



CRUSADERS OF MARY

Newsletter

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Pride, or 'I don't know how to read'

by Father Arthur Tonne

"Seek first the kingdom of God and His justice, and all these things shall be given you besides." St. Matthew 6:33

A little boy in the third grade had won a medal as the best reader in his class. Puffed with pride, he boasted to the maid: "Let's see if you can read as well as I do, Nora."

The good woman took the book, looked at it closely, and finally stammered: "Why, Billy, fact is - I don't know how to read."

Proud as a peacock, the little fellow ran into the living room and fairly shouted to his father: "Daddy, Nora doesn't know how to read, and I - only eight years old - got a medal for reading. I wonder how she feels, looking at a book she can't read."

Without a word his father went over to a bookshelf, took down a volume, and handed it to the boy, saying: "Like this."

The book was in Spanish and Billy could not read a line of it. That lesson the boy never forgot.

Whenever he feels like boasting or bragging, he quietly reminds himself: "Remember, you can't read Spanish."

1. Would that some such experience could cure every one of us of that first of the capital sins - pride. Pride is an excessive love of oneself, an unregulated opinion of what one is or what one can do. Pride is an unrestrained idea of one's own excellence. Sinful pride is

a high esteem of oneself for some imagined merit or superiority.

2. How common this vice and sin. It was the first sin committed in Heaven and on earth. Pride caused the fall of the angels; pride led our first parents into sin.

3. It is the very root of all sins, for we read: "From pride, all

perdition took its beginning." Tobias 4:14.

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"Pride goeth before destruction." Proverbs 16:18.

4. Pride shows itself in many ways, especially in —
 - A. Attributing one's good deeds to oneself.
 - B. In disobedience and seeking one's own will in everything.
 - C. In stubborn unwillingness to consider or to cooperate with the desires of others.
 - D. In refusing advice or assistance.
 - E. In impatience at correction by lawful authorities.
 - F. In looking down upon others.
 - G. In boasting or bragging about our accomplishments.
 - H. In ignorance or forgetfulness in skipping over of one's own faults.
5. Sacred Scripture and the history of the world are filled with tragic examples of the evil wrought by pride. It caused the fall of Lucifer and the bad angels; it caused the confusion in the Tower of Babel (Gen. 11:19); it brought about the defeat of Pharaoh (Exodus 5:2); it brought Nabuchodonosor to the level of a beast (Daniel 4:27).

Pride was the target of Christ's criticism, as we see in the stories of Simon the Pharisee (Luke 7:39), and of the Pharisee in the temple (Luke 18:11).

Look in your life and you will find many another sinful example of this capital sin. How can we overcome pride? How can we avoid committing this sin?

Let me suggest a few remedies:

- A. Study the example of Our Lord and His saints.
- B. Consider the emptiness of all earthly things, especially of fame and honor.
- C. Remember your own faults and helplessness.
- D. Realize how God hates pride, for it is a sin that is aimed at God particularly.
- E. Study the excellence, the beauty, the merit of the opposite virtue – humility.

Humility is a virtue which teaches us to look

on all things as coming from God. Humility is truth, the truth that of ourselves we are nothing. As St. Francis of Assisi defined it: "Humility is the desire to be accounted what we really are."

It is the foundation of all virtue and perfection, as we can see from its effects:

- A. Meekness and gentleness.
- B. Confidence in God alone.
- C. Charity and sympathy.
- D. Sorrow for our sins.
- E. Gratitude for God's graces and gifts.

How can we acquire and develop this most necessary virtue – humility? What are the things which will keep us from the greatest vice and sin – pride? Let me suggest a few ways of being humble:

- A. Promptly obey your superiors – parents, teachers, pastors, employers, and civil authorities.
- B. Cooperate with the plans of others, especially at home.
- C. Be reserved in tone of voice and in expressing your opinions.
- D. Ask for advice from those who are able to give it.
- E. Be kind and gentle, particularly to the helpless.
- F. Be willing to do favors for others, even at a sacrifice of personal likes and comforts.
- G. Keep peaceful when insulted or when misfortune strikes.
- H. Accept humiliations when they come. This is something we can do every day.
- I. Thank God for successes and honors.
- J. Avoid every word and act, yes every thought that tries to put you on a pedestal.

Here is the kingdom of God, which Jesus tells us today that we must seek. Here is the rock-bottom foundation of all goodness.

If you think you can read or do anything else better than another, or better than all others, remember the third-grader who boasted about his medal for reading, only to be reminded that he could not read a line of Spanish. There is always something you cannot do. Let the remembrance of that keep you humble. Amen †.

On "The Consoling of Christ"

by Caryll Houselander

Who has not run from the experience the author describes in the story below? We learn to love Christ not just with the head and the heart, but with the "flesh and blood and five senses, or not at all." Elsewhere in the original essay from which this passage is excerpted, she continues: "We learn, as Thomas the doubter learnt at Christ's command, by touching His wounds with our hands, or we miss Him and do not know Him at all."

