

Charismatic

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by Bro. John Samaha, S.M.

are angels a fad, a trend, or are they real?

Angels seem to appear in so many aspects of our lives today—jewelry, postage stamps, stories, television shows, literature, historical anecdotes, art, religious practice, biblical studies. Attention to angels seems ubiquitous. So absorbed in angels is the general population that this current interest borders on angel mania.

Like the commercialization of Christmas and Easter, angel mania can serve to draw our attention to the reality and importance of angels in God's creation. Angels are no myth. They are a very evident and significant part of history and spirituality.

Attention to our Christian prayer-life indicates that we encounter the angels of God not only in popular and vocal prayers in general, but we find them prominent especially in the Church's official, liturgical prayer—the Liturgy of the Hours and the Mass.

Angels are an obvious reality of religious history and of biblical study. This popular outburst of interest in angels leads us to learn the role of angels in the Bible and their meaning for us today. Mention of angels abounds in both the Old Testament and the New Testament. Christians do not look to pop news to learn more about the angels.

The word angel comes from the Greek *angelos*, which means messenger. The word is applied to both human and divine messengers. In the Old Testament the Hebrew word *mal'ak* is rendered *angelos*, and refers to both human and heavenly messengers. In several instances in the New Testament angels refers to humans, but the word usually means heavenly beings. Though our focus is on angels as heavenly beings, the Bible itself employs a wider use of the term.

The angels serve as messengers of the Lord and servants of the Lord. They help to bridge the gap

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by Rev. Joe Landi, Editor

it has been said that a picture is worth a thousand words. So here is a picture.

The day I visited the National WWII War Memorial it was crowded with WWII Veterans and their families, yet the only noise was from reporters asking questions of the elderly vets—many were almost overcome with emotion recalling to present faded memories. Many Vets arrived with their families to the third generation. It was a somber scene.

It is fitting this month when we celebrate the 4th of July recalling our nation's Independence to also recall not only those who died gaining it from Britain, but also those who fought and those who died in WWII to guarantee that the freedoms won by the battles for Independence would not be taken from us. Sixty years after the invasion of Normandy, and the beginning of the end of a truly evil empire, this memorial was dedicated. The war lasted 2,193 days and claimed an estimated 60 million people—an average of 27,600 lives every day, or 1,150 an hour, or 19 a minute or one

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Angels

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between humans and God.

Angels Point to God

Note that the names often given to angels point away from the angel and back to God. Michael means "Who is like God?". Raphael means "God heals." Gabriel means "God is strong." These angels are representatives of God's active presence in our world.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church teaches, "Christ is the center of the angelic world. They are his angels." (#331) There is a clear impression that some early Christians gave too much attention to angels, and that some New Testament writers addressed that point. Is this a message for us today?

Last year pollster George Gallup, a devout Episcopalian, reporting the results of his national survey, highlighted concerns among the clergy that angel mania "may be detracting people from proven paths to spiritual development" and that "pop culture visions of angels impede a deeper development of spiritual values to nourish the soul" (Emerging Trends).



Biblical Conclusions for Us

What does this mean for us today? Here are some conclusions we can glean from the Bible's teaching on angels.

First, we should focus more on God than on angels. The Lord sends the messenger who delivers the message or performs the action. Angels come from God and should direct us back to God.

Second, we need to place great trust in God's active presence in our lives. God's angels remind us that we are not alone. God is always with us. God wants to protect us from harm.

Finally, we can see Jesus as God's messenger and servant. Though not called an angel, Jesus is the one sent by

God into our world. He is the presence of God in our daily life, and expresses God's concern for the lowly and the needy. In Jesus, God "has visited and redeemed his people" (Lk 1:68).

God in Our Lives

We can celebrate angels and the important truth they communicate to us: God wants to be intimately involved in our everyday lives.

While being open to the good news conveyed by the angels, we too are invited to become messengers/angels of that gospel to the world. We are called to participate in the new evangelization. While the Bible does focus more on heavenly figures, it also recognizes that humans can be angels too.

Guardian Angels

Throughout the Old Testament God's messengers/angels guard and protect individuals as well as the people of God. God's providence is exemplified in instances found in Gn 21:17-18; Gn 22:11-18; Ex 14:19-20,23; Dn 12:1.

In the New Testament Jesus advises his disciples not to ignore or despise any of the "little ones" because "their angels continually see the face of my Father in heaven (Mt 18:10). God's care extends to the weakest and most vulnerable among us.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church affirms that "From infancy to death human life is surrounded by the watchful care and intercession ..." of the angels (#336, 352).

—Brother John Samaha, S.M., writes from the Marianist Community, Villa St. Joseph in Cupertino, CA 95014.

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Fr. Joe Landi is a Parochial Vicar at St. Cecilia Church and Editor of the Charismatics

Memorial From page 1

death every three seconds. Many who survived, like my brother Al, who left a limb in Manila during WWII, are constant reminders of the price some paid to vanquish evil. To those 16.4 million Americans who served in the military and to the more than 400,000 who died, we owe an enormous debt of gratitude. The National WWII Memorial can only be a token of that gratitude.

According to the *Washington Post*, (28 May 2004), fewer than 5 million WWII veterans remain alive and are passing at the rate of 1,100 a day.

While attending the Catholic Press Association meeting in Washington, D.C. Memorial Day weekend, I was able to visit the memorial that has generated more than its share of words.

One wordy review of it appearing in a local paper was disparaging in its description. In reading it, I was left with the impression that the writer thought the memorial would be more fitting had it been built by the Third Reich as a memorial to the military losing the war rather than for the members of the military winning it.

USA Today's contribution of words allowed that the monument will be "judged a huge success, especially with war-era veterans... but the granite-and-bronze monument on the National Mall already is a disappointment to many architects, historians, and cultural critics." (Especially those who think they own the eye which beholds beauty.)

The \$175 million memorial by Austrian-born architect, Friedrich St. Florian, is situated at the east end of the Reflecting Pool between the Lincoln Memorial and the Washington Monument. In my eye, it is a beauty to behold. Standing on 17th Avenue, looking at the memorial, it appears as if the water from the Reflecting Pool several feet above was flowing into the memorial over the waterfall.

Another disparaging writer, Robert Ivy, editorialized in the *Architectural Record*, that "the memorial lacks spirit and fervor... The struggle of the war was a moral struggle, the greatest of our time, and this (memorial) reduces that to convenient symmetry."

So get over it, Robert. It's there. I say, "It stays."

One of the joys of a free society is that everyone can have an opinion. It is one of the freedoms that the heroism and sacrifice of those who died in WWII secured. Those whose opinions that get the most listeners or readers sometimes can even make a difference—and not necessarily for the common good.

History tells us that every major monument in DC has been surrounded in controversy. Perhaps none as fierce as that over the Lincoln Memorial (1922). Begun in 1848 and stopped for 20 years over funding and the Civil War, it was finally completed almost 30 years after the architect, Robert Mills', death. A stone to be included in its construction, donated by Pope Pius IX, didn't help matters when an anti-Catholic political group stole it.

