



Pentecost 2005

Most often when we refer to the Catholic Church, we think of either the highly centralized, worldwide institution with headquarters in Rome or our neighborhood parish. Less frequently do we remember that the Church is also made up of several Eastern Catholic Churches who have specific cultural traditions toward practicing the Gospel and distinct approaches to theology, spirituality, liturgy, and church law. All the Churches (both Roman and Eastern) are united in the same profession of faith, the same celebration of the sacraments, and the same hierarchical unity.

When we refer to the Eastern Churches as the Eastern Rites, we really mean a local Church or specific tradition, a particular way of living the Gospel, and not simply a liturgical ritual. A particular Church means a way of living Christianity, a cultural mentality toward practicing the Gospel, a community of faith with a distinct, ancient tradition.

The different Churches evolved historically and culturally from several ancient centers of Christianity where various expressions of Jesus Christ's Gospel message developed. Those centers were the ancient patriarchal sees of Antioch, Alexandria, Constantinople, Jerusalem, and Rome.

Until the schism of the East, which oc-

curred after more than a millennium of Christianity, the Church of Christ was organized on a kind of federated basis. There were flexible groupings that included a particular geographical area and Christians of similar background and heritage. There were five distinct areas, each with a chief bishop called a patriarch.

The five patriarchates were named for their see cities: Jerusalem, Antioch, Alexandria, Constantinople and Rome. Rome was referred to as the Patriarchate of the West. The other patriarchates were in the East.

ALL CATHOLICS ARE NOT ROMAN CATHOLICS

by Br. John Samaha, S.M.

Antioch was the first headquarters of the Church until St. Peter moved to Rome. It remained an important center of Christianity for several centuries. Constantinople became the most im-

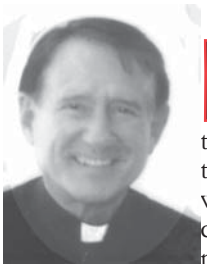
portant and influential patriarchal see when it was the capital of the Byzantine and the Roman worlds.

The Pope: Patriarch and Pontiff

The Bishop of Rome was the chief bishop of the patriarchs, the first among equals, because he was the successor of St. Peter, the first bishop. It was his special office to arbitrate decisively everywhere in ecclesiastical disputes. But in respect to jurisdiction in its own area, each patriarchate enjoyed independence in administration. Each exercised the right to appoint its own bishops, to legislate for itself, and to engage in its

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Who's Right Depends on Whose Right? by Fr. Joe Landi



IS there anything more annoying than someone who thinks they are right when you know for certain that they are not? In listening

to the talking heads or reading the syndicated columnists in the newspapers, one gets the impression that the conservative "Christian-right" is responsible for all the social woes in the United States, the 2000 election and 2004 re-election of Bush

II, and the media circus surrounding the removal of Terri Schiavo's feeding tube.

The finger pointing by the left-leaning media claims that U.S. Legislators backed by the Christian-right vote against social issues like same-sex marriage, stem-cell research with near perfect consistency. But in an article, "The Godly Must Be Crazy", by Glenn Scherer (Grist Magazine, 27 Oct 2004) he observes a surprisingly new frontier of unity—anti-environmentalism. He claims that "Forty-five senators and 186 representatives in 2003

earned 80- to 100-percent approval ratings from the nation's most influential Christian right advocacy groups—the Christian Coalition, Eagle Forum and Family Resource Council... and that the same lawmakers also got flunking grades, less than 10 percent, on average from the League of Conservation Voters."

Scherer observes that "These statistics are puzzling at first. Opposing abortion and stem cell research is consistent with the religious right's belief that life begins at the moment of conception.

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One day Jesus asked his apostles, “Who do you say that I am?”

(Matthew 16:15). Peter answered, “You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God” (16:16).

After he rose from the dead, Jesus appeared to his disciples. When Thomas, who was absent, heard that Jesus had risen, he had great doubts. But Thomas was present when Jesus appeared a second time. Face-to-face with the risen Christ, Thomas could only say, “My Lord and my God” (John 20:28).

As dramatic as these stories are, they also reveal two truths that have to do with our everyday lives: First, the Holy Spirit wants to convince all of us that Jesus is our Lord and God. Second, as he convinces us about Jesus, the Spirit also wants to transform us.

The Spirit of Revelation

In this article, we want to look at how the Spirit uses similar daily events to reveal the

could leave this world and be with Jesus right now?”

These experiences are only possible because God created us with the capacity to know him deeply and personally. When the Holy Spirit moves in us and enlivens this spiritual capacity, we find ourselves lifted up to heaven and filled with the love of Jesus. We experience the “Spirit of adoption” flooding us and crying out, in accord with our own hearts, “Abba! Father!” (Romans 8:15-16).

Of course, when we experience this, it really is our voice calling out in praise. It’s our heart and our mind experiencing the love and responding with joy and gratitude. Yet at the same time, by a mystery that we may never understand, the Holy Spirit is with us, praising God or bowing down in worship as well.

It’s not a coincidence when we find ourselves in God’s presence. It’s not luck. It doesn’t just happen. When we sense the presence of the Lord, and

to begin is to use the “eighty-twenty” rule. Learning how to pray in the Spirit can be a challenge. At first, our prayer may be made up of eighty percent our effort, with the remaining twenty percent being the Spirit’s power. But as we persevere over time, we find ourselves laboring less and less, to the point where our prayer is eighty percent the Spirit’s work and only twenty percent our work. We find ourselves enjoying God’s presence and his grace more and more as the Holy Spirit takes over our times of communion with God. This change doesn’t happen overnight, and it isn’t always a smooth transition. But that shouldn’t discourage us. God will reward our efforts.

The Gift Giver

Prayer is not the only way the Spirit works to convince us that Jesus is Lord. In addition to helping us pray, the Spirit wants to give us gifts that will help us grow closer to God and empower us to build up the church. Through his “sanctifying gifts”—wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude, knowledge, piety, and fear of the Lord—the Spirit forms and renews our character so that we are more open to his revelations. As “permanent dispositions” of the heart, these gifts help us keep the lines of communication open between us and God and make us more trusting when it comes to following his will (Isaiah 11:1-2; Catechism, 1830-1831).

The “charismatic gifts”—wisdom, knowledge, faith, healing, miracles, prophecy, discernment, tongues, and interpretation of tongues—are geared less toward our own personal development and more toward the common good and the state of the church (1 Corinthians 12:7-11). The Spirit gives us these gifts so that we might pray for a person’s healing, seek God’s wisdom on a thorny issue, discern what the Spirit might be saying, or exercise supernatural faith in God’s power and love for the world.

Finally, the fruits of the Spirit—love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, gentleness, faithfulness and self-control (Galatians 5:22-23)—are both a work in progress and a witness. They are a work in progress because they are the character elements that the Holy Spirit is always building within us. He is always at work replacing division with peace, selfishness with goodness, and anxiety with joy. They are a witness because the testimony of these fruits in our lives is a kind of proof that the Spirit is at work in us and that we are accepting his grace and putting it into practice.

The Spirit of Worship

love, mercy, and power of Jesus so that we will surrender our lives to him more deeply.

The pattern for both kinds of revelation is similar. The Spirit may reveal Jesus’ love and power to us during Mass or when we are reading Scripture. He may use a comment from your spouse or friend, or he may simply put a new thought into your mind. It may even happen when you are in the midst of a serious division or when you are committing some sin. Remember, the Spirit touched Mary when she was in a state of perfect grace, but he also touched Paul when he was on his way to arrest and kill Christians.

