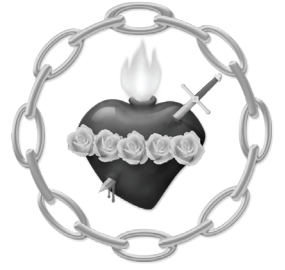


# MANCIPIA

THE REPORT OF THE CRUSADE OF SAINT BENEDICT CENTER

September/October 2018



Virgin and Child with a Rosary by Bartolomé Esteban Murillo



Br. André Marie,  
M.I.C.M., Prior

## PRIOR'S COLUMN HAVE CONFIDENCE!

In the film *For Greater Glory*, there is a dialogue between Mexico's Freemasonic head of state, Plutarco Calles and the American Ambassador, Dwight Morrow. Morrow is diplomatically attempting to convince Calles of the wisdom of ending the per-

secution of the Church in Mexico, expressing the idea that the Cristeros, who are causing Calles such problems, must be extremists who cannot possibly represent the Catholic majority in Mexico.

Calles' response is significant:

*In my experience as a revolutionary, a small group of determined men can bring down a government, and that is why every Catholic aggression must be responded to immediately, forcefully, and without hesitation.*

How true to history that dialogue is I cannot say, but it does contain a very important truth, namely, that revolutions are carried out, not by large uprisings of "the people," but by "a small group of determined men," usually wealthy oligarchs whose hatred for Christian order is an ideology. It is almost never the "common man" who makes the revolution happen. (On the other hand, uprisings to restore Christian order — e.g., those of the Vendéans, the Cristeros, the Chouans — are often truly movements "of the people.")

Catholicism in America is something of a sleeping giant. If America is to be saved, we cannot count on numbers, even if ours are formidable. Given the widespread infidelity to Catholic dogma and praxis, decades of shabby catechesis, pandemic liturgical anthropocentrism, etc., most Catholics would not seem up to the task. We need small groups of determined men and women who will work and pray for a Catholic America.

And in spite of our smallness, and in spite of the opposition we will have from the large numbers of our fellow Catholics, clerical and lay, these small groups must have *confidence*. Discouragement, despair, and defeatism are contraceptive of the good that needs to be accomplished.

Below are some thoughts on the confidence we must have in order to proceed rightly.

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For Saint Thomas Aquinas, confidence is a moral virtue by which we aspire to things worthy of great honor. He says that it is the same as "magnanimity." Notably, he says that "by confidence which here is accounted a part of fortitude, man hopes *in himself, yet under God withal*." This might strike us as

"proud," but let us not be taken away by a false humility; it is *excessive self-confidence* that opposes humility. If someone is an excellent mathematician and knows it, he should be confident in his knowledge and aptitude at math. Even here, we have confidence in the ability that God gave us, so such confidence is not pride. Saint Thomas distinguishes this moral virtue of confidence from the theological virtue of hope, which is a confidence that God will grant us the helps to eternal salvation here in this life, and finally beatitude itself in the next.

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The basis of our confidence must be entirely supernatural. Its motive force must be God's goodness, His mercy, and the divine promises. The object of our personal confidence must above all be the fulfillment of the duties of our own state in life and our actual achievement of holiness in this life and salvation in the next. Its object for the Church, and the different institutions within the Church, must be the fulfillment of the Church's mission on earth: to render glory to God and to save souls. If our confidence, personal and corporate, is not ordered to these ends, then it is disordered.

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Here are just a few of Our Lord's words — including some specific promises — that will help stir up our Christian confidence:

"In the world you shall have distress: but have confidence, I have overcome the world." —John 16:33

"Fear not, little flock, for it hath pleased your Father to give you a kingdom." —Luke 12:32

"If any one love me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him, and will make our abode with him." —John 14:23

"And Jesus coming, spoke to them, saying: All power is given to me in heaven and in earth. Going therefore, teach ye all nations; baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and behold I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world." —Matthew 28:18-20

And let us not forget the sublime promises implicit in the Beatitudes.

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Our confidence must be properly directed. "Put not your trust in princes" (Ps. 145:2), says the Holy Ghost. This applies as well to elected officials, appointed Supreme Court Justices, and all others in authority. Aside from the obvious lesson that we must put our trust first in God, one way to read this passage is that such officials, even if they are good, do not absolve members of the societies they govern from

the obligation of being good. We are mistaken, for instance, if we assume that enough pro-life justices on the Supreme Court would actually end abortion in the land. The overturning of *Roe v. Wade*, as much as we ardently desire it, would not overturn state laws for abortion. Moreover, even if abortion were appropriately criminalized in all fifty states in the present circumstances (an unlikely occurrence), abortion will most certainly continue. The pro-aborts have a point when they say that criminalizing abortion would bring those who want to kill their babies into the “back alleys” for an illegal abortion. Of course it will, for when people engage in illicit sex and have failed to commit effective contraception, infanticide is for them the contraception of last recourse. In other words, evil people will do evil, and those who govern men cannot stop them entirely. Conversion of hearts and minds is necessary. **And that is the mission of the Church.**

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We must be confident regardless of our external circumstances. “If only” statements about the great things we will achieve for the Catholic cause must be abandoned. *If only the Holy Father did such-and-such. If only we didn't have opposition from Cardinal or Bishop so-and-so. If only this-or-that political reality did not prevail.* These lamentations, tempting as they are, are poor excuses for our own spiritual sloth, human respect, fearfulness, and laziness.

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We must begin by “seek[ing] the things that are above; where Christ is sitting at the right hand of God” (Col. 3:1), as the Apostle enjoins us to do. This was Saint Benedict’s purpose. Christian culture and Christian order in European society arose in the atmosphere cultivated by Saint Benedict and his disciples. Why? Because these men were “seeking God,” as Saint Benedict directs the monk to do in his *Rule*. And when enough men and women were truly seeking God, they made life on this earth better, better because more directed to life in Heaven. The Church has a social teaching, and it is good that she does. But that social teaching has a purpose that is part of her larger mission of glorifying the Blessed Trinity and saving souls. The social teaching is to make life on this earth more



The family of Jose Sanchez Del Rio  
Members of the Cristeros

properly directed to achieving that twofold ultimate purpose.