Not only was there

controversy over the Vietnam Veterans Memorial's (1981) v-shaped design, which was termed an "Orwellian glop", (*National Review*) but the architect, Maya Lin's, Chinese-American heritage was attacked, too.

The most noticeable religious monument in DC is

"**m**y dream is that you will travel the road ahead with liberty's lamp guiding your steps and opportunity's arm steadying your way." Ronald Reagan, February 6, 1911–June 6, 2004

the National Cathedral, where former President Ronald Reagan's funeral was held. It was one of the many houses of worship that I visited while attending the Press Association meeting. It is an invigorating walk uphill from the meeting's hotel, but it was worth it. Besides, the return was easy.

Begun September 29, 1907, and finished September 29, 1990, the official name of the National Cathedral is the Cathedral Church of St. Peter and St. Paul—honoring the two apostles.

It is the sixth largest cathedral in the world and second largest in the United States, second to St. John the Divine Cathedral in New York City. Situated on 57 acres, the National Cathedral sits on the highest point of the District of Columbia. One of the few first editions of the King James Bible (London, 1611), is on display there.

Bishop John Byrson Chane, the dean of the cathedral, says the cathedral was created "as a national house of prayer for all people... a symbol of permanence in a time that we live in where

there's not a lot of permanence."

July 4th is also a time to think about faithful citizenship, especially that to vote. It is basic of liberties secured for us by those who fought in WWII.

The Catholic approach to faithful citizenship begins with moral principles. Politics should be about an old idea with new power—the common good. A summary of the statement by the Administrative Committee of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops notes that the question should not be, "Are you better off than you were four years ago?" It should be "How can 'we'—all of us, especially the weak and the vulnerable—be better off in the years ahead?"

The Bishops' statement urges a new kind of politics—focused on moral principles, not dictated by special interest groups or swayed by the contributions of the powerful, but focused on the pursuit of the common good.

The statement is at www.usccb.org/faithfulcitizenship and notes our Catholic moral framework. It is not mainstream or "politically correct." It is what the Church is called to do—share its social teaching because we are witnessing to the Gospel.

See you in church.

A Book Review

Oscar Wilde (1854-1900), one of the greatest literary figures of the 19th century, is an often-misunderstood poet, satirist, and playwright who is hailed as a "progressive" sexual liberator. A fresh and unprecedented biography on Wilde shows him as he truly saw himself. *The Unmasking of Oscar Wilde* (Ignatius Press), by Joseph Pearce reveals Wilde as a restless searcher whose fascination with Catholicism led to his eleventh-hour conversion.

Today, Wilde is depicted as persecuted for his homosexuality during the 19th century, the victim of a repressive social order. But this spotlighting of Wilde as a kind of "gay martyr" oversimplifies his spiritual complexity, and ignores his lifelong tendency toward finding forgiveness. In many of Wilde's most famous literary works are tracings and unmistakable threads of Christian teaching and belief.

Published on the 150th anniversary of Wilde's birth, Pearce's 400-page study goes beyond the escapades and provocations that brought him notoriety. The author reveals the real Wilde sought redemption shortly before his death. It was the consummation of his little-known lifelong love affair with the Catholic Church.

Wilde is often seen as an icon of sexual liberation, in the vanguard of the struggle for homosexual rights. "In reality," says Pearce, "he referred to the homosexual phase of his life as his 'pathology.' One who sees homosexuality as an illness should not be held up as a hero for the homosexual movement."

Pearce shows how Wilde revealed his deep-seated Christian longings in his art. "Despite popular notions to the contrary, Wilde's art is unmistakably

Christian and Catholic in its morality," says Pearce. That judgment may shock many who think of Wilde as the epitome of moral decadence.

The Unmasking of Oscar Wilde depicts a life of self-destructive indulgence and a deep cry for forgiveness and reconciliation with God. Wilde was always at war with the Puritan within himself who, like the Pharisee, saw sin in others but for so long refused to acknowledge it in himself.

"Wilde's life serves as a parable of the way evil can destroy an individual, and how God can restore him to fullness through forgiveness. Wilde's art remains as a monument to his essentially Catholic spirit," says Pearce.

Ron Hansen, *New York Times* bestseller-list fiction writer (*Mariette in Ecstasy*) says, "[This] is a brilliant, inter-

pretive biography of a wit, bon vivant, and literary genius who still delights us a century after his death. In Joseph Pearce's sympathetic appraisal, we never forget that Wilde was not just an entertainer but a soul that found himself only after ignominy, loss and desolation. I have read many of the other books on Oscar Wilde, and this is my favorite."

Michael O'Brien, best-selling author of the novel *Father Elijah* says, "Here is the journey of a soul, who frequently teetered on the brink of damnation, and at times courted it. Beautifully written, and in its own right a work of wit and wisdom, Pearce's biography of Oscar Wilde is ultimately a story of redemption."

Thomas Howard, author of *On Being Catholic*, says, "Oscar Wilde looms larger now than ever, not merely for his wit and rackets life, but increasingly for his work. Joseph Pearce has taken on Wilde's most eminent biographers and critics and has, with his bravura prose, turned our attention away from the prurient, and on to Wilde's achievement. This is a major work."

Author Joseph Pearce is internationally acclaimed for his literary biographies on Tolkien, Chesterton, C.S. Lewis, Waugh, Belloc, and others. Available from Ignatius Press at www.ignatius.com or (800) 651-1531.



Reader's Choice



A Time for Reflection

—An Autobiography

By William E. Simon

Written by a committed Catholic who was Secretary of the Treasury under Presidents Nixon and Ford and was also head of the U.S. Olympic Committee. He is currently an entrepreneur and philanthropist. For many years, he was on the board of advisors of the Catholic League, whose leader describes the author as a man of conviction and initiative and a source of great advice. Includes anecdotes about political, religious, and sports figures.

\$27.95—Regnery Publishing

Faith Stories

—God-Incidents, Not Coincidence

By Rev. Francis J. Karwacki, M.Ed., M.Div.

A book by the Charismatic Liaison of the Diocese of Harrisburg, Pennsylvania containing true stories intended to increase one's trust in God and inspire expectant faith by recalling what God has done in the past as a way of getting through difficult times in the present. Many of the outcomes of the stories are answers to prayer. All profits from the book will be contributed to parishes in small towns in Pennsylvania. Available by calling (570)648-4432.

\$5.00—Rekord Printing Company

Awake My Soul

—Contemporary Catholics on Traditional Devotions

By James Martin, S.J., Editor

This collection of fascinating essays offers favorite devotions, their history, their place in an individual's life, and their role in the life of contemporary believers. Contributors include Ron Hansen, Emilie Griffin, Joan Chittister, O.S.B., and Eric Stoltz.

\$11.95—Loyola Press

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by Leon Cardinal Suenens

modern life is lived at high tension; nerves get frayed, the pace of life is intense. Stop!

