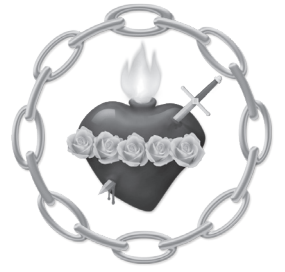


MANCIPIA

THE REPORT OF THE CRUSADE OF SAINT BENEDICT CENTER

JULY/AUGUST 2016



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“Her being now begins who ere she end
Shall bring the good that shall our evil mend”

-St Robert Southwell



PRIOR'S COLUMN THE MASS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

My title is not meant to connote an anachronism: I am well aware that the Mass was instituted on that first Holy Thursday, the night before Our Lord suffered His Passion. In invoking the Old Testament in this context, I am speaking about the *prophecies* and *types*

that pointed to the future reality of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.

In general, a prophecy is any supernatural revelation teaching us some divine truth that is not naturally knowable. The prophets are men used by God to teach us such truths, which are about Him and His economy of salvation. In a more narrow sense, prophecy may have the additional quality of forecasting or predicting an event ahead of time. In this narrower sense, the Mass was prophesied in the Old Testament just as other New Testament realities were. Further down, I will mention one Old Testament prophecy of the Holy Mass, after first considering some types of the Mass.

A type is any thing in the Old Testament — any person, event, institution, or object — which foreshadows some New Testament reality. The corresponding New Testament reality is called an “antitype.”

In his sublime Eucharistic sequence, the *Lauda Sion*, Saint Thomas Aquinas refers to such types when he writes that the Eucharist was:

Shown in Isaac’s dedication,
in the Manna’s preparation,
in the Paschal immolation,
in old types pre-signified.

Here, we see that Abraham’s sacrifice of Isaac, the manna in the desert, and the Paschal Lamb all prefigure the Holy Mass, which is both a Eucharistic Sacrifice and a Eucharistic Banquet.

Isaac was the son of the “Good Father” (Abram) whose name was changed by God to “Father of a Multitude” (Abraham). That son of a father carried the wood for his sacrifice up a mountain where he would be immolated. The parallels between the sacrifice of Isaac and that of Jesus Christ are striking — as are the contrasts.

The Paschal Lamb was that sacrificial victim offered up on the eve of Israel’s delivery from the bondage of Egypt. The blood of this spotless victim was put on the doorposts of the Israelites — in cruciform fashion, some commentators say, foreshadowing the Holy Cross — in order to make the Angel of Death “pass over” the houses of God’s people. The

Israelites were preserved from death and delivered by this victim’s blood, as Christians are redeemed and saved by the Blood of Christ.

After their escape from Egypt, the manna in the desert sustained the Israelites during their forty years in the desert. This manna was “bread from heaven,” as it is called in the Old Testament (Ex. 16:4, 2 Esdras [Nehemiah] 9:15, Wisdom 16:20). Jesus Christ applied this same phrase to Himself in His Eucharistic discourse: “Then Jesus said to them: Amen, amen I say to you; Moses gave you not bread

“[A] prophecy is any supernatural revelation teaching us some divine truth that is not naturally knowable.”

from heaven, but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven. ...For the bread of God is that which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life to the world. ...I am the living bread which came down from heaven. ...This is the bread which cometh down from heaven; that if any man eat of it, he may not die. ...I am the living bread which came down from heaven. ...This is the bread that came down from heaven. Not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead. He that eateth this bread, shall live for ever” (John 6:32, 33, 41, 50, 51, 59).

Another type of the Eucharist — specifically, as sacrificial — is the offering of Melchisedech, the “priest of the most high God”: I mean his gifts of “bread and wine” (Gen. 14:18). This mysterious character, who blessed Abraham after the Battle of the Vale of Siddim, is mentioned by King David in a Messianic Psalm: “The Lord hath sworn, and he will not repent: Thou art a priest for ever according to the order of Melchisedech” (Ps. 109 [110]:4). In his Epistle to the Hebrews, chapters five to (especially) seven, Saint Paul comments extensively on Melchisedech as a type of Christ, and on the priesthood of Christ as the priesthood “according to the order of Melchisedech.”

Let it not be missed that what Melchisedech offered was the very matter of the Holy Eucharist. In an amazing sermon, Saint Ambrose gives us the Catholic doctrine of the Eucharistic Sacrifice in terms of Melchisedech and his offering:

Melchisedech was also a priest, as Christ is a priest; to Whom it was said: “Thou art a priest for ever according to the order of Melchisedech” (Ps. 109:4). Who therefore is the author of the sacraments if not the Lord Jesus? These sacraments have come down from heaven; from whence all counsel comes. It was a truly great and divine miracle that God should rain manna from heaven on His people; and that the people should eat though they did not work.

But perhaps you will say: My bread is ordinary bread. On the contrary, this bread is bread only before the words of the sacred rite. When the consecration has been added, from being bread it becomes the Body of Christ. Let us therefore prove this. How can that which is bread be the Body of Christ? By consecration. Consecration by what words; by



Gathering the Manna

whose words? Those of the Lord Jesus. For all the other words which are said previous to this are said by the priest: the praises that are offered to God, the prayer that is offered for the congregation, for rulers, and for others. But when the moment comes to consecrate the venerable sacrament, the priest will no longer use his own words, but will use the words of Christ. It is therefore the Word of Christ that consecrates this sacrament.

If then there is such power in the Word of the Lord Jesus, so that the things that were not by It, began to be, how much the more can It change what is into another thing?