Saint Benedict did not set out to build Christendom after the ravages of the decline and fall of the Western Empire. He set out to give glory to God and to show others how to seek God and serve Him, giving the Almighty His due by way of divine praise and a life totally consecrated to Him. Let us recall the Benedictine motto, from Chapter 57 of the *Rule*: *Ut in omnibus glorificetur Deus* (that God may be glorified in all things). Christendom and its sublime culture were glorious by-products of this essentially supernatural monastic endeavor.

Like Saint Benedict’s, our confidence should be in this quest of seeking and serving God. All other things will be given to us — and that

is a divine promise: “But seek ye first the kingdom of God and his justice, and all these things shall be added unto you” (Luke 12:31).

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Those of us who wish to build a Catholic America must be wary of being mere enthusiasts for the external vestiges of other times and places. While studying and truly loving the historical and cultural monuments of Christendom, we must acknowledge that it is silly to confine ourselves to being wide-eyed romantics singing the panegyrics of bygone eras. The great builders and restorers of Christendom did not do that. They worked for the Kingdom of God in their own day, and did so by first rendering to God His due, for God’s rights come first. Had Saint Benedict merely pined away for the good old days (*which ones?*), he would not have been Saint Benedict, but some obscure dreamer we never heard of. True, Benedict and the other greats were cognizant of receiving and passing on a tradition which they loved and lived. What I am inveighing against is not tradition (*far be it from me!*) or studying and loving the glories of Christendom, but a sort of obsessive antiquarianism that would reduce the would be apostle to a spiritual Walter Mitty.

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Those dedicated to the Catholic cause must take risks. We must risk loss of reputation, the scorn of friends and family, and the hatred of this world and its power brokers. Taking

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such risks in the face of pandemic effeminacy and cruelty, we will have much to suffer, but suffering *for* the Church, *with* the Church and yes, sometimes, *by* the Church is a sacrifice that will be most pleasing to God. Let us consecrate ourselves to Mary, the Mother of the Church, and She will protect us from spiritual harm, which is, after all, the only harm that counts. She is that “throne of grace,” we can approach “with *confidence*” (Heb. 4:16, cf. the Introit for the Feast of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, Aug. 22).

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We must have courage in the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Immaculate Heart of Mary that our dedication to a Catholic America and a new Christendom will be blessed and will bear fruit. Aside from the promises we also have a command of Our Lord to fulfill: “I have chosen you; and have appointed you, that you should go, and should bring forth fruit” (John 15:16). Let us confidently pray with Saint Augustine: *Give what Thou commandest, and command what Thou wilt!* ■

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Sister Marie Thérèse, M.I.C.M.

## CONVENT CORNER

### JACK AND JILL

**D**ear Reader, have you ever wished you could start with a clean slate and a full dose of energy? Actually, the activity that provides this is something that all need for their health and sanity. I am speaking of “recreation.”

Literally, this term means to re-create. The question is: Re-create what? And, the answer is: Re-create the order, harmony, and peace in ourselves that God originally put in our first parents. Since we are composed of both body and soul, recreation should include both. The purpose of this recreation is to make us better able to do our daily duty, that is, God’s Will.

Recreation is not the same as “passing time.” If it were, then wasting time would be a good thing. Instead, recreation is using time wisely to prepare for other business. Although it contains an element of diversion or distraction, this is coupled with a purpose to come back with more intensity to the business of your daily duty.

Many things that are generally considered “recreational” do not fulfill the ends of recreation. First of all, anything that is sinful cannot possibly unbend the mind and prepare a person to do God’s Will. Some common forms of sinful “recreation” are: getting drunk or taking drugs; watching impure, blasphemous or graphically violent movies (if you allow yourself to watch these things you will be desensitized to evil just as a surgeon is desensitized to the gore of surgery by doing autopsies). We can similarly consider bad books, bad internet and bad music. And, finally, the ancient pastime of gossiping.

In fact, anything sinful will simply make a person more exhausted, agitated, and less able to do God’s Will. Perhaps it is worthy of note here that it is ridiculous to imagine someone choosing a sinful recreation and simultaneously trying to do God’s Will. Anything that makes it more difficult for us to do God’s Will cannot be considered a good recreation. If we keep the end of recreation in mind (the purpose of recreation is to make us better able to do our daily duty, that is, God’s Will), we will have a good guide for the type of activity, the length and the scheduling that will make for a good recreation. Please note that what is good recreation for one person may not be good for another person.

A related point: When two friends are playing their favorite game together it is very likely that at some point someone is going to have to make a sacrifice in order to make things continue pleasantly. Take a minute to think about this. Recreation, even in its best view of the end to be obtained, can be approached in a selfish fashion and selfishness will never help



us to do God’s Will. So now imagine a few contradictions that might take place during your card or tennis game. As you are absorbed in such a fun time these contradictions will come up fairly unexpectedly and will reveal with what spirit you are participating. At that point you can use God’s grace to pray and make a sacrifice which will help you to rid yourself of the selfishness that ruins all of our good works. Cheerfulness coupled with sacrifice contributes much to a wholesome recreation. Naturally speaking, this is simply good sportsmanship.

If all this seems like an unwanted intrusion on the day’s work then you should consider the following: If you do not set aside time for recreation, the time that you have slated for work and study will be admixed with recreation, and you will end up by neither making a good recreation nor doing your duty as well as you could have. The only other option for people who don’t make time for recreation is to push on with daily duties until they risk a nervous breakdown.