Whatever it costs, we must learn how to stop, when we need to, and draw a quiet breath. Some of us solve the problem of necessary recreation by taking more weekends and holidays. That is a step forward. But we must still learn how to relax, how to avoid being unbalanced by amusements, how to measure out this rhythm of fatigue and repose, work and recreation, in the required mixture.

It is most important that rest should be soothing and that recreation, as the word implies, should *re-create*, create us over again, give us new life, a fresh start. We are a long way from that: how many tourists do their touring on the piece-work system? They eat up the miles, they tear through the countryside, see nothing, and come back more exhausted than when they started. This applies not only to tourism, but to the cinema and TV, and it can even be true of reading if we fail to learn the art of relaxing in order to live better.

In order to acquire this art, we must learn particularly how to take advantage of the little opportunities life has to offer and become children at heart again.

We must not live at such an intensive, hustling pace that we no longer have time to . . . have time. To be relaxed makes one accessible to others.

Relaxation at Home

Parents, ask yourself occasionally during the feverish activity of the day whether you are sufficiently approachable to your children, especially the older ones. It is so easy to get to the stage of being so caught up in our work that we never really have time to be with others. We rush about and get involved in business when we ought to be able to sit down and listen; even, when the atmosphere is intimate enough, to sit

down in silence together. So many things need the right atmosphere, the slow and gradual approach.

Time has no respect, it has been said, for anything that is done without reference to time: time is needed to ripen a field of corn or make a flower come out. Our family life is too rushed. The home too often becomes a sort of boarding-house from which everyone

.....
Come away
into a quiet
place by
yourselves,
and rest a little.
—Jesus to his apostles
(Mark 6. 31).
.....

sets off on his own affairs, a crossroads where we pass each other. We no longer live together, breathe together, sing together, play together. Now all these things go a long way to promote unity of hearts and minds. We must try and preserve in our homes a modicum of recreation in common, something we can all do together, and find time for family prayer in the evening. What a blessing the family rosary is! Those *aves* link souls together more effectively than the rosary beads are linked! Prayer is a bond, a link, a union.

Happy the home where husband and wife read the same book and compare notes afterwards; where everyone shares, not just the bread which perishes, but the interests, the joys and the sorrows of others. We are too apt to think that amusements must be expensive if they are to be appreciated. How often the child of the rich is sad and miserable with his luxurious toys; how often the children of the poor are very happy without toys! The key of happiness is within us;

joy can only be measured by our own hearts.

The Master's example

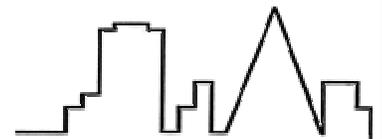
We must learn, or re-learn, to have time. Our Lord himself did not want his apostles to live in a state of perpetual tension. He urged them to "come away into a quiet place": "rest a little," he said to them one day after they had finished their apostolic missions. In the wilderness and in solitude, he revealed to them the best of himself and his message. Our Lord paid a great deal of attention to time and the gradual approach. How often he said to his apostles: "It is not for thee to know, now, what I am doing; but thou wilt understand it afterwards," or "My time has not yet come," "The time is coming...."

The duty of sitting down

We stand in need of rest; rest in the ordinary sense of the word, and also rest in God. We must find a place for him in the bustle of the day; a place for private prayer, for slow and meditative reading. We need this "oxygen". No luxury this; it is one of our vital necessities. It is a good thing to sit down, like Mary, at the feet of the Master before we go off to carry out our indispensable daily tasks. In the midst of work, we must keep our hearts open to God. It helps so much to keep things in their proper proportion if we keep a window open to heaven.

We must call a halt from time to time, and it is better to do it sooner than later. The Christian ought to take the trouble to find sound and wholesome forms of amusement. It is his job to christianize the vast world of entertainment. There is a Christian way of going out for the day and a Christian way of dancing. There is a way of life which it is our business to promulgate and ways of life we have no right to accept or tolerate. Christian parents, do not jeopardize

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by Russell Shaw

Why don't other people like us? Anti-Americanism has multiple causes, many of them justly resented by Americans. The negative image of America overseas is aided by our own media.

But making all due allowance for that fact, the image of a libertine United States generated by our secular culture and projected to much of the world by American media is one cause of anti-Americanism for which we have ourselves to blame.

Not only that — this media version of life in the United States also is highly relevant to whether President Bush's policy of fighting terrorism by promoting democracy in the Middle East succeeds or fails.

Two American Cultures

As students of American society repeatedly have pointed out, two cultures uneasily coexist in today's United States. One of these is traditionalist and, for the most part, morally upright. The other — the culture with which our secular elites identify for the most part — is permissive and decadent. Unfortunately, the decadent culture produces most of the movies, TV shows and other media products that are sent overseas.

History provides some parallels for this situation — at least up to a point.

Remember all those movies about decadent Romans wallowing in orgies? It may be that we owe the Romans an apology. Some very likely did go in for orgies, but the movie caricature misrepresents the behavior of most of them most of the time.

In his well-regarded book *The Christians as the Romans Saw Them* (Yale University Press, 2003), scholar Robert Louis Wilken writes of serious-minded Romans of the better sort: "Though the popular culture of our society views the Romans as degenerate and irreligious and delights in lurid portraits of the lives and loves of lecherous and lascivious emperors, one could hardly find a more upright and virtuous, at times even censorious, group." Making allowance for lots of differences, something like that is true of today's Americans. There is the good, solid America of traditional virtues which many Americans love; and there is the leering, over-sexed



America that our media so often depicts. If the United States wants to be a model for the rest of the world, a "city on a hill" in a new and often dangerous international setting, that latter image needs to change.

Promoting democracy in the Middle East is "the calling of our time...the calling of our country," President Bush declared in describing the approach to fighting terrorism that he calls a "forward strategy of freedom." This is a policy that many Americans, fearful of terrorism and proud of their system of government, can support. But it faces large obstacles, including the image of American corruption in our popular media.

Middle East Interpretation of Democracy

Whatever the president intends, lots of people in the Middle East take it for granted that when he says "democracy," he means the entire American way, warts and all. And many of these people don't want the warts. That notably includes the oppressive, obsessive fixation on sex and violence that the media of Hollywood and New York so often promote.

With democracy along American lines, some no doubt conclude, you get the American Civil Liberties Union, Planned Parenthood, abortion "rights," MTV, and pornographic Internet spam. Why shouldn't they believe that? More or less, it's what our media keep telling them about us. And even though it may be as much a misrepresentation of the reality as is our own commonly held view of ancient Rome, it can't be lightly dismissed.

At this late date it's difficult to say what government can do about the morally outrageous fare pushed by secular America and its media mouthpieces. But it's depressingly easy to say what government probably will do — not a blessed thing besides imposing token fines on offensive broadcasters.

In this area, the force for positive change present in public outrage is stymied by courts and frustrated by the wealth and power of interest groups and the communication-entertainment industry. Among politicians, those who haven't been co-opted are terrified of offending the ones who offend.

