

An Index is at the bottom of this page

Charismatic

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Articles & Spiritual Enlightenment for Christians

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Mary, the First Disciple, is bringing in the sheaves.

by Bro. John Samaha, S.M.

Among the religious and cultural factors that influence converts to enter into full communion with the Church, the Blessed Virgin Mary holds particular prominence. She brings us together.

Yet she is not the possession of the Catholic Church solely, for many Protestant Churches are rediscovering the presence and role of Mary in life's pilgrimage of faith.

John Henry Newman

Before embracing Catholicism, John Henry Newman, probably the most famous convert in the last two centuries, formulated an explanation of the development of doctrines in the Catholic Church, especially the Marian doctrines. He explained that the saving truths of revelation were not given by God in timeless and static expressions, but through dynamic and life-giving truths which continue to unfold and develop. In *An Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine*, Newman wrote, "Growth is the only evidence of Life." Ideas live in our minds and continually enlarge into fuller development. "In a higher world it is otherwise, but

here below to live is to change, and to be perfect is to have changed often."

Mary's Assistance in Conversion

To believe in the ongoing prayer and care of Mary for the faithful is to find the Virgin Mother's assistance in time of transitions, of new beginnings, of wandering and searching.

Sacred Scripture shows us that Mary is the Virgin of Beginnings, Transitions, for example, the Annunciation, Cana, Pentecost, and the Virgin of Spiritual Searching—Presentation, Finding in the Temple, Cana, Calvary. It is quite natural then to experience her motherly presence in the struggles which accompany conversion, according to Father Rene Laurentin in *A Year of Grace with Mary*.

Conversions to Catholicism develop from conviction and personal experience. But also at play are conditions and developments in the Church and society that often help or hinder conversions. An instance of the latter scenario is nineteenth century England when the decision of the

(Continued on page 2)



Abdul Henderson, is the US Marine who accompanied Michael Moore in requesting Congress members to get their children to enlist in the military and join the war in Iraq. None would.

Which man is laughing all the way to the bank? If you think the one on the left, you haven't seen F-911 yet.

F-911, written, directed and starring Michael Moore. *It's me. It's absolutely me!*

Moore serenading a Boston crowd with his rhetoric.

Fahrenheit 911

A weapon of mass destruction is finally found but not in Iraq.

by Fr. Joe Landi

Are you one of the few who has not seen F-911, Michael Moore's film disguised as a documentary. You've missed a masterful piece of propaganda—and I'm not referring to a congregation of the Roman curia having jurisdiction over missionary territories.

Charitably put, F-911 is a clever "messenger" of gloom and doom designed to feed on a fear that there is a huge conspiracy furthering the conservative agenda of the Bush Sr. and Jr. administrations.

Some say F-911 is the greatest exposé of the 21st century and slated to win an Oscar. I say, seeing some of the turkeys that have won Oscars, why not a pig with lipstick. Like a pig with lipstick, F-911 is painted to be

something it is not. While it claims to be factual, it takes more than a few creative liberties. About the film, the conservative *Free Republic* observes, "It looks like Democratic Party propaganda-meister Michael Moore may have finally found a way to get rid of all that filthy capitalist lucre he's been collecting from his hit movie, *Fahrenheit 911*. That is, if he decides to go through with a proposal he floats in *Time* magazine.

"About the numerous complaints that his movie is chock-full of inaccuracies, Moore boasts: "There is not a single factual error in the movie. I'm thinking of offering a \$10,000 reward for anyone that can find a single fact that's

(Continued on page 3)

Inside This Issue	Learn to Smile Cardinal Suenens	6	Justice and Healthcare Fr. John Rausch	7	Back to School Mary C. Flynn	8	On the lighter side	9	What is Church Authority? Bishop Joe Grech	10
	A Wrongful Law Catholic Bishops of California	12	Catholic Tradition Grace MacKinnon	13	In Noah's Ark A Children's Book Review	4	Mary, The First Charismatic Reinaldo dos Reis	5	Articulos en Español	14 15

Mary

From Page 1

British government to suppress a number of Anglican bishoprics gave rise to the Oxford Movement, which questioned the Anglican Church's legitimacy. The consequence was a number of conversions by prominent intellectuals from 1840 to 1920, the most noteworthy being John Henry Newman. These converts were usually imbued with an understanding of the Virgin Mary and their devotion to her often preceded their entry into the Catholic Church.

Conversion of Newman (1801-1890)

Following his conversion in 1845, John Henry Newman journeyed to Rome. Upon his return as a Catholic priest he wrote that he "went round by Loreto." As a pilgrim to the Holy House he wanted "to get the Blessed Virgin's blessing." Then he commented about Mary's presence in his life. "I have ever been in her shadow, if I may say it. My college was St. Mary's, and my church; and when I went to Littlemore, there, by my own previous disposition, our Blessed Lady was waiting for me. Nor did she do nothing for me in that low habitation, of which I always think with pleasure."

As an Anglican, Newman thought that the Catholic Church's Marian doctrine and devotion was exaggerated. But in his study of the development of doctrine, he discovered that it was consistent with the early Church. "I was convinced by the Fathers," he explained. The early Fathers and ancient Christian writers viewed Mary as the New Eve. Newman came to understand Mary in patristic terms. He understood the Immaculate Conception was based on Mary's holiness, a concept present in the Fathers; and the Assumption was rooted on her dignity as Mother of God, another concept from the early Christian writers.

Although Newman had reservations about some teachings of the Catholic Church while an Anglican, he nevertheless was devoted to the Blessed Virgin Mary. In his *Apologia pro Vita Sua* he proclaimed, "In spite of my ingrained fears of Rome, and the decision of my reason and conscience against her usages, in spite of my affection for Oxford and Oriel, yet I had a secret longing love of Rome, the Mother of Christianity, and I had a true devotion to the Blessed Virgin, in whose college I lived, whose altar I served, and whose Immaculate Purity I had in one of my earliest printed sermons made much of."

Newman's reluctance concerning the Virgin Mary, his "great crux" regarding Catholicism were the "expressions of popular feelings toward the Blessed Virgin" and the intemperate statements of some Catholic authors concerning Mary. Later, when responding to Dr. Pusey's *Eirenicon*, which contained numerous examples of exaggerated practices and devotions to Mary, Newman made a clear distinction between the Church's doctrines and officially sanctioned prayers and practices, and the many expressions of popular devotion, sometimes questionable in taste and theology. "Belief is separate from devotion; belief is the same everywhere, whereas expressions of devotion differ from place to place." Newman also noted that cultural differences become manifest in expressions of devotion, indicating that there exists a legitimate "English style" in the expression of devotion. These distinctions between officially approved doctrine and devotion, and the many practices of popular devotion, which frequently reflect a cultural bias, have helped many along the journey of conversion. Such was the experience of one famous convert and devotee of the Mother of the Redeemer.

Dorothy Day (1897-1980)

Prominent among 20th century American converts are Dorothy Day and Thomas Merton. Although baptized an Episcopalian, Dorothy Day might be characterized as an evangelical Protestant because of her involvement in the "social gospel" movement. She was a talented journalist who espoused radical causes, wrote for socialist newspapers, and staunch in her support of labor unions and pacifism.

Her earliest contacts with Mary came through a rosary and a small statue. While anticipating the birth of her daughter through a common law marriage, Dorothy Day began taking instructions so that her daughter could be baptized in the Catholic Church. "I began to think, to weigh things," she explained, "and it was at this moment that I began consciously to pray more." She developed the habit of praying often, of carrying a rosary, and addressing the statue of the Blessed Virgin Mary which had been given her. Deeply concerned about her daughter, Dorothy wrote that she "turned her over to the Blessed Mother."

"What kind of a mother am I going to be? I keep thinking to myself what kind of a Catholic home is she going to have with only me? I'm a failure as a homemaker, I'm untidy, inconsistent, undisciplined, tem-

peramental, and I have to pray every day for final perseverance. It is only in these last few years that it has occurred to me why my daughter never called me 'mother.' The Blessed Virgin Mary is Mother of my child. No harm can ever come to her with such a mother."