“All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy. All play and no work makes Jack a real jerk.” Of course, dear Reader, that goes for Jill, too. ■

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Mr. Brian Kelly

## KELLY FORUM

### CREDO IN RESURRECTIONEM MORTUORUM ET VITAM AETERNAM

*Now when it was late that same day, the first of the week, and the doors were shut, where the disciples were gathered together, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in the midst, and said to them: Peace be to you. And when he had said this, he shewed them his hands and his side. (John 20:19-20)*

*he shewed them his hands and his side. (John 20:19-20)*

#### The Qualities of the Glorified Body

Where has our youth gone? Where did the hair on our head go? Our teeth? Our toned, or not so toned muscles? Where did all those physical things go that we used to be so vain about? Out the door, slowly ebbing away, or hanging flabbily from our bones since we hit forty or so. Our bodies grow older every day, until one day they can no longer be animated by our soul and, then, we die. The flesh that gave us so many aches and pains in the later years of our life becomes food for the worms as it decomposes six feet under. Every soul, at death, will be judged: heaven, purgatory, or hell, await the word of the Son of God.

No matter where our bodies are, at the last day, the angels shall gather up what is ours, and we shall rise in our identical flesh. I will try to explain that word “identical” later. For those who died in grace, the soul and the body, reunited forever, will rise glorified and immortal. For those who died in sin, their bodies will be reunited forever with their sinful souls, and they will suffer, as complete substances, the torments of hell.

If we persevere in grace, the gift most worth praying for, then, at the last day, we shall be remade anew. We shall be glorified. The complete man in glory will never suffer again. He shall be immortal. As a son of God he shall shine forever with the brightness of the state of perfection he has merited in grace.

We do well, especially when our bodies seem to be breaking down with no hope of a virile agility on the horizon, to think not only of the four last things, but also of the glory of immortality that awaits us in eternity if we love God. True, this is just an accidental joy, incomparable with the beatific vision, which is the essence of eternal life. Nevertheless, the joy of beatitude will flow over into our very flesh as we rejoice forever in perpetual youth and lightsomeness.

I made a list below of the qualities of the glorified body that we can look forward to. One cannot put them into an order of greater or lesser, for they are all utterly marvelous. God is so good. His rewards are incomprehensible, even the ac-

cidental rewards He has in store for us. His love for us and for His angels is so beyond words that all we can do is say, “Abba, Father, thank you. Thank you for creating me and giving me a share in your Beatitude. Thank you most of all for your Son, our Humble Savior Jesus, whose obedience to You is the cause of our future glory. Thank you for giving us a Mother, Holy Mary, whom Your Son obeys. She is the Refuge of Sinners. She is the hope of all sinners whom Your justice ought to have condemned. But, no, You hear her pleas for the most unworthy sinners, sinners in whom she finds a small flame of love, and for whom she intercedes with Your gracious condescension to bring to the fountain of grace.”

#### Clarity

I choose to put clarity first. The reason is that it confers not only radiance but perfection in health. In this fallen mortal state of life, as we grow older, the pains of the flesh, the loss of agility, and the slow corruption of the body, weigh us down, emotionally as well as physically. We may feel that we are a burden to others. And some of the “others” who love us the most, unintentionally add to our grief: “take this, take that, exercise, go on a diet.” And none of this lifts us out of our hebetude. We may have trouble sleeping, up every couple of hours, never getting the sleep necessary to lose weight. I digress.

Let us think of the everlasting good health to come, which the good God has in store for us. Let us consider the invisible clarity of the soul before the resurrection. It will not be perfect because we shall not be complete until the body is resurrected. But it will be perfect in the beatitude of the spirit, because the One whom we shall see is a Spirit. “What shall we not see,” Saint Augustine says, “when we shall see Him who sees all.”

Clarity: “Then shall the just shine as the sun, in the kingdom of their Father.” (Matthew 13:43) and : “The just shall shine, and shall run to and fro like sparks among the reeds.” (Wisdom 3:7).

If the just shall shine, imagine the radiance of the Just One in glory and the brilliance and beauty of the Immaculata. Those who have seen our Blessed Mother in apparitions could find no words to describe her beauty and radiance.

#### Subtlety

Next, I choose to list subtlety. This quality appeals to me immensely. When I read the Gospels and I see that Jesus passed through walls and a closed tomb after His resurrection I am astonished. That is why I introduced this article with the text from Saint John. He saw it and gave testimony. The doors of the Cenacle were closed and Jesus passed through the walls in His Risen Body and appeared to the dejected Apostles. He even ate with the Apostles and He had Thomas put his finger into

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the holes in His hands and His side. Therefore, His Body is indeed palpable, touchable. “Why are you troubled,” He said to the Apostles in the Upper Room, “and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? See my hands and feet, that it is I myself; handle, and see: for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as you see me to have. And when he had said this, he shewed them his hands and feet. But while they yet believed not, and wondered for joy, he said: Have you any thing to eat? And they offered him a piece of a broiled fish, and a honeycomb” (Luke 24: 38-42).

Our bodies, too, in glory, shall not be hindered by any material obstacle. We, too, shall pass through walls. But, how is that? Our bodies will still be material. How can one body pass through another? Let me just say, without getting into a rational defense of the cosmology involved, that the lesser body will surrender its extension in space (without losing its quantity) to the greater. There will be two material things, but the glorified body will have the “right of way” so to speak. It shall be able to pass through, in a second, the whole earth, if it should so choose, to get to the other side. The glorified body will not be a spiritual body (that would be an oxymoron), but a material human body, recreated anew (spirit-like, if you will, on account of its impassibility), that will have qualities that surpass all that we know of human bodies in the mortal state.

Are we to believe, then, that two bodies, one being glorified, can occupy the same place at the same time? No, that cannot be, naturally speaking, not even if one body is glorified. To occupy a place is to have the accident of extension in space that goes

with the quantity (the how-muchness) of any material thing. On the other hand, Saint Thomas teaches, that *by the power of God*, the glorified body can occupy the same place as another body — not naturally, but preternaturally by divine power, for all things are possible to God. Hence, the body of Our Lord, who is God, passed through the virginal body of His mother at birth. We can use the analogy of light passing through a window, but the subtlety of light, which is material, does not actually occupy the same “place” as the glass. Moving rays of light are composed of contiguous particles, so rarefied and miniscule, that they can naturally penetrate the denseness of glass.