—Russell Shaw writes from Washington, D.C., for the Knights of Columbus and serves as a consultant to the Pontifical Council for Social Communications. Reprinted from *Columbia* magazine, courtesy of the Knights of Columbus Supreme Council.

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by Fr. Benedict J. Groeschel, C.F.R.

We need help to surrender our preconceived notions and fantasies, to go beyond our defenses and shallow expectations, to be lifted on the eagle wings of grace. To the one who seeks, it will be given; to the one who knocks, it shall be opened; to the one who listens, it shall be revealed.

If you are one of the increasing numbers of people who seek to grow in the life of prayer, and if you would like to become more Christian in your response to God and your neighbor by means of personal prayer, then this article may be written for you.

Admittedly, many excellent books on prayer already exist to explain its practice and theology and to suggest helpful techniques. So great is their number, in fact, that I was strongly inclined not to write another, even though several friends encouraged me to do so. As I prayed about it, I thought it might be helpful to write a simple book on a way of prayer I have found useful in my own life, which abounds with distractions.

It is a way I learned from many spiritual writers I have read since I started to pray as a boy. It has sustained me in my spiritual journey, which seems to have been a long struggle to survive, rather than any kind of a victory. In fact, I had to resist the temptation to call the book from which this article is condensed, *Prayer for the Distracted or Mysticism for the Muddled*, rather than, *Listening At Prayer*.

Try This Suggestion

Let me suggest something so simple that it cannot be called a method; yet it is so powerful that I believe one can find it running through the lives of many saints and in many spiritual writings. It is simply to listen at prayer. If you learn to listen, then you will come not only to hear all creation praying within you, but you will also, faintly at first, hear Christ praying within you.

St. Augustine tells us that we pray not only to Him, but with Him. He is the one who prays within us. If you listen you will be able to hear now and then the Holy Spirit responding to the Father and Son within you. Is it not too much to hope for—too sublime, too frightening? I don't think so, since the reality of God's presence within and all around us is the very foundation of all existence. Why should we not listen? One of the results of both psychological and spiritual growth is to become more aware of reality and to deal with it effectively.

Listening Is a Part of Growing

Accurate listening is an essential part of growth. In counseling we call this listening empathy, if done by a counselor, or insight, if done by oneself. We cannot deal freely with reality unless we first listen to it. The great living Reality

is God's presence, above all things and in all things. The prayer of listening is a simple but direct road to perceiving that reality.

Listening Is Not Easy

Listening accurately is simple, but not easy. That is why even genuinely religious people often build their spiritual lives by doing things and saying things to God. It is easier that way. But as we all know, even such genuine religion can become terribly complex.

The prayer of listening makes things simple but it also makes us vulnerable, and that is frightening. Listening makes us open to Christ, the Word of God, spoken in all things: in the material world, the Scriptures, the Church and sacraments and, sometimes most threateningly, in our fellow human beings. To listen at prayer is to take the chance of hearing the voice of Christ in the poor, the weak, those whom we love and those whom we do not love.

Responding

It is a well-known axiom of the psychology of perception that we succeed in listening only if we respond in some way to what we hear. Like all perception, listening is a two-way street. If I do not respond, at least within myself, I don't really hear. But often we are not inclined to respond to God's voice within us. In that case, no matter what ideas or images fill our minds, we do not pray in reality.

Everyone knows that prayer is a lifting up of the heart and mind to God. But this description can leave us feeling a little empty since when we pray our resolution often wanes quickly and our heart and mind come crashing down to earth with a dull thud.

Thus prayer can appear to be a futile exercise, like continuously throwing a ball into the air. Yet there are times when prayer is easy, when our mind and heart remain uplifted for a time and we feel that finally we are making some progress. Then, the next time: thud. One day we hear of a method of recollection, and, when followed prayerfully, it does indeed enhance our powers to meditate. Our minds and sometimes our hearts are lifted up for a longer time and come down more softly.

It's Only a Beginning

Learning a technique has often changed a person's life. The problem with any method, however, is that it cannot be used at all times. There is work to be done, constant intrusion, and the need to relax at times; thus, the technique itself may become a burden. Perhaps we can learn something from all the techniques. They have a common denominator: they help us to focus our attention on our inner life or on some passage of Scripture, or some religious truth. They are ways of perceiving and responding to events within our psyche, our inner world of thoughts, emotions and intuitions. The question beyond all these methods is how to listen in all events of life, how to begin to lead a life of prayer.

—*Listening at Prayer*, Paulist Press, is a masterfully simple and useful book on prayer by Fr. Benedict, a Franciscan Friar of the Renewal. This article by Benedict J. Groeschel, C.F.R., was condensed from it. © 2004 Benedict J. Groeschel



Catholic Radio Hour



KEST 1450AM
7:00 pm

by Mary Chang Flynn

So you want to write a best-selling book? Simple. First, become a celebrity; *then*, write a book.

Common on the publishing scene these days is the well-known celebrity who writes (or hires someone else to write) a book that is promptly bought up by an eager public, thereby magically transforming the celebrity into a best-selling author. Some of these celebrities-turned-authors are people whose fame arose from public service or commentary, and their issue-oriented books are solidly built on the foundation of the authors' expertise. The celebrity of most wannabe authors, however, usually does not arise from such a serious world, and neither do their books. Many of the celebrities are entertainers, and their books are more likely to be light-hearted autobiographies, humorous works, or novels.

The area of children's picture books is proving especially popular among celebrities who wish to make their mark as successful authors. But of the many celebrities who have made their way recently into this area of the publishing world, no one has created as big a media sensation as pop singer Madonna.

New York Times #1 Best-Seller!

Madonna's splashy entrance into the world of children's books last fall with *The English Roses* was a success. The book debuted at number one on the *New York Times* children's books best-seller list, and remained at the top for six weeks. Her second book debuted at the top of the *New York Times* list eight weeks later. Her third book is being released presently.

What is disquieting about the successful entry of someone like Madonna into the world of children's books is that it exposes the willingness with which so many adults generally—and parents in particular—accept someone with her public attitudes as suitable for the young children in their lives to become familiar with. It is not a matter of whether one likes or dislikes her as a performer or an author. Instead, the problem with introducing someone like Madonna to young children is that she objectively comes with a lot of baggage that it takes a mature mind to discern and deal with properly—maturity that by definition a young child cannot yet have.

Popularity and Baggage

Undeniably, only some of Madonna's twenty-year long career has been based on simply making music. A substantial amount of her popularity—and baggage—has come from publicly exhibiting constant and casual disdain for authority, principally the Catholicism in which she was raised but famously left behind. Another large measure of Madonna's fame has come from her coolly marketing her

sexuality as publicity demands, from publishing a coffee table book of pornographic photographs to most recently toying with same-sex displays with other pop singers during a televised awards show. Throughout her career, she has met people's expressions of offense at her performances with indifference.

