



CRUSADERS OF MARY

Newsletter

Volume 9 - Issue 30
July, 2007

Christian Simplicity

from *The Soul Sanctified*

"... In simplicity of heart and sincerity of God, and not in carnal wisdom, but in the grace of God, we have conversed in this world: and more abundantly towards you."

2 Cor. 1:12

Simplicity is nothing else than an act of pure and simple charity, which has only one purpose, namely, that of pleasing God. And our soul is simple when we have no other pretensions in whatever we do.



The well-known story of Martha and Mary, who exercised hospitality towards Our Lord, is very remarkable on this point. Although the object of Martha was praiseworthy in wishing to treat Our Lord well, she was nevertheless reprimanded by our Divine Master because, beyond the good purpose she had in view, in her haste she mixed up other purposes with it, and thus she lost her singleness of purpose, for which reason she was reprimanded: "Martha, Martha, thou art careful, and art troubled about many things; but one thing is necessary. Mary hath chosen the best part, which shall not be taken away from her." (Luke 10:41-42)

Christian simplicity, then, is an act of simple charity, which makes us have no other view in all our actions than the sole desire of pleasing God.

This is the part which Mary took, and it is the one thing necessary. It is a virtue which is inseparable from charity, which looks straight to God and which cannot suffer any interference from the consideration of creatures: God alone finds place in it.

This virtue is purely Christian. The pagans, even those who have spoken the best concerning other virtues, had no knowledge of it, any more than they had of humility. They have written well concerning magnificence, liberality, constancy — but nothing about simplicity and humility. It was Our Lord Himself, coming down from Heaven, who gave the knowledge of these virtues to man; otherwise they would have remained unknown. "Be as wise as serpents," said He to His Apostles, but do not stop there: moreover, be "as simple as doves." Let us learn of the dove to love God in sim-

In this issue:

Christian Simplicity	1
The First Catholic Teacher	2
News from the Apostolate	4

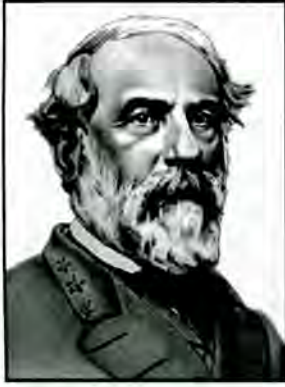
continued on page 2

The First Catholic Teacher

by Father Arthur Tonne

“Unless your justice exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.” Matthew 5:20

“I believe in the holy, Catholic Church.”



The leader of the Confederate forces in the Civil War, General Robert E. Lee, was esteemed and respected by the north as well as the south. He accepted the presidency of Washington College in Virginia and taught several classes in order to influence young people for

leadership in the Southern states.

In one of his classes was a boy who earned his room and board by working for a farmer. Lee noticed that the lad was very poor, very self-conscious, and often very tired from work and study. The great man decided to help him.

“What do you do between classes?” Lee asked him one day. “I look around for a classroom that is

continued on page 3

CHRISTIAN SIMPLICITY - *continued from page 1*

plicity of heart, having only one object or end, which is to please Him by the means corresponding to our vocation.

Thus, simplicity banishes from the soul the care and anxiety with which many uselessly seek out a multiplicity of means to enable them to love God, as they say; and they fancy that if they do not do all that the Saints have done, they cannot arrive at that end. Poor people, who torment themselves to discover the art of loving God! Do they not know that there is no other way but simply to love Him? They think there is some stratagem or other for gaining this love, while the greatest stratagem in the matter is to proceed with all simplicity.

But this simplicity ought to have no other motive for being excited to seek for the love of God but the objective itself; otherwise it would not be perfectly simple, for simplicity cannot allow itself to look toward anything else, howsoever perfect, save the pure love of God, which is its only object.

This virtue does not allow us to worry ourselves with what people will say or think of us because its only thought is to please God and not creatures, except so far as the love of God requires it. After the soul imbued with simplicity has done an action which it thinks it ought to do, it thinks no more about it; and if the idea occurs what people will say or think of it, such a soul at once rejects the thought, because it cannot allow any interference with its object, which is to keep itself attentive to

God in order to increase the love of Him in itself. The consideration of creatures in nowise moves it, because it refers everything to its Creator.

The soul possessed of simplicity practices this virtue even in conversation and recreation, as in every other action, although in these areas there ought to be a holy liberty to entertain oneself with such subjects as serve to promote the spirit of joy and recreation. We must be frank in conversation, but we must not for that reason be inconsiderate, inasmuch as simplicity always follows the rule of the love of God. But if we happened to say any little thing that seemed not to be so well received as we could wish, we ought not on that account to amuse ourselves with making reflections and examens on all our words. Oh no! For it is self-love that causes us to make all these reflections, but holy simplicity does not run after its words and its actions, but leaves the event of them to Divine Providence, to which it supremely attaches itself without turning to the right hand or the left, but following its path simply. And if simplicity meets with an occasion for practicing any virtue, it diligently avails itself of the opportunity, as of a means proper to enable it to arrive at its own perfection, which is the love of God, but it does not agitate itself to seek for the opportunity; neither does it despise it; simplicity keeps itself peaceful and tranquil in the confidence that it has that God knows its desire, which is to please Him, and that suffices for it. †

warm," the boy answered, "and stay there until I have to move out for a class. I can study better when I am warm." "You need not do that," suggested General Lee. "Come to my office and study. I am seldom there, and the fire is always burning. You can be custodian of the fire. Then I won't have to think about it. Come tomorrow. You are very welcome."