Enough of that. The subject is as complex as it is wonderful, and it is beyond the power of, not however contrary to, reason. Suffice it to say, that the soul in glory is so powerful in its animation of the body, that it confers upon the body quasi-spiritual properties. When it comes to the four qualities I am enumerating here, these qualities are indeed miraculous. But God performs far greater miracles than these in the multi-location of His own One Body in the Holy Eucharist.

### Agility

The next quality I choose to place before your wonder is agility. To be agile means to be easily mobile. Well, with a glorified body, that mobility shall be instantaneous. With the speed of thought a body will be able to go from any “here” to any “there.” Our Resurrected Lord appeared in many places in an instant. One second He was speaking to the women who had come to His burial place, another second He was walk-



# Saint Augustine Institute of Wisdom

The Saint Augustine Institute of Wisdom (SAI) is the educational division of Saint Benedict Center. The Institute provides well-rounded and conveniently simple courses of instruction in Catholic thought.

The course will have the aspect of continued adult education: Catholic men and women, in any ordinary occupation in life, increasing their knowledge of the Faith, and of things pertaining to it.

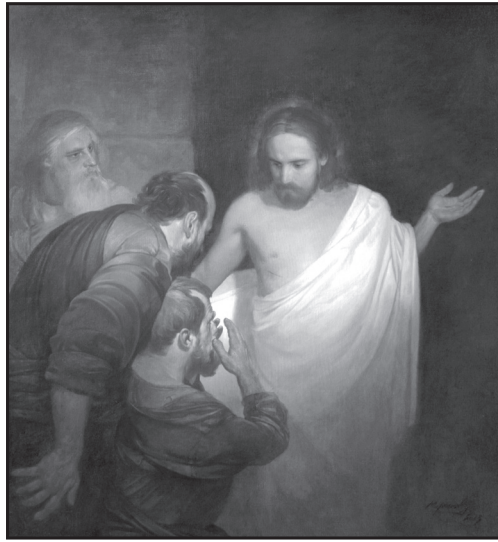
Visit: [www.SaintAugustineInstitute.org](http://www.SaintAugustineInstitute.org) for more information.

ing with two disciples on the road to Emmaus, and in another second He was with the Apostles in the Upper Room. He appeared to His friends and disciples eleven times in the recorded apparitions after His Resurrection and before His Ascension. Other apparitions during this time are attested to by tradition. I prescind from Our Lord's countless bi-locations after His Ascension and throughout the centuries. Our Blessed Mother bi-located while on earth to encourage Saint James while he was preaching in Spain. Bi-location, however, is not the same thing as agility. In the glorified state the saints shall be able to go anywhere in the universe, without losing the beatific vision, in the instant of an act of the will. Now that should be something to look forward to. The universe shall be recreated along with the "face of the earth." The Limbo of the unbaptized who have died with no personal mortal sin is "someplace." And the blessed in heaven will be able to go there and visit the unbaptized children who will be in a new body of perfect maturity, although unglorified. This is an opinion that was taught by the great Jesuit theologian Francisco Suarez, luminary of the Council of Trent. Father Leonard Feeney comforted many mothers who lost children by miscarriage with this hope.

### Impassibility

Lastly, I give for your consideration the quality of impassibility. This gift, which is consonant with the immortality of the next life, is more than immortality. Even the damned will live forever. But only the blessed in heaven will be wholly impassible. Impassibility not only means that the body cannot suffer any harm from the outside, but it will also be incorruptible, immune from all sickness and pain and deformity: "[The body] is sown in corruption, it shall rise in incorruption" (1 Corinthians 15:42). So, too, the soul — no sadness, no tears, only perfect happiness.

Imagine that! We shall rise in perfect maturity and integrity of body. We shall all be beautiful and our beauty will be radiant in clarity. Nothing impure or imperfect shall be in heaven. We shall be as the angels in purity and innocence. Adam and Eve, before the Fall, were impassible, but they were so, not by nature, but by the arrangement of God, who made all things in paradise to serve their needs. If Adam were struck by a falling rock it would have wounded him, but in paradise, God ordered everything to serve him not harm him. For immortality, our first parents ate from the Tree of Life. So long as they



obeyed God's command, they would live forever from the fruit of this tree (a figure of the Eucharist) and never know death. But, the state of glory is incomparably greater than the paradisaic state Adam and Eve originally enjoyed. There are no tests to pass in heaven, just the repose of the seventh day, eternal rest, beatitude, and camaraderie with the saints, all the multitude in their crowns of varying splendor.

These are the four properties of the glorified body.

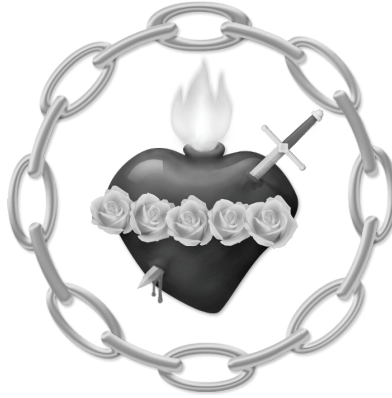
There are three other qualities of the resurrected body which complement the state of glorification but are not actually essential to it: identity, integrity, and quality.

I promised to write about *identity* and that will be all. When we are united with our body after the last day, it will be "our" body, no one else's. Nothing that made us physically who we were on this earth will be lost. Saint Thomas goes so far as to say, in his *Summa Contra Gentiles*, that matter is not only what individualizes us, but that without the body we are not complete persons. That seems too Aristotelian for me. I tend to favor Duns Scotus' more simple idea that "person" is the "thisness" of a rational being. It comes with the creation of the soul directly by God at conception, rather than with the body. In other words it has more to do with "form" than "matter." Nevertheless, Saint Thomas is, after all, the Angelic Doctor. He makes an important point in including the body in the understanding of what makes us persons, or shall I say, *complete* individual persons. The souls of the departed are certainly *persons*, although yet incomplete. They can say "I," so how can they not be persons?

