

The Delights of Paradise

Easter Season is a glorious time to reflect on the happiness of Heaven. Saint Anthony Mary Claret provides some considerations on the complete joy we will share when we enter the company of the saints and Our Blessed Mother.

In heavenly bliss man finds the fulfillment of all his desires. Once his body is dressed anew with the four glorious properties which all who are saved will receive at the time of the General Judgment, he will have a brilliance greater than that of the sun and stars, he will enjoy an agility and power of penetration like that of an angel; he will be impassable, incorruptible, and eternally blessed.

His eyes will enjoy the sight of the beauties of paradise. His ears will be delighted at the melodious music of heavenly spirits, and he will perceive the exquisite fragrance of that blessed place. O home of infinite delights! Here, the blessed, the redeemed, will taste the sweetest savor and enjoy the happiest companionship.

Ah! If association on earth with a very prudent, wise, agreeable and affectionate person brings great consolation, what will it not be to associate in Heaven with angels and saints, all of whom have the highest degree of prudence, wisdom, virtue, loveliness and affection?

What sweetness will one not experience in talking to, in seeing, in hearing creatures that possess such great beauty, knowledge and virtue? What pleasure will there not be in hearing, speaking to, and seeing the choirs of the fairest vir-



THE QUEEN OF HEAVEN

gins, of the charming confessors and martyrs, of gloriously brilliant apostles, prophets and patriarchs?

What will it not be like to behold, to hear, to talk with angels, Cherubim and Seraphim, who are afire with love for God? My soul pines away as it considers the delights of glory. My heart desires to depart from my breast in order to go forth to enjoy such great happiness.

There in paradise, all are immensely rich crowned princes. There all virtues reach a heroic degree, all holiness is genuine, all charity is overflowing, all love is sin-

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Sadness: Satan's Gate to the Soul

What is the worst thing in the world? According to Saint Francis de Sales, the worst thing – apart from sin – is sadness.

Sadness is the work of the spirit of darkness. It is not a fruit of recollection and prayer, nor is it ever the spirit of God which brings it. Any thought that troubles and disquiets the soul cannot come from the God of peace, who makes His dwelling-place only in peaceful souls.

Saint Francis de Sales wrote on this subject in a letter to one of his spiritual charges:

“Yes, my daughter, I now tell you in writing what I before said to you in person, always be as happy as you can in well-doing, for it gives a double value to good works to be well done and to be done cheerfully. And when I say, rejoice in well-doing, I do not mean that if you happen to commit some fault you should on that account abandon yourself to sadness. For God’s sake, no; for that would be to add defect to defect. But I mean that you should persevere in the wish to do well, that you return to it the moment you realize you have deviated from it, and that by means of this fidelity you live happily in the Lord. ... May God be ever in our heart, my daughter. ... Live joyfully and be generous, for this is the will of God. ...”

This advice reassures us, too, and recalls to us the request of Our Lady at Fatima to fulfill our duties of state. How shall we respond to Her request? Are we to moan about the sacrifices we must make, and perform our tasks grudgingly? It cannot be so. Our efforts, great and small, should always be of “double value.” Our cheerful cooperation with God’s desires for us is the generosity of heart that imitates the complete service of Our Lady.

Does this generosity of heart imply that we are to abandon our earthly hobbies and diversions? No. It is wrong to deny one’s self all diversion. The mind becomes fatigued and depressed by remaining always concentrated in itself. In this state, the soul falls more easily prey to sadness. But God does not want sad saints! Saint Thomas says explicitly that one may incur sin by refusing all innocent amusement. Such excesses are contrary to order and thus to virtue.

Recreation lifts the soul anew. It “re-creates.” Thus, its innocent amusements are to the soul what seasoning is to food. Food too highly seasoned can

become injurious to health. Food that is unseasoned is unendurable because of its insipidity.

How much recreation shall be prescribed for one? Father Quadrupani, writing on the subject, answers simply: as much as is necessary for him, according to his nature, the bent of his mind and his disposition towards sadness.

If you find your heart growing heavy and sad, divert yourself at once. Make a visit, take a walk, read a good book, sing a song, seek conversation with another, knit, chop wood – do whatever you need to drive away this sadness and close the gate to this enemy. For where sadness descends, there spies the devil the next place for his attack. †

MAKE PLANS!!



Fatima PILGRIMAGE 2006

PORTUGAL • SPAIN • FRANCE

The October pilgrimages to holy sites of Portugal, Spain and France are being planned. The cost for the short pilgrimage is \$1699, and for the longer one is \$2599.

For more information, call
1-866-871-7723

or E-mail:
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International Efforts

The Fatima Center continues to reach out in its campaign to distribute the leaflet "Heaven Opened by the Practice of the Three Hail Marys." *It is our goal to put this little leaflet into the hands of a million souls* – and that is just to start.

Wherever we go, we find Catholics who are ignorant of the Catechism, ignorant of the Fatima Message, and do not even have a devotion to Our Lady. They do not understand the need for prayers of reparation. How can one show them the necessity of praying the Rosary if they have no devotion to Our Lady? These souls must first learn a simple devotion to Our Lady, faithfully to greet Her every day with three 'Aves'. The Center hopes that they will be given the grace of a willing and loving disposition to answer Our Lady's requests at Fatima, to take up the Rosary and Scapular with pious hearts, desiring to please the Queen of Heaven.

