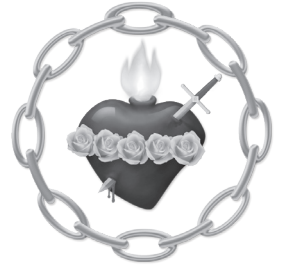


MANCIPIA

THE REPORT OF THE CRUSADE OF SAINT BENEDICT CENTER

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The Nativity of Christ by Francesco Francia



Br. André Marie,
M.I.C.M., Prior

PRIOR'S COLUMN

A BRIEF PRIMER ON THE VIRTUE OF JUSTICE

Justice, in its most foundational meaning, is “rendering to the other what is his due.” When the “other” is a fellow man or the State, there are three specific parts of justice that pertain: commutative justice, distributive justice, and legal justice, each of

which will be explained presently. When the “other” is God, then what directs our action is the virtue of religion, which is simply defined as “rendering to God what is His due.”

The virtue of religion has as its highest expression the cult of sacrifice, by which man renders adoration, thanksgiving, reparation, and petition to God. Whereas the Old Testament required multiple sacrifices which had to be repeated, there is only one sacrifice in the New Law: that of Calvary, which is renewed (not repeated) in an unbloody manner in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. Nothing else in our religion is a sacrifice properly so called, but we do have numerous analogously named sacrifices we can “offer up” on a daily basis.

Father John Hardon, whose definitions I will be borrowing throughout this piece, defines justice this way:

As a virtue, it is the constant and permanent determination to give everyone his or her rightful due. It is a habitual inclination of the will and therefore always recognizes each one's rights, under any and all circumstances. The rights in question are whatever belongs to a person as an individual who is distinct from the one who practices justice. The essence of justice, then, as compared with charity, consists in the distinction between a person and his or her neighbor; whereas charity is based on the union existing between the one who loves and the person loved so that the practice of charity regards the neighbor as another self.

In my estimation, it was prudent for Father Hardon to contrast justice with charity, as I have myself witnessed people confusing the two, and — worse — thinking that works of charity somehow exempt them from the duties that are proper to justice. By charity, one is always obliged to love one's neighbor, but one is not always obliged to give him alms. By justice, one is always obliged to pay one's debts.

There is only one cardinal moral virtue of justice. But, depending on the nature of the relationship of the individual to “the other,” it takes different forms, which are governed by different principles.

When man renders his due to the other as an individual, we call it “commutative justice,” which Father Hardon defines thus:

The virtue that regulates those actions which involve the rights between one individual and another individual. If a person steals another's money, he or she violates commutative justice. Any violation of commutative justice imposes on the guilty party the duty of restitution, that is, the duty of repairing the harm caused. In fact, strictly speaking, only violations of commutative justice give rise to this duty of restitution.

When it is not the individual, but the political community that renders what is due to the other, we call it, “distributive justice,” which is defined by Father Hardon as:

The virtue that regulates those actions which involve the rights that an individual may claim from society. According to distributive justice, the state has three basic duties: to distribute the common burdens and privileges equitably; to make it possible for each citizen to exercise natural and acquired rights without undue hindrance; to foster mutual relations among the citizens for living together peacefully. Inequitable imposition of taxes, for example, would be a violation of distributive justice.

In that definition, the distinction is made between “natural rights” and “acquired rights,” which are also called legal rights. Natural rights are due to each person by nature and are inalienable. They are not bestowed by the State, but by God Himself. Acquired or legal rights are bestowed by the State. Whereas the right a father has to provide for his family by the labor of his hands is a natural right, the right to vote in an election is something conceded by the State. All too often, modern man's thinking is distorted by social contract theory, and he assumes that all of his rights are given to him by the State. This is part of the modern tendency of deification of the State, and it is very destructive.

When man renders what is due to “the other” as the political community, we call it “legal justice.” Father Hardon:

The virtue that regulates those actions which society justly requires of the individual for the common good. According to legal justice, the State may institute just laws and perform such acts as further the welfare of the community. Thus import duties, fire and traffic regulations, anti-pollution laws, and similar provisions of the State concern legal justice.

As Joseph Pieper points out — and I am heavily paraphrasing here — to deny that distributive and legal justice

exist and to reduce all justice to commutative justice leads to libertarianism or anarchy, where the community has no rights over individuals at all, and where the individual need expect nothing from the community. On the other hand, to deny the existence of commutative justice and reduce all justice to legal and distributive, is to profess tyranny as the optimum form of government. Both of these errors, especially the latter, are still with us.

There is a fourth division of justice that only entered the Catholic lexicon in the twentieth century. It is called “social justice.” Sometimes, as in Father Dennis Fahey’s writings, and the teaching of Father Paul A. Duffner, O.P., social justice is used as a synonym for legal justice. In this use, the name makes sense. But in the modern lexicon, “social justice” has been expanded to mean much more. The normally very reasonable and lucid Father Hardon sounds a few false notes when he tries to accommodate new ideas in social doctrine, for he defines “social justice” as:

The virtue that inclines one to co-operate with others in order to help make the institutions of society better serve the common good. While the obligation of social justice falls upon the individual, that person cannot fulfill the obligation alone, but must work in concert with others, through organized bodies, as a member of a group whose purpose is to identify the needs of society, and, by the use of appropriate means, to meet these needs locally, regionally, nationally, and even globally. Implicit in the

virtue of social justice is an awareness that the world has entered on a new phase of social existence, with potential for great good or great harm vested in those who control the media and the structures of modern society. Christians, therefore, are expected to respond to the new obligations created by the extraordinary means of promoting the common good not only of small groups but literally of all humanity.