The Spirit of Worship

Have you ever felt completely in love with Jesus, wanting to pour out every ounce of your being in worship? Have you ever been so caught up in prayer that you didn’t care about the time or what was going on around you? Have you ever been so filled with his presence and so alive in the Spirit that you caught yourself thinking, “I wish I

when we feel his love, it’s the Holy Spirit at work, convincing us that Jesus is our Savior and our Lord.

Again and again, the Holy Spirit wants to fill us with his “living water,” with his joy, and with the peace of Christ. These phrases are not just snappy catchwords. They are statements that describe the Spirit’s desire to make us alive to God. They explain what happens when the Spirit takes what Jesus taught—and all the blessings the Father has for us—and imparts them to us. And whenever this happens, we are moved to worship Jesus from our hearts.

The “Eighty-Twenty” Rule

Scripture tells us: “Build yourselves up on your most holy faith; pray in the Holy Spirit; keep yourselves in the love of God” (Jude 20-21). And in another place, we read: “Pray in the Spirit at all times in every prayer and supplication” (Ephesians 6:18). There is a vital link between the Holy Spirit and prayer, and especially between the Holy Spirit and our ability to experience Jesus’ love in

prayer in a way that is direct, powerful, and transforming. But the question arises: What does it mean to “pray in the Spirit”?

A good way

Mark A. Shustoff

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Who's Right From Page 1

Opposing gay marriage is consistent with its claim that the Bible proscribes homosexual activity. Both beliefs are a familiar staple of today's political discourse. But a scripture-based justification for anti-environmentalism?" So Scherer's conclusion may surprise you. "Many Christian fundamentalists feel that concern for the future of our planet is irrelevant, because it has no future." Natural resources depletion and overpopulation, then, are not concerns for End Timers because they believe we are living in the end-time.



John Paul II 1920-2005

Their reasoning comes from a literal interruption of Scripture, perhaps from Revelation 6:12-14. So End Timers see the recent disasters cast in an apocalyptic mold. Whether or not these visions in Revelation were real experiences of the author or simply literary conventions employed by him is an open question. The Church teaches that these symbolic descriptions are not to be taken as literal descriptions. In any case, many End Timers believe that until Jesus' return, the Lord will provide. Perhaps, but the axioms, "God helps those who help themselves" or "pray as if everything depended on God and work as if everything depended on you" might also apply, (ccc 2834).

Many secularists view the world as overpopulated. Many Christians believe that God has made the earth sufficiently large with plenty of resources to accommodate all His people and we are the curators of its resources. Those of us neither left nor right, who do not see the Apocalypse in every natural disaster, are protecting the environment, recycling and conserving natural resources. As His stewards, what God has given us should matter. Protecting what God has provided for us, including using the talents given us to do so, then, makes sense.

In the Catechism of the Catholic Church, we learn that, "By the very nature of creation, material being is endowed with its own stability, truth and excellence, its own order and laws. Each of the various creatures, willed in its own being, reflects in its own way a ray of God's infinite wisdom and goodness. Man must therefore respect the particular goodness of every creature, to avoid any disordered use of things which would be in contempt of the Creator and would bring disastrous consequences for human beings and their environment" (ccc 339).

Who is right--The environmentalists, those neither left nor right, or the End Timers of the conservative Christian-right? One thing for sure, the Christian-right has strong political clout with Bush II and with two influential born-again lawmakers: House Majority Leader, Tom DeLay (R-Texas) and Senate Environment and Public Works Committee Chair, James Inhofe (R-Okla.). But DeLay could be particularly damaged from the fallout from the Schiavo controversy and the campaign against him by two liberal organizations, the Campaign for America's Future and Public Campaign Action Fund,

because it was not right that Republicans pushed through a more lenient ethics process as DeLay fights ethics problems.

So things may not be all that rosy for the Christian right as it sees its influence wane. For the rest of us there is food for thought. In a New York Time article, "Where Christianity Thrives The Best," Nicholas Kristof - (New York Times - 03 Mar 05) has an even more interesting observation: "Conservative Christians in the United States should take heed. Christianity is thriving where it faces obstacles, like repression in China or suspicion of evangelicals in parts of Latin America and Africa. In those countries where religion enjoys privileges — Britain, Italy, Ireland, Spain or Iran — that establishment support seems to have stifled faith."

When we don't agree, there is nothing as annoying than someone who thinks they are right, perhaps only more annoying when it turns out that they are. Take for example Joan Ryan, who wears her lapsed Catholic status like a flashing neon badge of courage, wrote about Pope John Paul II saying, "...this pope was as infuriating and disappointing as he was inspiring." About her Catholic status, "Being a Catholic is who I was... even if I dismissed as naïve and quaint the belief that the pope was infallible...he was a man like other men, except he had the trappings of a 14th century king, complete with worshipful minions and gilded palaces." ("A fearless defender—even when he wasn't right." S.F. Chronicle, 03 Apr 05)

Ryan turned her neon badge off long enough to compliment the Pope as "never afraid to speak up for what he thought was right. I took on faith that he meant the rest of us should not be afraid to speak up, either." Right.

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

*A Book Review
by Rev. John Hampock*

Ransomed From Darkness: The New Age, Christian Faith and the Battle for the Souls

by Moira Noonan is a memoir and expose of the New Age movement from the perspective of someone who was deeply involved in it for twenty years. From a good Catholic schoolgirl to the dark side and back again, **Ransomed From Darkness** is an eye-opener for those who think the New Age practices are not trying to disrupt the faithful with its quackery.

Amazement is an amazing emotion, inasmuch as it is found only in humans, as Aristotle noted. A dog or cat may have fear, joy, anger, guilt, or even surprise, but never amazement. Your pet cannot be amazed at the skill of a juggler, athlete, magician, tap dancer,

Ransomed From Darkness a book by Moira Noonan

singer or acrobat. Perhaps because it is exclusively human, amazement is an emotion that God often chooses to use for our spiritual persuasion, enticing us to love and praise him. The contemporaries of Jesus experienced amazement at his many healings, at his captivating speech, and even at his righteous indignation at the abuses of the money changers in the temple.

Jesus Uses “Instruments of Amazement”

But to extend his evangelizing ministry to make disciples of all nations, Jesus often used others as his “instruments of amazement” — unskilled humans like Peter, Philip, Paul, Stephen, and countless other noble souls through the centuries — to excite changes of heart. Note, for example, how the astonishing behavioral change in the demonized maniac (Mark 5, 20) caused the citizens of the Decapolis to

marvel at God’s power. Through the ages, by giving their testimony to numerous marvels of divine power, wisdom and love, these human instruments of amazement have championed the glory of God. One such instrument of amazement used by God in our modern era is Moira Noonan, who has authored this instructive autobiography. Her life story is guaranteed to excite amazement in the reader, and, hopefully, to promote the praise of God for his goodness in seeking to lift his precious people from the quicksand of evil and to deflect the machinations of the Evil One.

Amazement a Prelude to Divine Love

If one were to propose a scriptural similitude of this book, it could well be Jesus’ behest to the freshly exorcised Gerasene demoniac, who had sought companionship among the dead: “Return to your home, and declare how much God has done for you.”

(Luke 8, 39).

In this fascinating work Moira Noonan tells how, by Jesus’ gentle heart tug, she was ransomed from the darkness of comradeship with the spiritually dead who thought they were alive. Having “returned to her home,” the Church founded by Jesus, and by openly “declaring what God has done for her,” she has chronicled the remarkable story of her life. Her encounters with subtle evils serve to alert the reader to the many beguiling dangers that lurk all around us: the “deceiving spirits” of the New Age movement that signal the end-times, spirits that Paul has warned about (1 Tim. 4, 1). No one can read this book without rushing to Jesus, like a child encountering a pit of vipers who runs to the protective and loving arms of her father.