He says something similar about the consecration of the wine. Then, he repeatedly refers to the consecrated species as the Body and Blood of Christ, as here:

Before it is consecrated it is bread. When the words of consecration have been added, it is the Body of Christ. Then listen to Him saying "Take ye, and eat ye all of this; for this is my body." Again, before the words of consecration, it is a chalice filled with wine and water. Where the words of Christ have wrought, there the Blood of Christ, which has redeemed His people, is made. You see then in how many ways the words of Christ are able to change all things. Lastly, the Lord Jesus Himself testifies to us that we receive His Body and Blood. Are we to doubt His honesty and His testimony?

Other Fathers have employed this same imagery to explain the Holy Mass. See, for instance this passage by Saint Cyprian

of Carthage dating from the year 253:

In the priest Melchisedek we see prefigured the sacrament of the sacrifice of the Lord, according to what Divine Scripture testifies, and says, "And Melchisedek, king of Salem, brought forth bread and wine." Now he was a priest of the most High God, and blessed Abraham. And that Melchisedek was a type of Christ, the Holy Spirit declares in the Psalms, saying from the person

of the Father to the Son: "Before the morning star I have begotten Thee; Thou art a priest forever, after the order of Melchisedek." This order is assuredly the one coming from that sacrifice: that Melchisedek was a priest of the Most High God; that he offered wine and bread; that he blessed Abraham. For who is more a priest of the most High God than Our Lord Jesus Christ, Who offered a sacrifice to God the Father, and offered the very same thing which Melchisedek had offered, that is, bread and wine, to wit, His Body and Blood? . . . For if Jesus Christ Our Lord and God is Himself the chief priest of God the Father, and has first offered Himself a sacrifice to the Father, and has commanded that this be done in commemoration of Himself, certainly the priest truly discharges the office of Christ, who imitates what Christ did; and he offers a true and full sacrifice in the Church to God the Father, when he proceeds to offer it according to what he sees Christ Himself to have offered (Letter 62: 4,14; A.D. 253).

And Now We Turn From Type to Prophecy

About the mid fifth century, B.C., the last prophet of the Old Testament, Malachias (Malachi), uttered this prophecy of the Mass: "I have no pleasure in you, saith the Lord of hosts: and I will not receive a gift of your hand. For from the rising of the sun even to the going down, my name is great among the Gentiles, and in every place there is sacrifice, and there is offered to my name a clean oblation: for my name is great among the Gentiles, saith the Lord of hosts" (Mal. 1:10-12).

According to I. Shawn McElhinney, “The Didache §14 (c. 80 AD), 1 Clement §44 (c. 95 AD), Justin Martyr’s Dialogue with Trypho the Jew §41 (c. 155 AD), and Irenaeus of Lyons’ Against Heresies, 4:17:5 (c. 180 AD) are a few examples in the first 150 years of the Church from the Apostolic Fathers which recognized the connection between the pure offering [“clean oblation” in our Douay version] of the Son of God at Mass and the prophecy of Malachi (referring to the Eucharist specifically as both a sacrifice and as the Body and Blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ).”

“My name is great among the Gentiles,
and in every place sacrifice is offered
to my name”

Saint Augustine, who came later than the authors cited by Mr. McElhinney, directs himself to Jews who do not accept Christ as the Messiah:

‘From the rising of the sun even to its setting My name is great among the Gentiles, and in every place sacrifice is offered to my name, a clean oblation; for My name is great among the Gentiles,’ says the Lord Almighty. What do you answer to that? Open your eyes at last, then, any time, and see, from the rising of the sun to its setting, the Sacrifice of Christians is offered, not in one place only, as was established

with you Jews, but everywhere; and not to just any god at all, but to Him who foretold it, the God of Israel. . . . Not in one place, as was prescribed for you in the earthly Jerusalem, but in every place, even in Jerusalem herself. Not according to the order of Aaron, but according to the order of Melchisedech. (Sermon Against the Jews)

This “Sacrifice of Christians” that Saint Augustine here mentions is the Catholic Mass, for we know that Saint Augustine held the Catholic doctrine of the Eucharist, as is proven by these passages collected by Father Hugh Barbour, among myriad others: “Was not Christ immolated once in Himself, and nevertheless under the sacrament He is immolated for the people not only on every Paschal Feast Day, but even every day, and is it not also the case that he does not err at all who, when asked, responds that He is so immolated?” (Letter 98, 9; A.D. 410).

“Recognize in this bread what hung on the cross, and in this chalice what flowed from His side whatever was in many and varied ways announced beforehand in the sacrifices of the Old Testament pertains to this one sacrifice which is revealed in the New Testament” (Sermon 3, 2; circa A.D. 410).

Note how Saint Augustine, in his “Sermon Against the Jews,” ties in the “clean oblation” of Malachias to the “order of Melchisedech,” admirably illustrating the Catholic doctrine of the Mass from the Old Testament. Type and prophecy are here joined. ■

Email Brother André Marie at bam@catholicism.org

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Sr. Marie Thérèse, M.I.C.M.,
Prioress

CONVENT CORNER SUFFERING THE LITTLE CHILDREN

Dear Reader,
Does your chapel have a cry room? Well, ours does. A couple of years ago we had a nurse visiting who wasn't yet Catholic and we gave her a tour of our grounds and chapel. When we pointed out the cry room, she said, "Oh, so that's where people go

when they are overcome by devotion and are crying." Of course, we chuckled at the thought and then explained the commonly understood use of a cry room.

Little children often do things that embarrass adults and try their patience. All five of our senses can participate in the mortification they provide. A cry room is generally a place to which a parent or guardian can retreat with an offending youngster to avoid the looks and sighs of the other suffering adults.