But if justice pertains to what is “due,” namely, by rights and obligations, how is this version of “social justice” justice at all? Must a Vermont farmer, a Sri Lankan student, or a Finnish farrier confess the sin of not joining an organized body to work for global justice? How do we even examine our consciences on these matters? Real virtues imply real moral imperatives. As Sam Guzman correctly observes:

The other extreme is viewing justice as a vague and sentimental desire to help everyone. This is often under the guise of ‘social justice.’ While social justice is a valid concept when strictly and carefully defined, more often than not, it simply becomes an excuse for political violations of private property, the dignity of charitable giving, and even human life in the case of abortion.

Thus, the Catholic “social justice warrior” would trample on the State’s genuine rights and duties in the manner of immigration and say that by virtue of “social justice,” all men have a right to immigrate to another country indiscriminately.



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Again, that same warrior, who is generally a soft-core socialist, will argue that “healthcare is a human right,” meaning that the State must provide it for all at the expense of the taxpayer — even when the recipient of the healthcare is an immigrant who himself does not pay taxes. Such expansive notions of social justice actually violate distributive justice and legal justice. It is no wonder that many Catholic bishops find themselves morally undermined in condemning State programs that promote abortion, contraception, and the like, when their own USCCB pet “social justice” projects are dining at the same banquet of “government” (read: taxpayer) largesse. I have in mind especially the pomps and works of the CCHD, a USCCB bureaucracy steeped in moral turpitude.

Again, we are back at confusing justice and charity. The noble practice of genuine Christian charity is undermined or even entirely dissolved when what would constitute an act of charity is imposed by the government, muddled by bureaucracy, and distributed at least partially in the interests of radicalizing a new generation of social justice warriors.

I do not claim it was his intention, but Father Hardon’s definition of social justice had too little to do with the cardinal virtue and is far too compatible with the agenda of the globalists.

While I do not have time to develop it here, an adequate grasp of the Catholic concept of justice must respect the important truth that men come together to form political societies in order that they may live virtuously and thereby achieve their happiness. To consider this is to touch upon the true notion of the “common good,” a term hopelessly confused in our day by progressivist purveyors of “social justice.”

With this fuller appreciation of the cardinal virtue of justice, we should be able to spot the actual injustices all around us. Here is a small list:

- The denial of God’s rights by individuals and by society. Remember: God’s rights come first. His rights are violated when the natural law, which He wrote on our hearts, is violated, which means that societies that violate that law transgress distributive and legal justice. In Catholic nations, the social rights of Our Lord Jesus Christ the King go even beyond (but not against) the natural law.
- The denial of the State’s rights in the matter of capital punishment, an error now apparently enshrined in the current version of the CCC.
- The denial of the Catholic doctrine of Hell, which is tantamount to conceding a universal “right” to the Beatific Vision.

- Granting sodomites and unnatural women the use of the sacrosanct words “matrimony” or “marriage” to describe their perverse unions.
- The false mercy cult in the Church, which does such things as telling impenitent adulterers they may receive Holy Communion while living in habitual grave sin. True mercy does not contradict justice, though at times it may mitigate its full rigor. On the part of the clergy, the crime itemized here is both unjust and unmerciful, as it leads the sinner deeper into sin and closer to damnation.
- Perpetuating the lie that the Church has no mission to evangelize the Jewish people, when such is a mandate of Jesus Christ Himself (included in the universal mandate to preach to all nations and all creatures) — a mandate even the “Doctor of the Gentiles” took quite seriously. Mandates carry obligations, which are matters of justice.
- Making, as we said, immigration an unqualified right.
- Pseudo-judicial exercises in government shaming without due process, such as the Pennsylvania Grand Jury report. The torch and pitchfork brigades formed by Big Government and Big Media are not seeking justice, but the destruction of the Church.
- The genuine negligence of duty on the part of some number of the Church’s pastors, which caused the clerical homosexual scandals in the first place. The three munera of the priest — to teach, to govern, and to sanctify — are sacred obligations in justice especially binding on bishops with jurisdiction.

Rather than seek out and identify the injustices of others, it is incumbent upon each of us personally to examine ourselves on the practice of this virtue, not only to see where we have failed in it, but also to study how we might augment the virtue in our souls by seizing on opportunities to practice it, even where doing so does violence to our nature. “The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent bear it away” (Matt. 11:12).

Through the intercession of Mary, the “Mirror of Justice,” may we be perfectly converted to Jesus, the Son of Justice Himself, and shout with zeal to our God, “Thy justice is justice for ever: and thy law is the truth” (Ps. 118:142). ■

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Sister Marie Thérèse, M.I.C.M.