In that context, the amazement of the story becomes a mere prelude to a deeper emotion — and virtue: Love!

--Available from North Bay Books at northbaybooks.com

Reader’s Choice



COME, CREATOR SPIRIT

By Rainero Cantalamessa, OFM Cap

Contains a wealth of insight about life in the Spirit from a charismatic priest who was very close to the pope and preacher to the papal household. The author explains why the Holy Spirit is called the finger of God; what his role is in our lives; why we need healing, prophecy, and other gifts of the Spirit; and how the Spirit helps us proclaim, “Jesus is Lord.”

\$16.95—Liturgical Press

THE ROSARY HEALS

—Untold Stories of Jesus

By Fr. Robert DeGrandis and Eugene Peter Koshenina

All twenty mysteries of the Rosary come from Scripture. The authors imaginatively tell the story of each Scriptural event so you can picture it as you pray. Each mystery includes a meditation to apply to your own life, and a closing prayer of thanksgiving, healing, or forgiveness. After each decade, there is a collection of joyful, luminous, sorrowful, or glorious reflections from the saints.

\$6.40—DeGrandis

MARY, MOTHER OF GOD

—Her Life in Icons and Scripture

Edited by Giovanna Parravicini

Rare and precious icons, some created in mosaic, are arranged to tell the story of Mary. The accompanying text offers comments and explanations of the images and their symbols. A life of Mary as presented in the writings of the great fathers of the Orthodox church and in the liturgical rites of the Byzantine traditions is also included.

\$19.95—Liguori Publications

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How many of you read the Bible? I'm in the process.

Posted 2/23/05 5:03 pm by LockportKid

On-line replies to this message:

Re: Reading the Bible

PLEASE go read the Bible. It is God's Word and part of our faith as Catholics and Christians!!! I'll be praying for you!!

Re: Reading the Bible

I think that we as Catholics should read our Bibles way more often! After all, it is OUR book!! It was written BY Catholics FOR Catholics! Well, at least the New Testament. But we can learn from all of it. We can learn the history of the Church, and even find help for our everyday lives. I know there is some BORING stuff, but we have to get past that. There's also some really interesting stuff too, you just have to pick up your Bible to find it. A study guide would help too. But what I like to do is to say a prayer to the Holy Spirit before I open my bible. I pray that HE will inspire me and speak to me through it, that HE will lead me to the things I need to hear. It Works! I always come across things that really help and inspire me in my life, no matter what I'm going through! I challenge you to try it!

Re: Reading the Bible

I read it 'cause one of our CORE members set up a Bible Study for us teens. We were reading through Acts, then Genesis. Now we are going to do some skits on the Bible for an upcoming Life Night.

Yes, it can be boring, but it REALLY helps if you have some kind of structured group to read with. It's like when Philip found the eunuch who was trying to read the scriptures, but said "how can I when there is no one to tell me how!" Hope this helps!

Re: Reading the Bible

I tried to get through Genesis one time, but... and this is kind of not nice to say... I got bored of it. So what I'm doing right now is, I'm reading through the New Testament first... I just started Acts (the Gospels are great! Read Mark if you're short on time), and after Revelation, I hope to go back and do the O.T., trying to pick up on allusions and the like.

Re: Reading the Bible

Right now I try to follow a "How to read the Bible in a year" schedule that was in a "Light the Path for Teens" book. It's pretty simple... there's like 3 chapters from certain books every night. It's pretty cool and I think my year is almost done so I'm excited! God Bless.

Re: Reading the Bible

I'm working on it...my favorite book so far is Matthew, but I also like Jeremiah and Joshua....they're the most uplifting of the prophets.

Re: Reading the Bible

Just some advice, for the many people who have a difficult time reading the Bible, like me and almost everyone... start in the New Testament...it is easier to read and is NOT cheating...the

New Testament is the heart of the entire bible...Don't skip the Old Testament, but make sure you read the New first....

Re: Reading the Bible

I read it every morning, and it really helps me to get through each and every day.

Re: Reading the Bible

I read it. I prefer the epistles, because they are full of so much inspiration when it comes to igniting that spark that God placed in us when He created us. I am very familiar with the Gospels as well - ha ha, who isn't? They are the record of the very foundation of our faith! - and I have read many of the psalms. I read the NT far more often than the OT, but I'm slowly making my progression through the books in order to fully discover what our beautiful revealed text has to offer.

Re: Reading the Bible

I have just recently started making time to read the Bible. Some may not know, but every reading and gospel in the Mass comes from the Bible. My mom recently discussed reading the verses in the Bible for the Sunday Mass before going to Mass. I think it's a good idea. It helps me through my day.



Condensed from Teen Talk, the chat room at www.lifeteen.com & www.sfspirit.com



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Blessed are they who expect nothing, for they shall receive it."

This faux beatitude must have been formulated by either a pessimist, a skeptic, or, more probably, a pessimistic skeptic.

Expectancy, like so many human states, can be either negative or positive. To habitually expect bad or neutral results to our endeavors is simply psychopathological negativism. In contrast, habitual expectation of favorable outcomes is a sign of an optimistic, upbeat, well-integrated person-

er, there's more to it than that.

Trust is Reliance on God to Provide

The virtue of trust, while drawing its force from faith and hope, must be a positive and profound reliance on a loving, caring divine Person as the One who will provide that favorable outcome. We must be securely aware that the outcome or reward will not happen just because we have faith in our faith, or because we have doctrinal faith in the omnipotence of God. Believing that something can happen by God's power is not the same as believing that it will happen. Moreover, even having the virtue of hope—the

the focus on the Person who brings about the healing. The awareness of God's power and action is certainly present, but only as a kind of background awareness of God as the agent.

Foreground Awareness, Not Background Awareness

What is the quintessential element that is missing that would make the prayer one of authentic trust? It is foreground awareness, not background awareness, of the fact that the prayed-for cure will come as an ineluctable flow of beneficence from the loving, nurturing divine Person who delights in providing such benefits for his beloved children. In the words of Jesus (Lk 11:13), "If you [earthly fathers]... know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give... to those who ask him!" In this verse Jesus emphasizes reliance on a personal God as the "sublimator" of

hope-filled faith. Only when that person-focus is operative can we speak of a *trustful* hope.

--Condensed from **Pathways of Trust** ©2005 John H. Hampsch, Servant Books. Available at www.AmericanCatholic.org

Hope & Trust by Fr. John Hampsch

ality "You will live in hope if hope lives in you," says the old aphorism. Hope is also one of the premiere characteristics of the Christian philosophy of life. The biblical history of salvation chronicles many tumultuous human events, but closes by trumpeting the ultimate triumph of the answer to our ageless prayer: "Thy kingdom come."

Where Does Hope Fit In?

If trust is one manifestation of faith, where does the virtue of hope fit into the picture? Faith and hope are linked, as it were, by trust. From the viewpoint of time, we might say that the virtue of faith is based on the present, while the virtue of hope is futuristic. The linkage consists in the fact that trust is a confident present belief that a reliable God will certainly provide a future favorable outcome. Howev-

belief that the hoped-for outcome will happen—will still not make that belief qualify as holy trust, even though it may involve strong expectancy.