With Peter Maurin, Dorothy Day founded the Catholic Worker Movement, which strove to establish solidarity with the working classes through a generous and convincing witness of hospitality for the homeless and of the works of mercy. She promoted the traditional devotions in all her communities. She prayed the rosary "on the picket lines, in prisons, in sickness and in health." For her the rosary was not only a devotion to Mary but also a way of identifying with the poor who had lost hope. "Who could have given me Our Lord but the Virgin Mary. It was easy to pray to her, repetitious though it may seem. Saying the rosary as I did so often, I felt that I was praying with the people of God, who held on to the physical act of the rosary as to a lifeline."

The life and spirit of St. Therese of Lisieux, the Little Flower, fascinated Dorothy Day, "perhaps because she was so much like the rest of us in her ordinariness." In fact she authored a small book about St. Therese to offer hope to those who felt their lives were meaningless. Dorothy believed that Therese "speaks to our condition." Her approach, like that of St. Therese and the Blessed Virgin Mary, was to ask prayerfully at the beginning of each day, "What would you have me do?"

For Dorothy Day, Mary and Joseph shared in the plight and insecurity of the poor. During the Great Depression she wrote, "What security did the Blessed Virgin herself have as she fled in the night with the Baby in her arms to go into a strange country? She probably wondered whether St. Joseph would be able to obtain work in a foreign land, how they would get along, and anticipated the loneliness of being without friends, her cousin, Elizabeth, her kinfolk." At another time she recalled, "St. Bonaventure says Our Lady worked in Egypt to earn the family's daily bread because St. Joseph could not earn enough. It was all part of the humiliation of poverty for St. Joseph." The Holy Family definitely shared the lot of the poor.

Thomas Merton, 1915-1968

The conversion of Thomas Merton led to a prolific writing apostolate and was widely followed and celebrated. His parents were artists with little religious interest. Educated in France and

(See "Mary" Page 11)

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F-911, etc.

From page 1

wrong.' Ooops.

"If recent reports from even liberal quarters are any indication, the line to take Moore up on his offer will likely stretch around the block... *Newsweek's* Michael Isikoff detailed an array of errors in the movie that included, not just mistaken analysis, but seriously false claims..." And the beat goes on.

It's Not unusual

From the beginning of recorded history there always have been messengers of gloom and doom—as Spiro Agnew would say—nattering nabobs of negativity—playing Job in the drama of human history. However, heralders of bad news nowadays are more often than not borne out as "profits" rather

than prophets.

Not Jeremiah

When we read the Book of Jeremiah, which combines history, biography and prophecy, we see that nothing has changed in the profit and prophet business. In ancient Israel there also were two kinds of prophets and Jeremiah was one who was not a profit-prophet. He was a prophet for the Lord.

Guild Prophets

The Guild Prophets were educated men who gave advice to the political and religious leaders. They were well-paid advisors and few would jeopardize their cushy positions by giving advice that their employers were not interested in hearing.

Sound familiar? It should, because business and religious leaders today surround themselves with the modern version of the Guild Prophets, i.e., paid advisors—paid to maximize the successes of the people they serve.

Charismatic Prophets

Charismatic Prophets, like Jeremiah, on the other hand, took on both the political and religious establishment, criticizing them for their sins of idolatry. All the while the false prophet Hananiah was proclaiming that the yoke of Babylon would be broken, Jeremiah was predicting gloom and doom,

which did not sit well with the people. But Jeremiah's message was borne out with the destruction of Jerusalem by the Babylonian King, Nebuchadnezzar. Jerusalem's magnificent temple and all of its sacred furnishings were destroyed, and the intellectual elite and craftsmen carted off to Babylon to serve as slaves.

A Common Denominator

In the Hebrew Scriptures, there is a common denominator in the way the charismatic prophets responded to their high calling. For many, their response was that they were unworthy of their calling. Jeremiah, for example, objected that he was too young, but the Lord promised to give him the words he needed.

Those words are reflected by the great oracle of the "New Covenant" (Jer. 31:31-34), sometimes called the Gospel before the Gospel, containing Jeremiah's best teachings. It is considered a landmark in Old Testament theology.

Unfortunately, Jeremiah paid the ultimate price for speaking out against the establishment. Tradition has it that he was murdered by his own countrymen. However, Jeremiah's influence was even greater after his death and was a source of inspiration to the exiled in Babylon.

The Potter's Wheel

Today one can look to Jeremiah for good, sound, practical advice, for he was a prophet who the Lord taught by object lessons that are applicable today as then. For example, we can learn from the familiar metaphor of the potter's wheel, that is, learn from our mistakes. Yes, there are risks in life but it is better to fail in an attempt, than succeed at nothing. Mistakes, if we learn from them, become the "clay" out of

which character is molded. "My people are like clay in my hands," the Lord told Jeremiah. I am molding them into something useful and beautiful. If they do not turn out right, I try again to shape them into a thing of value."

We Are Called

As children of the light, we are called to enlightenment—spiritual insight. We are called to test what we see, hear and read against that which has been given to us as our roadmap to the promised land, the wisdom contained in the Scriptures. For how we interpret that road map determines where we spend eternity—whether in its smoking or non-smoking section.

In the November election, critical thought is needed by every voting adult, for the results of the November election will shape the destiny of our country in this crucial time of clashing ideologies. Moreover, every eligible adult must register, weigh issues and vote. The common good depends on it.

Whatever you think of it, F-911 is a marketing masterpiece. If nothing else, it should be viewed as a wakeup call to get involved in the process. Does the film F-911 meet the challenge of critical analysis or is it just another fluff piece designed by a Guild Prophet-Profit? You decide.

See you in church



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

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A Children's Book Review:

Through many generations, some of the best loved stories for children have come from the Bible.

Author and illustrator Berthe Amoss brings to life one such story (from Genesis 6-8) in her new book, *Draw Yourself Into...The Ark With Noah and His Family*. *Draw Yourself Into...* books invite young readers to add their own drawing by providing both the blank space on the illustrated page and colored pencils tucked into the cover. Complete with four coloring pencils, Berthe's story of Noah and his ark invites children of all ages to "help" Noah and his family on their journey of forty days and forty nights.

God Speaks

From the day God speaks to Noah until the ark comes to rest on Mount Ararat, children will be delighted to participate in this wonderful story as they are able to complete the beautiful illustrations on each page. Along the way, they will learn lessons about sharing, how to get along with others, and the importance of following God's plan.

Reviewers of Berthe Amoss' work are most enthusiastic. "Without resorting to excessive sweetness, [she] captures the intrinsic charm of

a young child," says John Warren Stewig, author of *Children and Literature*. "Amoss has a peculiar gift for the realistic use of historical background and Southern traditions to which she adds a piquant touch of mystery," add Dorothy Brown and Barbara Ewell, editors of *Louisiana Women Writers*.

About the Author

Berthe Amoss was born in New Orleans and attended Newcomb College and Tulane University where she holds a Master's degree in English and Art. From 1982 until 1994, she taught Children's Literature at Tulane and wrote a column, "Reading, Writing, and Children," for *The Times-Picayune*.



Berthe is product developer for More Than A Card, Inc. and Cocodrie Press, LLC. She designs advent calendars for the National Gallery of Art, The National Cathedral, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Cleveland Museum, and The Art Institute of Chicago, as well as greeting cards for corporations.

With Eric Suben, former editor-in-chief of Golden Books, Berthe has conducted Two Perspectives workshops, and written books on Writing and Illustrating Children's Books for Publication.

Berthe has started a new line of children's books for Word Among Us Press and is working on a young adult novel set in New Orleans as well as a sequel to her book *Lost Magic*.

—Available from The Word Among Us Press. For more information, see www.bertheamoss.com

Reader's Choice



What Does it Mean to be a Man?

By Thomas Hart

There is undeniably a macho side to most men—a great majority come to adulthood conditioned to be tough. They jockey for dominance even when it is unnecessary, often hide the softer parts of their humanity, and have difficulty expressing their feelings. They can too easily be sexual without love or concern, slip quite readily into anger or violence, and struggle to relate with sensitivity to their spouses, children, or friends. In this practical book, the author draws upon his several decades of experience as a therapist and spiritual guide to men to lay out in practical terms the transition that men need to make in order to realize this hope.