Next day the boy found a place prepared for him with reference books and a desk. Whenever the general came in the student found it hard to keep his mind on his books. He preferred to look at the kindly face of his wonderful teacher.

He learned more from Lee than from his books. The general took care of him when he was sick, and secured a teaching position for him when he graduated. The boy went out determined to teach and live like Lee.

Later the lad was called to serve his country, and was severely wounded. From death's door he sent this message to his friends: "Tell the folks that I did my best to be like my General Lee."

The big-souled kindness of General Lee reminds us of another Teacher, who surpassed all teachers of all times, Our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. He was the first Christian Teacher. He was the first Catholic Teacher. ...

Christ did teach definite things. He told us what we must believe. He told us what we must do and not do. He told us how to worship God. Dozens of times the Gospel tells us that He taught. Dozens of times Jesus told His followers to teach as He was teaching them. Teaching was one of His principal occupations. Today we would like to consider not so

much what Christ taught, but the circumstances of His instructions.

1. First of all we notice that even the enemies of Christ admitted, as they have admitted in every age, that His teaching is far superior to that of any other religious leader. It is complete. It is pure. It is elevated. It is powerful. In modern words: "It works."
2. At the time when Jesus began to do and to teach, the nations and peoples of the earth were devoted to many gods. Ridiculous religious ideas and cruel superstitious practices were the vogue. In place of virtue men honored vice. In place of the one true God



men worshipped many false gods. There was nothing in the world of Christ's day that would lead us to expect that men would accept the Teacher who came from an obscure corner of Judea. So unwilling were men to accept, so opposed were they to Christ's teaching, that they not only protested, they even put the ideal Teacher to death.

3. Consider further that this wonderful teaching came from the lips of an unknown Carpenter of Galilee. Up to the time Christ began to preach and teach He had lived by the labor of His hands. The Jews did not fail to note this: "And the Jews marveled, saying, 'How does this man come by learning, since He has not studied?'" John 7:15. It is equally remarkable that we find in the words of Jesus no trace of the prejudices of His time or people. What Christ taught applies to all men of all times of all places.
4. Most remarkable about the method used by the Master is that He does not argue or discuss. He states His truths as His truths. We see that in the Gospel: "You have heard ... 'thou shalt not kill'; but I say to you that everyone who is angry with his

continued on page 4



CRUSADERS OF MARY

News



Recently we have been busy with Rosary Rallies in New York and Ohio. But now we are turning more attention to the immediately upcoming conference in Brazil (August 2007), the theme of which is "The Only Way to World Peace." It was at the strong encouragement of our Brazilian priests and bishops who attended last October's conference in Tuy, that we committed to this conference which is farther away than Western Europe!

Therefore, we hope they have been spreading the word in their own country. Our conference enrollment is already over a hundred! The conference will be available to participants in English, Spanish and Portuguese; if you would like to listen, log on to www.fatima.org for instructions for listening.

Friends — Please pray for Jean, a longtime friend of Father Gruner and of Our Lady's Apostolate, who is quite ill with cancer. Jean and her husband have done so many kindnesses on behalf of Our Lady's Apostolate that we could fill a book with stories! †

THE FIRST CATHOLIC TEACHER - *continued from page 3*

brother shall be liable to judgment." "I say to you." Again and again Christ uses that expression. In Matthew, 7:29,

we read: "The crowds were astonished at His teaching; for He was teaching them as one having authority, and not as the scribes and Pharisees." The people cried out: "Never has man spoken like this man." John 7:46.

At the same time His speech was simple and plain, uttered naturally without any attempt at eloquence, without excitement, and without the weakness of big words. Indeed, Christ spoke directly to the little and humble and simple. Sublime and lofty though His ideas were, He expresses them so briefly and exactly that often a sentence, a proverb, gives us the gist of an entire talk. He told stories, and drew comparisons from things around, from happenings of the day, and the habits of His hearers. Thousands listened eagerly.

5. This Teacher of teachers was especially skillful in dealing with His enemies. Often they asked catch questions to make Him contradict Himself and appear ridiculous. Never did they succeed. Clear, concise, complete, the answers of Jesus confused their cunning.

6. Best of all, His teachings were practical. They worked. They changed the hearts of men. They changed society. Wherever men have followed Christ's teachings, they have advanced, they have made progress. Wherever and whenever men have forgotten or neglected His teachings, society has suffered. History proves that.

If General Lee inspired one of his students to love and imitation, how much more does Christ, the ideal Teacher, inspire us to love and imitation. Think of Him, follow Him. Amen. †