Saint Boethius, the great sixth century philosopher, defined person as "a complete, individual, and incommunicable substance of a rational nature." This brings us back to identity. As the catechism teaches regarding the resurrection of the dead, the dead shall rise *in eodem corpore* (in the same body) that they had on earth. How will God do this, after our bodies have decomposed? Rather than ask "how," we ought to ask "can He do this?" Then the answer is obvious: "Yes, He can." If God can make man out of the dust of the earth, as He did Adam, and all of Adam's children, then God can take our "dust" and make us *new* at the resurrection. "And I shall be clothed again with my skin, and in my flesh I will see my God" (Job 19:26). ■

*Email Brian Kelly at bdk@catholicism.org*





## Saint Benedict Center Conference

Friday and Saturday, October 12 and 13, 2018

This year's conference theme is:

### **Saving America**

*Considerations doctrinal, historical, cultural, and strategic on  
the conversion and sanctification of our land.*

Here is a list of our speakers:

**Mr. Gary Potter:** "The End of Modernity."

**Mr. Charles Coulombe:** "Where Did You Go, Joe DiMaggio?: Nostalgia and Evangelisation."

**Mr. Mike Church:** "The Only Step Forward, is the Step Backward."

**C.J. Doyle:** "Why Has America Not Been Converted to the Catholic Faith?"

**Mr. Martin Chouinard:** "Heroic Hearts and the Transmission of Culture."

**Sister Marie Thérèse, M.I.C.M. will host a Panel of Sisters:** "Talking Religion in America: Examples from the Field."

**Sister Maria Philomena, M.I.C.M.:** "The Caged Bird — The Role of Women in the Conversion of America."

**Brother André Marie, M.I.C.M.:** "Providence and Opportunism: On Being All Things to All Americans."

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Full conference with meals: \$175.

Where: Saint Benedict Center, 95 Fay Martin Road, Richmond, New Hampshire, 03470.

When: Friday and Saturday, October 12 and 13, 2018. Both will be full conference days.

The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass will be offered according to the traditional Roman Rite during the conference, as it always is offered at Saint Benedict Center.

There are a limited number of Saint Benedict Center community members who are willing to host conference attendees on a first-come, first-served basis; please call Russell at (603) 239-6485 for details.

There are several hotels in the Keene vicinity, but reservations should be made early because of tourism during the foliage season. Some include: Best Western Hotel & Suites (603) 357-3038; Holiday Inn Express Keene (603) 352-7616; and Super 8 Keene (603) 352-9780.

There are also bed-and-breakfasts in the area; call for details. For those interested, there is a campground three miles from the Center: Shir-Roy Campground (603) 239-4768.

For more information or to register by phone, please call Russell at (603) 239-6485.

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Br. John Marie Vianney,  
M.I.C.M., Tert., Prefect

## PREFECT'S COLUMN

### A MEDITATION ON A HOLY KISS AND OTHER MATTERS

There are many opportunities for us to honor God, the saints, our family members, and friends, sacred or holy objects, etc., by a simple kiss.

While kissing my Brown Scapular of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel, I recalled there is a

promise assigned the Brown Scapular. It is called the Sabbatine Privilege. The Blessed Virgin of Mt. Carmel promised to save those who wear the scapular from the fires of Hell; She will also shorten their stay in Purgatory if they should pass from this world still owing some temporal debt of punishment. The promise is found in a 1322 Bull of Pope John XXII, *Sacratissimo uti culmine*. The Blessed Virgin appeared to him and speaking of those who wear the Brown Scapular said: "I, the Mother of grace, shall descend on the Saturday after their death and whomsoever I shall find in Purgatory, I shall free, so that I may lead them to the holy mountain of life everlasting." The decree was re-confirmed 400 years later by Pope Paul V. There are two conditions to the Sabbatine Privilege. They are: 1) Observe chastity according to one's state in life and 2) Recite the Little Office of Our Blessed Mother (the Rosary, with permission from a priest, can be substituted for the office). Also, to obtain the fullest benefits from the Brown Scapular devotion, the scapular should be blessed by a priest and the recipient should be enrolled in the Brown Scapular; this any priest can do. There is a short formula of prayer that goes with the enrollment.

In the High Mass, the priest kisses the altar seven times, unless it is a Mass for the Dead, in which he kisses the altar five times. In the Solemn Mass, there is also the "kiss of peace" given by the celebrant to the deacon, and by the deacon to the subdeacon. This is not a "kiss" in any conventional use of the word, but is a very decorous, masculine, and chaste liturgical ceremony that befits the refined dignity of the classical Roman Rite.

Historically, it was at first intended simply for the altar itself where the Sacrifice of the Lord would occur. Subsequently this idea was enlarged to include the understanding that the altar built of stone represented Christ himself, the rock, the cornerstone. (Cf. 1 Cor. 10:4). Later, as the relics of saints were ordinarily placed within the altar stone, the kiss was also seen as a salutation of the saint and through the saint the whole Church Triumphant.

In one of his weekly articles Monsignor Charles Pope notes that "The kiss was actually very common in ancient culture. The temple was honored by kissing the threshold. In pagan

culture it was common to greet the images of the gods either by kissing them directly or throwing a kiss. Likewise it was not uncommon in the ancient world to kiss the family meal table with a kiss before the meal. Hence it was not surprising to find the practice brought into Christian worship."<sup>1</sup>

During the Mass, objects handed to, and taken from, the celebrant are kissed, along with the celebrant's hand. Father John Zuhlsdorf writes on his regular blog that "The kissing of objects and hands probably spread into Holy Mass from a courtly context many centuries ago..." It is not uncommon to see people here at Saint Benedict Center kiss the hand of a priest. "Remember," Father says that the priest "is alter Christus...another Christ...Kisses show joy in the occasion and the action. They lend solemnity to the moment." Recall that a priest's hands are, "anointed with Sacred Chrism and they hold the Host during Mass...The bestowing of these liturgical kisses of objects and hands ties directly into the style and quality of vestments and vessels used for Holy Mass, as well as the music and the architecture...When you see the priest...in fine vestments, remember the love, gratitude, and care with which we treat sacred things and persons and places."<sup>2</sup>

I often kiss my Miraculous Medal, the Green Scapular I wear, and both sides of the medal of our Third Order, which has the Sacred Heart on one side, and the Immaculate Heart on the other side. When you kiss the Miraculous Medal, you should say the prayer on the medal, "O, Mary conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to thee!"