\$14.95—Paulist Press

Early Christian Mystics

—The Divine Vision of the Spiritual Masters

By Bernard McGinn & Patricia Ferris McGinn

The teachings of twelve great spiritual masters living before the Reformation that offers insight into how we can apply that wisdom in our own lives today. Excellent for classrooms and general audiences.

\$18.95—The Crossroad Publishing Company

Evangelizing America

By Thomas P. Rausch, S.J.

The Catholic Church has been heavily committed to the evangelical mission from its earliest days. Yet evangelization has been a challenge for all churches, especially Roman Catholic, raising particular questions and unique opportunities. Here is a collection of essays that explores the Catholic Church's evangelical mission in the context of North America.

\$19.95—Paulist Press

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Call For A Free Brochure On Pre-Planning Traditional & Cremation Services

by Reinaldo Beserra dos Reis

According to the ancient patristic theology, one of the hindrances to the full and unceasing dwelling of the Spirit in us was our own nature marked by sin.

So what would we say of someone who, from her conception, had the privilege of being preserved not only from original sin, but also from each and every stain of moral sin?

If Mary, in accepting Christ as her Son to be, had been previously redeemed by God, can we not think of her as the first to be favored with the permanent fullness of the promised Spirit?

The only thing left to those marked by the separation that pride and disobedience generated was to wait for the glorification of Jesus that would bring the forgiveness of sins. After all, the Holy Spirit is spirit and we are flesh. To this difficulty we will add the fact that He is Holy and we, until then, were irremediably "slaves of sin".

Mary, The First Charismatic

But nothing would prevent her, who was chosen to be the Immaculate Conception, from receiving the Spirit, not in an immanent or diffuse way, as it was for the rest of mankind, but in a personal, absolute and permanent way. After all, Jesus would be created in her womb by the Spirit Himself and by His power: "she was found with child through the Holy Spirit: (Mt 1,18-20; Lk 1,35).

In Luke 1:28, the Angel (even before her "yes") had already found Mary "gratia plena", full of grace. The Spirit, when He worked the miracle of the Immaculate Conception in her, had surely made His own nest in the heart of Mary, so as to become acquainted with the human heart. His next dwelling—"humanized" in the flesh of the would-be mother of the Redeemer...

Mary and Messianic Times

As the Scriptures in the Old Testament had announced, the messianic times—when Yahweh's salvation would be manifested in fullness—would be marked by three main and great

events: the Incarnation of the Word, assuming our nature and overcoming the abyss that distanced us from the Father: Jesus' Passion and Death, through which man's offense to God would be redeemed and eternal death would be defeated by the victory of the Lord's resurrection; the sending—and the coming—of the Holy Spirit, that would be given to us as "the first installment of our inheritance" (Eph 1:14), so that we could understand and accept, through faith, the testimony of the Son of God, and attain salvation...

These great promises to the messianic times (the coming of the Savior, His death and resurrection, and the outpouring of the Spirit) are mingled, interdependent, and combined, and they confirm the beginning of the era of grace, the manifestation of salvation, God's kingdom among men... And to only one person was given the grace of living through those events, not only as a viewer, but as a participant all through the process: **Mary!** There she is, unique and necessary, in the Incarnation of the Word, offering herself as a field for the dwelling of the Spirit, where He, because of His own dynamic presence, enables the coming of the Messiah... There she is again, by the cross, letting herself be pierced by the prophetic sword of suffering (Lk 2, 35a) and accepting the Motherhood of Christ in His new mystical body, the Church. There she is once more—the mother who is to be assumed into heaven—with the rising Church, at Pentecost, waiting for the fullness that, remarkably and exclusively she had already received ahead of anyone else... On account of that we have good reason

to call her "Mother of Christ" and "Mother of the Church", the unique partner of the Trinity.

The Second



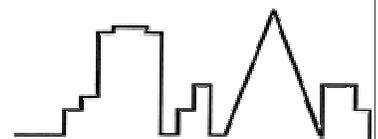
Vatican Council says that "before the day of Pentecost...we also see Mary by her prayers imploring the gift of the Spirit, who had already overshadowed her in the Annunciation" (LG 59). We, who have already received the gift of the Spirit on the occasion of our sacramental baptism, can now, united to the intercession of Mary, wait at Pentecost for a renewed outpouring of the Living Water, which was promised to "anyone who thirsts" (Jn 7:37). For even before offering the glorified Christ as a gift from the Father (Acts 2:23), that would be given to those who believe, the Spirit had given Himself to Mary—the first charismatic!—so that through her motherhood, she could offer Christ Himself to us. And He gives us the Spirit.

With Her, the Spirit's Presence is Assured

How could we not love Mary? How could we not admire this "most beloved daughter of the Father, chaste spouse of the Spirit and loving mother of the Son?" How could we not seek her maternal company waiting (and searching) for the gift of the Spirit? Let's look at the Mother: she is, above all, a sign of the Spirit; and as the Second Vatican Council says, she is a "temple of the Holy Spirit" (LG 53). Therefore, trusting in her maternal intercession, we can join John Paul II in prayer and say: "You who were gathered in prayer with the Apostles in the Cenacle, awaiting the coming of the Spirit at Pentecost, implore his renewed outpouring on all the faithful, men and women alike, so that they might more fully respond to their vocation and mission, as branches grafted onto the true vine, called to bear much fruit for the life of the world" (Christifideles Laici, closing prayer).

With Mary, the presence of the Spirit is assured, the outpouring is always renewed and the blessing is certain.

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Leon Joseph Cardinal Suenens

The Gospel message is one of joy.



When Jesus began to preach his good news—the meaning of the word "Gospel" is message of joy and gladness—he opened the Sermon on the Mount with a torrent of words, all of the same kind: "Blessed are the poor in spirit. . . . Blessed are the patient. . . . Blessed are the peacemakers. . . . Blessed are those who mourn."

In Christian speech, there is a connection between the words "happy" and "blessed" and the very essence of the spiritual life. That does not mean that life should be without suffering or shock. No, joy and sorrow co-exist in the Christian life, but not on the same level; rather like the new capital of Brazil, where there are no traffic problems, because the streets cross at different levels. Suffering does not destroy hope; joy lies at a depth beyond the reach of man. Joy is something Christ himself expressly promised to his disciples: "Your gladness will be one nobody can take from you." The promise was explicit, the pledge sacred. And Jesus emphasized his statement when he said: "For my yoke is easy, and my burden light." In spite of the apparent contradiction we find in some tragic situation or other, there is nothing misleading about these words.

Let It Be Done

The Master's statement, "my yoke is easy, and my burden light," prevails in spite of all appearances to the contrary, and remains true for all times and all places. Nothing can happen to gainsay these words: they dominate facts, they overcome them, they create them. They will be proved true, even if a miracle is needed to do so. But there is one condition: like the Blessed Virgin at the time of the Annunciation, when she summed up her complete obedience to the will of God in this one phrase: "Let it be done to me according to thy word," we must offer no resistance. Right to the very core of her being, Mary had been fashioned by the Word: all her submission to God's will cries out in the joy

mits in a filial way to all the demands of that law. Christianity is in itself a source of happiness to the individual, the family and society.

The School of the Saints: Smile!

The lives of the saints are a splendid illustration of the fact that Christianity is the source of joy. Their outlook on the world is bright and luminous, full of sunshine, leaving no room for doubt about the inner fire which consumes them. The greatest of their gifts was their smile. Let us imitate them; it is the very least we can do for others. Even if we have nothing to give, even if we cannot give them a helping hand, we can make their path through life brighter with a smile. To smile is to look at others with the eyes of Christ. A smile is a luminous ray from the face of God. When you smile at a stranger, you are telling him that you recognize him and accept him as a brother.