Of course, as with all of the adults in the chapel that day who had spent a greater or lesser portion of their childhood in some form of a cry room (or should have), the hope is that the child will be trained to behave in a socially acceptable fashion. Be it noted that on occasion some adults still behave in a fashion that is worthy of a cry room, although they may not admit it.

Which brings me to my point. When we adults behave in a fashion that is worthy of the illustrious cry room, we act in a childish manner. "Childish" is very different from "childlike." When Our Lord said, "Unless you become as little children, you shall not enter the kingdom of heaven," He was not recommending that we pack the cry room with emotional and dyspeptic adults.

Fine. So what did Our Lord mean when He said, "Unless you...become as little children, you shall not enter the kingdom of heaven?" (Matthew 18, vs 3)

Keeping you in suspense, I am going to go to the next chapter in Saint Matthew and observe Our Lord speaking again about little children.

Our Lord had come into the coasts of Judea beyond the Jordan and "the multitudes were flocking to Him again." Yes, people were drawn by an invisible and supernatural force from their homes and work to see and hear the God-Man. In the middle of this sea of creatures seeking their Creator is a handful of men known as Pharisees. They are asking Him about marriage and in particular about the validity of divorce. Just in case we would imagine them to be sincere in their inquiries, Saint Matthew and Saint Mark (who also relates this event) both tell us that they were "tempting Him." Patiently Our Lord explains how He first intended marriage at the very creation of Adam and Eve. Who else could have given an eye witness account? Then when the

Pharisees think they have Him cornered by referencing the "bill of divorce" approved by Moses, He patiently explains from His divine point of view what was in the hearts of Moses and the wayward people he was governing. In conclusion, He, as the Eternal Lawgiver, clarifies the indissolubility of marriage and the particular chastity required within this state in life. Surprisingly, His disciples conclude and state that "if the case of a man with his wife be so, it is not expedient to marry." (Hmmm, who knows more about marriage — the Creator or the creature?)

As He continues to expound the beauty of chastity, a unique phenomenon begins to take place in the crowd. There is a movement in the sea of people. Weaving and pushing, pressing, reaching, grasping, stumbling, drawn like iron shavings to a magnet, the crowd separates into two concentric circles — one tightly encircling Our Lord. This inner circle is full of children and their caretakers.

Now, of course, there was no cry room in that place. Perhaps that is why the disciples were quite indignant and "rebuked" the people that brought the children to Our Lord. In any case, Saint Matthew is clear that the disciples were upset that children were being brought to Our Lord in order to have Him "impose hands upon them and pray." After all, Our Lord was engaged in some pretty important business with the Pharisees and everyone was watching! This was definitely an undignified disturbance to Our Lord's sacred work.

And now Our Lord responds. His patience and long-suffering with the Pharisees evaporates quickly from His manner and is replaced by great displeasure (Mark 10:14). And what does He say to these disciples, apparently zealous for His reputation, honor, and dignity? "Whom when Jesus saw, he was much displeased, and saith to them: Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of God." But Our Lord goes further and speaks of adults. "Amen, I say to you, whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, shall not enter into it." (Mark 10:15) And in the context the distinction is luminously clear. Those who are unchaste or insincere, or who pose as devout seekers of the truth, are not childlike. Those who are genuine, innocent, chaste and truth-loving, like little children, will draw near to Him longingly and lovingly. If anyone prevents them, Our Lord will be "much displeased" with him.

And now, Dear Reader, we will go back one chapter in Saint Matthew to revisit the quote we started thinking about earlier. The occasion was His disciples asking who was greater in the kingdom of heaven. Our Lord responded with the vivid clarity of actually bringing a child to sit in their midst and saying, "Amen I say to you, unless you be converted, and become as little children, you shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall



humble himself as this little child, he is the greater in the kingdom of heaven. And he that shall receive one such little child in My Name, receiveth Me.” (Matt 18:3-5) Our Lord then continues expressing His love for little children with a warning about those who scandalize them, and finally a warning against despising children, noting that their angels see the face of His Father in heaven.

Back to the coasts of Judea in Matthew 19. Our Lord turns His displeased attention from His disciples and gives His whole attention to the children and their caretakers. Look at His Holy Face as He begins to embrace and bless the children. Imagine how His Sacred Heart is leaping in His breast and all of the holy desires of the children and their childlike caretakers become as a drop in the ocean of the measureless desires of that Sacred Heart.

Dear Reader, come out of the “cry room” and draw near to Jesus in the tabernacle. Pour out your heart to His. Ask His blessing. He will do to you what He did to the little children. “And embracing them, and laying His hands upon them, He blessed them” (Mark 10:16). ▪

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A group photo of our 1st, 2nd and 3rd Order members from the 2015 Conference



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

PREFECT'S COLUMN

OUR LADY AND THE VIRTUE OF CHARITY

Know, of course, that we cannot cover everything we would like to say about charity, in Latin *caritas*. Some delineate charity to mean only benevolent giving, while Catholics know it is far more than that. And there is a difference between

charity and love, although the two are connected. In good traditional Catholic teachings, there are many references to the word charity.

“Charity is one of the 10 principal virtues of Our Lady. Charity is one of the 12 fruits of the Holy Ghost. Charity is one of the 3 theological virtues — a divine virtue by which we love God above all things for His own sake, and our neighbor as ourselves for the love of God. Charity shall cover the multitude of sins. (1 Peter 4:8) Charity is the most excellent of virtues.” (Saint Thomas Aquinas)

He who possesses faith, hope and charity has all the other virtues in some degree. Without them, he cannot possess any other supernatural virtue, nor reach heaven. We receive faith, hope and charity at Baptism.