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I witnessed Brother Francis, our late Superior of fond memory and love, when I gave him a holy card, he looked at it and then immediately, reverently, kissed it. A local tertiary, Sister Marie Bernard (Mrs. Rita Skiffington) once showed Brother a copy of an old Irish catechism. He read it and said, "That is the Catholic faith whole and entire," then tenderly kissed the little book. With each of my holy cards, whether they have relics or not, I have imitated Brother's loving act ever since.

It is common to see Catholics making the Sign of the Cross, with the crucifix affixed to the Rosary, and then kiss it. For the Adoration of the Cross (*Crucis adoratio*), there used to be a plenary indulgence granted to the faithful, who in the solemn liturgical action on Good Friday, devoutly assisted at the adoration of the Cross and kissed it.

There is a tradition, among some Catholics, whereby each child kneels before his father, who blesses him before bed. I suggest the blessing be with holy water, making the Sign of the Cross on the forehead, and end with a kiss, on the forehead or cheek. I see no reason why the mother should not add a kiss too, or perform the little ceremony if the dad is not available that night, or is deceased.

The word "kiss" is found in scripture many times. Notably, the kissing and perfuming of Our Lord's feet by the weeping penitent, Saint Mary Magdalene, in the house of the Pharisee: "Thou gavest me no kiss; but she, since she came in, hath not ceased to kiss my feet" (Luke 7:45).

Too, there is a kiss that will live in infamy. The treason of Judas.

"As he was yet speaking, behold a multitude; and he that was called Judas, one of the twelve, went before them, and drew near to Jesus, for to kiss him. And Jesus said to him: Judas, dost thou betray the Son of man with a kiss?" (Luke 22:47-48). "And he that betrayed him, gave them a sign, saying: Whomsoever I shall kiss, that is he, hold him fast. And forthwith coming to Jesus, he said: Hail, Rabbi. And he kissed him. And Jesus said to him: Friend, whereto art thou come? Then they came up, and laid hands on Jesus, and held him" (Matt. 26:48-50).

The tongue is very close to those lips that kiss. It is the tongue which is, in a manner of speaking, the paten where the Blessed Sacrament lies when you receive Jesus at Mass. By these small physical acts, let us exemplify our love for Our Lord, Our Lady, the saints, their images, etc., so that we may show God how we love Him and all that is His. ■

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<sup>1</sup> See: <https://tinyurl.com/ybuncrpb> – *The Mass in Slow Motion: The Altar is Reverenced By Msgr. Charles Pope*

<sup>2</sup> See: <https://tinyurl.com/y7guh9f> – an untitled article by Fr. John Zuhlsdorf.

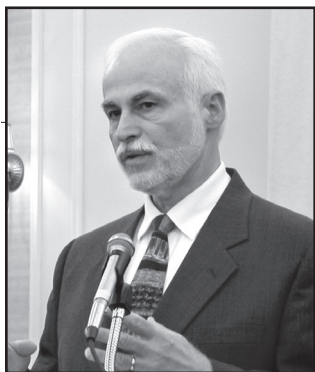
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Brother Lawrence Mary,  
MICM, Tert.

## GUEST COLUMN

### WHY PHILOSOPHY XII — WHY EPISTEMOLOGY?

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In my early twenties I left the Catholic Church. I had become a skeptic, questioning everything, and an agnostic, professing that God, if He existed at all, was unknowable. Despite my loss of faith, the question of *what is truth* and *how we can achieve certainty in our ideas* drove my interest in philosophy and eventually led me back to the Catholic Church. Our Lady's undeserved intervention helped me to find Brother Francis and the Saint Benedict Center, where I had my questions answered. After I had completed my journey through Brother Francis' first six philosophy courses, I was finally ready to tackle the questions of "what is truth?" and "how do we know?"

These two questions are not only my personal concern; they dominate most of modern philosophy. The majority of philosophers after Descartes have maintained that we cannot know anything for certain or that truth is consistency between ideas or that truth cannot be known at all.

The study of Epistemology (which, along with Ontology, is part of General Metaphysics) teaches us that truth is the conformity between mind and reality. We study the different levels of truth until we reach the highest — ontological truth — in which all things must conform to the Mind of God in order to exist. When I could see that what I learned in Epistemology matched reality, I knew I had finally reached the goal to which I had aspired so many years before — how to know what is true — to possess the tools, or *criteria*, to assess truth and error. I was thrilled to consider how it is possible that the entire universe can become mine by the mystery of knowledge. Meditation on the process of how this happens by my intellectual grasping of the physical world as it is perceived by my senses was positively dizzying.

Epistemology has three axioms, three ideas, which are so fundamental that they cannot be proved but must simply be assumed. In this way it is like the study of geometry in which there are certain axioms that cannot be proved in themselves (such as "the whole is equal to the sum of its parts") but which stand behind and propel the various geometric demonstrations. The epistemological axioms are: 1) our own existence, 2) the principle of contradiction, and 3) the fact of knowledge. First, we know we exist. There is no way to prove it. Second, a thing cannot be and not be at the same time. To say otherwise would be a contradiction. Third, we know things outside of us and we simply must accept this as a fact. Knowledge is not an hypothesis or theory; it is fact. Even though these axioms cannot be proved as such, they perfectly match Common Sense.

Because our ideas have been thoroughly grounded in the previous six courses, we easily make the leap into the realm of the purely abstract. In the first course, Minor Logic, we learned the three acts of the mind: simple apprehension, judgment, and inference. We know that truth resides in judgment, where we determine "this is true" or "this is false." We studied the process of how ideas are formed and of reasoning itself. In short, we received the tools of good thought, which we would use throughout all of the remaining courses.