I have always been struck by these words of St Therese on the subject of heaven: "In heaven, there will be no more looks of indifference." What a contrast heaven will be to this world, with all the crowds of people we meet with their averted gazes and hard and indifferent faces. Let us be sowers of joy. A smile creates bonds between men, creates bridges between them, makes friends. In other words, it turns the human community into one great family and, if only for a second, takes people out of their cold and hostile anonymity.

A smile is a foretaste of paradise. It is like the reflection of another world. Some smiles are signs of victory. Is there anyone who does not cherish the memory of some invalid, some person at the point of death, whose smile of joy was a triumph of courage and resignation in affliction? Think of the smile of St Bernadette, which her contempo-

aries all found so striking, which came to her straight from the smile of Our Lady herself, who had marked her forever with her imprint.

To smile is to forget yourself for the sake of others, to let God shine through you. Men know that well enough: that is why they smile instinctively when they bend over a child's cradle: one of the loveliest sights this world has to show, which comes straight from heaven.

When a person smiles at other people he brings out all that is best in them; he does more: he brings the child in the grown man to life again, liberating his real self from the hard shell of conformity, freeing his liberty from all restraint. It is such a good thing to do!

Humor, a Smile in Another Form

A touch of humor—a smile in another form—is a form of good will which can relieve tension in difficult situations and put many things into perspective. It is like a breath of fresh air in a stuffy room: we breathe more freely. There is a lot of self-forgetfulness in the kind of humor which puts things in their proper proportion. If laughter, as Bergson says, is born of contrast, of the unexpected in a situation, the Christian, who by definition has the sense of the absolute, should also have a better sense of the relative than others and avoid over-dramatizing things. Men are generally better, at heart, than they seem, and they appreciate being treated accordingly.

A smile is an invitation addressed to the real self, the self God sees when he looks down on the earth, the self we hope to be judged by. A smile is an invitation to a state of grace; it emerges like a flower from its stem. To know how to love men and smile at them, through our tears if need be, is to breathe in advance the atmosphere of heaven, where brotherly love, with nothing to mar its perfection, will hold sway in the one embrace which goes on for ever and starts with God himself.

--Condensed from *Christian Life, Day by Day* by Leon Joseph Cardinal Suenens. English Translation ©Burns & Oates Ltd., 1963. The Newman Press, Westminster, Maryland. Cardinal Suenens (1904-1996) was the former Archbishop of Malines-Brussels and an ardent supporter of the Charismatic Renewal.

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by Rev. John Rausch

We All Should Be Seeking Justice In Health Care.

patches but with lots of holes. U.S. is less a system than a hodgepodge of haphazard arrangements with

cially for the working poor and economically disadvantaged, becomes a matter of justice. The U.S. Catholic bishops in their recent "Faithful Citizenship: A Catholic Call to Political Responsibility" write: "Affordable and accessible health care is an essential safeguard of human life, a fundamental human right, and an urgent national priority" (p.23).

My friend, Norma, died because she was poor. Diagnosed with Type II diabetes, she found no company willing to insure her because of her pre-existing condition. She skipped preventive medical care because she could not afford her prescriptions till she was hospitalized dealing with severe hypertension.



When she suffered a heart attack 8 months later, complications from the diabetes kicked in, and she spent 45 days in the intensive care unit at Lexington's Baptist Central Hospital as an indigent patient. Norma, age 43, had recently graduated first in her class at Eastern Kentucky University, but died before reaching her potential of service in Appalachia.

Tragically Uninsured

Norma fits the type of uninsured and underinsured cases that Rudolph Mueller, M.D. cites in *As Sick As It Gets: The Shocking Reality of America's Healthcare*. His anecdotal cases include Emily who died of advanced cervical cancer 3 days after finally entering the emergency room because she could not afford regular pap smears. He describes Judd who declined having an X-ray of his fractured ribs after an accident because he could not afford it. Taken together the anecdotes weave a pattern resembling a worn cloth with many

thousands of small players, dauntingly difficult to understand. My friend, Norma, was one of the estimated 18,000 in the U.S. who died prematurely in 2002 because they lacked access to adequate health-care.

Universal Healthcare

Industrialized countries deliver universal healthcare typically with a national health service as in the United Kingdom, or with national health insurance as in Canada. The U.S. remains the only industrialized nation without universal healthcare. Comparing the next 9 largest democracies in the base year 1998, Dr. Mueller estimates that healthcare costs 58 percent more in America. Still the U.S. ranks 48th in life expectancy, lagging 1 to 3 years behind other industrialized countries, and 42nd in infant mortality by exceeding other comparable nations by 2 to 4 deaths per 1,000 live births. Although U.S. medical practice uses the most advanced technology in the world, most of the 43 million uninsured are denied the benefits these advances promise.

A Matter of Justice

To a person of faith the lack of access to primary medical care, espe-

Political Will and Moral Outrage

The Institute of Medicine, an independent non-profit grounded in science and dedicated to improving health, recommends in its January 2004 report, "Insuring America's Health: Principles and Recommendations," that "the President and Congress develop a strategy to achieve universal insurance coverage and to establish a firm and explicit schedule to reach this goal by 2010"(www.iom.edu).

A Matter of Priorities

Given that America could land on the moon within a few years after setting that goal, establishing U.S. universal healthcare requires only overcoming the political barriers to change. Universal healthcare needs no rocket science—just political will and moral outrage that American healthcare costs too much, excludes too many and skimps on services to many more.



Fr. John Rausch, a Glenmary priest, teaches, writes and organizes from Stanton, Kentucky, in central Appalachia.

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Don't hit that snooze button on your alarm clock! It's time for school.

The familiar flurry of activity that accompanies the beginning of a new school year remains strikingly similar regardless of age. There are always high hopes and curiosity about who your new teachers and classmates will be, and what your classes will be like. School supplies and textbooks sit in a pile on your desk as you wonder, *where did the summer go?*

Necessarily, much of the whirlwind of action that permeates early September is brass-tacks academic, that is, the business of getting down to business. But in addition to the academic function, another essential part of school life (which takes much of the sting out of saying goodbye to summer) is the school's function as a community.

The School as Community

The importance of the school as community is quite evident in the case of the very young. Most of their friends come straight from the classroom. However, a small child's main focus is still ordinarily on his or her immediate family (and the small child is, in turn, ordinarily their main focus), so the family—not the school—accounts for the bulk of influence on the young child.

The predominant role of the immediate family normally diminishes over time, however, so that for older children, teenagers, and young adults, the school community gains proportionally more importance. Young persons' identities, ideals, and aspirations are shaped greatly by the school environment in which they spend the majority of their time, by the teachers who instruct them, and by the friends with whom they spend their days. The wholeness of that school community—that is, its encouragement of cooperation, acceptance, and unity—is vital to the success of the school and to the well-being of both students and teachers.

Popular thought tends to underestimate the importance of cultivating a healthy community in schools as an important first step to schools' and students' overall success. Instead, the tendency is to skip over community issues in order to hone in on specific desired results such as "higher test scores," "top grades," and "less violence." The problem with such a results-oriented approach, however, is that such an approach almost ensures that the means adopted in an effort to attain the desired results will be narrow in scope, aimed only at the longed-for results, and will not address larger issues affecting the well-being of the school community. Moreover, using a results-oriented approach draws attention away from considering new policies and practices apart from the positive results that they are expected to produce. It may not be fully understood that policies and practices adopted to attain hoped-for results may themselves produce unexpected and undesirable results in the school community.

In a tragic example, Columbine High School in 1999 was a highly successful institution with policies focused on

academic and athletic achievement, and was getting desired results on those fronts. However, it was apparently also highly stratified into cliques that had developed seething resentments for one another, complicated by the large number of students (approximately 1800). The ghastly massacre that took place asks the question whether the pronounced emphasis on academic and athletic success, perhaps at the expense of cultivating a higher-quality campus life in a largely impersonal setting, might not have played a significant role in the tragedy.