Recall that we receive faith, hope and charity in that order, and we lose them in inverse order.

All mortal sin destroys charity. Just because you lose charity does not mean you’ve lost the other two. Saint Thomas Aquinas teaches that “Charity is held to be the ultimate perfection of the human spirit, because it is said to both glorify and reflect the nature of God.”

Perhaps the best chapter in the scriptures on charity is 1 Corinthians, 13. Recall Saint Paul here saying, “If I speak with the tongues of men, and of angels, and have not charity, I am become a sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal . . . and now there remain, faith, hope, charity, these three: but the greatest of these is charity.”

Faith, which is of things that appear not, and hope, which is of things that we enjoy not, will cease in heaven, but charity, the greater, or greatest even of these

three, will remain in heaven. It is by charity we approach near to God, that we become His true image. Can we, then, wonder at the magnificent praises, glorious prerogatives, and surprising effects Saint Paul gives to this virtue?

Venerable Father Emmanuel D’Alzon, himself an edifying model of charity, wrote:

“and now there remain, faith, hope, charity, these three: but the greatest of these is charity”

“What is the Virtue of Charity in Essence?

“1) Charity is friendship with God. What a strange expression! Yet the wonderful thing about it is that God takes the initiative in this friendship. ‘No longer do I call you Servants. You are my friends.’ (Jn 15:15,14) So we are God’s friends, and this friendship implies benevolence. Can anyone doubt this when we consider what God has done for us? But we, too, must be benevolent toward God. That is the meaning of the first three petitions of the Lord’s Prayer: ‘Our Father Who art in heaven, hallowed be your name,

your kingdom come, your will be done.’ (Mt 6:9,10) And what can we say about the reciprocity involved? God loves us. As soon as we love him, charity is reciprocal.

“2) But charity does not seek the object of its love to obtain some advantage for itself. In the words of Saint Augustine: ‘I call by the name of charity that impulsion of the soul that inspires us to seek to possess God for his own sake.’ Faith seeks God for the sake of the truth it receives from him; hope seeks God in order to possess the eternal life it expects to attain; charity seeks God in order to be rooted in him.”

Regarding Our Lady’s inexhaustible charity, Father D’Alzon writes,

“Since Mary was endowed with abundant graces from the very first, how can anyone doubt God’s charity for her? As for Mary’s charity for God, where



Our Lady of Charity

could we find purer love in any human creature? What was the overwhelming concern of her whole life? God and God alone. God was the one and only motivator of all she did:

“We can be certain that this love extends to everything her Son loves, and that she loves us the way her Son loves us.”

‘Behold the handmaid of the Lord’ (Lk 1:38). Hers was an obedient love, that is to say, a love that wanted to express itself in the way the beloved wished. It was a unique love: ‘My soul doth magnify the Lord.’ (Lk 1:46)”

Where can we find a more powerful charity? From the first instant of the Incarnation until the Savior’s death, what tenderness for Jesus her God, nurtured by her tenderness for Jesus her Son! And yet the tenderness for the Son was eclipsed by her charity toward God! Everything is sacrificed to this greatest of loves, and that is why she participated

in the mystery of the Redemption in love, silence, and the deepest anguish, just as she participated in the birth of a God born in the greatest humility and deepest poverty. Only her Son can describe her love in heaven. We can be certain that this love extends to everything her Son loves, and that she loves us the way her Son loves us.

Finally, just as the virtue of poverty is related to the virtue of hope, the virtue of obedience is related to the virtue of charity. Let us therefore proclaim with great love: ‘I am the servant of the Lord.’

How can we know the will of God? It is revealed above all in the commandments of God and the precepts of the Church, “If you love me,” said our Saviour, “keep my commandments.” (John 14:15) This is to serve, please, and love God.

Mary, mother of fair love, enkindle in our hearts, the fire of love for God! ■

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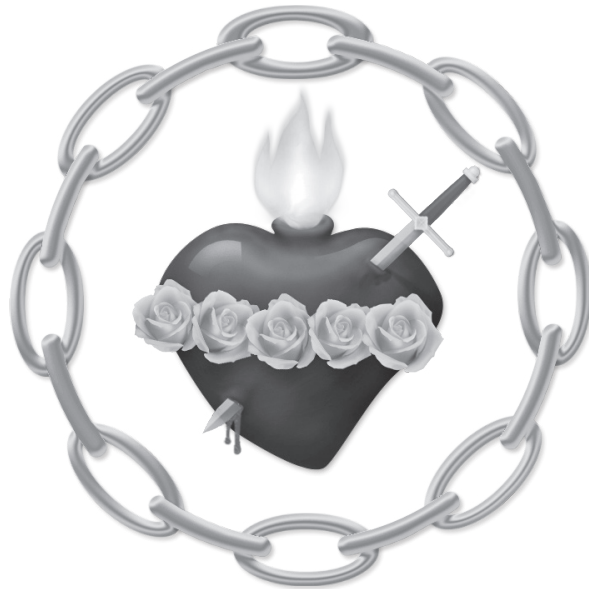
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Mr. Brian Kelly

KELLY FORUM THE FOURTEEN HOLY HELPERS

During the chastising period of the Black Death that devastated Europe from 1346-1349 there were many saints that the faithful invoked against the plague and sudden death. Among these were those who a century later would be known as the Fourteen Holy Helpers.

(A brief history of the devotion of the Holy Helpers, and the vision that initiated that devotion, is wonderfully related in a little book, *The Fourteen Holy Helpers*, by Fr. Bonaventure Hammer, O.F.M. A good deal of the material that follows is taken from this book. It is available from our bookstore.)

