future generations to know, love and practice a message of such importance, that God sent His Holy Mother to deliver it personally to us at Fatima in 1917.

St. Louis de Montfort says that Mary, being the most gracious and giving of all pure creatures, never lets herself be outdone in love and liberality. As a holy man said of her, for an egg she gives an ox; that is to say, for a little that is given her, she returns a hundred fold.

And St. Bernard says that "when you want to offer anything to God, take care to offer it by the most agreeable and worthy hands of Mary, unless it be rejected."

Pass on Devotion to the Next Generation

To pass on devotion to Our Lady to the next generation ask your attorney to include in your will either of the two phrases below:

Option 1

"I give and bequeath the sum of \$_____dollars to be used for the general purposes of America Needs Fatima, a special campaign of The Foundation for a Christian Civilization, Inc., of 1358 Jefferson Rd., Spring Grove, PA. 17362, a 501 (c)(3) tax-exempt charity."

Option 2

"I give, devise and bequeath to America Needs Fatima, a special campaign of The Foundation for a Christian Civilization, Inc., of RR 1358 Jefferson Rd., Spring Grove, PA 17362, a 501 (c)(3) tax-exempt charity, for its general purposes all (or state fraction or percent) of the rest, residue and remainder of my estate, whether real or personal."

* * *

Fatima's Echo to the Next Generation

Your bequest will help future generations live Our Lady's Fatima message and you will also

receive many spiritual benefits. We pray daily for our benefactors, both the living and the faithfully departed. Fr. Kevin J. Beaton says Mass on Saturdays for the intentions of America Needs Fatima members.

Your generosity is not only appreciated by us, but, much more importantly, our Blessed Mother and Her Divine Son. They are more interested than anyone in the restoration of society and the triumph of the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

Your help will make such apostolate possible:

- Home-visitations with the Pilgrim Virgin statues of Our Lady of Fatima, reaching tens of thousands of families each year.
- Protests and acts of reparation nationwide to stop blasphemous attacks against the Sacred Persons of Jesus and Mary.
- Massive promotion of FREE religious literature, books, medals and especially rosaries.
- Family Pilgrimages to Marian Shrines.
- Fatima lectures and audio-visual presentations.
- Outreach programs for high school and college students.
- Fatima Proclaimers nationwide volunteer network, reaching millions with the Fatima message. ■

Fatima Custodian Visits House of Elian Gonzales

Last December 8, Fatima Custodian Jose Walter visited the house where Elian Gonzales lived while in America. This was the house invaded by FBI agents under the orders of Janet Reno during the early hours of Holy Saturday, April 22, 2000, to drag Elian away from his relatives and eventually return him to Cuba.

In the picture to the right, Mr. Jose Walter posed with Elian's uncle Delfin Gonzales and aunt Caridad Gonzales around the statue of Our Lady during the celebration of Elian's birthday on December 8, 2001.

The picture to the lower right, shows a lady wearing a T-shirt with a picture of Elian next to a ANF statue of Our Lady of Fatima while holding and kissing a small 10" Fatima statue.

On December 23, 1999, Elian Gonzales was present during a Fatima presentation. When the ANF Custodian uncovered the statue of Our Lady of Fatima, Elian exclaimed that she was the Lady who had saved him from the waters. ■



Fatima pilgrim statue visits the house where Elian Gonzales lived while in the U.S.





Devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary

An essential part of the message of Fatima

Our Lady revealed to Lucia, Francisco and Jacinta in Fatima during her second apparition on June 13, 1917, "Jesus wishes to use you in order to make me known and loved. He wishes to establish devotion to my Immaculate Heart in the world. I promise salvation to those who embrace it; and these souls will be beloved of God like flowers arranged by me to adorn His throne."

Commentary by Plinio Corrêa de Oliveira

"What Our Lady says about devotion to her Immaculate Heart is amazing. She formally promises heaven to all that practice this devotion. There are no two ways about it, she is very clear: to those that embrace devotion to her Immaculate Heart, she promises salvation."

late Heart, she promises salvation."

"This promise was made to Lucia, Jacinta, Francisco and through them, all of humanity. It holds true for all that would learn of it in years to come. Thus, wherever it is announced, this promise is made. For example, as I speak of it at this very moment, this promise is being made."

"So, then, what are we waiting for? Let us immediately accept it! It is Our Lady herself who makes this promise. It is as if she said to us:

'Make haste to embrace this promise. I shall love you so much more for it. Come!'"

"It is as if Our Lady were trying her hardest to think of new ways of drawing us to heaven. But there is a miserable something or other in modern man that makes him impervious to even the most magnificent promises. He would rather trust his all to a life insurance policy than to a promise such as this."

"Now, consider the beautiful comparison Our Lady makes: she says that those souls that embrace devotion to her Immaculate Heart will be placed near the throne of God in heaven, as a lady places flowers before an altar near the Most Blessed Sacrament."