Another dire example of the shortcomings of a results-oriented approach not strongly focused on building community involves an effort to stop school violence by keeping guns off- and bringing police officers on-campus. Last November, in San Francisco, a 15-year-old Balboa High School student was fatally shot. With heartbreaking irony, this had been a young man who had categorically rejected violence during his short life. He was shot not on campus but on a city bus, after school, by a 16-year-old who was a student at another high school. All the results-oriented efforts at on-campus policing proved utterly futile in that woeful situation.

Importance of Christian Community

Pursuing a list of desired results for schools is a valid way of proceeding. But this approach tends toward tunnel vision and has its limitations, as discussed above. An arguably surer way of achieving these goals, while looking to the overall well-being of students and teachers alike, is to use these results-oriented approaches *in tandem* with vigorous efforts to develop healthy school communities. Academic development happens best in a cooperative community of learning, not as the result of goals and policies promoting negative competition and divisiveness, put in place solely in an effort to improve grades or test scores. Similarly, violence in schools is defused by building a supportive community to counteract impulses towards violent action, not just by trying to keep guns off-campus.

In the building of healthy community, Catholic schools are richly endowed with a priceless advantage: the institutional understanding that the Lord Jesus is the cornerstone of the community, which in turn neatly bestows on the school a clear mission, unity, and norms of behavior based on the Son of Man's not coming to be served, but to serve (Mt 20:28) and on His command to "Do to others as you would have them do to you" (Lk 6:31). Celebration of the sacraments (as well as other liturgical expressions), faith formation, and Gospel ideals are built into the school environment and curriculum and are invaluable community-builders. Even simple details of Catholic school life, such as wearing uniforms throughout elementary and high school, bear witness to belonging to a unified community that gathers in Jesus' name.

One of the hallmarks of being a Christian disciple is being sent out in the Lord's name: "As the Father has sent me, so I send you." (Jn 20:21). Once enriched by the experience of Christian community, no matter what our age, we are uniquely qualified to share that experience of the Good News with others by bringing Christian words and example to the other communities to which we belong. May we have the privilege of doing so.

—Mary Chang Flynn is a member of St. Cecilia 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@sfsfspirit.com)

for decades, two heroic statues, one male and one female, faced each other in a city park, until one day an angel came down from heaven. "You've been such exemplary statues," he announced to them, "I'm going to give you a special gift. I'm going to bring you both to life for thirty minutes, in which you can do anything you want." And with a clap of his hands, the angel brought the statues to life.

The two approached each other a bit shyly, but soon dashed for the bushes, from which shortly emerged a good deal of giggling, laughter, and shaking of branches. Fifteen minutes later, the two statues emerged from the bushes, wide grins on their faces.

"You still have fifteen more minutes," said the angel, winking at them. Grinning even more widely the female statue turned to the male statue and said, "You want to do it again?" And he replied, "Yes, very much. But this time let's switch positions. This time you hold the pigeon down and I'll poop on its head."

three women die together in an accident and go to heaven. When they get there, St. Peter says, "We only have one rule here in heaven ... don't step on the ducks."

So they enter heaven, and sure enough, there are ducks all over the place. It is almost impossible not to step on a duck, and although they try their best to avoid them, the first woman accidentally steps on one. Along comes St. Peter with the ugliest man she ever saw. St. Peter chains them together and says, "Your punishment for stepping on a duck is to spend eternity chained to this ugly man!"



The next day, the second woman accidentally steps on a duck, and along came St. Peter, who doesn't miss a thing, and with him is another extremely ugly man. He chains them together with the same punishment as the first woman.

The third woman has observed all this and, not wanting to be chained for all eternity to an ugly man, is very, VERY careful where she steps. She manages to go months without stepping on any ducks, and one day St. Peter comes up to her with the most handsome man she has ever laid eyes on ... very tall, tan, muscular, and with good hair. St. Peter chains them together without saying a word.

The woman remarks, "I wonder what I did to deserve being chained to you for all of eternity?"

And the guy replies, "Well, I don't know what you did, but I stepped on a duck."

in the "holy men" line at the Pearly Gates, a guy hears the man in front of him being told by an angel that the "computers are down" so he would have to wait to be processed. In the meantime, he could go back to earth temporarily, but not as the same person. He could pick what he wanted to be. The man in front decided to go back as an eagle. It was granted, and he flew away.



When the second man's turn came, he asked if what he did on earth "temporarily" counted against him and was told, "No," that he had already been accepted, so what he did while back on earth, would not prevent him from entering.

He decided that he wanted to go back as a stud having fancied what it must be like. Granted.

The computer glitch is fixed and the Lord inquires about the two holy men who had been given a sabbatical back to earth. "Well, we've located the eagle, he's soaring over the Rockies and can be back anytime. But we're having trouble getting the stud back," replied the angel. "Apparently he's very busy. As far as we know, he's somewhere in South Dakota on a snow tire."



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

Pearls of Wisdom

Truth hurts—not the searching after; the running from.

Laughing helps—It's like jogging on the inside.

Don't cry—because it's over. Smile because it happened.

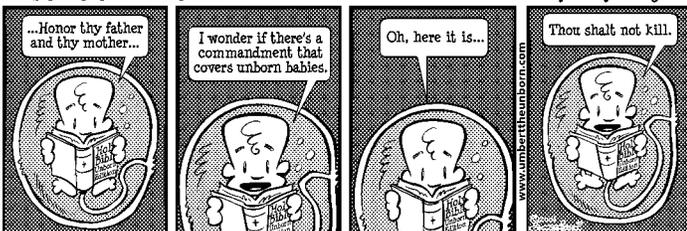
A lady had just finished doing her CPR Course and was on the lookout for a chance to try it out. As she left the shopping center she saw a man lying on the sidewalk with a lot of people around him.

Screaming, "I know first aid," she ran to the man, threw her bag down, loosened all tight clothing and got ready to start mouth-to-mouth. At this stage, a huge policeman tapped her on the shoulder and asked, "Do you mind? I'm trying to arrest this man."



Umbert the Unborn

by Gary Cangemi





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by Bishop Joe Grech

more and more, in our times, we are witnessing many people moving away from any notion of authority to pursue what they perceive to be right for them.

this way of thinking and acting does not leave any room for objective truth. The danger is that some people will pick and choose only those doctrines and instructions that appeal to them or with which they are in agreement. Consequently, it is vitally important to understand that as believers in Jesus Christ and as members of the Catholic Church there is a particular way of acting and that there are certain principles and values to be adhered to and followed. As Catholics we cannot simply choose what we like and what sounds reasonable to us. As a church, we are under authority and we are accountable to this authority for the way in which we live our daily lives. Therefore, there is a vital question to be answered. Who is this authority?

Who is the Authority of the Church?

The Dogmatic Constitution of the Church affirms strongly that Jesus Christ is the source of the ministry of the church. Jesus Christ gave the Church its authority, its mission and its goals (LG n.5). Consequently, Jesus sent by the Father and through the power of the Holy Spirit is the ultimate authority of the Church. It is therefore imperative that as believers, as disciples of Jesus and as members of the church, we develop a deeper and personal relationship with Jesus. As a Catholic, I am called to submit myself first and foremost to the authority and teachings of Jesus. This requires familiarity with the Word of God, the Holy Scriptures. It is crucial that as Catholics we pray and meditate on the Word of God every day of our lives.

Being under the authority of Jesus helps us to keep alive our Christian vocation, identity, vision, hopes and dreams. This is vitally important especially during times of disillusionment, anxiety and disorientation. Chapter 21 of St. John's gospel describes "the third time that Jesus showed himself to the disciples after rising from the dead" (Jn 21:14). Peter and some of the other disciples were by the Sea of Galilee. Peter said, "I am going fishing." (Jn 21:3). Peter seemed to have forgotten the three years that he spent with Jesus. He forgot all the amazing miracles of Jesus. He forgot the teachings of Jesus and how the people flocked to him. Peter forgot the promises that Jesus made, especially that He will rise again (Jn 12:31-32). Consequently, in his disillusionment,

Peter forgot that Jesus called him for a special task: to be the leader of the Church.