The Holy Helpers are: **Saint George**, a victim of the Diocletian persecution. George was born in Cappadocia (Turkey) but moved with his noble mother to Palestine after the death of his father. Being of robust body he enlisted in the army and advanced to a high rank of Tribune. When the persecution of Diocletian broke out George rebuked him for his cruelty. Consequently, the brave Tribune was cast into prison and tortured. No torment could move him to renounce Christ. While being tortured and tied to a spiked wheel, George was encouraged by a vision of Our Lord. Many witnesses were converted by his steadfast firmness of faith. Finally, he was sent to heaven by being beheaded. The year was 303. Saint George is invoked against diseases of the skin and palsy.

Saint Blaise, bishop of Sebaste in Armenia. He was arrested by order of Emperor Licinius in the year 316 and, after being tortured with iron combs, was thrown into prison. Visitors, however, were allowed to see him, among whom was a woman whose child had swallowed a fishbone that could not be dislodged. The bishop blessed the child and he was cured. Afterward, Saint Blaise was beheaded. He is invoked against diseases of the throat.

Saint Aegidius (Giles). He was from Athens, Greece. He left the city and retired to a remote place in France where he accepted a few other men who desired to live under his direction as monks. Charles Martel, grandfather of Charlemagne, King of the Franks, called him to court as a counselor. He warned the king to confess a certain sin that the king had concealed. After confessing it Charles received peace. Saint Giles returned to his monastic solitude and lived to a ripe old age. He died in 712 and is invoked against crippling diseases. He and Saint Erasmus are the only ones of the Fourteen Holy Helpers who did not die martyrs.

Saint Denis (Dionysius, +95). Saint Denis, the earliest of the Fourteen Holy Helpers, is perhaps the most renowned of them on account of the fact that he was converted by Saint Paul when the Apostle gave his famous sermon at the

Areopagus. Saint Paul ordained him a priest and the first bishop of Athens. To acquaint himself better with the holy people in the land of the Savior, he visited Jerusalem where he met several apostles, Saint Luke, and Our Lady herself. Back in Athens, Bishop Denis was gaining so many converts by his preaching that some idolatrous priests conspired to take his life. He fled to Rome where he was commissioned by Pope Clement not to return to Athens but to go to preach in Gaul (France). He and his companions labored throughout France eventually settling in Lutetia which later was named Paris. Here, in the year 95, Bishop Denis was martyred by being beheaded on the hill later called Montmartre in his honor. A church was built on the exact place where his head fell to the ground. Denis is invoked against demonic assault.

Saint Eustace. After Saint Denis, he is the next earliest of the Fourteen Holy Helpers, having been martyred under Emperor Trajan in 118. As a pagan, named Placidus, he had been a general in the imperial army. One day, while hunting, he saw an apparition of Christ on the Cross standing between the antlers of a stag. Our Lord told him to become a Christian in order to attain eternal life. His wife, separately, saw the same vision. They both, with their two children, went to the Bishop of Rome, who baptized them all. Placidus, now named Eustace, was recalled to the army by Trajan. He was asked to offer incense to the gods in thanksgiving for a certain victory. Upon his refusal, he and his family were thrown to the lions. The beasts would do them no harm. He was then put in an oven and burned to death along with his wife. Their bodies, however, remained intact, and they were buried by devout Christians. A church was later built in their honor. Eustace is invoked against fires.

Saint Erasmus. Some accounts have him as a bishop of Antioch. During the persecution of Diocletian he fled to Lebanon living in the mountains as a recluse. Here he was discovered by enemies of the Faith. He was taken to Italy where he was horribly tortured. Miraculously, he survived, even after having his intestines partially cut out. From prison he converted many. After being delivered by an angel and healed he preached the Faith far and wide winning thousands of converts. Finally, he was thrown into prison again when he returned to Italy. Once again, however, he was freed by an angel. He entered his glory peacefully in 303. Erasmus is invoked against stomach disorders. He is also the patron saint of sailors. This is on account of the Saint Erasmus (or Elmo) Fire which fishermen of the high sea say precedes a storm as a warning of danger.

Saint Cyriacus. He was a Roman deacon. When persecution broke out under Diocletian Christians were forced into slave labor, building what became known as "the Baths of Diocletian." Cyriacus volunteered to take the place of an old laborer. Renowned for virtue even among the pagans, he was summoned by the emperor to cure the

latter's daughter who was stricken with blindness. The holy deacon came to the court and, in the Name of Jesus, did just that. When Diocletian died, the new emperor, Maximin, intensified the persecution against Christians and threw Cyriacus into prison. The holy deacon, along with his companions, was tortured at the rack after he refused to sacrifice to idols. Finally, together, they were all beheaded. Cyriacus is invoked against eye diseases.

Saint Christopher. Born with the name Reprobus, he was a pagan filled with pride on account of his immense height and massive muscles. He hired his services out to a pagan king who was a servant of Satan. The king admitted to him that there was one named Jesus who was more powerful than Satan and conquered him by His Cross. Seeking the counsel of a Christian monk, Reprobus was hit by grace. The monk instructed him in the Faith and after baptizing him told him to go to the banks of a certain river, build himself a hut, pray, and use his strength to help people cross the river where there was no bridge. We all know the next part of the story. A Child comes and asks Reprobus to carry Him across the river. The Child, mid-passage, became so heavy that the giant carrier asked Him what was happening. The Child answered, "Thou beareth the Creator of heaven and earth. I am Jesus Christ, thy King and Lord, and henceforth thou shalt be called Christopher (Christ bearer)." With a renewed zeal Christopher returned to his birthplace in Lycia (Turkey) and there preached the Faith where he converted 48,000 (according to Saint Ambrose). The cruel Emperor Decius, having heard of this, arrested Christopher and cast him into prison where he was terribly tortured. Despite the tortures neither fire nor arrows could kill him. At last he gave his soul to God after being beheaded. The year was 250.