Belief in God's Power to Make Things Happen

Hence, the faith that believes, for instance, that a healing of cancer can happen, coupled with hope that expects that it will happen, still falls short of the virtue of trust. In this situation, the primary focus is simply devout faith in the possibility of the healing, coupled with a prayerful, confident hope in the eventuality of the healing. That's analogous to the faith and hope of a dog waiting for the bone held just out of its reach.

Yet only secondarily is

WHEN THEY CALL ON ME I WILL ANSWER
SAYS THE LORD
PSALM 91:15



Is this movie suitable for children?

www.usccb.org

The U.S. Catholic Bishops' Office of Film and Broadcasting

Biannual Meeting of Prayer Group Leaders

May 21, 2005

St. Cecilia Church, 17th Ave at Vicente, SF

9:00 am Mass

Bishop Ignatius Wang

9:45 am Registration, Praise & Worship

in the Lower Church Hall

10:15 am Business Meeting

1:00 pm Luncheon

EACH PRAYER GROUP SHOULD HAVE A REP AT THIS MEETING!

I'm often asked how the Catholic League decides what it should do and how it should proceed. Suffice it to say that there are no barometers, metal detectors or replay cameras in this business—it's always a judgment call that cannot be reversed.

Once we verify the facts of a case before us, we must frame the issue. Put differently, it is not good enough to identify wrongdoing—we must decide how we are going to cast the issue and what remedy we are going to pursue. And above all, we have to decide each issue on the basis of its own merits; this presupposes the ability to make critical distinctions. In other words, discernment is everything.

Discernment in Action: the Catholic School

That's the gist of it; now let's see how it plays out in real life. We recently fielded a case

pressed in Judeo-Christian thought, that the innocent should not be punished for the transgressions of the guilty.”

Prudentially, I asked: “What should be done about kids who were born out-of-wedlock? What about those kids who have a father or a mother who is the town philanderer? Should we expel kids whose parents are cohabiting? Or are known adulterers?”

Regarding the gay parent who was a teacher's assistant, I had no problem saying that if the accusations against him were true—that he was abusing his role to proselytize the children—then he should be shown the gate. The classroom exists for the promotion of literacy, not politics.

The Super Bowl Ad

Another recent case that illustrates how we approach controversial issues occurred just prior to the Super Bowl. Ford/Lincoln planned to run an ad for its new Lincoln truck, the Mark LT. The ad showed a clergyman (he could have passed

was able to view it on the Internet). I offered a one-word response—asinine. After the ad was yanked, I was asked what I thought of SNAP's objections. What I said did not endear me to the protesters.

“Unfortunately,” I said, “the protesters are so consumed by the sex abuse scandal in the Catholic Church that they can no longer see straight.” What bothered me most of all was SNAP's flawed judgment: “To assign predator status to a priest in an ad like this,” I charged, “suggests that the complainants think of priests as child molesters.”

Four of us at the Catholic League (two men and two women) watched the ad on the Internet, and we all had the same reaction: it made so little sense we thought we missed something, so we watched it again. Significantly, no matter how many times we watched it, we couldn't for the life of us see how the ad was trying to trivialize the sex abuse scandal in the Church. To come to that conclusion, we reasoned, suggested a mindset so obsessed with the scandal that it impaired cognition.

Discernment, not Ideology

As I said at the beginning, it all comes down to discernment. Unfortunately,

what often inhibits discernment is ideology, the tendency to interpret all events through the same lens. To be sure, we all have our philosophical predilections, and that's fine. What is not fine is the willingness to substitute ideology for thought.

In any event, the ability to make critical distinctions is a necessary condition for success in a business like the Catholic League. But it is not sufficient: the other element is courage—the courage to make decisions that run against the grain. Put the two together and the result is a winning combination.

—William A. Donohoe is President of the Catholic League. Courtesy *Catalyst* magazine, March 2005.

Bad Year for Cultural Elites by William A. Donohoe



about two kindergartners in a Catholic school in California whose parents are gay. This did not sit well with all the parents who had their children in the school, and some of them wanted the adopted children to be expelled. Also, there were reports that one of the gay parents was a teacher's assistant who was trying to influence the students to his way of thinking.

When a reporter from the *Los Angeles Times* asked me whether the kids should be thrown out, I said no. I said there were both principled and prudential reasons to keep them in the school. “There is a moral principle,” I said in a news release, “ex-

as either a Catholic (or an Episcopalian priest) who finds the keys to the truck in the collection plate; a little girl and her father show up to claim the keys. The ad ended by showing the cleric approaching a church marquee; he then puts the letters L and T on the opposite side of the word US, thus spelling LUST.

The reason the ad was never shown was because of a protest organized by SNAP (Survivors Network of those Abused by Priests), Catholic activists, lawyers, psychologists and feminists. Ford didn't want to deal with all the negative publicity, so they pulled it.

Before Ford withdrew the ad, I was asked by a reporter from the *Chicago Tribune* what I thought of it (I

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How fitting to celebrate God's tender gift of mothers in the gentle bliss of springtime. It is a sunny moment fragrant with flowers and bursting with birdsong in the month dedicated to the holiest of mothers, the impeccable beauty newly with child that the Holy Spirit described through Elizabeth as being "most blessed . . . among women" (Lk 1:42).

We are amply blessed by God in the form of our earthly mothers. As members of the Body of Christ, however, we have in addition to this sweet gift, the awesome gift of the matchless Blessed Virgin Mary as our mother, too. Her spiritual motherhood of the Church was fully realized in most dreadful and painful labor on Golgotha with the dying Jesus' directives: "Woman, behold your son . . . Son, behold your moth-

contemplating Jesus following the example of Our Lady: "The contemplation of Christ has an incomparable model in Mary. In a unique way the face of the Son belongs to Mary" (RVM, Ch I, §10). He continues (very relevantly for the Charismatic renewal), "This school of Mary is all the more effective if we consider that she teaches by obtaining for us in abundance the gifts of the Holy Spirit, even as she offers us the incomparable example of her own 'pilgrimage of faith.'" (RVM, Ch 1, § 14, quoting *Lumen Gentium*, §58).

The School of Mary

This "school of Mary" had more than a pupil in Pope John Paul II; it had a prodigy who reaped in tremendous abundance those gifts of the Holy Spirit. More than a prodigy, the school of Mary had a superlative and supremely loving son. And as all mothers—including Mary—know, one of the most de-

successfully to the governor that a condemned murderer's life be spared. He unblushingly extolled the splendor of marital love in a long series of audiences that became the *Theology of the Body*, which asserts that the Holy Spirit fills such marital union, through the redemption of the body, "with everything that is noble and beautiful" (Oct. 22, 1980). And he unhesitatingly spoke out against war, as in his address before the United Nations in 1995.

Totus Tuus

This intrepid and devoted son of the Blessed Mother in entering eternal life has left us a marvelous example of how to live according to his motto, lovingly addressed to Mary: *Totus Tuus*, All Yours. We who search for ways to honor and remember him may best do so by striving to be "all hers" as he was and become fearless, well-adjusted sons and daughters of so great a mother, ready to serve her Divine Son by following her direction to "Do whatever He tells you" (Jn 2:5). Following in the footsteps of our magnificent late Holy Father, we are to seek her motherly love and support particularly through the sublime, Christ-centered prayer of the Rosary in which we encounter and contemplate the face of her Divine Son. Finally, especially as participants in the Charismatic Renewal, we can request with confidence her intercession in obtaining the gifts of the Holy Spirit in order that we may build up the Body of Christ.