"What a magnificent thought; to think of our soul placed near God as if it were a flower! Could anything be compared to that? Yet people hear this and remain indifferent..." ■

Will Americans accept this?

♦ **Filthy Attack on Our Lord:** Until recently, the Baltimore Museum of Art offered *Piss Christ* postcards for sale in their gift shop. This blasphemy by Andres Serrano, depicts Our Lord Jesus Christ crucified dunked in a jar of urine.

To voice your protest call the Baltimore Museum of Art at 410-396-7100.

♦ **Blasphemy in Boston:** As a lead up to Christmas, the blasphemous play *Jesus has two Mommies* was performed several times in The Copley Theater in Boston.

Call 617-824-8000 to share your outrage with The Copley Theater for hosting this blasphemy.

♦ **Wellesley hosts homosexual play:** Wellesley College in Massachusetts will show the blasphemous play *Corpus Christi* for four consecutive nights in February. The play portrays Our Lord Jesus Christ and the apostles as homosexuals. Thirteen Wellesley students are in the cast.

To express your opinion of the play, call Wellesley College Theater Office at 781-283-2000.

♦ **Sodom and Gomorrah in Vermont:** According to *The Washington Times*, "Vermont's Supreme Court has rejected a challenge to the civil unions law granting homosexual couples many of the rights and benefits of marriage. In a Dec. 26 order signed by all five justices and released yesterday, the court turned aside claims brought by taxpayers, legislators and town clerks" (*The Washington Times*, Jan. 4, 2002).

Note: *The Washington Times* uses the word "couple" in reference to same-sex unions. However, to avoid relativism when referring to sodomite unions, we will not use the word "couple" since that normally denotes a man and woman union.

♦ **Museum mocks Pope and nuns:** According to the *Los Angeles Times* (latimes.com), there is "an exhibit at Copia, the Napa Valley's heralded new food, wine and arts museum, that includes figurines of the pope and several nuns defecating" (*Los Angeles Times* (latimes.com) Jan. 5, 2002).

ANF members can call Copia at 707-265-5948 to voice their opinion about the exhibit.

♦ **Christmas kicked out of schools:** In dozens of public schools across America, any reference to Christmas was expressly forbidden. The wave of anti-Christmas sentiment last year went so far that school authorities forbid both children and teachers to say "Merry Christmas" or even to hand out Christmas cards.

♦ **Filth Fed College Students:** As if the immoral filth on TV, in print, and on the Internet was not enough, it is now taught in many colleges. According to *Accuracy in Academia*, Fort Lewis College in Durango, CO, joins a growing list of colleges that teach classes in pornography. A senior seminar, *The Poetics of Porn*, is offered this spring" (*Accuracy in Academia*, Dec. 3, 2001).

The phone number for Fort Lewis College in Durango, CO, is 970-247-7184.

Please remember that violence has no place in any ANF protest. Protests should always be strictly legal and peaceful.

Continued from page 8

waves to the horizon, from the horizon to the sky, and from the sky to God in a continuous line; and suddenly the exclamation emerges: "Wow! What an awesome Creator!"

On the other hand, how many times have I heard people tell me things like: "My mother had beautiful china and crystal glasses but always kept them in her cupboard. We never used them." Or, "At home, we had a beautiful living room that was always kept locked." Or, "I almost never saw my mother dressed up, but when she did she was stunning!"

Why? Why did the china and crystal stay in the cupboard, why did the beautiful living room remain locked, and why did the beautiful dresses hang all year in the closet? As human beings made to the image and likeness of God Himself, we are all entitled to be surrounded by a reasonable amount of beauty. We do not necessarily have to be kings and queens for that.

The ongoing tendency is to strip, downplay, and downsize. More and more the tendency is to use only plastic or paper plates and cups for all occasions, to use the den all year round, and to dress down all the time.

In a word, life is not only simple but also outright plain. For a child this is a great motivation killer because it starves their inborn thirst for beauty, by means of which they unconsciously tend toward God. Moreover, right on the heels of beauty is dignity, and children make that connection very easily.

Parents, without realizing it, take the place of God for their young children. The child has a sense that God has to be beautiful and dignified. Therefore, when parents begin dressing down all the time, the child realizes that something is wrong, and thus the respect begins to decline. This principle is applicable to many other things as well.

I once watched as five and six year olds sat at a beautifully decorated Christmas table and drank from stemmed glasses like perfect ladies

and gentlemen without spilling a drop onto the tablecloth. I was flabbergasted. I had approached the hostess with a few counter suggestions before the meal but she had smilingly affirmed to me, "Watch, they will sense the ambiance and will rise to the occasion." And the incredible did happen.

Once a little neighbor boy came running up to me, eyes glistening, with the grand news, "Mom is going to be wearing her crystal earrings for Easter!" I will never forget the expression of almost ecstasy in the child's face as he made the glorious announcement.

Though reasonably well off, by one of these inexplicable modern tendencies, his parents usually dressed like hoboes. The most the mother donned was a pair of jeans, an old top and a head of hair that begged for a comb.