Saint Vitus (Guy). He was born in Sicily to pagan parents who gave him over to the care of a nurse named Crescentia. The nurse and her husband Modestus were Catholics. They had the baby baptized and raised him in the Faith. When Vitus returned to his father, Hylas, the unnatural man was enraged. He had his son scourged and then handed him over to the pagan governor. He escaped prison, but was later seized again during the Diocletian persecution. No tortures were able to conquer him, including having

boiling pitch poured over him. Even the lions refused to attack him and his companions in the colosseum. All of these signs only infuriated the emperor even more. They were finally put to death on the rack. The year was 303. Saint Vitus is invoked against paralysis, nervous diseases, and epilepsy.

Saint Pantaleon was a Christian physician in the employ of Emperor Maximin. The bad example of his fellow courtiers, however, seduced him and he abandoned the Faith. By the grace of God he was won back to the Faith by a zealous priest named Hermolaus. Pantaleon continued to practice medicine and gave away his father's inheritance to the poor. Eventually his reputation was such that Maximin had him seized and brought to court. Pantaleon professed his Faith without fear even offering a challenge of power to the pagan doctors at the court. A man with the palsy was brought in and the diabolical arts could do nothing to better him. Pantaleon prayed in the "Name of Jesus, the Son of God, I command thee to rise and be well." And so it happened. With the conversion of many of the witnesses, however, the emperor became even more hardened. He ordered that the saint, his former physician, be nailed to a tree and then beheaded. The year was 308. Saint Pantaleon is invoked against lung diseases.

Saint Acatius, from Cappodocia, was a Roman soldier, a captain in the army during the reign of Emperor Diocletian.

One day, while on a campaign with his troops, he heard a voice saying, "Call on the God of the Christians." He responded immediately to this grace. He sought instruction in the Faith and was baptized. After this, he tried to convert those under his command. Hearing of this the emperor cast him into prison, tortured him on the rack, and had him scourged. Having survived this, he was handed over to a tribune named Bibianus. Asked his name he said, "My name is Christian, because I am a follower of Christ." He was beaten with clubs and, after seven days in another prison, he was transported to Byzantium covered with wounds. While on this journey a consoling voice was heard from the clouds, "Acatius be firm." The soldiers heard it and were terrified. Many fellow prisoners, who heard the voice, were converted. Finally, after angels healed his wounds, he was beheaded. The year was 303. He is invoked against headaches.



The Fourteen Holy Helpers

The last three Holy Helpers are women.

The first is **Saint Barbara** who died in 235. She was born in Heliopolis in Egypt. On account of the growth of Christianity in the country, her pagan father, Dioscorus, confined her to a tower so she would not hear about Jesus Christ. Barbara prayed in solitude to know the true God. Somehow she heard about Christ and got a message to Origen who taught in Alexandria asking for his help. He sent her one of his disciples who came to the tower disguised as a physician. After instructing her, the “physician” baptized her. She then professed her faith boldly to her father after destroying whatever idols she could lay her hands on. Her father was enraged. Unable to dissuade her by scourgings, he turned her over to the pagan proconsul Marcian. When none of the tortures exacted by order of Marcian did her harm, her own father, who had been standing by watching, took a sword and cut her head off. He and Marcian were condignly killed by lightning bolts. Saint Barbara is invoked against lightning and explosions.

Saint Catherine of Alexandria. Her story is similar to Saint Barbara in that she was a virtuous pagan; daughter, in fact of the Queen of Egypt, Sabinella. Through the acquaintance of a holy hermit, Catherine learned about the Catholic Faith. After her baptism, Jesus appeared to her and put a ring on her finger. After the death of her mother (who died a Christian), the evil Emperor Maximin came to Alexandria and began to persecute the faithful. Catherine was renowned before her conversion for her knowledge of philosophy. Because of her renown and nobility, Maximin tried to turn her against the Faith by sending fifty pagan philosophers to refute her publicly in a trial in the pagan

temple. Catherine answered them so well that they all converted. Maximin then put her to the torture. She was, like other saintly martyrs, tied to a spiked wheel. When the executioners turned her on the wheel the instrument of torture broke apart. Maximin then had Catherine beheaded. Tradition in the East has it that angels buried the saint on Mount Sinai. She was martyred in 307. Saint Catherine is the patron saint of philosophers and is invoked in lawsuits.

Saint Margaret. Another victim of the persecution of Diocletian, Margaret was born in Antioch and raised a Catholic by a devout nurse. When she returned to her pagan father he, hearing her testify to her Faith and to her vow of virginity, was greatly displeased. A prefect of the city, Alybrius, took a fancy to Margaret and tried to convince her to marry him. When she refused, and said she was espoused to the King of Heaven, he brought her to his court and tried to dispute with her, even citing the Bible, about her “Crucified God.” Margaret answered, “The books of the Christians would have told you that the Crucified rose on the third day, and that He ascended into heaven.” With this rebuke, the prefect had her tortured on the rack and pierced with iron hooks. Then, while she still lived, he cast her into prison to die. Therein, a heavenly light appeared and a celestial visitor came and healed her from her wounds. Alybrius, seeing her wounds healed was too maddened to be moved. He had her tortured again with flaming torches. The fire did her no harm and many, witnessing this miracle, converted. Finally, she was beheaded. The year was 304. Saint Margaret is invoked against kidney diseases. ■

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MY MORNING CUP OF JOE — CONCLUSION

