



APOSTLES THE ROSARY Newsletter

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The Inward Spirit

by Edward F. Garesché, S.J.

This is an age of extraordinary and vivid activity. Everything is moving and changing. Progress is the word of the hour. Our civilization is all keyed up for swift action. "Faster and faster" is the motto of the times.

Everyone is caught up in this current of rapid action. It is frequently said nowadays

that man is becoming the victim of his own inventions. Many whose nerves are frayed and worn with the continual stir of modern life look back longingly to the times when life was leisurely and tranquil, when people slept soundly at night and were not constantly driven by the problems of a complex age. But these very people, like all the rest of mankind, find themselves unable to resist the swift current of modern life.

Every new invention speeds up the tempo of the time. We little realize how much society is at the mercy of new devices. A couple of generations ago, an ingenious innovator produced a crude-looking machine which was the first typewriter, and exhibited it with pride because, crude as it was, it could write faster than the human hand and print so that all could read.

He little realized, when he launched this invention and saw it become more and more perfect, that he was changing the whole face of society. Up to that time writing in offices had been carefully done by trained penmen, and

records were kept and letters dispatched in a leisurely, quiet way. But the invention of the typewriter speeded up the whole current of business. Now it was possible to employ women as secretaries, and they could do more with the typewriter than a strong man with a pen.

This, together with the huge increase of other machines which women could run, took women from the homes and put them in direct competition with men in the business world; and though this had many good results, as well as unfortunate ones, still every one can see how the whole



THE HOLY FAMILY ... MODEL OF THE INWARD SPIRIT

face of our civilization was changed by these machines.

So, too, when the first halting models of the early automobiles began to move jerkily along country roads, the coming of this machine brought another revolution into society. It enhanced the craving for travel and started hundreds of thousands of people roving back and forth over the country, thus doing its part also to break up the old tranquility and peace of homes.

Again, when the astounding news was spread that a

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machine had been devised which would throw moving pictures on the screen, no one realized the profound effect this would have on the peoples of the entire world. But now, time has revealed the profound and inescapable influence the moving pictures have on society. Aside from their content, movies and television have brought a fever to people's imaginations and cravings into their lives which were not experienced before; they have profoundly modified the whole face of society.

All these inventions have great advantages, as well as great drawbacks. It is possible by their means to accomplish much more in a given time, of good as well as evil. But they all have this result – that they distract the mind and make life more complex, more attractive, more exteriorly compelling than it was before.

These are times, therefore, when it is wise to think and speak often of the interior spirit, of the inward life of the soul, which, though its currents flow gently and often obscurely, is more important than all the whirl and variety of outward things. The real life we live is within us, in the inmost sanctuary of our own heart and soul. Within each human being there is an inner solitude, a shrine of holiness and power, where God and the soul dwell together and which is only accessible to the soul and to God.

It is the happiness or unhappiness, the goodness or evil, of this inward life that determines each human destiny. Therefore nothing is so important as to safeguard and cultivate a holy and happy life in this sanctuary of the soul. This life is chiefly lived through our thoughts and desires; that is to say, by our inward knowledge and inward love.

The mind and the heart are always busy, all during our waking hours. The stream of outward events, the experiences of each day's life, the outward influences brought to bear on us, do affect and profoundly modify our thoughts and our desires; but the mighty power within us of choosing and willing may still be master of our inward life. Outward events affect us, modify us, dominate us, only in proportion as we allow them to do so. We can yield to the current of outward distractions, lose ourselves in trifles, and forget the inward life of the soul; or we can, with the same deliberation, turn our thoughts inward, remember the things which are for our peace, and live an inward life, happy and holy, no matter what distractions, difficulties, dangers or pleasures assail us from without.

It is the unfortunate tendency of our time to neglect this inward life of the soul, to live principally for exterior things. It is easy to drift along with the current of events, letting one's self be influenced, this way or that, by the happenings of each hour; and it is much more difficult to

deliberately keep control over the current of thoughts and desires. But the second way of acting makes us much more happy. Who has not noticed the craving and emptiness, the restlessness and unhappiness of those who yield themselves entirely to exterior things and neglect the inward life?