In Cosmology and Psychology we were able to use these tools and become comfortable with them by checking their validity with the real world around us. In Ethics, we took everything we had learned and applied it to the problem of good and evil, how to live in a manner befitting our human nature. We also developed a philosophical "platform" of ideas that we understood and could defend.

The first of two courses in the History of Philosophy studied how philosophy came to be and examined early Greek thought in order to discover which of the ideas were found to match reality. In the second history course, we considered modern philosophers and engaged in a polemical consideration of how these philosophers went wrong and threw away their intellectual patrimony.

With this solid foundation, we were quite prepared to study the first of the two most abstract courses, Epistemology and Ontology, together referred to as "General Metaphysics." Building on the ideas which were clarified in the first courses, Epistemology seems very familiar. In a sense, it is. We discover

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The study of Epistemology teaches us  
that truth is the conformity between  
mind and reality.

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that Brother Francis, with his unique manner of teaching, has been introducing the truths of Epistemology throughout all of the earlier lectures.

In the process of our studies, we found that three great truths are upheld by the careful study of natural thought<sup>1</sup> under the guidance of a good teacher who is grounded in the truth. They are: 1) The reality of God, 2) the freedom of the will (Man is responsible for his acts), and 3) the immortality of the soul. Epistemology is part of Natural Philosophy.

To answer the question, "Why Epistemology?" I refer the reader to Brother Francis. Epistemology is a necessary part of wisdom because, "It helps us keep away from unhealthy

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extremes on the left and on the right — between rash subjective judgments with false certainty and fanaticism on one side, [i.e.], with no rationality and no examination of the criteria of truth and, on the other side, an attitude of skepticism that would doubt everything on principle and never make a strong judgment. [...] In Epistemology we study knowing and the mystery implied in it. We'll come back to this in Theology.

The foundation of the great reality is to be found in God. It's when we know the light of God in the Trinity [that] we will know why there is such a thing as truth." ■

<sup>1</sup> Philosophy that studies nature and is not connected with any religion.

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# *Too Catholic for Satellite Radio*

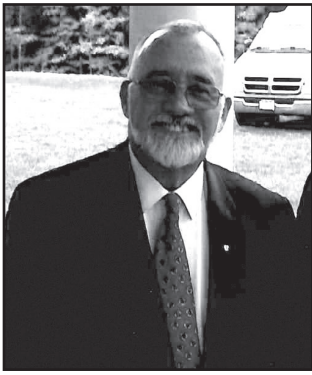


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By Brother Dismas Mary,  
M.I.C.M., Tert.

## GUEST COLUMN

### BOOK REVIEW OF: *AS IT IS IN HEAVEN* BY GARY POTTER

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To those who view modern society with its licentiousness, perversion, and, in general, its increasing unpleasantness and decline, and wonder, “What in the world is going on? How can this have happened?”, the answer can be found in this

short book by acclaimed Catholic historian and journalist Gary Potter.

A hint may be found in the title itself: *As It Is In Heaven*. In a world where virtually every person calling himself Christian knows the words to the Lord’s prayer, most do not truly mean the words they utter by rote when they say, “Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.” The words have become empty and meaningless. The Social Kingship of Christ has been replaced (in the minds of most) by the deeply held and erroneous belief that the only true authority is in the will of the people. In other words, not only the godless secular world but virtually all Catholics, including many prelates, have dropped Pope Pius XI’s 1925 encyclical *Quas Primas* down the Orwellian memory hole.

That encyclical, written during the life of many still living, stated, among other things, that “It would be a grave error to say that Christ has no authority whatever in civil affairs...He is the author of true happiness and prosperity for every man and every nation... If, therefore, the rulers of nations wish to preserve their authority and increase the prosperity of countries, they will not neglect the public duty of reverence and obedience to the rule of Christ.” This statement would be incomprehensible to most people in today’s world.

A recurring theme in Potter’s writings is the Rights of God, which have been supplanted in the minds of most moderns by their own “right” to live as they please. While the world has not been free of sin since the fall, and never will be until Christ returns, Potter traces the modern view of freedom from religion and a society that operates as if God does not exist right to the root of the problem: the false philosophy of Liberalism.

He details the development of this philosophy, a philosophy that began with the so-called Reformation, wherein persons felt able to arrogate to themselves the right to interpret God’s word the way *they* wanted, through the folly of the misnamed Enlightenment, wherein men sought to free themselves from the shackles of dogma.

But what really has enabled the false philosophy of Liberalism to take over was the godlessness espoused by the French Revolution, a revolution that was enshrined in our own Constitution (although in a far lesser degree) with its lack of

any mention of God, and has taken hold in every nation of the formerly Christian west, despite being condemned by Pope Gregory XVI in his encyclical *Mirari Vos* in 1832.

Potter points out that, in contrast with the modern idea of one being able to live as he wants, the only true freedom a person has is the freedom to do what can be done with impunity in the eyes of God, and no law passed by any government can change that, no matter what the “will of the people” may call acceptable. One of the problems is that once a behavior, no matter how aberrant, is enshrined in law (Mr. Potter quotes here France’s great Cardinal Pie), “Many men are certainly conservative and even Catholic by intention and will have the air of not doubting, but experience shows something else: once error is embodied in legal formulas and administrative practices, it penetrates minds to their depths, from which it is impossible to extirpate it.”

Those who are familiar with Potter’s writings over the years will be acquainted with some of the great thinkers he cites in support of his thesis; men like France’s Cardinal Pie (quoted above), the lesser known Spanish Catholic thinker, Juan Donoso Cortes (a liberal politician who renounced Liberalism in favor of Catholic thought) and the better known (but rarely understood) Alexis de Tocqueville, who accurately predicted the decline of today’s much vaunted democracy into a state of affairs which will eventually result in a worse problem than that caused by any previous despotism or tyranny.