BY RUSSELL LAPLUME

It has been close to a year since I started these articles and I find myself, again, sipping my coffee in my easy chair, early morning, attempting to clear the fog that envelops my mind. My wife, as usual, is bustling to and fro in organized activity stopping now and then to check her to-do list which she diligently fills in each day. She uses a Catholic saint's planner and spends much time hovering over it, pencil in hand, ready to enter a new task, or to erase one completed. I call this planner her "pacemaker" because without it, her heart would stop. There are times I sneak over to peruse her schedule, secretly hoping that a chore has not been assigned to me, and if one has, that I have time to make up an excuse not to perform it, or at least delay the inevitable. I have been tempted to use a planner myself, but I always figure that just as you won't know if you need something unless you throw it away, then you'll never know if something needs to be done unless you don't do it. As a youth I never practiced this philosophy, but old age has brought me the wisdom to develop methods like these designed to alleviate the stress of everyday life. Now if I could just convince my wife to follow these methods, then we could just spend time in our chairs staring at each other wondering what not to do next.

I'm not too sure what I just wrote, but there must be a kernel of wisdom embedded somewhere in those lines.

The theme of these articles has been twofold; firstly and most importantly, to provide glimpses into the heroic sanctity of St. Joseph, and secondly, to reflect on the nuances of attaining old age. It is a sad statement of old age that one of your hobbies becomes attending funerals. Attending weddings should be occasions of merriment, but I find myself frequently, with morbid curiosity, scanning the room to identify who is likely to pass away next. It is most disconcerting when I find no likely candidate and the lot falls to me. Whatever our age, our final end should always be before us, and we should live our existence so that the worldly gladness of today will not be sadness in eternity. I have always envisioned old age as a time of smug gladness, with my wife and me sitting on the

front porch gently swaying in our rockers, smiling at our children — with their children frolicking on the front lawn to our amusement. Knowing the insidious debauchery of the world, we installed a volleyball and basketball court, and even a large swimming pool to keep them from the public beaches, a place of probable mortal sin for most men, and a certain occasion of sin for most adolescents. But the allure of the world has overtaken some of them. To be fair, my wife and I grew up in the notorious sixties, and our lives were far from stellar, but we overcame that gross liberality and returned to mother Church before our children came along. We raised them in the traditional Catholic faith and would always say to them "learn from our mistakes," but little did we know that upon reaching adulthood and on their own in the world, they would turn that around and say, "let us live our lives as we wish — after all, we know how you lived your lives as youths — we have plenty of time to make amends." The folly of youth! As I am wont to say, the problem with wisdom is that it's wasted upon the old. And as the good Lord says, the sins of the parents will be visited upon their children (Cf. Deut. 5:9).

My greatest heartache is to see my wife suffer for our children, for she took great pains to instruct them properly. She home schooled all of our children, created a little farm complete with ducks, sheep, geese, rabbits, goats and cows;

we raised our own vegetables and canned close to a thousand quarts a year, and all this to provide wholesome activity as an alternative to worldly delights. But how do you keep them down on the farm when they've seen old Paris? So we suffer in prayer as we watch some of them leave the faith entirely, some become lukewarm, some with marriages breaking up, others putting themselves in the grave danger of sin by un-chaperoned dating and still others foregoing Sunday Mass because a baseball or hockey tournament has been scheduled at the same time. And I must mention the modern bane of humanity — that of technology, replete with internet access, video games, facebook, tweets, and only God (or the devil) knows what will be invented tomorrow. It has become an addiction depriving



us of contemplation and prayer. Someone once asked me just how I defined technology, and I stated “anything needed after the Fall.” Simplistic, but in truth, our first Father did proclaim, “I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself” (Gen. 3:10), and they realized their need for

“I personally give all to Saint Joseph, for I feel that devotion to this most loving father is the remedy for familial ills.”

garments, not only for modesty, but probably for warmth and also protection from the insects which now regarded them as food. In an amazing act of divine condescension, God Himself became their tailor: “And the Lord God made for Adam and his wife, garments of skins, and clothed them” (Gen. 3:21). And we have been in need of technology ever since that inglorious Fall.

All of this is a sadness almost too hard to bear, but bear it we must, and must increase our prayer life and hope in God’s mercy, for these heartaches are endured by many parents, and the only solace we have is to throw ourselves at His feet and beg for intercession. After I re-read the previous lines of this article, I thought it prudent to let my wife peruse them for editing or deleting purposes. To me, it read like True Confessions, and I found that a bit disturbing. But lo and behold, Judith said, “Russ, this reads like True Confessions, but let it be printed. We, and parents like us, need all the prayers we can get.” So please, Dear Readers, pray for our children, as we will most assuredly pray for yours. I personally give all to Saint Joseph, for I feel that devotion to this most loving father is the remedy for familial ills.

And with that I will launch into the fifth and final mystery of my Saint Joseph rosary.

The fifth decade I call, Joseph Dies in the Arms of Our Lord and Our Lady. Almost all the commentators on this event are in agreement that Saint Joseph died shortly before Our Lord’s public ministry. The main reason they give is that Joseph, being a strict advocate of the law, would have protested Christ’s innocence, and indeed fought the Pharisees with righteous anger, once they had falsely accused his Son. Unlike Our Lady, he was saved from that agony, though many writers state that he was given foreknowledge of the Passion, so that when he held the Infant in his arms two swords, one of joy, one of sorrow, pierced his most tender heart. The book that I used extensively in the writing of these articles, *The Life and Glories of St. Joseph*, is filled with facts, tidbits and trivia into the hidden life of Joseph, but remarkably little is said about his death, thus enabling the reader to use his imagination in ending the narrative.