As I stood there and watched the little boy run off, I couldn't help thinking how much more he would respect and love his mother if she wore those crystal earrings often with hair and outfit to match.

Furthermore, would it be too improbable to surmise that when the time came for him to learn the catechetical truth of "Honor thy father and mother," how easily he would respect and honor such a dignified woman as his mother? And when the catechist admonished him, "be good for your mother," it would come more naturally to him to be good for such a beautiful lady as his mother?

Yes, beauty is a powerful tool.

Archbishop Fulton Sheen, in one of his masterful talks, speaks of the "Apostolate of Beauty" and affirms that it is one of the most efficient means of reaching people.

Let us use this apostolate with our children. Of course, like everything that is good, it takes time. Nothing good happens overnight. Nevertheless, if we apply the principle of Beauty consistently and pray, between God's grace and our beautiful example, children will have a much better chance of turning out nothing but beautiful. ■



Our Lady of Fatima: Prophecies of Tragedy or Hope?

The world renowned Fatima scholar, Anthony A. Borelli, focuses on the core of the Fatima Message in this inspiring best-seller. Over 3,000,000 have been sold in 11 languages across the globe. With an introduction by Catholic leader Plinio Corrêa de Oliveira, the book contains the complete 1917 story of the apparitions at Fatima beginning with the coming of the Angel of Portugal and ending with a series of private revelations made to the three children. A great source of inspiration and guidelines for our times are the words of admonition by the youngest of the children, Jacinta Marto, before she was taken to Heaven as Our Lady foretold.

B10 - (English) \$8.95

B15 - (Spanish) \$8.95

**To order, call:
1-888-317-5571**

Chapter 1

The Papacy in Crisis

Part two: Avignon Captivity

BY JEREMIAS WELLS

The death of Boniface VIII did nothing to soften the rapacity and autocracy of King Philip; it merely removed a Pope who frustrated his unjust schemes. He continued with his designs to subjugate the Church and find new sources of revenue.

While the gangsters organized by Nogaret and Sciarra Colonna were harassing Pope Boniface and plundering his palace at Anagni, all the cardinals fled except two. One of them, Nicholas Boccasini, was elected as his replacement. Taking the name Benedict XI, he granted a general amnesty to all those who had fallen under the ban of excommunication provided they indicated a sincere repentance to which even Philip agreed. One group was explicitly excepted. Nogaret, Sciarra Colonna and fifteen others were denounced by name in a special bull and ordered to appear before the Pope to receive the punishment they deserved. When they refused, he declared that he would announce the sentence anyway which, at the very least, would have confirmed that Nogaret was an outlaw (anathema). Such a condition would have jeopardized not only his possessions, but also his life for the unscrupulous counselor also had enemies. On July 7, 1304, Benedict XI died suddenly after enjoying a plate of poisoned figs.

After a year of haggling, the Sacred College elected the Archbishop of Bordeaux, Bertrand de Got, who took the name Clement V. A compliant, vacillating man, he lacked the strength of character to stand up to the ruthless cunning of Philip and his malignant genius, Nogaret. A series of events ensued which debased the moral prestige of the Church and hastened the decline of Western Civilization.

Among the first acts taken by Clement was the revocation of the disciplinary bulls

against Philip, the restoration of the dignities of the Colonnas¹ and the creation of ten cardinals, nine of them French. However, the malevolence of Philip and the weak compliance of Clement are best illustrated by the attack on the memory of Boniface VIII and the murderous assault on the Knights Templar. Since Philip saw that the good name of Boniface was a reproach to his own evil reputation, he applied pressure on Clement to



Palace of the Popes, Avignon, France

have the actions of the dead Pope condemned. When the harassed Pope resisted, the wily King extracted other concessions, principally forcing Clement to remain on French soil from which he never left and to assist him in his protracted campaign against the Templars.

Suppression of the Templars

Although the once-great religious military order had amassed great wealth and power, they had fallen into a pattern of uselessness when their original vocation of fighting in the Holy Land disappeared with the fall of Acre in 1291. The Knights of the Hospital of St. John retained their medical service and their warriors transformed themselves into the Knights of Rhodes by assailing Moslem shipping in the Mediterranean from that

island. Conversely, the Templars just languished in their banking strongholds, which attracted the attention of the always impecunious Philip. Mollat made an astute observation when he declared, "temporal prosperity (in a religious order) almost inevitably produces a slackening of discipline, excites pride and favors the deterioration of moral standards."²

In order to facilitate the attack against the Templars, Philip had a list of the most horrible crimes imaginable compiled from hearsay and innuendo. In this sorry mess, Philip, his lawyers, and his compliant bishops were not able to produce any solid evidence of heresy, blasphemy or gross immorality which they unfairly attributed to the Knights. Nevertheless, they forged ahead through audacity and strokes of violence.