CONVENT CORNER THROUGH THE WINDSHIELD

Destination...Droning of Vehicle...Darkness... Three in the morning... Red lights converging...then parting before my eyes...then converging again. Vague thoughts move in my mind. Flashing lights...

trucks...large trucks...semi trucks... Strange...trucks weaving ahead of me with lights flashing...flashing... Why?... Where am I?... Oh! I am driving! I had fallen asleep!!!! A shake of my head and a straightening of my back...I am awake! The truckers were trying to wake me without driving me off the road with their horns!

That, Dear Reader, was more than a quarter of a century ago...somewhere en route from far-off college to home... Yes, that night I could have entered eternity through the windshield of my car...

Since then, I have used many means to keep myself awake on long journeys. To name a few: coffee, music, conversation, coffee, asking someone to keep me awake, coffee, pinching and slapping myself, coffee, and last but not least, getting a little more sleep (sometimes). I note that the more tired I am, the

more violent I need to be with myself to keep alert.

Destination...Comfort, Dear Reader...A new day...Daily routine...Daily news...Calendar...Graduation...Courtship... Marriage...Alarm clock...New job...Children...Anniversary... Stars...Winter...Summer...Over the Hill...Death of a parent... Death of a friend...Retirement...Retirement party...Doctor report...Pain...Fear...Why?...Where am I?...Oh! I had fallen into routine in my Faith!!!!...God was trying to wake me without “knocking me off my horse!”

WAKE UP DEAR READER!!!! Your exit is coming up... and you...are...falling.....asleep. Yes, you are so very comfortable in your routine as a “practicing Catholic”...Use a little violence on yourself! And, get some help staying “awake” spiritually. A retreat is like a few good nights’ sleep and strong coffee in the morning. A meditation is like a good nap. Penance is much like slapping oneself and drinking coffee...And, a truly good friend will have a bracing effect on your spiritual life...

If you don’t wake up, Dear Reader, you might not make it safely to your Eternal Destination — Heaven.

By the way, Dear Reader, when are you planning to die? Aren’t you? Don’t you ride in vehicles with... windshields? ■

Email Sister Marie Thérèse, at convent@catholicism.org

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Mr. Brian Kelly

KELLY FORUM

THAT'S NOT SANTA CLAUS, THAT'S YOUR DAD

My siblings and I were so blessed to have parents who gave their five children the most beautiful and happy Christmases.

The first thing that went up in our house was the Nativity scene with all the characters in place waiting until midnight, Christmas Eve, for mom to place the Infant Jesus in the manger. She did that while we were sleeping before she and dad slipped out for Midnight Mass. I do not remember the prayer that we said at dinner every evening in Advent but I do remember the simple joy of lighting the Advent candles at the dinner table before grace. I think each of us five children was given the honor of lighting those candles, although I am not sure about Sheila, the youngest, who was four years younger than me, the next-to-the-youngest. It was a simple joy that is a very fond memory. At the time I am reminiscing about I was perhaps six years-old, although some of the memories I include here are from a few years later.

As the next-to-the-youngest I once explained to our parents' best friends, Eddie and Lee Curtin, that I was like Tuesday. I informed them that my brother Austin, Jr. (God rest his soul) was special because he was the first-born. Then I explained to these wonderfully Catholic, wide-eyed listeners (Lee Curtin was a saint, Italian, Eddie was almost as Irish as my father, a good and holy man with a very good heart) that my older brother and sister, Richard and Mary Sue, were special because they were twins. And, finally, there was Sheila. She was special because she was the youngest. So, I explained, I was like Tuesday. You see, I went on, Sunday was the Lord's day. Monday began the school week. Wednesday was the middle day of the week, so it had a central place. Thursday was sort of special because on Thursday youngsters are excited because Friday is coming and then we are out of school and free. I guess I did not like school very much as a child. And Saturday, well, Saturday is fun day, sports all year round, and after a few chores in the morning we were off and running. There was Pop Warner football Pee Wees and the Little League Reserves. I guess many want-to-be athletic fathers couldn't resist living vicariously in their little tots so long as they could walk. Can you picture ten, nine, even eight year-olds with helmets and shoulder pads, and mouth pieces, and rubber spikes, playing tackle in uniforms? My father was not of that breed, but many other fathers of the baby boom generation were, and dad did not mind at all. Mom went to the games, but not dad. But Tuesday? Nothing special at all about Tuesday. Eddie and Lee always called me "Tuesday's child" after that. May they rest in peace. I digress.

Mom and dad let us decorate the tree a week early (a real tree — almost every family of the lower middle class Catholics had real Christmas trees), except for two items: the angel to crown the tree, and the tinsel. These finishing touches required ceremony. What a thrill it was to deck the tree with the same ornaments every year, especially the different colored balls and the wrap around silver and gold ribbons. We all helped out with that as soon as the red, blue, green, yellow, and white lights were strung around the tree and the bulb test was done. Mom always had spare bulbs on hand. Often we had other morsels of multi-colored paper rings and other trinkets that we had made with the sisters at Our Lady of Lourdes grammar school.