Indeed, Potter, who has no use for today’s democratic ideals, states the problem unequivocally when he cites the great Bishop Jacques Benigne Bossuet in saying, “Since the day a popular assembly condemned Jesus Christ to death, the Church has known that the rule of the majority can lead to any crime.”

To Potter, the decay of society in virtually all its aspects can be summed up in one word: “Modernity.” The problems contained therein, while not, in the long run, insoluble, are not likely to be solved in the near future. One of the reasons is the modern person’s aversion to reading and learning anything of the wisdom of the past. Instead, the modern man is too busy writing his autobiography on Facebook and checking his smartphone.

Potter explains why the false philosophy of Liberalism, being itself a lie, is itself bound to produce other lies. The lies are many, but the end result is persons perfectly content to live as if God did not exist, and thus being totally unprepared to stand before God in judgment.

He also points out how many, if not most, of the people in today’s world waste that most precious commodity, the time they have here on earth. Thus it is not unusual to hear some-

one say, for instance, “I would like to read more (or look at art, or do anything else that would improve the quality of one’s life) but I don’t have time.” Yet this same person will spend several hours each day updating his Facebook page, staring at a screen instead of reading, or engaging in a variety of other pastimes that accomplish nothing towards improving his life.

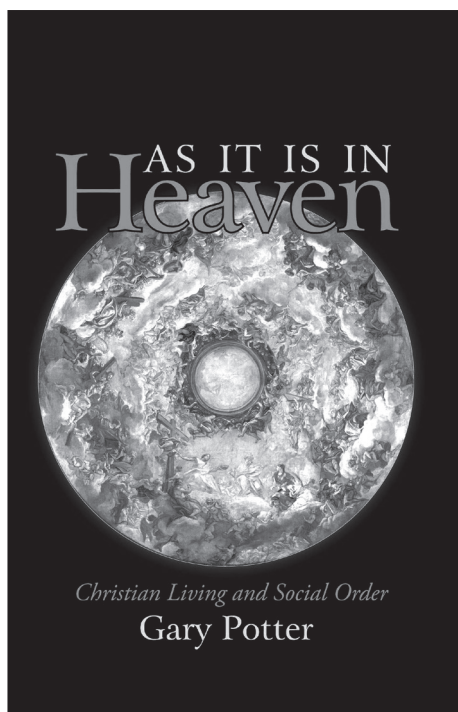
Potter is a historian as well as a journalist, and he devotes pages in the book to contrasting today’s society with the way in which civilization worked in the days of Christendom, when one’s religion actually meant something, when men became citizens of that realm through Baptism, and when civil marriage simply did not exist. All true marriage was known to be sacramental, unlike today, when even such a disgusting practice as sodomy is believed by many to be a basis for marriage.

But Potter does not live in the past. He is well aware that Christendom as it existed previously cannot be recreated; rather, a new Christendom must be born. And this can only be done by persons living out Christian standards (he distinguishes them from the more vague term “values”) in whatever small corner of the world in which they find themselves. It is even possible, though difficult in today’s world, for this to be done by the ruler of a modern republic (example: Gabriel Garcia Moreno in Ecuador).

But most people, obviously, are not rulers of a nation. Instead, each individual, on his own, must avoid having a merely private religion, but rather one which shapes everything he does; becoming within his sphere of influence a knight, chevalier, lady or gentleman willing to devote his or her life to what might be called a “Lost Cause” but which, in reality, is not “Lost,” but one that, in eternity, will prevail.

Potter is enthusiastic about some trends occurring in the Church today, including what is often called the “Benedict Option,” becoming more common and reflected in the community of laity that has grown up around Saint Benedict Center for example. He is not in the long haul pessimistic, but recognizes that major changes must be made in all aspects of society to eventually produce what is needed by mankind, a truly Catholic world.

This book is filled with wisdom and the author has a remarkable grasp of what has caused the problems of modernity and what needs to be done. This will not be surprising to anyone familiar with Potter’s work. If a person were to read but one book this year, I would recommend this one. ■



## As it is in Heaven

**T**his extended essay encourages Catholics to face reality in the murky spiritual darkness of our present century. That means that it is also a message of light and hope. Do not be mistaken, Mr. Potter is no silly optimist or clueless observer. He knows the darkness and the dangers as clearly as any living writer, but he is a Catholic through and through, and his judgments are sound and realistic. Catholic realism! A realistic outlook can only come to a Catholic who believes and who tries to live according to that belief. The strength to face reality and to deal with it courageously is what is most necessary to men who wish to truly live—not just pass through this world—and to fight manfully for truth and goodness and beauty during this short pilgrimage that is life on earth. • \$10

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*Ex Cathedra*: “There is but one universal Church of the faithful, outside of which no one at all is saved” (Pope Innocent III, Fourth Lateran Council, 1215).

*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).

*Ex Cathedra*: “The most Holy Roman Church firmly believes, professes, and preaches that none of those existing outside the Catholic Church, not only pagans, but also Jews and heretics and schismatics, can have a share in life eternal; but that they will go into the eternal fire which was prepared for the devil and his angels, unless before death they are joined with Her; and that so important is the unity of this ecclesiastical body that only those remaining within this unity can profit by the sacraments of the Church unto salvation, and they alone can receive an eternal recompense for their fasts, their almsgivings, their other works of Christian piety and the duties of a Christian soldier. No one, let his almsgiving be as great as it may, no one, even if he pour out his blood for the Name of Christ, can be saved, unless he remain within the bosom and the unity of the Catholic Church” (Pope Eugene IV, the Bull *Cantate Domino*, 1441).

### Notes:

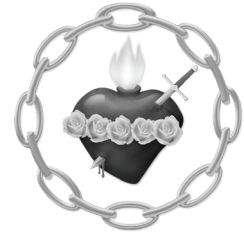
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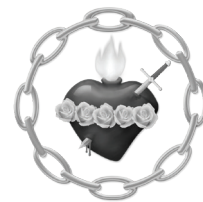
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