While trying to convince an incredulous Pope of their supposed evil deeds, Philip presented him with *fait accompli* by arresting all the Templars in France, some 2,000, and sequestering their property. Holding them incommunicado and in separate cells without any moral support, Philip's jailers applied merciless torture to the unfortunate brothers, which caused dozens of them to die. Nogaret anticipated modern times in his diabolical ingenuity by inflicting continuous, unbearable pain over a period of weeks and months. Not surprisingly, many confessed to the most heinous crimes and sins on Nogaret's list.

In the months that followed, the still-unconvinced Clement once again was threatened with a trial against the memory of Boniface VIII, suffered under a barrage of slander created by Nogaret and forced to recognize the confessions of the tortured Templars. Finally he capitulated and ordered an investigation to be modeled on the Inquisi-



Place in Paris (Ile de France) where the last Grand Master of the Templars, Jacques de Molay, was executed by fire.

tion, which was unfortunate because if any of the Knights repudiated their confession, they could be burned as relapsed heretics. That is indeed what happened to many, including Jacques de Molay, the Grand Master and many of his assistants.

In the other countries, that is, those outside of Philip's power, the Templars were basically exonerated, especially where torture was not used. In France if the process met with obstacles, a few dozen wretched Knights would be dragged from their cells into the surrounding fields and burned at the stake, which caused the process of death to accelerate once more.

The posthumous trial of Boniface, which the Pope delayed by every expedient available, was resolved by another humiliating compromise. All papal acts against the King were erased from the papal register. Nogaret, Colonna and the other conspirators of Anagni were absolved and without a hint of irony Philip the fair was publicly praised for his zeal and good intentions.

The fate of the Templars was settled at the Ecumenical Council held at Vienne in 1311-12. A special committee of bishops reported that the Templars should be heard in their own defense. Philip came to Vienne and alternately cajoled and threatened. The committee, sad to say, reversed its decision and recommended that the religious order be suppressed. In a solemn session on April 3, 1312 after imposing silence under the pain of excommunication, the Pope read the decree—without allowing any debate—that destroyed the great military Order of the Knights of the Temple and distributed their

property to the Hospitallers. But they saw little of it, for Philip deducted a large amount for the "expense of protecting their property."

The Popes at Avignon

Although these events overshadowed all else in Clement's pontificate, the most notable occurrence was the establishment of the papal residence at Avignon where it remained to the great detriment of its authority and the unity of the Church for the next 70 years. Sitting on the French border, Avignon was a possession of the King of Naples, but in reality an independent city. The Romans called the long sojourn the "Babylonian Captivity" because of its resemblance to the exile of the Jews in Babylon in the sixth century B.C. and also in allusion to its worldliness which was constantly criticized by the Italian poets, Dante and Petrarch. Clement saw his stay in France and Avignon from 1309 as a temporary expedient due to constant warfare in Northern and central Italy and his failing health. But his successor, John XXII, took concrete steps to establish a permanent residence.

Any blame that can be placed on the Avignon popes can be mitigated by the anarchic conditions in Italy. Disastrous wars were laying waste the Church lands and neighboring regions. The dissension between the Guelphs and the Ghibellines, who still supported either the Papacy or the all-encompassing Empire, had lost none of its bitterness. Rome itself was controlled by riotous and feuding nobles when it was not subjected to some glory-hungry adventurer. The pleasant, peaceful Rhone valley was far more con-

ducive to the comfort of the increasingly French College of Cardinals and Curia, but at a debilitating price.

The preponderance of French cardinals and the subsequent election of seven French popes contradicted the universal character of the Church that gave unity and strength to Medieval Christendom. Although most of the popes were competent by ordinary standards, the impression of a Papacy swayed by national and personal considerations weakened its authority and served to increase the antagonism of the constantly growing secular movement.

A Revolution in ideas

The bitterness of the factional disputes served as a backdrop and a stimulus for the emerging pernicious philosophies and heresies that were to rend Christian unity. Another excommunicated German King, Louis IV (1314-46) invaded Italy to give support to the Ghibellines in their war against Pope John and to receive the imperial crown that John had denied to him. In his entourage travelled Marsilius of Padua, who had just written *Defensor Pacis*, the most explosive attack against papal supremacy until then. The provocative ideas of Marsilius anticipated Lutheranism, Thomas Cromwell and the worst aspects of the French Revolution. In fact, Cromwell, while engineering Henry VIII's split with Rome republished *Defensor Pacis* in an English translation.

Among the subversive propositions is the unconditional sovereignty of the people over both Church and State. The Church is what society feels at any given moment about reli-



Altar dedicated to Saint Catherine of Siena at the church of Santa Maria sopra Minerva, Rome.

gion. Since whatever the people do is good there can be no moral criticism of legislation. According to Marsilius' pernicious ideas, the Pope, whose primacy is not founded on Scripture, is subject to a General Council, which in turn is subject to state authority. The confirmation of the Pope's election is required by the State, which also has the authority of summoning a General Council, presiding over it, drawing up its decisions and executing them. This submission of the Church to lay power extends to the parish level where the people elect and control the official duties of the priest and have the power of dismissal. In short, the function of the clergy was to keep quiet, administer the sacraments and stay out of public life, a laicism that was instituted in the French Revolution.