In the earthly loss of our beloved Holy Father, we are greatly comforted by his consoling words entrusting us to the Blessed Mother: "In the same maternal Hands I leave everything and everyone with whom my life and vocation have linked me. In these Hands I leave, above all, the Church, as well as my Nation and all humanity" (Testament of Mar. 3, 1979). Mary, beautiful Mother, we have been placed in your Hands by your loving and devoted son, our dearest Pope John Paul II; we are All Yours. Pray for us!

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

Living Totus Tuus

By Mary Chang Flynn

er" (Jn 19: 26-27). Yet, despite the greatness of such a gift, we hear so often about Our Lady's spiritual motherhood that it becomes perilously easy to get used to. But the truly wise and holy among us never take this peerless mother, beyond compare, for granted.



lightful, if exhausting, rewards of effective mothering is a child that does not exhibit excessive or inappropriate fear at his or her surroundings but instead navigates, explores, and strives to understand—then explain—the world with curiosity, enthusiasm . . . and love and support from Mom as needed. How natural, then, that this transcendent, fearless son of Mary who spent hours in prayer before the Blessed Sacrament daily would exclaim upon assuming the seat of Peter, "Be not afraid!" How natural that this dauntless son of Mary would circumnavigate the globe in the Lord's name, making 104 pilgrimages to 129 countries, effectively bringing about the fall of European communism in the process, most rewardingly in his well-loved Poland.

The indomitable nature of Karol Wojtyla, son of Mary, also expressed itself in his brilliant and extremely wide-ranging study and consideration of the human condition. He unflinchingly condemned the excesses of both socialism and capitalism as offensive to the dignity of human labor (*Laborem Exercens*, 1981). He untiringly denounced capital punishment, even taking the opportunity during a brief visit to St. Louis, Missouri in 1999, to appeal

Pope John Paul II: Jesus Through Mary

Such a wise and holy man was Pope John Paul II. Made especially keen to the glories of the Blessed Virgin Mother by the loss of his earthly mother when he was a child, he infused his life, priesthood, and papacy with an outstanding love for Jesus through Mary. The enduring theme of his pontificate was set by his simple papal coat of arms emblazoned with the cross of Jesus—and the letter "M" nestled at the foot of that cross, all set against a background of celestial Marian blue. Pope for only two weeks at the time, the Holy Father declared in October 1978, "The Rosary is my favorite prayer." The reason for his devotion to this prayer was made evident years later, when he stated in the Apostolic Letter *Rosarium Virginis Mariae*: "The Rosary, though clearly Marian in character, is at heart a Christocentric prayer." (RVM, Intro, §1). Near the end of his glorious papacy, his nonpareil devotion to the Rosary brought us the Year of the Rosary, beginning in October 2002. During that time, he wrote glowingly of

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On the lighter side...

(Send us yours to sfccr@sfspirit.com)

DETERMINING THE SEX OF FLIES

A woman walked into the kitchen to find her husband stalking around with a fly swatter.

"What are you doing?" she asked.

"Hunting flies" he responded.

"Oh!, killing any?" she asked.

"Yep, 3 males, 2 females", he replied.

Intrigued, she asked, "How can you tell?"

He responded, "3 were on a beer can, 2 were on the phone."

THE attorney gathered the entire family for the reading of the will. Relatives came from near and far to see if they were included in the bequests. The lawyer somberly opened the will and began to read:

"To my cousin Ed, I leave my ranch.

"To my cousin Mark, I leave my townhouse.

"To my brother Jim, I leave my money market accounts.

"To my neighbor and good friend, Fred, I leave my stocks.

"And finally, to my cousin George, who always sat around and never did anything, but wanted to be remembered in my will, I say, 'Hi, George!'"

CHILDHOOD WISDOM

1) No matter how hard you try, you can't baptize cats.

2) When your mom is mad at your dad, don't let her brush your hair.

3) If your sister hits you, don't hit her back. They always catch the second person doing it.

4) Never ask your 3-year old brother to hold a tomato.

5) You can't trust dogs to watch your food.

6) Reading what people write on desks can teach you a lot.

7) Don't sneeze when someone is cutting your hair.

8) Puppies still have bad breath even after eating a tic tac.

9) School lunches stick to the wall.

10) You can't hide a piece of broccoli in a glass of milk.

THE LORD PROVIDES

There was an elderly charismatic lady, who every morning, stepped onto her front porch, raised her arms to the sky, and shouted: "PRAISE THE LORD!"

One day an atheist moved into the house next door. He became irritated at the elderly lady so every morning he'd step onto his front porch after her and yell: "THERE IS NO LORD!"

Time passed with the two of them carrying on this way every day. One morning, in the middle of winter, the elderly lady stepped onto her front porch and shouted:

"PRAISE THE LORD! Please Lord, I have no food and I am starving, provide for me, oh Lord!"

The next morning she stepped onto her porch and there were four huge bags of groceries sitting there. "PRAISE THE LORD!" she cried out. "HE HAS PROVIDED FOR ME!"

The atheist neighbor jumped out of the hedges and shouted: "THERE IS NO LORD. I BOUGHT THOSE GROCERIES!!!"

The little old lady threw her arms into the air and shouted: "PRAISE THE LORD! HE HAS PROVIDED ME WITH GROCERIES AND MADE THE DEVIL PAY FOR THEM.

10 THINGS MOMS DON'T WANT TO HEAR

1. I swallowed a goldfish.

2. Your lipstick works better than crayons.

3. Does grape juice leave a stain???

4. The principal called...

5. But DAD says that word all the time.

6. What's it cost to fix a window???

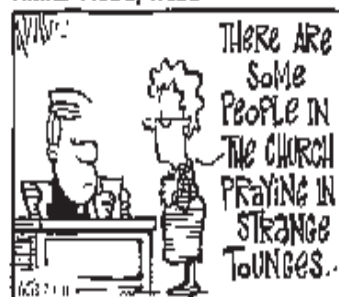
7. Has anyone seen my earthworms???

8. I painted your shoes pretty, huh Mommy?

9. The dog doesn't like dressing up in your clothes.

10. I'm moving out. (Well, maybe some day.)...

Father Flood/Webb



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

Whatever it costs, we must learn how to stop, when we need to, and draw a quiet breath. Men 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

Learning to Relax

by Leon Joseph Cardinal Suenens

art of relaxing in order to work 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 in the 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 busi-

ness 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 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; how often the children of the poor are happy. 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 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.

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 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. Sunday is the day to halt so that we can resume our march with a firmer tread. 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 the late Leon Joseph Cardinal Suenens. English Translation © 1963 Burns & Oates Ltd.. The Newman Press, Westminster, Maryland.



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Catholics From Page 1

own liturgy of worship. Uninvited intervention in the internal affairs of another patriarchate was not tolerated.

The Great Schism between East and West occurred in 1054, brought on by difficulties over centuries. The fracture grew during the Crusades. In addition to sacking Constantinople and establishing a new kingdom of Jerusalem, the Crusaders imposed Western authority and practice on the East.

The Patriarch of the West permitted a Latin (Roman) hierarchy to be set up in Constantinople and in Jerusalem, areas in which a Byzantine (Greek) hierarchy already existed. Eastern Catholics resented that the West was intervening in its patriarchates.

Gradually the West lost sight of the distinction between the pope's patriarchal and supreme pontifical offices. It forgot that most of the pope's authority over the Catholic Church rested in his patriarchal function for the West, not his supreme pontifical function. Even today it is important for Western Catholics to regain awareness of the distinction between the pope as Patriarch of the West and as Supreme Pontiff.