My brothers and I decorated the windows of the front porch. An exquisite Madonna and Child (Was it a Botticelli?) on a round plastic sheet was taped up to the big window and Santa Claus went on the storm door window. No, he didn't have a bottle of Coke in his hand. Then, the real fun began. We sprayed every free inch of glass with canned snow. Easy to put on, but hard to scrape off after it had frozen and dried.

Mom and my older sister seemed to be always baking and cleaning the week before Christmas. The boys got away with just vacuuming. The last thing we did before going to bed was throw tinsel on the tree. At least for me, this was great fun. It was the icing on the cake. Don't they call tinsel "icing"? I think so.

Mom and dad made sure we were all in bed before eight o'clock on Christmas Eve, right after thumb tacking our big red stockings to the stairway wall frame. I guess the excitement made us all tired because, except for one occasion, we fell asleep fast as soon as we were sent upstairs to bed. That gave mom and dad time to take out our well-hidden presents, tag them, wrap them up, and put them under the tree.

I guess we all believed in Santa Claus although I do not remember much about that. If I got a coal in my stocking (and that was very possible because we had a coal furnace in the cellar) I knew it would have come from mom not Santa Claus. None of us ever got coal.

The only Santa Claus I ever personally encountered as a child was at a Cub Scout Christmas party. It was a huge event as I remember, the only one I ever went to as a child. My best friend and I were in line to meet Santa and get some kind of little toy from him. All the kids got something. And it wasn't a candy cane. We were about six years old at the time I am thinking of. I hate to say seven because at seven we *homo sapiens* are supposed to have attained the use of reason. You cannot have the use of reason and believe in Santa Claus. Saint Thomas says so in the *Summa*. Well, my best friend kept

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telling me that that wasn't Santa on the stage, it was my dad. I do not really remember what happened after that. My friend was right, however, as I learned later, but I wasn't about to ask that question when I sat on Santa's knee and looked him in the eye. My dad made the perfect Santa. He was good-sized, had a big chest, plump rosy cheeks, and thick snow-white hair. He only needed the beard.

This brings me to the one time that I did not fall totally asleep while mom and dad were at Midnight Mass. I heard someone downstairs in the wee hours that one Christmas morning, so I stood at the top of the stairs to listen. I heard mom whispering and actually giggling. This is a true story, with a bit of literary licence allowed, so don't laugh! I tiptoed down the stairs and what did I see? Mommy kissing Santa Claus right in front of the piano no one in my family could play. I was traumatized. I slowly sneaked back upstairs keeping the secret to myself. (You see, dad used to dress up as Santa Claus every year when he was a young father, even after Midnight Mass apparently, and he and mom would stop in at some neighbor's after Mass party.) When he came upstairs to wake us all up, he was not Santa Claus any longer.

This was the tradition at the Kelly house every Christmas: Dad would come to our rooms, pull our big toe (if you want a fault-proof method of waking someone up, try it, Dads), and we would come downstairs one by one. In the living room was a spectacular sight. The tree was all aglow and presents all around it. Mom was so happy. I remember her singing some of the carols that she sang at Midnight Mass with the choir. Mom had a wonderful voice.

The eldest child, Austin, opened his gifts first, then on down the line. Sheila was just a little lassie at the time I am remembering, and so she had to wait . . . and wait . . . and wait. Dad probably had her on his knee. Sometimes there were



surprises when we received presents that we had never asked for. Like a Zoro outfit with a sword that made me a little crazy for a while. When I got to be a little older I knew I would get a basketball or football. I got one of those every year . . . and sweat socks. All boys got sweat socks for Christmas.

Dad was such a kibbitzer. When all the presents were opened and stockings were emptied mom would say it's time to go back to bed. By then it was three A.M. Then dad would say "Wait a minute!" Didn't Santa leave something else for Austin, for Richard, for Mary Sue, for Brian, and for Sheila? Mom would say, "Oh, yes, yes, I forgot." Then the two of them would go down to the cellar and come up with the one present that they knew each of us wanted the most. I will never forget dad bringing up for me a four-speed Schwinn racer with handle brakes, just like my cousin had. Four-speeds, can you imagine that!

With all of us kiddoes spoiled to the core we ushered off back to bed. Only a few more hours left to sleep before we had to get up for the nine o'clock Christmas Mass. I don't think any of us could sleep after that.

So many beautiful memories. You know, my parents didn't have a car back then. We walked to Mass. Yes, we did, even when six and seven years-old, with my cousins and siblings. It was exactly one mile away. All the school children went to the nine o'clock and most of them walked. It was safe back then. The Mass was in Latin and we all followed it in our little pocket missals. I had a real missal, a daily missal, and do you know who taught me how to use it and put the colored liturgical ribbons in the right place? My best friend, the smart guy, who knew Santa Claus was my father. His name is Joe Storm and he is still my close friend. ■

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DO NOT GO TO BETHLEHEM TO FIND THE OBVIOUS

From The Leonard Feeney Omnibus

To the young Mother who stands in silence and wonderment beside the manger-box in the cave of Bethlehem, this gift of Sanctifying Grace was bestowed in its fullness. Our Blessed Lady

was a little Jewish girl. She lived in the northern province of Palestine, which is called Galilee, and was the only child of an aged couple, Joachim and Anna, and her name, as we know, was Mary. Nine months before her birth, Mary of Nazareth was conceived in the womb of Anna. Her physical conception occurred naturally, according to the manner of every other human child, through the humble processes of her father and mother cooperating as husband and wife. This much of her was usual and ordinary.