I used to give a coin to a beggar every evening. I passed him going home from my office, and I was glad that when I passed him it was growing dark; the merciful twilight helped me to avert my eyes from him. I could not face the man's misery. His face was disfigured, by disease it seemed, and his eyes were eyes into which I dared not look.

One day I read about Saint Francis and the leper: how the debonair young man passed the leper with horror, flinging him a golden coin, then suddenly he turned back, wounded as it were by grace; he threw himself down from his horse and embraced the poor man. That was the beginning of the most lovely, the most lyrical sanctity the world has ever known. From then onwards Francis became poor, he became homeless and he began to sing; he attended lepers from then on until he died, and on his own body he bore Christ's wounds.

What had happened? Francis had seen Christ in the leper, and from then on he became Christ's contemplative in all poor men, in all broken lives. He saw Christ in them all, and because he recognized Christ he could not content himself by giving Him money and

distant pity, he had to become like Him, he had to suffer with Him and he had to serve Him in His suffering.

People say that what we look at for a long time, what we live with, we come to resemble. There seems to be a truth in it; people's dogs, for example, become like their owners, and that not only in face but in disposition; it is instructive to spend an afternoon at the window noticing the resemblance between the passersby and their dogs.



From continually looking at and living with Christ in humiliated men, from contemplating Him through the ugly and filthy wounds inflicted on Him by sin, Francis began to reflect His beauty. Those wounds began to be shadowed in the saint's own body, and one day they broke out in points of burning light. Francis was blind, he could not see God's glory shining on his face, he could but feel the pain and joy of it in his soul and his body.

The world has been glad enough to fling Christ Our Lord a coin in the gutter and pass on with eyes averted. We have not dared to face Him. Suffering has been hidden. Hospitals, prisons, workhouses, rooming houses, walls round pain and grief and death, even our customs and conventions have joined in the conspiracy, it has become bad taste to show when we suffer.

If we heard that a friend was bereaved, we felt shy about offering sympathy. We were afraid to probe such a wound, and made our clumsiness an excuse for silence. We were afraid of, and embarrassed by, other people's suffering, and even by other people's sympathy...

Christ is in everyone with whom we come in contact. In our employer, our secretary, our office boy, in our grocer and plumber, in the policeman who takes the number of our car, in our cook and in our bishop, in our husband,

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At the invitation of Archbishop Aloysio Jose Leal Penna, Our Lady's Apostolate recently hosted a conference for priests and bishops in Botucatu, Brazil. Staff and speakers flew ten hours or more south to Sao Paulo, then traveled another three hours by land to reach the conference center in the Archdiocese of Botucatu. There we were joined by some bishops and many priests from all over Latin America.

The interests of these clergy were varied – but few were aware of the complete story of Fatima. Some priests who had thought that “liberation theology” (a Marxist interpretation of Catholicism in vogue since the 60's) was the teacher for these times, expressed the need to rethink everything in light of the events of Fatima.

After five days of lectures, punctuated by the rosary and prayers, the conference closed with a public procession through the streets of Botucatu to the cathedral. Catholics from the



area also joined in the public devotion to Our Lady, which included many enrollments in the Brown Scapular.

The Sunday following the conference, Father Gruner was invited to address a nearby parish on the story of Fatima.

As a direct result of the conference, we now have a request for 165,000 Brown Scapulars — this is in addition to the 7000 distributed while we were there. A Fatima Center staff member has extended his stay in Brazil to help send out the volumes of literature and sacramentals the attendees requested for their parishioners. These are the seeds of Our Lady's triumph. Please pray for the nourishing showers of grace to water this good ground.



Have you received your copy of *A World View Based on Fatima*? Our readers have been very pleased, writing to express their enthusiasm and support for the distribution of this booklet. While it is a little larger in format than the Protestant tracts left in various public places, it tells a story that people will want to hear. Perhaps you would like to distribute some additional copies of this beautiful color booklet among friends, or place some in waiting rooms. Please contact the Fatima Center to obtain more copies. (Donations to cover postage are always appreciated.)†

On “The Consoling of Christ”
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wife and child, in our friend, in our pet aversion. You can think of anyone you like; in that person Christ is, and is there to be known and loved and served in this world. If we are not interest-

ed in the minds, the feelings, the hopes, fears, sorrows and joys of everyone with whom we come in contact, we are not interested in Christ. Whatever we do to anyone, we do to Him.

If we are impatient with the mental suffering, the doubting, questioning and wrestling with the angel, of more sensitive minds, then we are impatient with the mind of Christ bleeding under the crown of thorns. If we shrink from the broken lives of sinners then we draw away from Christ fallen and crushed under His cross. If we will not go to the sick and the afflicted and the poor to help them, we will not help Christ.†

We'd Like to Hear From YOU!

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