Eastern Churches Practice Local Autonomy

The Churches of the East – those now in communion with Rome and those not (Orthodox and non-Chalcedonian Churches)—have lived in a state of local autonomy throughout their history. This is not a matter solely of organization; it has religious and theological dimensions, too. This tradition has deep roots. Hence the Orthodox are wary of Latin (Roman) centralization and its past errors.

The Orthodox and non-Chalcedonian Churches see in the highly centralized Roman Catholic Church the religious history and mentality of Western Europe, and not a universality of their own concept and tradition. They wonder about the single structure and system of discipline and administration, the minutely developed canon law, the highly systematized theology, the curia in Rome regulating affairs of the whole Church – at times, affairs of which they have little real understanding.

Over the centuries these characteristics have intensified and spread. Despite promises to the contrary, these Western characteristics and practices have affected the Eastern Catholic Churches.

Among the institutions to which Eastern Catholics attach particular importance are the rites of public worship, yet never was reunion based simply on the preservation of the Eastern rites. Church law requires that Eastern Catholics adhere to and maintain the rite of their respective families, and to preserve faithfully their heritage, even though the location of a Roman rite parish may be more convenient.

Ancient Religious Cultures Embodied

Yet to consider our Eastern Catholic Churches as merely users of different liturgical ceremonies and languages would be a gross misunderstanding. It would be an error to identify the Eastern Catholic or Orthodox Churches as merely rites (church with a specific tradition). The question of Catholic unity is not dealing with rites. The concern is centered rather on branches of the Church struggling to maintain the complete and ancient religious cultures in which they are embodied.

The one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church founded by Jesus Christ stresses unity, not uniformity. The Church has always celebrated unity in diversity. The particular Churches of the East and of the West have always been unified in our fundamental beliefs, but diverse in their practical expression.

Repeatedly the late Pope John Paul II explained that the Church must breathe deeply with both lungs – East and West.

--Marianist Brother John Samaha, a former high school and adult education teacher in the U.S., including the Oakland Diocese and Lebanon, is now retired and residing at Villa St. Joseph in Cupertino, CA. He is a Melkite-Greek Catholic (Byzantine).

Spirit From Page 2

Admittedly, this is a very limited presentation on the gifts and fruits of the Spirit. But we wanted to use this teaching from Scripture to reinforce the point that the Holy Spirit really is with us, always reaching out to us. He uses these gifts and fruits to convince us that Jesus is far more powerful and far more loving than we can ever imagine. He also gives us these gifts to help us in our daily living so that as we grow and mature, we become more and more convinced that Jesus is Lord of all. So don't be afraid to ask for—and to use—the gifts of the Holy Spirit. While it does take time to develop these gifts, trust that the Spirit is in you; know that you are capable of receiving his gifts. They were poured into you at your baptism, and God is just waiting for you to embrace them.


Praying with the Holy Spirit

St. Paul told the Corinthians that they are a temple of the Holy Spirit. He said that through this Spirit they have the mind of Christ and can be taught by him (1 Corinthians 2:14-16; 6:19). He prayed that the Ephesians would receive “a spirit of wisdom and revelation” (Ephesians 1:17). And he told the Colossians that God had chosen to reveal to them the great mystery of Christianity: “Christ in you, the hope of glory” (Colossians 1:27).

These words—and similar ones that can be found in almost every one of Paul's letters—tell us that the Holy Spirit is among us, always seeking to convince us that Jesus is Lord.

This truth is the very foundation for our faith.

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Sweet Globalization?

Fr. John S. Rausch



Ever feel dumped on?" Singer Michael Stipe got drenched in milk, actor Antonio Banderas nearly buried by corn and musician Nitin Sawhney pelted by peanuts. Oxfam International staged a demonstration with celebrities from music and film at this year's World Social Forum in Brazil to highlight the plight of millions of farmers in developing countries unable to sell their produce because of dumping by rich nations.

At play remains the process of globalization and the giant corporations' power over public policy and their quest for profits even at the expense of small farmers, the environment and even personal health.

The U.S. and Europe spend \$1 billion a day on agricultural subsidies with surplus production sold on world markets at artificially low prices. This dumping makes it impossible for farmers in developing countries to compete, and worldwide more than 900 million farmers now risk losing their livelihoods.

Take sugar, for example. The current EU sugar policies allowing dumping cost Brazil \$494 million per year in sales, Thailand \$151 million and South Africa and India approximately \$60 million.

In addition, a World Wildlife Federation report, "Sugar and the Environment," claims "sugar may be responsible for more biodiversity loss than any other single crop." The report cites the loss of habitat, the intensive use of water for irrigation, heavy use of petrochemical fertilizers and pesticides, plus runoff of polluted effluents. It estimates that 5 to 6 million hectares of crop land are lost annually worldwide because of severe erosion and degradation from the intensive production of sugar.

Besides the economic and environmental dimensions of the sugar industry, the increased consumption of sugar is contributing to people growing fat. Two-thirds of the U.S. population is overweight and nearly a third is obese. Yet, obesity is not necessarily a disease of affluence. The same trends occur in poorer countries and in poorer populations in richer countries.

Some guilt must rest with corporate globalization. Corporations are the ones that developed processed foods and promoted ways for distribution. Patterns of food purchases everywhere have moved from local markets to more dependence on supermarkets. Brazil in the decade of the 1990s saw supermarket share of food retail jump from 30 percent to 75 percent. China in 6 years went from no supermarkets to 6,000. Supermarkets depend on pre-cooked meals and processed foods that frequently have sugar added as a preservative. In the U.S. convenience foods now account for a greater source of our sugar intake than traditional bags of sugar.

Health-wise, with obesity come related problems. Nancy Appleton in her book, *Licking the Sugar Habit*, cites a litany of health concerns associated with over-consumption of sugar: asthma, headaches, osteoporosis, heart disease, tooth decay, inflammatory bowel disease, hypoglycemia, diabetes, chronic constipation, cancer, multiple sclerosis, canker sores, gall stones and cystic fibrosis. While the USDA recommends a maximum of 12 teaspoons of sugar per day, the average American consumes four times that much.

For the past few years the National Catholic Rural Life Conference has promoted the principle that "eating is a moral act." The NCRLC asks that our eating patterns respect the sustainability of our crop lands, the livelihood of farmers growing our food and our own bodies living in the web of life.

Coming Attractions

May 6 FIRST FRIDAY MASS of the Sacred Heart
A joyous gathering of Spirit-filled Catholics

7:00pm Mass
St. Andrew Church,
1571 Southgate Ave. at Sullivan, Daly City
Fr. Joe Landi, Principal Celebrant,
with Deacon Noel Santilian.
Come, experience the healing joy.

May 15 PENTECOST SUNDAY CELEBRATION OF THE
SPIRIT-FILLED CHARISMATIC RENEWAL

Mass 2:00pm
Followed by fellowship in the lower church.
Sponsored by the multi-lingual ethnic prayer groups and
music groups affiliated with the Archdiocese of
San Francisco, Office of the Charismatic Renewal.
Msgr. Fred Bitanga, Principal Celebrant
Concelebrants include Rev. Joe Landi &
Rev. Dan Nascimento
St. Patrick Church
756 Mission St. (between 3rd & 4th Sts.) SF
Contact Judy 415/826-7827

May 20 CATHOLIC BIBLE STUDY

Every 3rd Friday of the month.
With Rev. Kato Kei, SDB
Corpus Christi Parish Hall, 62 Santa Rosa Ave, SF
Advance Registration: Norma Calip 415/468-8369
Leonor Conde 415/584-8120

May 21 BIENNIAL MEETING
OF PRAYER GROUP LEADERS

9:00 am Mass-Bishop Ignatius Wang, Celebrant
9:45 am Registration/Praise & Worship
10:15 am Business Meeting
1:00 p.m. Luncheon
St. Cecilia Church
17th Ave at Vicente St. SF
Registration & Meeting in the Lower Church Hall
Park in School Parking Lot

Each Prayer Group should have a rep at this meeting!