But being destined, as she was, to become the Mother of Jesus Christ, she was presanctified for this sublime function by being given at the first moment of her conception the gift of Sanctifying Grace. The darkness which exists in human nature in the first phase of its development was not allowed to enter the soul of Mary. As a beautiful gesture of Divine courtesy and filial respect, Our Saviour saw to it that this maiden, from whose body He would one day derive the substance of His own, should enjoy the benefits of Redemption in a fashion all her own. At the first earliest instant when there was life in the womb of Anna, God sanctified it. He destined Mary at that moment for the Kingdom of Heaven. This is the Immaculate Conception.

The Immaculate Conception has nothing to do, as is commonly supposed, with Our Lady's chastity, nor with the chastity of her father and mother. The Immaculate Conception refers to Our Lady's Christianity. Its meaning is best studied, not in connection with the Nativity or the Annunciation, but in connection with the third chapter of Genesis and with the discourse of Our Lord at the Last Supper; for there is a world of difference between the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception and that of the Virgin Birth. The Immaculate Conception refers to Our Lady at her own birth and the sanctified condition of her soul in the nine months that preceded it.

The Virgin Birth refers to her at Our Lord's birth, and to the fact that she conceived Him without the aid of man. The Immaculate Conception refers to Our Lady as a child; the Virgin Birth has to do with her as a mother. The Immaculate Conception has reference to the condition of Our Lady's soul at the instant of its creation; the Virgin Birth to the condition of her body before, during, and after the time that she became

fruitful with the Divine Child. This is the woman, the miracle woman of all the centuries, who stands so quietly by her Infant in the cold of the first Christmas Eve, and at whose side stands meekly her husband, Saint Joseph, marveling at the Child of predilection which was not his own.

And now about the Child Himself. One does not go down to Bethlehem to see an ordinary child, for the little Jesus is the wonder child of our earth, fashioned and structured in a way no child has ever been since the human race began. To begin with, He possesses two natures, the nature of God and the nature of man: He possesses the Divine Nature because it was such that the Eternal Father gave to Him in Its fullness when He generated Him in eternity. He is true man because He possesses a human body and a human soul. But there is only one person in Him, the person who coexists in beatitude with the Father and the Holy Ghost in Heaven. The same "I" who says, "I am the Father's only begotten Son," also says in truth, once Bethlehem has occurred, "and I am also Mary's Child."

The theological implication behind this great mystery should not be ignored simply because of the strangeness of our Emmanuel. To love Him we must know Him, and we must know Him as He is, and realize that there is no one in this world like Him. He has two minds, two wills, two spirits (one of them a human soul), one body. From the very first moment of His conception by the power of the Holy Ghost,



He was in possession of the Beatific Vision, and saw with His human mind, the eternal beauty of God face to face: He was also gifted with infused knowledge to enable Him to fulfil His rôle as Messiah and prophet; and lastly, there came through the medium of His little senses, through the windows of His eyes, and the doorways of His ears, human sights and sounds just as they come to any other child, and this we call His “experimental knowledge.”

Having known the Eternal Beatitude in the bosom of His Father, it was most terrible that He should ever experience suffering in the temporal sphere into which He moved. This little Child should never have been cold, should never have been abandoned or neglected or forced to go into exile. No one

should ever have been unkind to Him, or ungrateful. Never should His poor body have been scourged at the pillar, His beautiful head crowned with thorns, and nails impressed into His sacred hands and feet. He should never have been covered with mud and spittle, never been called a sinner and a fool; not even after His death should the Centurion, save for fulfilling the prophecy, have pierced His side with a spear.

But we will forget at Christmas time that such things are to happen in the course of His short life. We shall only be glad that a Child is born to us who is the salvation of the world, and we shall join our minds and hearts to some simple shepherds, adore Him, and be glad there is another Christmas. ■

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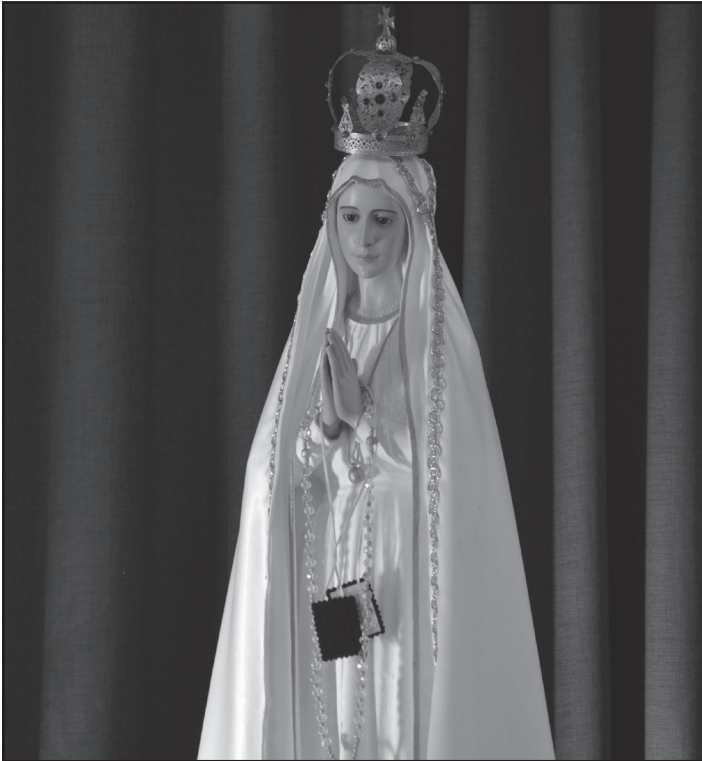
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Saint Benedict Center Conference 2018 Wrap-Up