Marsilius' attack on the clergy's right to hold private property found a sympathetic resonance with a troublesome wing of the Franciscans known as the Spirituals. They advocated absolute poverty, both personal and in the order as a whole, which was quite unreasonable because the order grew to such large proportions that it needed residential buildings, schools and land on which to place them. Their zeal for holy poverty was only exceeded by their disobedience to their superiors who in conjunction with the popes were trying to resolve the vexatious problem. The spirit of contention and rebellion severely affected the order internally and, because of its size, the Church as a whole. In the ensuing conflict, the Spirituals declared that their way of life was more perfect than any other and that Christ and His Apostles practiced perfect poverty. John XXII denied the former and condemned the latter.

The few Franciscans who did not submit were encouraged by Louis IV, now Emperor for he had been crowned in 1328 by Sciarra Colonna, the assailant of Boniface VIII. When Michael of Cesena, the Franciscan Minister-General, was called to Avignon to explain his relationship with the German Emperor, he argued his case with such disrespect and vehemence that Pope John placed him under arrest. Michael escaped from his confinement and fled to Louis' court with another highly influential Franciscan malcontent, William of Ockham.

The English Franciscan sowed the seeds of disaster that were reaped in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries in philosophy, theology and political science. The thinking of Saint Thomas Aquinas achieved harmony between faith and reason, theology and philosophy, and revelation and science. Ockham destroyed that harmony by denying the existence of universals or concepts (nominalism), thus saying that reason cannot prove the existence of God, the immortality of the soul, or the freedom of the will, which Saint Thomas clearly demonstrated. In practice, Ockham denied the necessity of supernatural grace and the value of merit, which played right into the hands of Martin Luther and the German Protestants. Interestingly, one historian has claimed that Luther can be "regarded as the last in a long line of Catholic theologians of scholastic decadence."³

The existing order was further violated by the political views of Ockham, which complemented those of Marsilius. His strongly anti-papal, secularizing opinions attracted followers who prolonged the Great Western Schism in the next generation and reappeared in the heretical systems of John

Wyclif, John Hus and Martin Luther. The latter proclaimed himself to be an Ockhamist.

The Black Death

Rumors were reaching Southern Europe about a terrible disease that was devastating the populated areas along the Russian Steppes, travelling in a westerly direction. Largely ignored at first, Westerners began to take notice when the ravaging disease reached the northern coast of the Black Sea where Italian merchants had a number of trading colonies. In October 1347, a dozen Genoese galleys docked at the port of Messina in Sicily. Within a short time, their disastrous cargo of plague was killing hundreds of victims a day. The Messinans drove the merchant sailors away, which caused the devastation to spread throughout the port cities of Italy and southern France, ran up the rivers and advanced into the interior. Throughout the next two years, the disease moved northward and then spread east and west infecting all of Europe.

The Black Death consisted of two strains: the more prevalent bubonic plague which was spread from infected rats by fleas and the more-deadly, highly contagious pneumonic plague which affected the lungs with symptoms similar to pneumonia. Between 1348 and 1350, one-third to one-half of the European population succumbed.

Social and economic conditions and religious fervor declined as repeated smaller plagues continued for the rest of the century. Family life suffered when the epidemic produced countless widows and orphans and killed other members of the family who provided the necessary support for daily living. The ranks of the clergy suffered a frightful toll

since in times of pestilence they generously exposed themselves to death by caring for the sick and administering the sacraments. Their replacements were recruited from the uneducated and those unqualified for life in holy orders. In general, the Black Death and the prolonged warfare during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries (which will be discussed in a subsequent chapter) brought about pressures and strains that resulted in social unrest and peasant uprisings.

Profile: Saint Catherine of Sienna

One of the delights of studying history is discovering those occasions when God provides unmistakable evidence of His Divine Providence in the management of our earthly affairs. The marvelous life of Saint Catherine of Sienna falls into that category, thus indicating the foolishness of dividing history into artificial, airtight compartments on Church history and secular history. Catherine had a profound influence on the events of her time, but her action occurred not because of her own volition but because of her extraordinary union with God under His immediate direction.

Born into a large family of a reasonably pious mother and an industrious father who prepared colors for wool dying, Catherine Benincasa exhibited a mature sweetness and joy at an early age that impressed not only her family but also the entire neighborhood. At the age of six, she beheld a remarkable vision of Jesus Christ sitting on a splendid throne with Saints Peter, Paul and John the Evangelist at His side. While she stood in admiration and contemplation, Christ cultivated an overpowering love for Him in her heart. From that moment, the force of divine love induced her to emulate the prayers, austerities and sacrifices of the great saints, particularly Saint Dominic. She abstained from meat and otherwise ate extremely little, used the discipline despite her tender age, and prayed throughout the night, allowing herself only a quarter of an hour of sleep daily. One day while praying to the Blessed Virgin, she made a vow of perpetual virginity in order to unite herself closer to Christ. So close was her union with Christ that later in life, at her request she, received the five wounds of the Stigmata.