Therefore, the only thing that was left for Peter to do was to go back to the way of living he followed before he met Jesus, namely to go fishing. He also influenced the others, but they caught nothing that night. How could they catch anything with such a negative attitude? How could they achieve success when they felt defeated and disillusioned? Yet Jesus was not far away. He was on the shore "about a hundred yards from land" (Jn 21:8).



We all know how the story ended. Through the miraculous catch of fish, Jesus reminded Peter that in spite of all his shortcomings his mission was still to "Feed my lambs" and to "Look after my sheep" (Jn 21:16-17). Under the authority of Jesus, Peter was not only renewed and encouraged in his vocation but he was also empowered to continue the work of Jesus, accompanied by signs and wonders. (Ac 3:1-10). In a similar manner, when we start to doubt and tend to get discouraged because of our limitations, Jesus continues to give us His authority and His assistance to proclaim Him as Lord and to continue His work.

The Church's Leadership Ministry

Moreover, because of our baptism we not only become a new creation in Jesus Christ; we also become members of the Church. Consequently, we also need to live under the authority of those who have been entrusted with the leadership ministry of the Church. When Jesus chose the twelve apostles, "He constituted them in the form of a college or permanent assembly, at the head of which he placed Peter, chosen from among them" (LG n.19; Lk 6:13). Jesus named Peter as the rock. He entrusted him with the power of the keys and made him the shepherd of the new people of God (Mt 16:18-19). Moreover, the office of binding and loosing that was given to Peter was also given to the other apostles when united with him (LG n.22). This pastoral ministry of Peter and the apostles is at the very heart of the Church's foundation and ministry. Today this ministry is being continued by the bishops with and under the headship of the Pope.

the mission of those who have been entrusted with the leadership ministry of the Church is to guide God's people in the ways and in the teachings of Jesus. He promised to protect His church and to be with us always through the power of the Holy Spirit "To fulfill this service, Christ endowed the church's shepherds with the charism of infallibility in matters of faith and morals. The exercise of this charism takes several forms" (CCC n.890). A detailed explanation of how the charism of infallibility is exercised in the Church is found in CCC n.891.

When we place ourselves firmly under the headship of Jesus and with our feet firmly planted in the life and teachings of the Church we can realize our full potential as people created by God and help others to realize their identity in God and their purpose in life.

Coming Events

Clip & Save

ST. HILARY, QUEEN OF PEACE PRAYER COMMUNITY— 9:30 to 11:30 am Every Saturday
Lydon Hall, at St. Hilary's Church,
761 Hilary Drive, Tiburon, CA

Sept 2-- **HEALING MASS**—Most Thursdays in September, 8:00 pm.—Immaculate Conception Chapel, 3255 Folsom St., near Precita St. SF, Rev. William Lauriola, **Principal Celebrant**
Contact: Rose 415/587-8155

Sept 3-- **FIRST FRIDAY MASS** of the Sacred Heart
7:00pm Rosary -7:30 Bilingual Healing Mass
St. Cecilia Church, 17th Ave at Vicente, SF
Fr. Peter Sanders, Orat, **Principal Celebrant**, Deacon Mark Reburiano

Sept 3-5 **ANNUAL SCRC CHARISMATIC CONFERENCE**
Anaheim Convention Center, Contact: SCRC at (818) 771-1361

Sept 11 **NEW LIFE IN THE SPIRIT SEMINAR**
St. Paul of the Shipwreck Church, 1122 Jamestown Ave, SF
Sponsored by Christ Family Apostolate
Contact Mario & Tessie 415/468-1346

Sept 18 **SAN LORENZO RUIZ FEAST DAY** 8:30 am-with a closing Mass at 5:00 pm
St. Veronica Church Hall, Alida at Ponderosa, So. SF
Information: Mario Vierende 415/468-1346
Norma Guerrero 650/219-4556

Sept 18 **FALL FEST 2004**
Annual Conference for Young Adult Catholics with English & Spanish Speaking Sessions
University of San Francisco, McLaren Center, 2130 Fulton St. SF
Information at www.sfyam.org

Sept 19 **SUNDAY CHARISMATIC MASS** 2:00 pm
St. Patrick Church, 756 Mission St (between 3rd & 4th Sts.) SF
Contact Judy 415/826-7827

Sept 25 **PRAYER, PRAISE & ADORATION** 9:30 am-2:00 pm
St. Cecilia Lower Church, 17th Ave at Vicente, SF
Lead by Fr. Jim Tarantino
Bring a bag lunch. Refreshments provided.

Oct 1-3 The 7th Annual **HOLY SPIRIT CONFERENCE**

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Fr. Robert Faricy, SJ, (Rome), Fr. John Hampsch, CMF (L.A.),

Fiver Rodriguez (Chicago), Tetche Rodriguez (Manila),

Fr. Peter Sanders, Orat. (Monterey), Linda Schubert (Santa Clara),

Fr. Joe Landi, (San Francisco), Carlos & Nora Merlo (San Diego),

with **Bob Canton** (Stockton) **Norma Calip**, **Mandy Labayan** (S. F.)

Healing Mass, Friday 7:00 pm—(In the Cathedral)

Bishop Ignatius Wang,

Homilist: Fr. Robert Faricy, SJ

Saturday Mass 4:00 pm (In Conference Center)

Fr. Peter Sanders, Orat.

Sunday Mass 3:30 pm (In Conference Center)

Fr. Mario Castaneda

Masses are open to the public; priority seating for conferences.

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Mary

From Page 2

England, his interest in religious questions grew out of his study of literature and philosophy. In 1938 he entered the Catholic Church, and later became a Trappist at the Gethsemane monastery in Kentucky. His talented pen produced voluminous writings in a personal style on topics pertaining to monastic spirituality, mysticism, racial justice and peace.

Merton's references to the Virgin Mary are personal and deep, a response to a mystical attraction. *The Seven Storey Mountain* is the autobiographical account of his early life and conversion. One passage concerns his departure from England to a new life in New York City. He describes his experience of Mary's guidance at this turning point in his life.

"Lady, when on that night I left the Island that was once your England, your love went with me, although I could not know it... I was not sure where I was going, and I could not see what I would do when I got to New York. But you saw further and clearer than I, and you opened the seas before my ship, whose track led me across the waters to a place I had never dreamed of, and which even then you were preparing for me to be my rescue and my shelter and my home. And when I thought that there was no God and no love and no mercy, you were leading me all the while in the midst of His love and His mercy, and taking me, without my knowing anything about it, to the house that would hide me in the secret of His Face. Glorious Mother of God, shall I ever gain distrust you?"

At crucial points in his life he actively sought the presence of Mary and her direction. When discerning his vocation to the priesthood he embarked on a pilgrimage to the shrine of Our Lady of Charity of Cobre in Cuba.

"There you are, *Caridad del Cobre*. It is you that I have come to see; you will ask Christ to make me his priest, and I will give you my heart, Lady; and if you will obtain for me this priesthood, I will remember you at my First Mass in such a way that the Mass will be for you and offered through you in gratitude to the Holy Trinity, Who has used your love to win me this grace."

Bewildered in the struggle to decide about becoming a Trappist, he turned naturally to the Mother of Jesus as any child would turn to his mother. "I give this whole Advent, every minute, to the Blessed Virgin, begging her to help me and bring me to her house at Gethsemane to be her loving child and servant, a child of God in silence and labor and sacrifice and obscurity." After receiving the diaconate he wrote, "Our Lady has taken possession of my heart. Maybe, after all, she is the big grace of the diaconate."

For Thomas Merton, Mary is always gently persuading from within. "Mary does not rule us from without, but from within. She does not change us by changing the world around us, but she changes the world around us by first changing our own inner lives."

This is the Marian legacy of several notable converts to Catholicism in recent times. These converts testify beautifully to the mystery of Mary in their spiritual lives.

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

Jungle Safari

Sept. 24-25-26

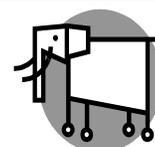
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California's Catholic Bishops support a court challenge to the law that eliminates time limits on filing sexual abuse cases.