On the other hand, the most happy and contented of all who are on earth are those whose inward life is best regulated, who refuse to allow themselves to be carried away by the current of distractions, but deliberately live with God in the inner sanctuary of their souls. They are not so rich in pleasures, perhaps, as the self-indulgent, shallow nature; but they are far richer in happiness. The gulf between pleasure and happiness is very great. Pleasure is a passing gratification, happiness is a deep and lasting contentment; and this contentment is impossible without a well-ordered inward life of the soul.

As the bodily life is nourished by food and helped by exercise, fresh air and sunlight, and as we can keep ourselves in fairly vigorous health by observing the simple rules of physical well-being, so also the inward life of the soul has its definite rules for health and growth. They differ, of course, from the rules which pertain to the care of bodily health, but there is enough similarity to make an interesting comparison. Our spiritual nature needs food of another kind from that of the body, but it may be truly said to need spiritual nourishment. The exercises which benefit the inward life of the soul are different from the exercises of the body; yet, there is a close resemblance in methods and results.

Finally, bodily disease may be diagnosed and cured, or better still, kept off and prevented. So also, the diseases and afflictions of the soul may be diagnosed and cured. Their prevention, like that of the prevention of diseases of the body, is still more desirable than a cure, and this also can be achieved by reasonable effort and foresight.

There is a great advantage, however, of the health of the soul over the health of the body, of the soul's food and exercise and cure over that of our bodily nature. In the one case, the body is destined to death and corruption. Nothing can entirely arrest the onset of old age and the gradual decay of the faculties.

But all the care which we give to our interior life, to the life of our soul, has its results not in time only but in all eternity. Our soul is deathless; though the body dies and falls to dust, the life of the soul continues forever. It is true, this brief span of life is all the time we have in which to develop and increase the beauty and vigor of our soul. At the moment of death our opportunities are all over. The Bible tells us, "If the tree fall to the South or to the North,

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Saint Gemma Galgani

Gemma Galgani was born on March 12, 1878 near Lucca, Italy, the fifth of eight children. At a very young age Gemma, which is Italian for gem, developed a profound prayer life, due primarily to her pious mother. When Gemma was only seven years old, her mother died, and from thence forward Gemma led a life of continuous suffering, which she treasured as a means of uniting herself to her suffering Savior.

Young Gemma ardently longed to be united to Our Lord in Holy Communion. She would plea: "Give me Jesus ... and you will see how good I shall be. I shall be quite changed. I won't commit any more sin. Give Him to me. I so long for Him, and I cannot live without Him." She said of her First Communion: "It is impossible to explain what then passed between Jesus and me. He made Himself felt, oh so strongly, in my soul."

When Gemma was nineteen years old, her father died. Due to unfortunate circumstances, he left his orphaned children penniless. Gemma had always longed to become a Passionist nun, but illness prevented her from being accepted into the order, and she patiently accepted this cross.

Various supernatural phenomena surrounded the life of Gemma. She prayed and conversed with her visible Guardian Angel frequently. She was granted visions, ecstasies, revelations, prophecies, miracles and supernatural knowledge. She had periodically occurring stigmata from 1899-1901.

On June 8, 1899 the Blessed Virgin appeared to Gemma, saying, "My Son Jesus loves you beyond measure and wishes to give you a grace. I will be a mother to you. Will you be a true child?" Our Lady then covered Gemma with Her mantle.

Gemma describes her reception of the stigmata:

"At that moment Jesus appeared with all His wounds open, but from these wounds there no longer came forth blood, but flames of fire. In an

instant these flames came to touch my hands, my feet and my heart. I felt as if I were dying, and should have fallen to the ground had not my Mother held me up, while all the time I remained beneath Her mantle. I had to remain several hours in that position. Finally She kissed my forehead, all vanished, and I found myself kneeling. But I still felt great pain in my hands, feet and heart. I rose to go to bed, and became aware that blood was flowing from those parts where I felt pain. I covered them as well as I could, and then helped by my Angel, I was able to go to bed ..."