As she approached her teen years, her parents began their search for a suitable marriage partner. To forestall their romantic

One of the delights of studying history is discovering those occasions when God provides unmistakable evidence of His Divine Providence in the management of our earthly affairs.

activities, the determined mystic sheared off her beautiful hair and covered her head with a veil. In retaliation, her furious parents loaded her with all the manual work in the house, which she characteristically performed with her usual joyfulness. Finally her father relented when he became convinced of her religious sincerity. Always attracted to the spirituality of Saint Dominic, Catherine was clothed as a Dominican tertiary when she was sixteen. Reluctantly, we must pass over her numerous miracles and an account of many lives that she enriched spiritually and go to her involvement in the Avignonese Papacy.

Gregory XI and the return to Rome

When Gregory XI was elevated to the papal throne in 1370, its prestige had sunk so low that any attempt by the popes to resolve the numerous problems besetting Christianity was largely ignored. Due to her reputation for sanctity and her influence as God's messenger on earth, Saint Catherine rose to the forefront among those who saw that the solution to the problems facing the Church was a return of the Papacy to Rome.

She wrote several letters to Gregory urging him "to come and defend the place of the glorious Pastor St. Peter. Raise the standard of the Holy Cross and we shall be delivered from discord, war, and wickedness and those who have gone astray will return to their allegiance." Catherine travelled to Avignon in 1376 on a peace-making mission for Florence and arrived at the frivolous, worldly fortress-palace of the popes in July. There she encountered a deep-seated hostility from the painted ladies of easy virtue and the corrupt clergymen who saw in her holiness and dedication to virtue the end of their sumptuous lifestyle.

In one of the early audiences, the austere mystic convinced the Pope of her divine mission by revealing to him a secret vow, known only to him, to return to Rome. Her problem was not to convince him of the necessity of the move but to overcome his irresolute nature and his timidity in facing the powerful French cardinals in the curia who enjoyed their pleasant surroundings on the banks of the Rhone. She also complained of the stench of sin in the palace and Gregory's tolerance of it. Strengthened by Catherine's advice and support, the Pope quietly made preparations to leave and departed by boat on September 13. Her mission supposedly completed, Catherine travelled separately overland to resume other responsibilities.

By the time the papal fleet reached Genoa in October, Gregory's resolution was shaken by the constant complaints from the cardinals in his entourage. Catherine had arrived some days earlier by a different route and by coincidence or Divine Providence was still there. One night a simple priest, showing signs of depression, knocked on her door. Immediately she recognized the Supreme Pontiff. After several hours of conversation, a reassured and confident Pope resumed his journey. Gregory entered Rome amid wild acclaim on January 17, 1377. Unfortunately, an even greater crisis for the Papacy loomed over the horizon. ■

Biographical Note

A judicious, objective approach to many problems covered in this period can be found in Philip Hughes, *A History of the Church*, vol. III, (New York, 1947). Stephen Howarth, *The Knights Templar*, (New York, 1982) gives a colorful account of their history. The standard work for the Avignonese Papacy is G. Mollat, *The Popes at Avignon* (New York, 1963). For a discussion of the ideas of the day see David Knowles, *The Evolution of Medieval Thought*, (Baltimore, 1962). For Saint Catherine we used biographies by Blessed Raymond of Capua, her confessor and Alice Cur-tayne (London, 1929). Throughout this and subsequent chapters, we will rely heavily on that great work of Catholic scholarship, Dr. Ludwig Pastor's *History of the Popes*.

Notes

1. In his war with the rebellious Colonna family, Boniface VIII reduced two of them from the rank of Cardinal. See the article in the last issue.
2. Mollat, *op. cit.*, P. 230
3. Pastor, *op. cit.* vol. I, p.105.



FAMILY
SERIES

Cecy and her Friend

BY PAULINE SANDERS

My name is Cecy Cony. I am now in Heaven with my Guardian Angel who brought me here and am waiting for all of you to come one day.

Like you, I was also a child and, like you, had a very special friend, my Guardian Angel. I want to tell you all about him and how I could hear him and see him for a long time but, first, let me tell you a little about my self and my family and how I first learned about the good God who gave me my great friend.

I was born in the year 1900, in the far away land of Brazil where the sun shines brightly, palm trees sway in the wind and colorful birds sing many songs. My father was a captain in the army and my mother a very sweet lady. I loved my parents and had a very special spot in my heart for "Papai" which is how we say "Daddy" in Brazil.

Papai had a big soft spot in his heart for me also. I was glad because when I came to learn of the other big "Papai in Heaven," as my father called the good God, I knew He was just as good as my father only much, much more; which made me love the good God hugely!