There are many pictures depicting Saint Joseph lying on his deathbed with Mary on one side, Our Lord on the other, and usually Joseph is gazing with rapt contemplation on the face of his Son. Can you imagine that holiest of deaths? — Saint Joseph saying ‘Goodbye Son,’ and in the next instant after death saying, ‘Hello Son.’ When I meditate on the other mysteries of this rosary, I usually alternate the scenes in my mind according to my mood of the day, but this last mystery never deviates. I always have Our Lord escorting Saint Joseph to the Limbo of the Just, and after Jesus departs, I place Joseph in the back of the waiting room, so to speak, where in front of him there are countless souls, each represented by a burning flame, waiting in anticipation for the gates to open.

They are arranged in order of merit and all are aware that an event has just occurred that will shorten their confinement in this holding cell. Suddenly, the crowd separates, forming an aisle, and as Joseph passes between, a lily appears above each burning flame which becomes brighter from his passing. Upon reaching the front of that vast multitude, the chamber is glowing with an incredible light, and hymns of praise and thanksgiving are sung for they know that now that Joseph is here, his Son will soon follow to lead them to their eternal reward.

Although the former part of this meditation never changes, I usually have slightly different variations of the ending. Saint Paul stated in Corinthians, “When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child. But, when I became a man, I put away the things of a child” (I Cor. 13:11). A good part of childhood is fantasizing, whether it be hitting the game winning home run or being the hero in countless scenarios your youthful mind can dream. I have always felt that this youthful fantasizing should evolve into a grown-up form of spiritual meditation. This is why I meditate/fantasize on my hero Saint Joseph, the only difference being he always ends up the hero, and I, the Joseph devotee, remain content to hold onto his many-colored coat.

So I end this meditation by turning from the happy celebration just described in Limbo, and as I walk away, I feel a hand upon my shoulder. I turn and see the happy smile of Joseph and he says, “I know you well enough to feel that you are not comfortable here, so I will see you again at the first decade of your rosary for in that one we always fish down by the Jordan; but please, next time bring worms.”

It is my hope that I have brought my readers to a greater love of this glorious Saint, and though as I see now through a glass darkly, it is my most earnest hope that upon dying and meeting my Judge, that the clear smiling face of Saint Joseph will be there by his side. ■

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A PRAYER FOR THE CONVERSION OF AMERICA

O Mary, Mother of mercy and Refuge of sinners, we beseech thee, be pleased to look with pitiful eyes upon poor heretics and schismatics. Thou who art the Seat of Wisdom, enlighten the minds that are miserably enfolded in the darkness of ignorance and sin, that they may clearly know that the Holy Catholic and Apostolic Roman Church is the one true Church of Jesus Christ, outside of which neither holiness nor salvation can be found. Finish the work of their conversion by obtaining for them the grace to accept all the truths of our Holy Faith, and to submit themselves to the supreme Roman Pontiff, the Vicar of Jesus Christ on earth; that so, being united with us in the sweet chains of divine charity, there may soon be only one fold under the same one shepherd; and may we all, O glorious Virgin, sing forever with exultation: Rejoice, O Virgin Mary, thou only hast destroyed all heresies in the whole world. Amen. Hail Mary, three times (Pius IX, Raccolta No. 579).

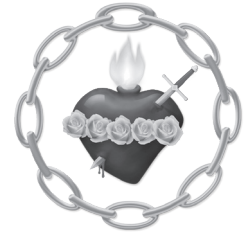
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Ex Cathedra: “We declare, say, define, and pronounce that it is absolutely necessary for the salvation of every human creature to be subject to the Roman Pontiff.” (Pope Boniface VIII, the Bull *Unam Sanctam*, 1302).

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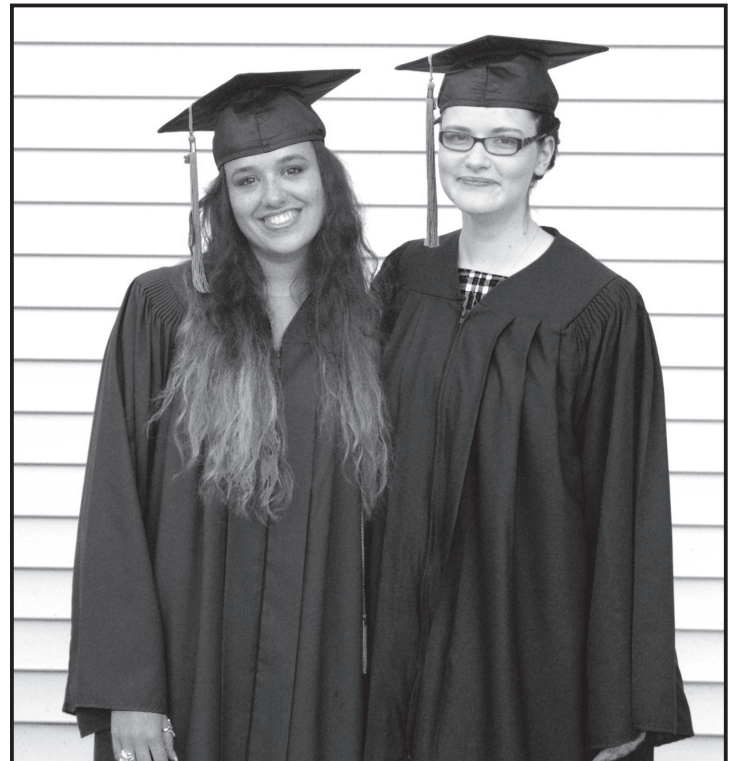
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