BY BRIAN KELLY



This year's conference was a rousing success. Over one hundred people attended, many coming from states as far away as Texas and Mississippi. Speakers, too, came from Washington D.C., Louisiana, and, our Master of Ceremonies, Charles Coulombe flew in from Austria.

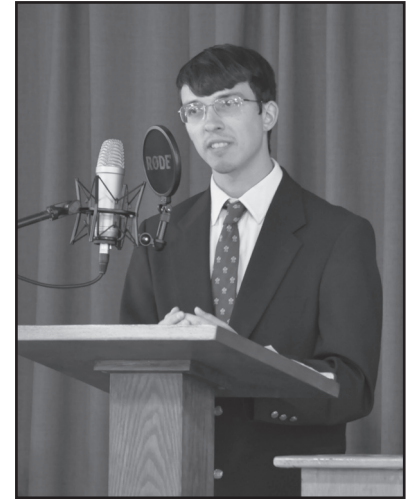
Brother André Marie introduced the theme for this year's conference "Saving America," which the speakers would be addressing from different perspectives. He touched upon the challenge that the faithful are presented with in regard to the clergy abuse scandals and cover-ups, stressing that, with Amer-



ica being at the epicenter of the scandal, we have a duty according to whatever our state is in life to "save America" by working to "save the Church."

Sister Maria Philomena opened the speaker forum with a talk whose title had aroused much curiosity. It was "The Caged Bird: The Role of Women in the Conversion of America." Feminists, she said, think that

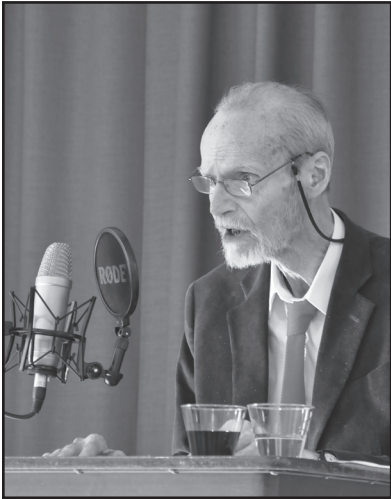
the "cage" is maternity. They think that by freeing women from maternity they can set them free. For what? For "other things" they imagine to be more important. There is nothing more important for a woman, who is not in religious life, than to be a good mother. Without that society crumbles. So-called liberated women are bereft of joy and fulfillment, always seeking something "else" that



never satisfies. Sister spoke beautifully on the necessity of holy joy, which follows upon loving and being loved, first loving God and then our children. "The more you give away," she said, "the more you have to give." "Saving America" begins by "saving the family." If a woman has a higher vocation to religious life that is the best that love can give. America, she noted, has had two hundred religious orders of women founded here. Are we women "caged" she asked rhetorically? Yes! But what does it matter, she said, if the bird sings. No one can be free without structures and restraints. This is the "truth" that sets us free to love God as He wills us to love Him.

Martin Chouinard, teacher at Immaculate Heart of Mary School, gave a talk on the theme of "Heroic Hearts and the Transmission of Culture." The purpose of "culture," he said, is to produce temperance, order, and a desire for virtue, to prepare uncultivated soil to receive the Gospel. We must not run away from reality when it is unpleasant, but face it, and change it, renew it in Christ. This is the "Life" Jesus offers, not only for us as individuals, but for nations, for America. There is no "saving America" without working for the conversion of America. Catholic culture is essential if we are to produce fruit in our society. What is our "purpose" in life? We all know our highest vocation, which is the saving of our souls. Herein lies the virtue of prudence, choosing the right means to achieve our end, our God-given purpose. This is the highest good, he said; nothing can be called good that fails to be what it ought to be. Let us seek the true good, in grace, which the Author of Goodness, offers us.