I can remember as far back as when I was four years old. I can remember the day Papai said to me: "Cecy, come see the baby the big stork brought in his beak to Mother." It was my little brother!

I remember that even at that time I already knew something about the good

God. That is because my parents had a crucifix on top of a bureau. I would ask Acacia, my good nanny, who took care of me until I was eleven, to hold me up so I could see it. I also remember the big picture of the Holy Trinity, God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Ghost. We also had a holy water font with the image of the Blessed Mother on it.

Thunder and lightning

One day, Papai was sitting in his big comfortable chair reading when it began to storm. There were huge claps of thunder and lightning. Frightened, I ran to my father's arms and hid between his knees. It was there that he told me about "Papai in Heaven."

"Hear that, Cecy?" he said. "That is Papai in Heaven who is not happy with those children and grown ups who do not want to be good. But when we are good, Papai in Heaven is very happy and makes the sun shine."

It was my first lesson about the good God. From then on, as soon as I woke up in the morning, the first thing I did was check if the sun was shining or if it was raining. When it was raining but there was no thunder, I figured, Papai in Heaven was just sad but not upset. Then I tried to remember what I did wrong that could have saddened Papai in Heaven.

"Behold I will send my angel, who shall go before thee, and keep thee in thy journey, and bring thee into the place that I have prepared..."

— Exodus 23:20-22



I often remembered something ugly I had done. One day I did not let good Acacia put curls in my hair and called her ugly. The other day I threw a fit because I wanted to see Congo, Papai's big horse, given a bath. Then, yet another time, I had pretended to eat but had angrily thrown the food on the ground. That day, it rained and thundered.

After these tantrums, I felt ashamed for having made the good God sad. Then I ran to my mother's bedroom and looked hard at the picture of the Eternal Father with the long white beard to see if He was still sad or upset with me. I never found His holy face angry, but rather calm and peaceful looking down on me.

It was then I began to love the good God very much. In my heart, I felt the wish to please Him and not make Him sad anymore. I thought, "My Heavenly Father is so good, and He wants to do good things for me. When I am bad, He does not like it, but when I tell Him that I will not do such a bad thing any more, then my Heavenly Father is my friend once more."

I did not know how to pray yet. I only learned how to pray in school when I turned five. I did know that God who lived in Heaven made all that is good and beautiful.

Jesus Crucified and His Holy Mother

The crucifix on top of the big bureau frightened me a bit. That is because I did not know who was the poor man hanging on the cross and felt very sorry for Him.

One day Dona Mimosa, a friend of my mother, came to visit us. I liked this lady very much and always stayed with her when she came to our house. That day, taking me up in her arms she approached the bureau and asked me if I knew who the man on the cross was. I did not know. Then, turning to the picture and pointing to the old man with the beard as white as cotton, she asked if I knew who He was. "O, yes," I said, "that is Papai in Heaven!"

Returning to the crucifix, she explained to me that the man on the cross was Papai in Heaven's Son. She said, "Your name is Cecy and His name is Jesus." She explained that He lived in Heaven with His Father and that Heaven was a beautiful place. She also explained that His Father made everything on earth for good people and that some day all the good people would come to live with Him in Heaven. However, the bad people who did not want to live with Him in Heaven would go for punishment to the deep earth where there is a lot of fire.

"But the good Father in Heaven had pity on those bad people," she continued, "so He sent His Son Jesus to live here on earth to ask all the bad people to be good and to do only what His Father wanted them to do." Then she said that many people did not like the good Jesus. They beat Him, and soldiers seized Him and nailed Him to a big black cross. Jesus died but then He came to life again and went to Heaven.

But the good Jesus is so good and He loved those bad people so much that He said to them: "Do not do bad things! Everyone, even children like Cecy who want to be good, I shall bring to the beautiful Heaven that is filled with angels who fly like butterflies," she finished.

Then taking the holy water font with an image of the Blessed Mother on it, she showed it to me and said: "This beautiful woman is the Mother of the good Jesus. She is good like her Son and went with Him to Heaven."

This was the first catechism lesson I ever received. It sank deeply into my heart and I never forgot it. I was always grateful to Dona Mimosa. She does not know the good she did to me!

My first sorrow

After Dona Mimosa explained to me about Jesus, I felt a great pain in my heart. I felt so sorry for Papai in Heaven and for His Son nailed to that big black cross! Burying my face in her shoulder, I cried bitterly. My mother and Dona Mimosa were frightened and did not know why I was crying. Then Acacia came and took me out to see Congo.

From that day on, I loved Papai in Heaven much more and felt a great desire to please Him. Even though I still did many wrong things, it was never on purpose anymore. I tried more and more to be good from the day of that holy lesson.

From then on, I also decided to keep Jesus company. When it was getting dark, I would go into the room with the big bureau, pull up a chair and stand there with the good Jesus so He would not be frightened of the bad soldiers. The darkness scared me but I did not want to leave Him alone.