Our efforts to distribute the leaflet are worldwide, and continue to win enthusiastic response. The Brazilian priests who received the Portuguese version last December have been requesting more leaflets for their flocks. They have also awaited eagerly the Portuguese version of "Garment of Grace," which was mailed this past March to 14,000 priests in Brazil. Included with the booklets were Brown Scapulars and the "Three Hail Marys" leaflets. We anticipate requests for many more.



Please continue to pray your three Hail Marys for the success of this cause to bring souls to Our Lady. †

Internet News from the Apostolate

Just in time for First Communion

With the season of First Communions, graduations and weddings upon us, you may be looking for appropriate gifts for your loved ones. Check out our new Internet gift store, Fatima Shoppe, which was launched at the end of February. You can get to it from the www.fatima.org home page or by going to: www.fatimashoppe.org.

You can also obtain additional copies of *Fatima! Through the Eyes of a Child*, which was written especially to tell the whole Fatima story to children.

Fatima Radio: The Voice Heard 'Round the World'

Join others in praying the Rosary three times a day, listen to interviews with genuinely Catholic writers and priests, learn your catechism – all at our new 24hour/day, seven-day/week web radio. Link to "fatimradio.org" and click on "ListenLive"; or download programs to your i-pod for listening at another time. Here are comments from some of those who have tuned in:

"I love and enjoy the radio station and listen every



chance I get. I am glad I stumbled on this great site. Thank you very much."

"Very pleased to have more than what is offered on regular radio, tv or the computer. I hope to join in

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cere. There peace prevails as well as concord, and all awards are perfectly just. One finds abundance, magnificence and grandeur. Not a thing there is faulty or blemished. Sin gains no entry and death holds no sway.

But where will my talking this way lead to? Is there yet more one might say? How does one tell it? Our Blessed Mother Mary is the charm of the saints. Jesus Christ is the joy of the elect, as likewise He is the immense and sovereign God wherein the angels and saints find their rest and satisfaction. But is Blessed Mary not a portion of the inheritance of the just? Yes. Indeed, what will the joy not be of seeing Her fair face, Her gracious eyes, Her lovely person? What a delight it will be to behold the Queen of Heaven and earth, endowed with every grace, adorned with every perfection?

What a joy the just man will experience from being in his Mother's company, in partaking of Her gifts, in witnessing Her devotedness. Even if there were nothing else among the created enjoyments and glories of Heaven besides enjoying seeing the sweet and Blessed Virgin Mary, the hermits would consider their penances well worth it; the martyrs, their torments; and the confessors and virgins would remain satisfied for all their privations and toils.

And what shall I say about the happiness which the saints will experience from seeing and possessing Jesus Christ? This sweetest Savior appears in Heaven with all the splendor of His glory. One is allowed to see His Holy Humanity in all the perfection that the hand of the Almighty gave It. One sees His Sacred Head crowned with resplendent stars. The locks of His golden hair well suit the purple of a great King. His eyes are brighter than a thousand suns. His face, more handsome than any other sons of men, will shine with the glory of God.

From His feet and hands rich rivers of grace gush forth. That loving breast is an immense sea of treasures and blessings. O most holy Humanity of Jesus! When will I see Thee at the right hand of the Father? O Infinite God! When shall I enjoy Thy presence? When will my eyes see Thee face to face? When will my soul, once it is free of the chains that shackle it on earth, become free and active in Heaven? †

We'd like to hear from YOU! Write or call:

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Other News

Father Gruner and other workers at the Apostolate have been busy taking the Fatima Message on the road. This past March, Father spoke at the Saint Joseph Forum, in South Bend, Indiana. Many attendees return regularly to hear Father and others speak at this annual conference, where Father has spoken for the past 11 years. They go to Mass and confession, and to acquire needed spiritual reading, or sacramentals to distribute. And always there are souls to counsel, encourage in the apostolic work, or enroll in the Brown Scapular or Miraculous Medal.

Father Gruner also had the opportunity to meet with volunteers and friends of the Apostolate when he visited the Orlando, Florida area this past March. Audience members were impressed with the message of the EWTN book. Many expressed enthusiasm for the upcoming Bishops' conference. This is heartening on the human level, but please, dear reader, join them in praying for the success of this conference.

"Unless the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it." (Ps. 126:1)

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much more, especially the Rosary, as my family does not join me in prayer. Thank you." BJ

"WONDERFUL! I must say the site navigation was very easy to follow, I enjoyed the variety of programming, the subject matter, and the guests VERY MUCH! I live in an area where I am just not able to pick up the weekly radio broadcasts, but now I am able to listen to it whenever I have time to do so. This is a great way to reach out to the maximum audience who often have limited time or a strange schedule to their day."

"I have listened to all the shows in the archive of Heaven's Peace Plan. I am very pleased with this radio station. Now I can listen to live and new shows. I also like the classic and Catholic music in between shows. Thank you for this traditional Catholic radio station. With friendly greetings (from the Netherlands). L.S.

"My favorite part of the Fatima Radio is the Rosary. I try to pray the Rosary with you each time it is on." †