Statement of the Catholic Bishops of California (July 2004):

A challenge to the constitutionality of the California law (Senate Bill 1779) that eliminated the statute of limitations on sexual abuse cases (the time limit for victims of sexual abuse to bring civil suits against employers) filed in California Courts during the 2003 calendar year has now been filed in Federal Court by the Diocese of Davenport. We, the Catholic Bishops of California, have also questioned the fairness and constitutionality of the law. We believe that the challenge by Davenport is well taken and we support this challenge.

As Bishops and Pastors we must be concerned both for the victims and their healing, and for the continuation of the Church's ministries and apostolates, as well as our outreach to the broader community.

Our legal advisors have called to our attention the following reasons in support of such a constitutional challenge to this law (Senate Bill 1779):

The Statute was not a law of general application and its effects were not broadly felt. Studies on the abuse of children have demonstrated the widespread societal prevalence of this shameful problem, yet of the hundreds of lawsuits filed, all but a tiny fraction have been directed against the Catholic Church. In the midst of the unprecedented media coverage of the Catholic Church's sexual abuse scandal during 2002, the California Legislature enacted this discriminatory legislation crafted by plaintiffs' attorneys seeking only one result against a single institution: the Catholic Church.

Specific objections to the law:

1. The law violates the Ex Post Facto clause of the U.S. Constitution.

* The Ex Post Facto clause prohibits States from enacting penal laws that operate retroactively. The Law imposes new retroactive standards. It permits the revival of claims that have been settled, that had been litigated to finality in the courts, or that had lapsed under the previous law.

* The law retroactively and unconstitutionally changes the legal consequences of acts and omissions which occurred before its enactment.

2. The law violates the Due Process Clause of the U.S. Constitution.



* The Due Process Clause is a protection from the extreme hardship and oppressive effects of having to investigate and defend claims that are so old that doing so is nearly impossible.

* Critical witnesses from the relevant period are dead, have impaired memories or are otherwise unavailable. Many allegations are against priests who are dead, some for many decades.

* Many pastors, bishops, and other clergy who could have knowledge of whether misconduct was alleged or had occurred, are also dead.

* No one anticipated being sued for acts that happened as long as seventy years ago, so locating records is tremendously burdensome or altogether impossible.

* No records at all are available for many lay employees and volunteers who worked at parishes and who could be "witnesses" to corroborate allegations.

* Information about the accusing parties and their families is often lacking. Roman Catholic entities in California have served tens of millions of people since the 1930s. Specific information about particular plaintiffs or other accusing parties is hardly available for recent events, let alone events that are decades old.

* This law imposes special hardships and oppressive effects upon the Catholic Church in California. By making a fair defense impossible, it ensures almost certain liability for the Church.

3. The law violates the Bill of Attainder clause of the U.S. Constitution.

* Chief Justice William H. Rehnquist defined a bill of attainder as "a legislative act that singled out one or more persons and imposed punishment on them, without benefit of trial."

* By way of Senate Bill 1779, the California Legislature singled out the Catholic Church, declared it guilty, and imposed penalties on it.

* Senate Bill 1779 was designed to transfer massive amounts of the Church's assets to self-interested attorneys.

* It punishes the Catholic Church by forcing it to spend a great deal of money investigating old claims and multiple claims that have only surfaced in 2003 or recently.

In Summary

For all the reasons above, we believe the legal challenge presented by the Davenport Diocese provides an opportunity to review Senate Bill 1779 and test its fairness as law towards the Catholic Church. Our responsibility as Pastors and stewards of the Church requires us to question a law that threatens the Church's mission. Our efforts to ensure both the pastoral works of the Church and the just relief of the victims of sexual abuse are being endangered by the flawed character of this law.

Our support for the legal action by the Davenport Diocese does not diminish our abiding concerns: to make certain the Church is safe for everyone, especially for children and youth; to reach out to victims of clergy sexual abuse, and their families, with spiritual and pastoral care and counseling; to continue our efforts for a just and fair settlement with victims of clergy sexual abuse.

We will continue to keep you, our Catholic people, informed of our ongoing efforts on all of these matters. We ask your prayers for all who have suffered sexual abuse, and we ask your continued prayerful support for your Church throughout California.

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Dear Grace...

my Protestant friends say that I should only follow what the Bible says and that Catholic tradition is not from God. What do I say to them?

Tell them that Catholicism is not a religion of the Bible alone. This is one important area where we differ strikingly from our Protestant brothers and sisters in Christ who believe in “*Sola Scriptura*” – the Bible alone as authority. Jesus’ last command to his apostles before ascending to heaven was that they “go out and make disciples of all the nations...teaching them to observe all I have commanded you.” He even added a promise – “I am with you always, until the end of the world” (Matthew 28: 19-20). At that point, Jesus did not give them a book to follow. That “book,” which contained the New Law, the New Testament, did not even begin to be written until 50-100 AD.

No Approved New Testament for 400 Years

Some people have a tendency to treat the Bible as if it is a book that simply fell down from the sky one day, all written and bound just as we see it today. In reality, however, it was not until the year 393 A.D. that the books of the New Testament were accepted and approved by the Catholic Church at the Council of Hippo. For nearly 400 years, the early Church did not yet have an approved New Testament. So, what or who did the Church (the followers of Christ) follow for those first 400 years? It was the teaching of the apostles!...those whom Jesus had left in charge of His Church, telling them that He would be with them to the end.

Catholic Tradition—With a Capital T

Therefore, what Jesus left on earth to complete his mission was the Church, guided by the Holy Spirit. This oral teaching is what the Catholic Church calls Tradition with a capital “T.” It comes from the Latin word *tradere*, which means, “to hand down.” The apostles handed down what

they received from Christ Himself and Christ was God. Another important fact that many do not have clear is that for the first three-fourths of the entire history of Christianity, the only Christian Church was the Catholic Church. It was at the Protestant Reformation in the sixteenth century that the great division occurred – one that still remains to be healed.

Jesus told his disciples: “He who hears you hears me, and he who rejects you rejects me” (Luke 10:16). This oral teaching was accepted by Christians, just as they accepted the written teaching that came to them later. The Church, in the persons of the apostles, was given the authority to teach by Christ; the Church would be his representative. That is why He commissioned them, saying, “Go and make disciples of all nations” (Matthew 28:19).

God Reveals Himself Through Both Sacred Tradition and Sacred Scripture

It is the firm belief of the Catholic Church that God has revealed Himself to His creation through both Sacred Tradition and Sacred Scripture, and that these are interpreted by the only authoritative and authentic interpreter of the Word of God – the Church. The Bible itself tells us that the Church is “the pillar and foundation of truth” (Timothy 3:15). Why would it say that so clearly if it were the Bible alone that we should follow? Yes, the Bible is at the heart of our faith, but we have more than the “written” Word of God. In fact, John states for us that there are so many things that Jesus did, but if these were to be written down, the whole world could not contain all the books that would have to be written (John 21:25). We are truly blessed with our rich Sacred Tradition.

To fully understand the role of Tradition in the Church, one must study Church history. It is all there, and for many it would be a real eye-opener.

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

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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 Reinaldo Beserra dos Reis

Según la teología patristica antigua, uno de los obstáculos para la completa morada del Espíritu en nosotros era nuestra propia naturaleza marcada por el pecado.

¿Y qué diríamos de alguien que, desde su concepción, tuvo el privilegio de ser preservada no solo del pecado original, sino también de cada una y todas las manchas del pecado moral? Si María, al aceptar a Cristo como su futuro Hijo había sido redimida por Dios previamente, ¿no podemos pensar en ella como la primera en ser favorecida con la plenitud permanente del Espíritu prometido?

La única cosa que les quedaba a aquellos marcados por la separación que el orgullo y la desobediencia generaron, era esperar la glorificación de Jesús que traería el perdón de los pecados. Después de todo, el Espíritu Santo es espíritu y nosotros somos carne. A esta dificultad añadiremos el hecho de que El es Santo y nosotros, pasta entonces, eramos irremediamente "esclavos del pecado".