This consideration of Madonna the Entertainer leads to the question of whether Madonna the Author is someone to whom, say, a five-year-old girl should begin getting attached. It is most unlikely that a young child can perform the mental gymnastics required for successfully partitioning one area of a media figure's identity from another area such that the child who enthuses over the Author can successfully keep the Entertainer cautiously at arm's length. It seems very likely that a young child will instead develop a kind of generalized "brand loyalty" to an author whose books he or she enjoys, and it is very difficult to see how brand loyalty to Madonna is something that will boost a child's development, especially if the child is a Catholic just starting out on his or her faith journey. A young child is beautifully but dangerously unguarded, and it is important for an adult to ensure that a child is not left vulnerable to a source of influence that he or she is still too young to discern properly, even in the form of something as everyday as a picture book and its author. Adults cannot, and most likely should not, shield children totally from the popular culture—and that includes Madonna—but it is vital for a Christian adult to oversee the spiritual formation of a child while the child matures before introducing the child to elements of popular culture that demand discernment and especially those elements that can affect one's identity as a Catholic.

Evangelizing the Culture

During a recent visit by a group of American bishops to the Vatican, Pope John Paul II reminded them of one of the chief themes of Vatican II—namely, the importance of the laity in evangelizing the culture and in working to promote Christian values in society.

The Holy Father's words at first may sound challenging for ordinary laypersons to fulfill. But spreading the Good News may be as simple as giving a child a warm smile and *a spiritually-nourishing* picture book about the Lord Jesus that will help reveal to the little one just how much he or she is loved, not only on earth, but in heaven too. St. Thérèse of Lisieux (herself the author of the wonderful *Story of a Soul*) considered it a great misfortune that Christians are not properly formed in their early years. In caring for a pair of little girls and telling them about God, Thérèse relates how the older child asked "a thousand questions" about Jesus and heaven and promised (very optimistically!) always to give in to her sister rather than fight with her.

Being around children, whether they are one's own, or one's grandchildren, nieces and nephews or cousins, or pupils, or the children of friends, is a delightful experience. But as mature Catholics, it is also an opportunity for us to do what the pope reminds us to do and share the life-altering message of Christ's love with them. So, gather everybody around, pull up a chair, hand out some milk and cookies—keep some for yourself—pick up that new picture book about St. Francis, and start reading.

—Mary Chang Flynn is a member of St. Cecilia's Parish, San Francisco, and does Layout and Design for the *Charismatics* newsletter.

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On the lighter side...

(Send us yours to SFCCR@sfspirit.com)

a minister is driving back to the parish from a wedding reception and was stopped for speeding. The state trooper smells alcohol on his breath, sees an empty wine bottle on the floor, and asks, "Sir, have you been drinking?"

The minister replies, "Just water."

The trooper asks, "Then, why do I smell wine?"

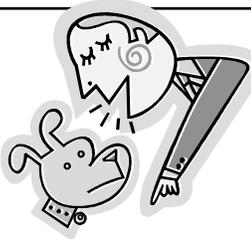
The minister looks down at the bottle and exclaims, "Good Lord, He's done it again!"

A man talking to his psychiatrist says, "Doctor I have this feeling that I am really a caterpillar."

"Don't worry about it," replied his doctor. "You'll change."



Happy 4th of July. Celebrate independence from sin.



The new minister was walking down the street near his church when he came upon a group of about a dozen boys, all of them between 10 and 12 years of age. The group had surrounded a dog. Concerned lest the boys were hurting the dog, he went over and asked, "What are you doing with that dog?"

One of the boys replied, "This dog is just an old neighborhood stray. We all want him, but only one of us can take him home. So we've decided that whichever one of us can tell the biggest lie will get to keep the dog."

Of course, the reverend was taken aback. "You boys shouldn't be having a contest telling lies!" he exclaimed. He then launched into a ten-minute sermon against lying, beginning, "Don't you boys know it's a sin to lie," and ending with, "Why, when I was your age, I never told a lie."

There was dead silence for about a minute. Just as the reverend was beginning to think he'd gotten through to them, the smallest boy gave a deep sigh and said, "All right, give him the dog."

One day God was looking down at Earth and saw all of the rascally behavior that was going on. He decided to send an angel down to earth to check it out. So he called out one of his angels and sent the angel to earth for a time.

When the angel returned, he told God, "Yes, it is bad on earth; 95% are misbehaving and 5% are not."

God thought for a moment and said, "Maybe I had better send down a second angel to get another opinion." So God called out another angel and sent him to earth for a time, too.

When the angel returned he went to God and said, "Yes, the earth is in decline: 95% are misbehaving and 5% are being good."

God was not pleased. So he decided to E-mail the 5% that were good because he wanted to encourage them -- give them a little something to help them keep going. DO YOU KNOW WHAT THE E-MAIL SAID? No?

(Editor's note: I didn't get one either.)



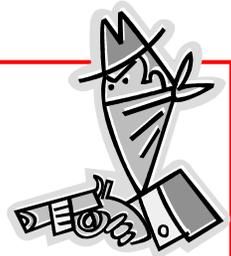
"A joyful heart is the health of the body..."
Proverbs 17:22

there was an American basketball player participating in a tournament in Belfast. After one of his games he stepped outside for a breath of fresh air when he felt a gun in his back.

"What's your religion?" he heard the gunman growl.

The American player had no real religion but he knew if he said he was Catholic and this guy was a Protestant he might kill him. And if he said he was Protestant and the guy was Catholic he still might get killed.

Thinking quickly he said "I'm Jewish." The gunman replied, "Oh Allah, I must be the luckiest Arab in all of Ireland."



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by William A. Donahue

G

oing to the chapel and they're going to get married? But not for gays in a Catholic one. However...

Hispanics thought gays should be able to marry; 47 percent of whites approved. In Florida, a survey by Schroth & Associates found that 20 percent of Hispanics were pro-gay marriage, compared to 29 percent of whites.

On March 22, several hundred clergymen rallied at a church in the Atlanta area to sign a declaration of opposition to gay marriage. All of them were black. One week later, on March 29, hundreds of clergymen from across New York gathered at City Hall to protest gay marriage. Almost all were African American or Hispanic (conspicuously absent were Catholic priests).

The Catholic Church rightfully emphasizes that all human beings share an inherent dignity. It matters not a whit what a person's race, ethnicity, national origin, sex, sexual orientation or age is—all are equal before God. Because we do not choose any of these attributes, they are of no moral consequence. It's only when we engage in making value choices that morality kicks in. For instance, having a homosexual orientation is not sinful; acting on it is.

Until recently, such an observation would be regarded as pedestrian. Always allowing for the occasional eccentric, everyone knew that homosexuality was wrong. But all this has changed.

First gays wanted tolerance. To tolerate is to put up with, and that's what homosexuals wanted from heterosexuals—to publicly acknowledge their presence without rancor or discord. Having won that battle (deservedly so), they proceeded to reject tolerance altogether. What they did was to raise the bar: they wanted social affirmation. Nothing less than social approval of who they are—including their lifestyle—would satisfy. Now they want us to say it's okay for a guy to marry a guy.