One time, Papai brought us a

delicious box of candied fruit. My mother kept it on the bureau. One day, finding me on the chair, Acacia thought I was there to sneak some fruit. However, I was not. I was just keeping Jesus company. She did not know better and told my father. He said to me sadly: "Now I know that my little girl is like the little mice who love to take away what they can find..

I never said anything. I could not understand why Acacia had said what she did but then I was too small to realize that she did not realize why I was there.

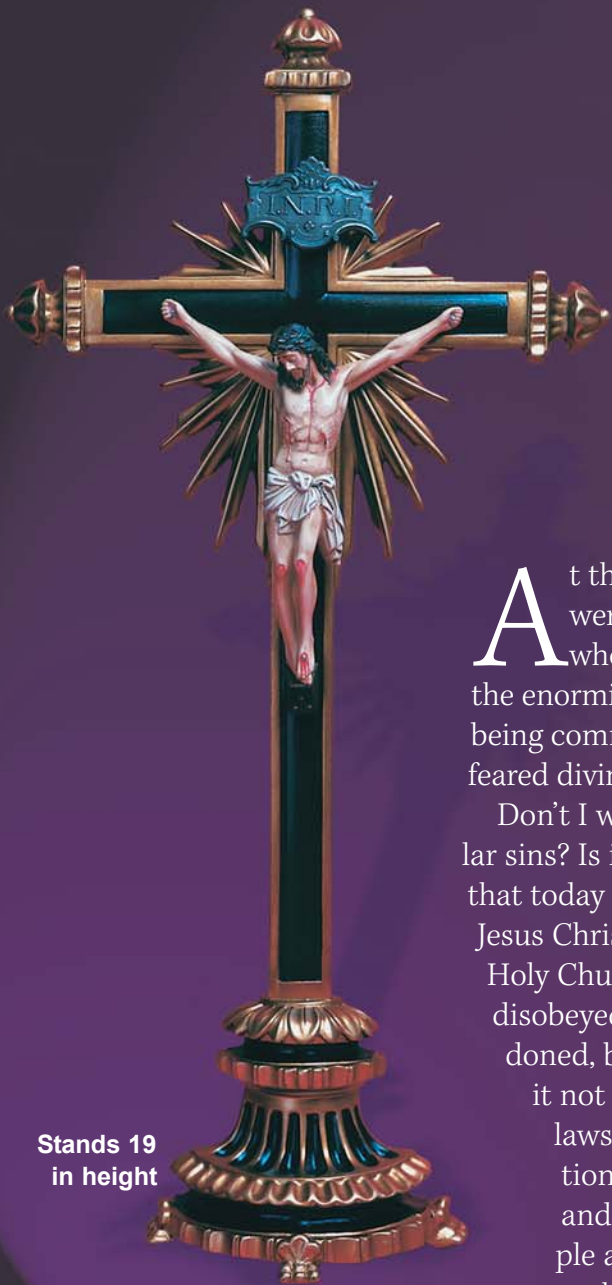
After some time, I went back to keep the good Jesus company. Whenever we went visiting people, I always felt sorry for Jesus all alone in the house and hoped He would not be too scared of the bad soldiers.

Next time, I will tell you how Jesus gave me yet another companion who never left me and who became my great friend. ■



This is a true story taken from the autobiography of Cecy Cony, later Sister Maria Antonia, O.F.M. She was born in the year 1900, in Brazil and died in 1939. Until the age of thirty, Cecy had the privilege of seeing and hearing her Guardian Angel.

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The Way of the Cross

BY PLINIO CORRÊA DE OLIVEIRA

At that time there were good souls who, realizing the enormity of the sin being committed, feared divine justice.

Don't I witness similar sins? Is it not true that today Our Lord Jesus Christ and His Holy Church are being disobeyed, abandoned, betrayed? Is it not true that the laws, institutions, morals, and ways of people are more and more hostile to

Jesus Christ? Is it not true that Our Lady spoke at Fatima, pointing out all of these sins and asking for penance?

But where is that penance? How many are there who really see these sins and who try to point them out, denounce them, fight them, dis-

pute every inch of their progress, raise up against them a whole crusade of ideas, of acts, of force if it be necessary? And how many are there who are capable of unfurling the standard of absolute and flawless orthodoxy in the very places where impiety or false piety struts? How many are they who live in union with the Church during this moment that is tragic, as the Passion was tragic, this crucial moment of history when all mankind is choosing for Christ or against Christ?

Oh, my God, how many are so short-sighted as to prefer neither to see nor to foresee the reality which lies plainly before their eyes! How much false peacefulness, how much trifling well-being, how many petty routine pleasures! How many tasty dishes to be eaten!

Grant us, Jesus, the grace not to be of that number. Grant us the grace to follow Thy counsel, that is, to weep for ourselves and for our own. Give us not just a few sterile tears, but grant us a flood of tears, which, poured out at Thy feet and made fertile by Thee, may become for us forgiveness, strength for the apostolate, for the fight and for acts of courage.

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