In 1902 Gemma offered herself to God as a victim soul, and He accepted. Afterward Gemma became

violently ill. In addition to her physical illness, she was tortured with spiritual dryness and was also violently assaulted by the devil. One eyewitness relates: "That abominable beast will be the end of our dear Gemma – deafening blows, forms of ferocious animals, etc. – I came away with tears because the demon is wearing her out."

During this last struggle Gemma could only pray fervently. Before dying she said: "I seek for nothing more; I have made the sacrifice of everything and everyone to God; now I prepare to die. Now it is indeed true that nothing more remains to me, Jesus. I recommend my poor soul to Thee ... Jesus!" Gemma Galgani, who forsook both herself and the world to unite herself more perfectly with God, died on Holy Saturday, April 11, 1903 at the age of twenty-five. She was canonized on May 2, 1940. ■





Dear Father Gruner,

Needless to say, I am very upset that you have suffered persecution for your beliefs. I commend you for standing up against such tremendous pressure in protecting the sanctity of the Shrine of Fatima. I want you to know you are in my prayers daily and I hope that you can somehow keep the Shrine from being desecrated by all the different sects trying to accomplish that end.

Good luck with your endeavors, and I will pray for you daily.

Doug P., ON

Apostolate News

The Fatima Center has recently published an important Special Report entitled "Father Fox's Modernist Assault on Fatima." While claiming to be obedient to the Law, the Pharisees of old emptied the Law of its true meaning and replaced it with a corrupted human interpretation. The report explains that today, Fr. Robert J. Fox and his fellow apologists for the "new" religion of "ecumenism" and "inter-religious dialogue" are doing much the same with the Message of Fatima. Unfortunately, they have been very successful.

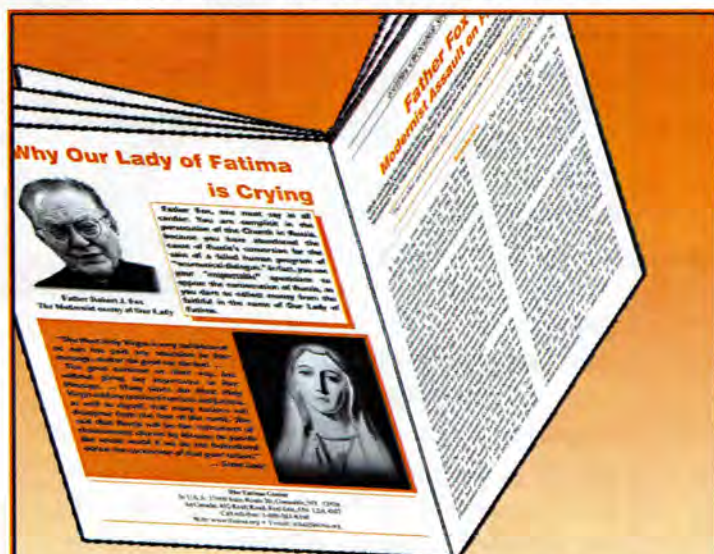
This Special Report, masterfully written by Christopher A. Ferrara, is a clear account of how the modernists have led their systematic assault against Fatima, and the disastrous results of their offensive. The assault has led to the recent desecration of the Capelinha, the chapel built on the sight Our Lady appeared at Fatima, by pagan Hindu worship.

This Report is essential reading for those who wish to truly understand why Our Lady of Fatima has not been obeyed, why Her Message has been so severely targeted and who is behind the assault. We encourage you to read it and pass it on to others.

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in what place soever it shall fall, there it shall be" (Eccles. xi, 3). As we are when we go into eternity, such will be the measure of our beauty of spirit, our loveliness, joy and glory for ever and ever. These thoughts should surely make us more and more interested in the care of our interior lives.

When we become enthusiastic about maintaining the life of our body, we naturally ask, "How can I gain and keep vigorous health?" We expect to be required to do some hard things and make some earnest efforts, but we feel that we shall be repaid by the sense of vigor and fitness, and the happiness and efficient strength which comes of being well. So, also, when we commence a deliberate effort to cultivate, enrich and deepen the vigor of our inward life, and to feed and exercise our soul, we expect to make some efforts and sacrifices. But we shall be repaid a hundredfold by the satisfaction and contentment which come from a well-developed and healthful inward life. ■



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