Ethnic Views of Gay Marriage

Americans are a tolerant people. That's good, just so long as tolerance doesn't slide into amorality. For example, it is one thing to put up with immoral behavior, quite another to say we no longer object. Not only is there nothing wrong with registering moral outrage at morally outrageous behavior, there is something immoral about remaining silent. And no segment of society fails this test more than white people; in particular, well-educated white people.

In a recent survey of the American people by Quinnipiac University, it found that opposition to gay marriage was running 63-31 percent. Among whites, 31 percent were pro-gay marriage, but among blacks the figure was 22 percent. Even in a place like New York City—long considered a bastion of liberalism—the sentiment was running 47-40 percent against homosexual marriage; blacks were the most opposed, with 63 percent favoring a ban.

The Pew Hispanic Center found that 72 percent of Latinos believe homosexual sex between adults is "unacceptable"; 59 percent of whites feel the same way. In New York State, in a poll of Democratic voters taken by Edison Media Research, it was determined that 27 percent of

Worldwide, A White Right

The same phenomenon exists worldwide. Virtually every nation in the world where the right of two men to marry is being seriously advanced is white: it is in Canada, the U.S. and Europe where the gay rights movement is flourishing. It is not flourishing in Asia, the Middle East, Africa or Latin America. Just in nations that are predominantly white.

This pattern is evident in the United Nations as well: non-white nations are busy resisting the tide of the gay rights movement that is being foisted upon them by rich white countries. And within North America and Europe, we find that it is the best educated white men and women (more women than men) who want to see Tom and Dick get married. Though they may balk at the prospect of Tom, Dick and Harry marrying, not one among them is able to articulate a principled reason why it's okay for two guys to marry, but not three.

So what's wrong with white people? To be sure, many have swallowed the moonshine—served up in copious portions by our cultural elites—that to deny homosexuals the right to marry is to discriminate against them. Lost in this logic is the fact that homosexuals can marry. And many do; some even father or give birth to children. What they can't do is marry someone of the same sex. Neither can brothers marry their sisters; or fathers marry their daughters; or sons marry their mothers; or sisters marry their sisters; or brothers marry their brothers. But all are free to marry someone outside their family who is of the opposite sex.

Following Nature's Cues

It is not a good sign when a society passes laws that contravene nature's cues. For example, nature tells us that, on average, men are stronger than women, and that young men are stronger than older men. That is why we draft young men and not old ladies. In the same way, nature, and nature's God, allow for the unity of male-female relations and the prospect of a family. A society that does not ratify that fact of life is simply asking for trouble.

---William A. Donahue is the President of the Catholic League for Religious and Civil Rights. Join the Catholic League on line at www.catholicleague.org.
© The *Catalyst* (May 2004), the monthly journal of the Catholic League.



Coming Events

Clip & Save

ST. HILARY, QUEEN OF PEACE PRAYER
COMMUNITY

9:30 to 11:30 am Every Saturday in July
Meeting of Marin Prayer Group Leaders
Lydon Hall, at St. Hilary's Church
761 Hilary Drive, Tiburon
with Fr. James Tarantino

Bible Study Saturdays 12:15 pm-2:00 pm
1 Corinthians—Using "The Little Rock" Study Program
To register, contact: Moriah 415/756-5505

Jul 1 HEALING MASS—Most Thursdays in July
8:00 pm.—Immaculate Conception Chapel
3255 Folsom St., near Precita St. SF,
Rev. William Lauriola, Principal Celebrant
Contact: Rose 415/587-8155

Jul 2 FIRST FRIDAY MASS—Of the Sacred Heart
7:00 pm Rosary, 7:30 Mass.
Fr. Joe Landi, Principal Celebrant
Immaculate Conception Church
3255 Folsom St., SF—Music by JAC

Jul 16 BIBLE STUDY (3rd Friday of the Month) 7:30 pm
with Fr. Balaswami,
Corpus Christi Church Parish Hall
Alemany Blvd at Santa Rosa Ave., SF
Contact: Norma 415/468-8369

Jul 12 EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING 5:30 MASS
& PLANNING SESSION

Jul 18 SUNDAY CHARISMATIC MASS 2:00 pm
St. Patrick Church,
756 Mission St (between 3rd & 4th Sts.) SF
Contact Judy 415/826-7827

Oct 1-3 Holy Spirit Conference
with English & Spanish Speaking Sessions
St. Mary's Cathedral Conference Center
Gough at Geary, SF

Speakers: Tetché Rodriguez (Manila),
Linda Schubert (Santa Clara),
Fr. Mario Castaneda (Palm Beach, Fla.),
Fr. Robert Faricy, SJ, (Rome),
Fr. John Hampsch, CMF(L.A.),
Fr. Peter Sanders, Orat. (Monterey)

Opening Mass Friday 7:00pm—Bishop Ignatius Wang
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Sunday Mass 2:30 pm—Fr. Mario Castaneda
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Relax

From page 5

the souls of your children by letting them go on "blind dates" where the moral atmosphere is beyond your control. Do not yield to the pressure of the young when they want to see everything and read everything in order to be up to date.

The more technological progress advances, the farther the vast field of leisure will stretch. Here is tremendous scope for Christian influence. In the past we have sinned by our negative attitude; we have too often been content to condemn without any attempt at participation on our part. We ought to be alive to this world in the making, where the way of life of the younger generation is in the balance. Don't blame the young, but learn how to find healthy and wholesome forms of amusement for them which respect their souls, their faith and their hearts. In all the capitals of the world there are complaints about the behavior of the beatniks. The youth of today, for a variety of reasons, lack inner harmony, and so they try and forget their troubles by behaving badly or foolishly.

Sunday Rest

We need to get our breath back. That is why the Church is so insistent on Sunday being kept as a holy day; a day for public worship, certainly, but also a day of rest. Don't let us make it the most hectic day of the week. Sunday should be distinguished from other days by rest, which is akin to recollection, rest which is not empty, but full to the brim.

When, on a Sunday, we should deck ourselves out in our best clothes, we should also, on this of all days, give ourselves a new heart, or at least a renewed heart. We must detach ourselves from our work, but only in order to attach ourselves more firmly to the one thing needful. We must stop, like the Alpine climber who has reached a high peak, to take breath for a moment, admire the view, fill our lungs

with fresh air and go on to the next peak. Sunday is the day to halt so that we can resume our march with a firmer tread.

Do not let us neglect to fix our gaze on the sky until we can see the stars shining there. We make much better headway here on earth when we have a sense of direction and move forward with a firm step on solid ground. Looking at the heavens is the form of relaxation we can least dispense with if we want to keep things in their perspective and make the world a better place to live in.

—Condensed from *Christian Life, Day by Day* by Leon Joseph Cardinal Suenens.
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by John Murphy

Why are there so few new vocations to the priesthood and religious life? Could it be that even we Catholics are more influenced by the culture of the world than by the culture of Jesus Christ?