MAY 27-29 NORCAL CONVENTION

Santa Clara Convention Center
at Great America, Santa Clara
Information 1-800-474-6644
or www.ncccdl.com

Jun 3 FIRST FRIDAY MASS of the Sacred Heart

7:00 p.m. Rosary, 7:30 p.m. Mass
St. Augustine Church,
3700 Callan Blvd., South SF
Fr. Joe Landi, Principal Celebrant

Oct 1 & 2 5TH ANNUAL HOLY SPIRIT CONFERENCE
with English & Spanish Sessions, St. Mary's Cathedral
Conference Center. SF, Circle the Date!

By focusing too narrowly on profits, global food and agricultural corporations too easily put these concerns at risk. If people of faith took the morality of eating more seriously, more people might resist the candy bar produced by a global corporation and snack on a locally grown carrot purchased at the nearby farmers market.

--Fr. Rausch is a Glenmary priest who teaches & organizes in central Appalachia.

My non-Catholic daughter-in-law believes that we put Mary on the same level as Jesus. How do I explain that we do not?

It is sad indeed that there exists much misunderstanding regarding the love and reverence that Catholics have for the Mother of Jesus.

More than likely, the problem stems from the fact that the Blessed Virgin Mary is not regarded by some as a personal, spiritual mother. For it is only in recognizing her as our true Spiritual Mother that we will be lead to an authentic response to Mary.

When Catholics say, "Mary is our Mother," these are not just empty words. They mean rather that we recognize Mary for who she is and also for her role in the plan of God. That Mary was the mother of Jesus the God-Man is almost universally accepted among all Christians and probably many non-Christians as well. Therefore, in this small space, let us focus instead on her role in the life of the Church today. We will then be better able to explain why we love, revere, and honor her and also why we are thus lead to seek her intercession and protection.

Mary in John's Gospel

Looking first at Scripture, the principal basis for the doctrine of Mary as Spiritual Mother of all humanity is found in the Gospel of John. In this scene, Mary is at Calvary at the foot of the Cross with John, the beloved disciple. John tells us, "When Jesus saw his mother, and the disciple whom he loved standing near, he said to his mother, 'Woman, behold your son.' Then he said to the disciple, 'Behold your mother'" (John 19: 26-27). Throughout the Church's history, numerous popes, theologians, and writers have confirmed their belief that here John is symbolic of all humanity. In other words, that Jesus from the

Cross gave His Mother to every human person for all time.

Our Lord said, "Behold your mother." He was not suggesting that Mary become our mother, but that Mary is our Mother. And to Mary He gave us as children. But, if this is true, how do we make theological sense of this relationship? Turning again to Scripture, we can best understand it by considering St. Paul's beautiful doctrine of the Mystical Body of Christ (cf. Colossians 1:18, Ephesians 4:15). In this whole Body, St. Paul refers to Christ as the Head and the Church as the Body. Head and Body make up the entire and whole Mystical Body of Jesus Christ.

Mary Gave Birth to the Church's Head and so to its Entire Body

Now, if we say that Mary gave birth to Jesus, the Head of the Body, then it must be that she gave birth to the entire Body since a true body cannot be separated. Thus, it would mean that she gave birth to the members as well. In

giving physical birth to Jesus, we can say that Mary made it possible for us to receive spiritual life through Him. We were dead, and through Him we have come back to life. And it was Mary's "yes" at the Annunciation that made our rebirth possible. To question this is to question the plan of God. For it was He who decided from all eternity that it would be so. And the list of those who have believed it is almost endless.

Once we have established that Mary is our true Spiritual Mother, we must ask what this means for us in our everyday lives? What is a mother, anyway? What does a mother do? Why did God arrange it so that every human person would come into the world through a mother? There must be a reason. Does a mother simply give birth to a child only to abandon him or her? Of

course she does not. A mother not only gives birth, but she also is given by God so that she might nurture, feed, teach, guide, and protect her child. God entrusts her with these tasks. In the human family, a mother is not optional. So too, in the spiritual family of the Mystical Body of Christ, Mary, our Mother is not optional.

Devotion to Mary is Ancient

Any person who studies the history of the early Christian Church will easily discover the solid witness of how lovingly and faithfully these first believers in Christ, and countless others who went after them down through the ages, turned confidently with love and devotion to the Mother of Jesus for protection, guidance, and assistance in their hours of gravest need. Why did they do this? It seems safe to assume they did so because they wished to obey Jesus. And, after all, she had given birth to Him, nurtured, fed, guided, and protected Him.



Dear Grace...
by Grace MacKinnon

If God allowed Himself to be born of her and chose her as His Mother, can we do anything but accept her as ours? To put our trust and confidence in her will always be pleasing to God because everything she does will always lead us closer to Him.

The Church has never claimed or taught that Mary is on an equal level with God. But, nonetheless, because we are her spiritual children, she looks tenderly on us and after us with a love so profound that we are moved to plead, "Oh Blessed Mother, pray for us, now and at the hour of our death. Amen."

--Grace holds an MA in Theology and is a syndicated columnist and speaker on Catholic Doctrine. Contact Grace at www.deargrace.com. ©2005 Grace D. MacKinnon. All rights reserved.

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Quizás puedo comenzar este artículo con una pregunta.

¿Cuántos de nosotros hemos leído las epístolas escritas en el Nuevo Testamento? Cartas escritas a las diversas Iglesias por San Pedro y Pablo, por Santiago, Juan y Judas. No tengo ninguna duda de que la gran mayoría de los que leen este artículo, con calma habrán leído todas las cartas del Nuevo Testamento, y no sólo una vez sino que repetidamente habrán vuelto sobre ellas para refrescar su memoria con el contenido de estas cartas.

Sin embargo, ¿cuántos de nosotros podríamos decir que hemos leído aunque sea una fracción de las cartas que el Papa Juan Pablo II ha escrito a toda la Iglesia? Es verdad que no son parte del canon de la Sagrada Escritura, pero son cartas personales para

rio cumple su promesa al convertirse en Carne y Sangre, Alma y Divinidad, sustancialmente presente sobre el altar durante el Sacrificio Santo de la Misa, y se da gratuitamente para hacerse pan vivo, alimento verdadero para nuestras almas.

Es trágico que tantos de nuestros hermanos católicos no son conscientes de que este año ha sido dedicado a la Santísima Eucaristía, y es por lo tanto importante que nosotros nos familiaricemos con las intenciones y objetivos de este año para comunicar estas grandes verdades a nuestros hermanos católicos. Juan Pablo II comienza su Carta Apostólica con un recordatorio de los acontecimientos descritos en Lucas 24, 29, donde Jesús ha explicado el Antiguo Testamento revelando profecía tras profecía sobre el Mesías a los dos discípulos camino de Emaús. Se llenaron de esperanza nueva y sus corazones

tos del Concilio Vaticano II recordándonos cómo en las reformas litúrgicas podemos participar ahora más plenamente en la mesa de la palabra como lo hacemos en la mesa del pan. Al escuchar la Palabra de Dios en nuestra propia lengua vernácula nos alimentamos mientras Cristo nos habla. Juan Pablo continúa diciendo en la sección 13: “En efecto, no basta que los fragmentos bíblicos se proclamen en una lengua conocida si la proclamación no se hace con el cuidado, preparación previa, escucha devota y silencio meditativo, tan necesarios para que la Palabra de Dios toque la vida y la ilumine”.