Gary Potter addressed the theme of "Saving America" by calling for "the End of Modernity." The talk was vintage Gary Potter filled with examples of what Catholic culture is and can do. Culture, of course, is not abstract. "The extent," he



said, “to which a person is authentically Christian can be gauged by the extent to which he resists modernity.” To help bury “modernity” we must plan a strategy [prudence] and we must execute it. There is a reservoir here in these United States that can be channeled into springs and fountains. Catholics, he said, are actually the largest religious body in America. Our Catholic forefathers are the fore-

most inheritors and beneficiaries of western culture. Culture endures when the cultivated show life, grow, assimilate what is good into the culture, and, I might add, reproduce. “Modernity,” he said does not endure, “its most prominent characteristic is ceaseless change.” Take the apple as an illustration: “Culture,” Gary said, “is the skin; the meat [or pulp] is civilization; and the core is religion.” And one of the cultural fruits of religion is art.

A few quips from the talk: “Art is the application of skill... to the production of something that will communicate beauty as wisdom.”

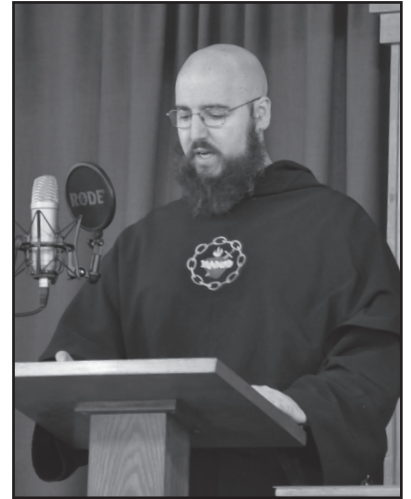
“All corporal beauty [to include the beauty of the audial as well as the visual] flows from an Eternal Source, the Good.”

“What we think, how we fill our minds, determines our state of being.”



Our Master of Ceremonies, **Charles Coulombe**, had the most intriguing title for his talk: “Where Did You Go, Joe DiMaggio?: Nostalgia and Evangelisation.” “Nostalgia,” he explained, “implies a dissatisfaction for the present.” It need not be self-indulgent nor an escape from reality. Rather, he said, it can have a real use; namely, the understanding that the way things are now is wrong and the yearning for Heaven is right. When one hears someone

longing nostalgically for things gone by it is almost always for something good, the so-called good old days. It is good for us to be nostalgic for the “good things” not only of the past, but, more importantly, for the future, i.e., to have a nostalgia for Heaven by way of anticipation. Writing as your reviewer, I will say that Joe DiMaggio was of my father’s generation, but I



guess I could be nostalgic for Mickey Mantle. On a higher note, I do have a nostalgia for the days of innocence, my grammar school years as an altar boy. These days, I hope (and we all have such good bygone days) will have their fulfillment in the bliss of eternity. There are endless examples of uplifting nostalgia, personal and societal, that we can make use of for purposes of evangelization, so why not take the advice of our speaker and employ them for our neighbors’ sanctification in truth.

Brother André Marie’s talk “Providence and Opportunism: On Being All Things to All Americans,” was a veritable crash course on the subject of Divine Providence and how a proper “opportunism” on our part can work along with the divine plan. Situations will arise frequently in our day to day life that we ought to make use of for God’s glory and the salvation of our neighbors. Brother used the example of Saint Paul in Athens where the apostle made use of a statue in the Areopagus dedicated to “the unknown God.” Paul went on to make the one God, who was “unknown’ to them, known. Again, citing Saint Paul, “I became all things to all men, that I might save all” Brother explained the second part of his title, referring the above passage in Corinthians, to our vocation to help in the “saving of America.” The first part of this insightful talk was a theological overview of the doctrine of Divine Providence. Particularly interesting was his explanation of the permissive will of God and the problem of evil. The Council of Trent, he said, had to condemn the heretical idea that God is the author of all acts, even evil acts, in such wise that the treason of Judas was as much God’s work as the conversion of Saint Paul. What a horrible thing this Calvinistic falsehood was! Our speaker went on to praise the Providence of God making use of the Wisdom books and demonstrating the “sweetness” of God’s order and the three gradations of providence. Brother spoke eloquently about God’s Providence in history and how we must be open every day to advancing God’s “will of good



pleasure.” By being ready, in grace, to give a reason for our hope as Saint Peter urges in his first epistle, we can be good instruments in helping to bring about the conversion of America. Brother ended with a reminder that we have our guardian angels at our disposal and, most importantly we have Our Lady. She asked to make her known throughout the nation as “Our Lady of America.”

This Conference included something new and that was a series of brief personal accounts from seven sisters highlighting their apostolic work out bookselling and as teachers in the classroom. It was titled: “Talking Religion in America: Examples from the Field.” The mini-presentations were both delightful, especially the anecdotes, and inspiring. **Sister Maria Philomena** gave a little background about the launching of the bookselling apostolate in 1950 and its pioneer, Brother Edward Maria, the first of the Slaves of the Immaculate Heart of Mary to be called home. She gave three reasons for talking about bookselling: 1) to gain the listeners’ prayers for the work on the street as sowing the seed on the highways and byways is not easy, 2) to demonstrate the value of good Catholic apologetics in action and 3) to encourage (rather more, to insist upon) study in order that each of us will be equipped with sufficient knowledge to defend the Faith. **Sister Maria Perpetua** spoke next, followed by **Sister Marie Gabrielle** who said she prays to be a “spiritual pyromaniac” casting fire upon the earth. **Sister**