In the Charismatic Renewal, we think of ourselves as a people called by God. We read in Ephesians 1:11-13, *"In him we were chosen, for in the decree of God who administers everything according to his will and counsel, we were predestined to praise his glory by being the first to hope in Christ. In him you too were chosen, when you heard the glad tidings of salvation, the word of truth, and believed in it. You were sealed with the Holy Spirit who had been promised. He is the pledge of our inheritance, the first payment against the full redemption of a people God has made his own, to praise his glory."*

What About Us?

In the Catholic Church, how many think the way Paul instructed the Ephesians. Even those of us in the Charismatic Renewal, I wonder, how many of us see that teaching as covering our whole daily life.

A vocation culture implies that many see their lives as a total call by God.

We cannot compartmentalize our lives into areas for God and areas for the world like rooms within a house. The litmus test is how we view our lives in the world. For example, do we see God's call there? For example—on the highways, in the store, in our area of work or in the school—do we see God's call to us to live "in his will and counsel"? Our we living "the way"?

Can the people of the Charismatic Renewal help the Church rediscover and develop this vocation culture? I believe it can. But we may need to change our approach. For a long time we have held Life in the Spirit Seminars, prayer meetings and Charismatic events. These work for some people but not for others. Actually, the LSS was meant to be for those who were new to the prayer group to help them enter into the fullness of the prayer group.

I think we attached the evangelization concept to it and hoped it would

get more to come to the prayer groups. But I think the Charismatic Renewal is more for those who have been trying to live a life called by God and found they needed the Holy Spirit and the support of like minded to help them. LSS may be jumping from evangelizing to Charismatic much too fast for someone who wants to join a prayer group.

When we evangelize, we share that Jesus is our savior and has blessed us with new life. We let the persons we are evangelizing know that Jesus is their savior, too, and will bless them with new life if they accept him. The next step for them is to be "born again of water and the Holy Spirit." For the non-Christian, it may mean RCIA first. For the nominal Catholic/Christian it may have to be the same thing with a series of seminars that brings about the renewal of our Baptismal promises and an understanding of the Sacraments.

The steps after that are daily prayer life, scripture to understand the teaching of the apostles, and involvement in the communal life. In Acts 2:41 and 42, we learn: *"Those who accepted his message were baptized, some three thousand were added that day. They devoted themselves to the apostles' instruction and the communal life, to the breaking of bread and the prayers."*

The Holy Spirit may be calling us in the Renewal to do something else. The Holy Spirit may be calling us to reach out to others and invite them to walk in the Way, the Truth and the Life. But what we do to help them will be different from before. We need to meet them where they are in this process and not try to short cut to making them *charismatic* in an LSS.

We need a

whole range of teaching and support programs that help a person grow in the spiritual life. The Charismatic Renewal does not have to do it all. We can work with other groups and programs in the Catholic Church. Some things we can do or sponsor what others are doing to help, for example, the School of Pastoral Leadership or our parish's RCIA programs.

We may want to set up Bible studies where many may feel more comfortable than at a prayer group meeting. If we do, we may have to refrain from praying in tongues aloud. We can still pray in our hearts in tongues and should. We can provide and sponsor teachings on a variety of topics: prayer, meditation, God's purpose in our lives, discernment, healing, and so on.

What Others See

As others see us in operation in a "normal" setting of bible study, choirs or RCIA and realize that we also belong to prayer groups, they may open to an invitation to come to the prayer group meetings as well. As they see us living the life in the Spirit, they may want to go to a Life in Spirit Seminar to learn to live it, too.

The Charismatic Renewal needs to think of new ways that we can develop the vocation culture. For out of the Renewal experience has come many "lay" vocations as well as ones to the priesthood and religious life.

We must understand what the "Call of God" is and that it motivates us. As parents who work, we should see the call of God in our work family and our home family. How do you see the call of God? Do you see marriage as a vocation and the raising of children as a vocation? Do your children know it? Do singles see that they may be called to serve God in a way that cannot be done if they were married?

It is only in actively seeking God's will that we find the vocation call to lay, priesthood or religious life. And, we also find happiness in life when we say with Jesus "I come to do your will, O God."

—John Murphy is a member of St. Gregory Parish, San Mateo and the Secretary/Treasurer of the Executive Board of the San Francisco Renewal.



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Dear Grace...

What is the importance of the Ten Commandments and how are they to be used as a guide? Why they are still important for us today.

The reason God gave the Ten Commandments to us was not to limit or restrict us, but rather to set us free—free from sin.

Who is it that knows us better than the One who made us? Because we belong to God who loves us so much, the only way we can be truly free and happy is when we live according to His ways. That is when we become “who we really are” – sons and daughters of the One, True, and Living God. It is precisely when we try to be “who we are not” that we are not free.

Natural Law...The Moral Order

Deep within every human heart, God inscribes what is known as the natural law, a sort of code of moral conduct by which our reason tells us whether something is in conformity with our true human nature (Romans 2:15). All of those things that are not in agreement with our nature we are obviously to avoid because ultimately they will not fulfill us. In other words, they will hinder and possibly destroy the possibility of attaining our true destiny, heaven. This should make sense. Would we feed our bodies gasoline when they are made to live on food and water? This same basic principle applies to the moral order of our lives, for we are a people who are a unity of body and soul.

The Ten Commandments are a summary of this

natural law, which reveals all that is good for us. When the Hebrews, wandering in the desert, failed to obey the natural law inscribed within them, God then gave to them the revealed law—the Ten Commandments.

Moral Law

In his beautiful encyclical *Veritatis Splendor* (the Splendor of Truth) the Holy Father, John Paul II, tells us that man’s freedom is not unlimited. Every human person “is called to accept the moral law given by God. In fact, human freedom finds its authentic and complete fulfillment precisely in the acceptance of that law. God, who alone is good, knows perfectly what is good for man, and by virtue of his very love proposes this good to man in the commandments. God’s law does not reduce, much less do away with human freedom; rather, it protects and promotes that freedom” (n. 35).

Throughout the Scriptures, a certain theme is woven in—that in life, there are two roads, the road to life and the road to death. By this we mean eternal life and eternal death, for we know that this life here on earth is temporary. If you can imagine this, on the road to life, there are signposts, if you will, and these signposts are the Ten Commandments.

Connection To Eternal Life

This connection between the commandments and eternal life is clearly demonstrated by Jesus in the story of the rich young man in Matthew’s Gospel. When asked, “Teacher, what must I do to gain eternal life?” He answered him, “If you wish to enter into life, keep the commandments” (Matthew 19: 16-17).



Grace MacKinnon holds an MA in Theology and is a syndicated columnist and speaker on Catholic Doctrine.

Is It A Challenge?

Yes, to many the commandments seem so challenging and restrictive, and this is so because we live in a world where at every turn there is the temptation to sin. But like Peter, who could do what seemed like the impossible when he walked on water only by keeping his eyes fixed on Jesus (Matthew 15: 29-30), we too can follow the Lord to our heavenly home. So, let us follow the “signs.” The road to life is the right road to be on! You are indeed a good mother in wanting to teach your children to love God.