Pero nada le impediría a ella, elegida para ser la Inmaculada Concepción, recibir el Espíritu, no de una manera difusa, como lo era para el resto de la humanidad, sino de una manera personal, absoluta y permanente. Después de todo, Jesús sería creado en su seno por el Espíritu mismo y por Su poder: "se encontró encinta por obra del Espíritu Santo" (Mt 1,1&20; Lc 1,35).

En Lucas 1,28, el ángel (incluso antes de su "sr") ya había encontrado a María "gratis plena", llena de gracia. El Espíritu, cuando obró el milagro de la inmaculada Concepción en ella, seguramente había hecho Su propio nido en el corazón de María, para llegar a conocer el corazón humano. -Su siguiente morada- "humanizada" en la carne de la futura madre del Redentor.

Como habían anunciado las Escrituras en el Antiguo Testamento, los tiempos mesiánicos cuando la salvación de Yahvéh se manifestaría en plenitud estarían marcados por tres acontecimientos principales y grandes: la Encarnación del Verbo, asumiendo nuestra naturaleza y superando el abismo que nos distanciaba del Padre; la Pasión y Muerte de Jesús a través de la cual la oferta del hombre a Dios sería redimida y la muerte eterna sería derrotada por la victoria de Su resurrección; el envío y la venida del Espíritu Santo, que nos sería dado como "prenda de nuestra herencia" (Ef 1,14), para que pudiéramos aceptar y entender, a través de la fe, el testimonio

Misa con Padre Peter Sanders, Orat.

7:00pm, Viernes, 3 Septiembre 2004

La Iglesia de St. Cecilia

Vicente & 17th Ave., San Francisco

7:00pm, Miércoles, 15 Septiembre

La Iglesia de All Souls

315 Walnut Ave., So. San Francisco



del Hijo de Dios, y alcancemos la salvación.

Estas grandes promesas a los tiempos mesiánicos (venida del Salvador, Su muerte y resurrección, y la efusión del Espíritu) están asociadas, son interdependientes, y confirman el principio de la era de gracia, la manifestación de la salvación, el reino de Dios entre los hombres. Y solo a una persona le fue dada la gracia de vivir esos acontecimientos: Nadal Allí esta, nice y necesaria, en la Encarnación del Verbo, ofreciéndose como terreno para la morada del Espíritu, donde El, por Su presencia

dinámica, posibilita la venida del Mesías. Allí está ella otra vez, junto a la cruz, dejándose traspasar por la espada profética del sufrimiento (Lc 2, 35a) y aceptando la Maternidad de Cristo en Su nuevo Cuerpo Místico, la Iglesia. Allí está una vez más la madre que va a ser asumida al cielo- con la Iglesia emergente, en Pentecostes, esperando la plenitud que, notable y exclusivamente, ella ya había recibido antes que cualquier oboe. Por eso tenemos buenas razones para llamarla "Madre de Cristo" y "Madre de la Iglesia", la asociada singular de la Trinidad.

María, La primera carismática

El Concilio Vaticano II dice que "antes del día de Pentecostés... también vemos a María implorando el don del Espíritu, quien ya la había cubierto con Su sombra en la Anunciación" (LG 59). Nosotros, que ya hemos recibido el don del Espíritu con ocasión de nuestro bautismo sacramental, podemos ahora, unidos a la intercesión de María, esperar, en Pentecostes, una efusión renovada del Agua Viva, que se prometió al "que tenga sed" (in 7,37). Pues incluso antes de ofrecer al Cristo glorificado como un don del Padre (Hch 2, 23) que le sería dado a los que creen, el Espíritu se había dado a María -la primera carismática- para que por su maternidad, ella pudiera ofrecernos a Cristo mismo. Y El nos da el Espíritu.

¿Cómo podemos no amar a María? ¿Cómo no vamos a admirar a esta "amadísima hija del Padre, esposa casta del Espíritu y amante madre del Hijo"? ¿Cómo no vamos a buscar su compañía maternal esperando el don del Espíritu? Miremos a la Madre: ella es, sobre todo, un signo del Espíritu; y como dice el CV II, ella es "sagrario del Espíritu Santo" (LG 53). Por lo tanto, confiando en su intercesión maternal, podemos unirnos a Juan Pablo II en oración y decir: "Tú que junto a los Apóstoles has estado en oración en el Cenáculo esperando la venida del Espíritu de Pentecostes, invoca su renovada efusión sobre todos los fieles laicos, hombres y mujeres, para que correspondan plenamente a su vocación y misión, como sarmientos de la verdadera vida, llamados a dar mucho fruto para la vida del mundo". (Christifideles Laici).

Con María, la presencia del Espíritu está asegurada, la efusión se renueva siempre y la bendición es segura. Aleluya!

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Bienvenidos a Casa

Sábado

7:00 am to 7:30 am

Radio Única 10.10 AM



La Viña de Raquel

P. Frank Pavone, Priests for Life

"No se me ocurre otro trabajo de este tipo tan bien hecho", ha escrito el padre Benedict Groeschel acerca de Rachel's Vineyard (Viña de Raquel). "Un doloroso y difícil problema humano que debe abordarse con fe, intuición psicológica y confianza".

Luego de haber estado involucrado por muchos años en los retiros para gente herida por el aborto, no podría sino coincidir con esta evaluación. Por eso es que me alegré cuando Theresa y Kevin Burke, los fundadores de Rachel's Vineyard, me contactaron a fines del año pasado para solicitarme que este programa de retiros se convirtiera en un ministerio de Priests for Life. Debido a ello, se ha vuelto un programa más conocido entre los sacerdotes de todo el país, brindando otro camino para extender el poder sanador de Cristo en el sacramento de la penitencia, a través de la consejería y la predicación. Más aún, los retiros de Rachel's Vine-

yard pueden llevarse a cabo en un formato ecuménico, permitiendo que cristianos de todas las confesiones participen de manera acorde con su propio origen.

Rachel's Vineyard es una experiencia de retiro de fin de semana para varones y mujeres que han perdido un hijo a causa de un aborto. Con la asistencia de consejeros y sacerdotes, exploran el dolor emocional y espiritual de sus abortos en presencia del Señor y en un ambiente protegido y confidencial. Dado que la herida del aborto está complicada por el secreto y en los hechos lleva a un aislamiento destructivo del individuo, al compartir su dolor con otros que han tenido experiencias similares la persona encuentra una nueva libertad y se beneficia de la comprensión, aceptación y experiencia ajena.

Uno de los aspectos más poderosos y únicos del retiro es el uso de la "Escritura Viviente". En esencia, se trata de una reflexión grupal sobre hechos de la Escritura utilizando un método tradicional de meditación por el cual la persona se imagina presente y participe del evento. En vez de tener que reflexionar interiormente en soledad y únicamente en pensamiento, el grupo lo

dramatiza en conjunto, utilizando una vez más un enfoque católico muy tradicional, o sea, usando signos, símbolos y gestos para hacer más tangibles las realidades espirituales. Un ejemplo claro es la curación de Bartimeo en el capítulo 10 del Evangelio según San Marcos. En Rachel's Vineyard, el pasaje se lee en presencia de todos; el sacerdote se dirige entonces a cada persona, junto con un miembro del equipo, que dice, "Animo, te está llamando". La persona dice, "Jesús, Hijo de David, ten piedad de mí". El sacerdote dice entonces las palabras de Jesús, "¿Qué quieres que te haga?" La persona hace su pedido en sus propias palabras. El sacerdote da una bendición individual.

Miles de retiros Rachel's Vineyard se están llevando a cabo en los Estados Unidos y alrededor del mundo. Muchas diócesis han adoptado oficialmente este programa para su ministerio de sanación post-aborto. A medida que más y más gente se acerca, abandona su culpa, su aislamiento y su vergüenza, ¡recibámoslos juntos en la Viña de la Iglesia!—Para más información, visite www.RachelsVineyard.org con la colaboración del Dr. Paul Schenck

8th Annual **Congreso**
St Mary's Cathedral Conference Center
Gough at Geary, San Francisco
Octubre 1-3, 2004

con Obispo Ignatius Wang, Fr. Mario Castaneda
(Palm Beach, Fla), Fiver Rodriguez (Chicago), Fr. Peter
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