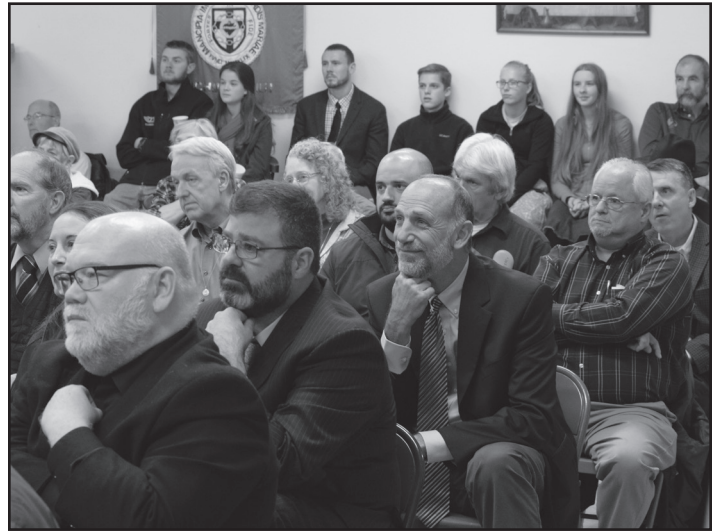
Mary Joseph spoke next about “Approaching the Unapproachable.” In the bookselling apostolate now more than ever before there are non-Christians in the marketplace. Our sisters do not waste any opportunity but, with these souls, they leave appropriate literature for them and ask them to accept a Miraculous Medal. **Sister Mary Peter** continued on that theme by saying that they always carry with

them pockets full of Medals, Rosaries, and Scapulars. She had wonderful stories to tell as did all the sisters. With Catholics, Sister said that she always encourages those with little or a lot of faith to show their gratitude to God by going to Confession. The sisters carry a How to Make a Good Confession booklet with them for this purpose. **Sister Maria Rosaria**, one of our three California sisters, called herself



a “Valley Girl” from the San Fernando Valley. Quoting Brother Francis she said she always looks for good will by seeking “inquiring minds.” Again, citing Brother Francis, she stressed enthusiasm for all defenders of the Faith. Ask the person questions to whom God has arranged for you to speak. Get them to talk about themselves. People need affirmation she said. Like a cat, they need their coat fluffed. It was funny, but so true. Then after you soften them up, give them the hard stuff, the truth about salvation. **Sister Marie Thérèse** ended the queue with an inspiring affirmation that it would be a sin against charity not to tell a non-Catholic that they are headed for hell. One can put it in the positive, as Brother did in *Sentimental Theology*, by stating that when we say there is *no salvation outside the Church* we are also saying that there *IS* salvation inside the Church. This is the good news of the Gospel. Sister encouraged her listeners to build on the virtues of Joyfulness, Generosity, and Genuineness (guilelessness) by being Courageous, Loyal, Strong, and Confident. Regarding the Sisters presentation at the recent SBC conference Attendee Robert Boehm said: “Seven wise consecrated virgins! — Wise according to the definition given by Brother Francis! I thought their comments were perfectly exemplary of the method to be used by lay apostles when someone is placed in our company. They inspired us to follow their excellent examples; how to engage the help Heaven wants us to invoke; and why confidence in Our Lady & the Church Triumphant should provide courage. One the best presentations of all our conferences.”

For lack of space I can only give you the titles of the two remaining talks. **Mike Church**’s talk is entitled: “The Only Step Forward, Is the Step Backward.” And **C.J. Doyle**, our closing speaker, addressed the question “Why Has America Not Been Converted to the Catholic Faith?” Ending the conference there was our traditional Q & A panel discussion where the audience submitted questions to each of the speakers. ■



OUR CRUSADE:

The propagation and defense of Catholic dogma — especially *Extra Ecclesiam nulla salus*
— and the conversion of America to the one, true Church.

PRAYERS FOR THE HOLY FATHER

V. Let us pray for our pontiff, Pope Francis.

R. The Lord preserve him, and give him life, and make him to be blessed upon the earth, and deliver him not up to the will of his enemies (Roman Breviary).

Our Father. Hail Mary.

V. Let us pray.

R. Almighty and everlasting God, have mercy upon Thy servant, Francis, our Supreme Pontiff, and direct him, according to Thy loving kindness, in the way of eternal salvation; that, of thy gift, he may ever desire that which is pleasing unto Thee and may accomplish it with all his might. Through Christ our Lord. Amen (Roman Ritual).

EXTRA ECCLESIAM NULLA SALUS

Ex Cathedra: “We declare, say, define, and pronounce that it is absolutely necessary for the salvation of every human creature to be subject to the Roman Pontiff.” (Pope Boniface VIII, the Bull *Unam Sanctam*, 1302).

Notes:

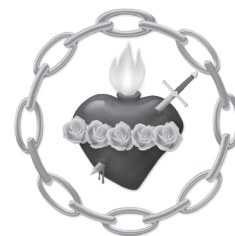
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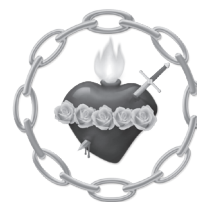
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