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Vision Statement of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal (Adopted January 2004)

The Lord is calling the Charismatic Renewal to be bold in a united voice to make an impact on the Church and society by proclaiming:

1. the priority of the Lordship of Jesus
2. the Father's love for all
3. the power of the Spirit in all we do
4. the radical call to a witness of holiness.

por P. Frank Pavone

Separación de Iglesia y Estado— En los últimos tiempos hemos oído a prominentes políticos pro-aborto repitiendo el mensaje: "No les digo a los líderes de la Iglesia lo que tienen que hacer, y los líderes de la Iglesia no deberían decirle a los funcionarios públicos que hacer." Esta es la forma en que resumen su consideración sobre la "separación entre Iglesia y Estado."



del correo, o los límites de los condados, o la administración del ejército, sin embargo, a ella le toca decirle al Estado alguna que otra cosa. Esto es especialmente cierto cuando el Estado falta a su deber de proteger a la niñez inocente, o cualquier otra persona, en materia de sus derechos humanos fundamentales. Una vez más, el sufrimiento humano no puede sepultarse en abstracciones sobre la "separación de Iglesia y Estado". Tanto la Iglesia como el Estado tienen la obligación de defender a los seres humanos, y a menos que se apoyen mutuamente en esta tarea común, ninguno puede hacerlo con propiedad.

La gente siempre debe tener libertad de culto. La verdad que la Iglesia proclama tiene su propio poder para atraer a la gente hacia ella. Las creencias no son algo que se imponga por ley. Sin embargo, la ley debe

Sin embargo, pareciera que de hecho en los últimos años los funcionarios públicos le han dicho a los líderes de la Iglesia que hacer a medida que estos se aplicaban a los problemas relacionados con abuso de menores. Y al abocarse a este problema los funcionarios públicos están cumpliendo con su deber. Después de todo, tienen que proteger a los niños, sin importar quienes sean los abusadores.

Los funcionarios públicos que encaran éste problema no le están diciendo a la Iglesia lo que tiene que creer, que sacramentos administrar o cuales son las oraciones y lecturas de la misa dominical. Todas estas cuestiones y otras quedan para que las administren las autoridades propias de la Iglesia en una legítima autonomía y "división del trabajo".

No obstante, es obvio que cuando los líderes de la Iglesia dejan de proteger la vida inocente el Estado tiene el derecho y la obligación de intervenir. El Estado no puede pretender ser libre para ignorar estos abusos a causa de la "separación de Iglesia y Estado." El sufrimiento humano no puede sepultarse en abstracciones.

Lo mismo ocurre en el caso opuesto. Aunque la Iglesia no establece reglas para la distribución

limitar lo que el creyente puede hacer. ¿Qué diríamos de alguien que lo mata a Ud. porque "no cree" que su vida sea valiosa? No es su creencia la que violó la ley, sino su acción contra Ud. ¿No deberían los funcionarios públicos tomar posición contra esa acción, aún defendiendo la libertad de culto del criminal?

Como algunos no creen que la vida de un niño por nacer es tan valiosa como la suya o la mía, el asesinato por aborto es el más obvio campo de batalla de este punto.

Un funcionario público dijo recientemente que esta no es la "República Católica de América." Estoy totalmente de acuerdo. Estos son los Estados Unidos, orgullosos de su libertad de culto, e igualmente orgullosos de su protección de los derechos humanos. Ambos pueden ir de la mano, si reconocemos que la "separación entre Iglesia y Estado" nunca puede significar que uno de ellos mira para otro lado cuando se violan derechos humanos.

Misa con Padre Peter Sanders, Orat.



7:00pm, Viernes, 3 Septiembre 2004

La Iglesia de St. Cecilia

Vicente -17th Avenue, San Francisco

Bienvenidos a Casa

Sábado

7:00 am to 7:30 am

Radio Única 10.10 AM



por P. Frank Pavone

Esta columna requiere un esfuerzo especial para explicar de lo que no se trata. No es una evaluación de la guerra en Irak ni de ningún líder nacional.

columna y comenzarán a discutir conmigo acerca de la guerra en Irak y si es justificada o no. Esta columna no desea discutir con ellos, sino precisamente señalar que es legítimo que lleguen a esa conclusión. También es legítimo que otros concluyan que la guerra es justificada.

Lo que no está bien es que alguien diga: "Ud. no es pro-vida porque apoya la guerra." De hecho, uno puede apoyar la guerra precisamente porque es pro-vida y llega

Sí es una observación a nivel de principios morales sobre la relación entre el aborto, la guerra y el ser pro-vida. Y aún en estas cuestiones, me limito a puntos sencillos y específicos y no hago un análisis exhaustivo.

En su histórico discurso ante las Naciones Unidas en 1965, el Papa Pablo VI exclamó: "¡Nunca más la guerra, nunca más la guerra!" El mundo necesita hacer caso a estas palabras. No significan simplemente, "¡No peleen!" Significan que tenemos que asegurar de tal manera la justicia y los derechos humanos que la necesidad de pelear desaparezca.

Muchos se preguntan si es posible ser un buen católico, pro-vida y apoyar la guerra. La respuesta es sí, lo que quiere decir que las enseñanzas católicas y pro-vida contemplan circunstancias en que esta es justificada, porque a veces tiene que

hacerse la guerra precisamente en defensa de la vida.

Aún cuando la guerra sea justificada, en su desarrollo siempre se pierden vidas. Pero la vida inocente nunca es el blanco, y allí radica toda la diferencia. ¿Cuántas vidas nocentes, cuántos niños, han sido deliberadamente señalados para la destrucción en la guerra actual? En comparación, cada aborto, apunta deliberadamente a un niño y lo destruye; de lo contrario no sería un aborto.

El propósito de la guerra no es matar al enemigo, sino privarlo de su capacidad de hacer la guerra para destruir los derechos de otros. Hay una gran diferencia entre apuntar a objetivos militares y equipos de comunicación para obstaculizar las operaciones del enemigo y simplemente tratar de matar la mayor cantidad posible de gente. Sin duda, algunos leerán esta

a la conclusión que en este caso, la fuerza es el único camino para proteger la vida humana, los derechos humanos y la libertad frente a aquellos que quieren destruirlos. Otros podrán estar en desacuerdo, y está bien, siempre que no nieguen a otras personas el derecho a llegar a una conclusión diferente.

No deje de ver la profunda diferencia que hay con el aborto. No hay lugar para interpretaciones o evaluaciones acerca de la justificación del aborto. Nunca puede haberlas, porque su misma esencia se dirige hacia la destrucción deliberada de un niño. En la guerra, ningún niño se consideraba un objetivo, mientras que todo aborto apunta a un niño. La enseñanza católica contempla más de una posición en la guerra, pero sólo admite una posición sobre el aborto.

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A Healing Mass

July 2, 2004

7:00 pm Rosary—7:30 pm Mass

Immaculate Conception

3255 Folsom St., San Francisco

Fr. Joe Landi Principal Celebrant

Music by JAC

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