Pasando a la mesa del pan, Juan Pablo también nos recuerda que estamos participando del Sacrificio del Calvario hecho presente (sección 15): “Sin embargo, no se puede olvidar que el banquete Eucarístico tiene también un sentido profundo y primordialmente

sacrificial. En él, Cristo nos presenta el sacrificio ofrecido una vez por todas en el Gólgota... Al mismo tiempo, mientras actualiza el pasado, la Eucaristía nos proyecta hacia el futuro de la última venida de Cristo, al final de la historia”.



al final de la historia”.

La presencia real de Jesús

En años recientes ha existido confusión en las mentes de muchos sobre lo que significa la verdadera presencia de Jesús en la Eucaristía. Juan Pablo II en la sección 16 clarifica el misterio de la presencia real con estas palabras: “Junto con toda la tradición de la Iglesia, nosotros creemos que bajo las especies eucarísticas está realmente presente Jesús. Una presencia -como explicó muy claramente el Papa Pablo VI- que se llama «real» no por exclusión, como si las otras formas de presencia no fueran reales, sino por antonomasia, porque por medio de ella Cristo se hace sustancialmente presente en la realidad de su Cuerpo y de su Sangre. Por esto la fe nos pide que, ante la Eucaristía, seamos conscientes de que estamos ante Cristo mismo. Precisamente su Presencia da a los diversos aspectos, -banquete, memorial de la Pascua, anticipación escatológica- un alcance que va mucho más allá del puro simbolismo. La Eucaristía es misterio de presencia, a través del que se realiza de modo supremo la promesa de Jesús de estar con nosotros hasta el final

Quedate con nosotros, Señor

por Peter Thompson

cada uno de nosotros, para alentarnos, exhortarnos, desafiarnos y, a veces, corregirnos. Están escritas en nuestra época para ayudarnos en el camino de la fe, para hacernos santos y conducirnos con seguridad a través de tiempos difíciles y peligrosos en la historia de la Iglesia.

Una carta de amor

¿Alguno de nosotros después de recibir una carta por correo dejaría de abrirla y leer su contenido? Nuestro amado Papa Juan Pablo II sigue escribiéndonos y su carta más reciente titulada *Mane Nobiscum Domine* (Quedate con nosotros, Señor) está a disposición de todos nosotros para leerla, estudiarla y ponerla en práctica. Así que con esta re-prensión, espero y pido que los que estén leyendo este artículo busquen esta carta dirigida a ustedes y se unan a Juan Pablo II en su deseo de que este año de la Eucaristía (Octubre 2004 - Octubre 2005) sea celebrado con gran amor y gratitud a Nuestro Señor Jesús. El cual en su promesa de nunca abandonarnos, a dia-

ardiendo dentro de ellos claman al Señor “Quedate con nosotros”. Jesús se revela a sí mismo al partir el pan y los dos discípulos reconocen a Jesús como Señor verdaderamente resucitado de entre los muertos.

A lo largo de su pontificado, Juan Pablo II nos lleva reiteradamente a reflexionar sobre la Eucaristía, fuente y cumbre, centro de la vida cristiana y nos recuerda de nuevo otra carta reciente *Ecclesia de Eucharistia* que es un deber para todos nosotros leer. Los meses siguen pasando y ya hemos tenido un Congreso Internacional Eucarístico celebrado en Guadalajara, México, pero todavía nos queda por delante la Jornada Mundial de la Juventud en Colonia, Alemania, del 16 al 21 de agosto de 2005, donde exhorta a los jóvenes, “a reunirse alrededor de la Eucaristía como la fuente vital que alimenta su fe y entusiasmo”.

¿Acaso esto nos deja al resto fuera de los planes para este año Eucarístico? De ningún modo, pues a lo largo de su carta apostólica Juan Pablo II nos alienta a todos a participar plenamente de muy distintas maneras. Nos recuerda constantemente a lo largo de la carta, de los documentos que ha escrito y, también, incluye citas de los documen-

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del mundo”.

Ofrece otros modos prácticos en los que podemos aumentar nuestra comprensión de la Eucaristía y especialmente de las normas litúrgicas del rito romano. Una sugerencia que tiene para nosotros es que cada comunidad parroquial pueda estudiar la Instrucción General del Misal Romano a lo largo de este año Eucarístico. Esto ayudaría a los fieles a comprender el significado de las palabras y acciones de la liturgia. Continuando con el tema de la presencia real de Cristo tanto en la celebración de la Misa como en la adoración Eucarística fuera de la Misa. Prosigue diciendo que se debería tener cuidado al dar testimonio a través de la voz, los gestos, la postura y el comportamiento. Nos urge y nos recuerda la necesidad de momentos de silencio tanto en la celebración de la Misa como en la adoración de la Eucaristía.

¡Busca Su rostro!

Cada sección en esta carta es una joya mientras nos conduce a un conocimiento más profundo del don que tenemos en la Eucaristía. Nos anima a contemplar el rostro de Cristo mientras le contemplamos en la Eucaristía expuesta sobre el altar para nuestra adoración, y a utilizar el rosario durante la adoración como medio de contemplar las verdades profundas de nuestra fe mientras adoramos al Señor Jesús allí ante nosotros. Con alegría leí en la Sección 18 su exhortación, una vez más, a celebrar procesiones del Corpus Christi, la procesión tradicional llevando a Cristo a nuestras calles.

Este testimonio de nuestra fe debe ampliar nuestros horizontes. La

“cultura de la Eucaristía” promueve una cultura de diálogo. Cristo a quien hemos recibido nos envía a ser testigos proclamando y viviendo la verdad. Para vivir esta verdad Juan Pablo II nos llama a, con ocasión de este Año de la Eucaristía, que sea una oportunidad para que las comunidades diocesanas y parroquiales se acerquen a los pobres, especialmente a los hambrientos, y se comprometan en proyectos específicos para aliviar esta injusticia.

Nos recuerda las vidas de los Santos, quienes encontraron en la Eucaristía el alimento en su camino hacia la santidad y la perfección. Nosotros que estamos llamados a lo mismo, no podemos hacer menos que María y los Santos, que desearon a Cristo con todo su ser y con lágrimas de alegría se acercaron al gran misterio del banquete Pascual, la Eucaristía.

Exhorto a todos a leer detenidamente esta carta apostólica dirigida a todos los fieles, y a responder con amor al mandato de Cristo a comer Su Carne y beber Su Sangre: “Porque mi carne es verdadera comida y mi sangre verdadera bebida. El que come mi carne y bebe mi sangre, permanece en mí, y yo en él” Jn 6, 55-56.

“Quedate con nosotros, Señor, porque atardece.”

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**2:00 pm Mass--
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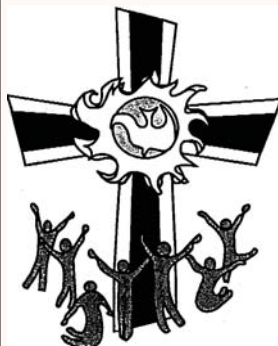
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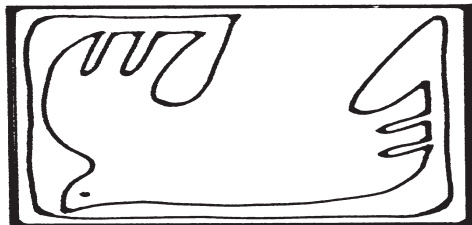
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