



League of the Immaculate Heart *Newsletter*

"MY IMMACULATE HEART WILL TRIUMPH"

Volume 12 - Issue 37 - August, 2009

The Rosary and the Likeness to Christ

by St. Louis de Montfort

The chief concern of a Christian soul should be to tend to perfection. Saint Paul tells us "Be ye followers of God" (Eph. 5:1). This obligation is included in the eternal decree of our predestination, as the one and only means prescribed by God to attain everlasting glory.

Saint Gregory of Nyssa makes a delightful comparison when he says that we are all artists and that our souls are blank canvases which we have to fill in. The colors which we must use are the Christian virtues, and our Model is Jesus Christ, the perfect Living Image of God the Father. Just as a portrait painter who wants to do a good job places himself before his model and glances at him before making each stroke, so the Christian must always have the life and virtues of Jesus Christ before his eyes so that he may never say, think or do the least thing which is not in harmony with his Model.

It was because Our Lady wanted to help us in the great task of working out our salvation that She ordered Saint Dominic to teach the faithful to meditate upon the sacred mysteries of the life of Jesus Christ. She did this, not only that they might adore and glorify Him, but chiefly that they might pattern their lives and actions upon His virtues.

Children copy their parents through watching them and talking to them and they



The Fifteen Mysteries of the Rosary

learn their own language through hearing them speak. An apprentice learns his trade through watching his master at work; in the very same way that faithful members of the Confraternity of the Holy Rosary can become like their divine Master if they reverently study and imitate the virtues of Jesus Christ that are shown in the fifteen mysteries of His life. They can do this with the help of His grace and through the intercession of His Blessed Mother.

Long ago Moses was inspired by God to command the Jewish people never to forget the graces that had been showered upon them. The Son of God, then, has all the more reason to tell us to engrave the mysteries of His life, Passion and death upon our hearts and to have them always before our eyes – because each mystery reminds us of His goodness to us in some special way and it is by these mysteries that He has shown us His overwhelming love and desire for our salvation. †

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The Virtue of PENANCE

By Blessed Abbot Marmion

Note: Our Lady at Fatima calls upon us to do penance. Blessed Abbot Marmion, the great master of the spiritual life, explains that the virtue of penance is most important if we are to perform our acts of penance with the greatest profit.

Even when God has forgiven us [in the Sacrament of Confession], there remains in us the remnants of sin. Evil roots ever ready to spring up and bring forth evil fruits. Neither baptism nor the sacrament of penance take concupiscence totally away.

If then we wish Divine Life to develop greatly in our souls, we must labor unceasingly to diminish these remnants of sin, to weaken these evil roots that disfigure our souls in God's sight.

Besides the action of the sacrament of penance, an efficacious means exists for removing those scars of sin that prevent God from communicating His life to us in abundance.

This means is the *virtue* of penance. It is a habit which, when deeply implanted, constantly inclines us to the expiation of sin, and the destruction of what remains of it.

This virtue must doubtlessly, as we are about to see, manifest itself by acts proper to it; but it is, above all, an habitual attitude of the soul – an abiding regret for having offended God, and the desire to make reparation for our faults. This habitual sentiment ought to inspire our acts of penance.

By these acts, man rises up against himself to avenge God's rights which he has trampled under foot. By his sins, he rose up against God, he opposed his will to the all-holy will of God; by his acts of penance he unites himself to God in his hatred of sin and to His justice that demands the expiation of it.

The soul then sees sin by faith through the eyes of God. "I have sinned," it says, "I have committed an act of which I cannot measure all the malice, but that is so terrible and so much violates God's rights, His justice, His holiness and love, that only the death of the Man-God could expiate it." Then, moved with sorrow, the soul says to God: "O my God, I detest my sin, I long to avenge Thy rights by penance, I would rather die than offend Thee again." That is the *spirit* of penance that urges and inclines the soul to make *acts* of expiation.



Even after a worthy confession, there remains in us the remnants of sin. The virtue of penance directs us to make reparation to God for our sins that have offended Him.

You will understand that this attitude of soul is necessary for all who have not lived in perfect innocence. When the motive is fear of hell, it is good, says the Council of Trent; God accepts it. But when the motive is love, it is excellent and perfect. The more the love of God increases within us, the more we feel the need of offering to God the sacrifice of "a contrite and humbled heart": "A contrite and humbled heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise" (Ps. 1:19). The more we feel the need of often saying to Him with the publican in the Gospel: "O God, be merciful to me, a sinner." (Lk. 18:13).

When this feeling of compunction is habitual, it maintains the soul in great peace; it keeps it in humility. It becomes, too, a powerful instrument of purification. Compunction helps us to mortify those ill-regulated instincts, those perverse tendencies that might lead us into fresh faults. One who has this virtue, is careful to use all the means at their disposal so as to make reparation for sin.

The virtue of penance is, as regards ourselves, the greatest assurance of perseverance in the way of perfection, because it is, as we can easily see, one of the purest forms of love. One loves God so much, regrets so profoundly having offended Him, that one longs to repair and expiate: this is the source of a life of generosity and self-forgetfulness. †

Saint Anthony and the CHILD JESUS

St. Anthony lived in intimate union with Our Lord and His Blessed Mother. He venerated most tenderly the mysteries of the incarnation and the sacred infancy of the Eternal Word, and thus won for himself the favor of sweet communication with the Child Jesus. It is with the Child Jesus that St. Anthony is most frequently represented. One of his visions of the Divine Infant has been described by an eyewitness.

During the lifetime of St. Anthony, there lived in Padua a nobleman called Tiso, who always extended friendly hospitality to the saint on his preaching tours. It was probably in the year 1229, when St. Anthony had again accepted the kind offer to spend a few days in retirement at Tiso's castle.

One night when Tiso passed Anthony's room, he saw rays of light issuing from under the door. Impelled by curiosity, he peeped through the keyhole, and saw to his amazement a Child of wondrous beauty standing on an open book of the Gospel which was lying on a little table, His tiny arms encircling the neck of the smiling Anthony.

Tiso also saw the flood of light which surrounded the Child, and the unspeakable tenderness with which He caressed the saint and was, in turn, caressed by him, so that Tiso's own soul became inebriated with sweetest delight and heavenly rapture. Was any further proof required that the ravishing form was that of the Divine Child of Bethlehem, who thus filled the chaste heart of His favored servant with supernatural bliss? A holy dread, however, came upon the daring observer when suddenly the beautiful Child pointed to the door and seemed to whisper something to St. Anthony. Tiso realized that he had been detected, but also that the charming Guest was not offended by his curiosity.

Tiso continued to gaze with ever increasing rapture upon a scene which doubtlessly ravished the seraphim. Gradually the vision disappeared and darkness replaced the heavenly brightness. Not until then did Tiso rise, to return



The Child Jesus' great love for Saint Anthony

noiselessly to his apartment, filled with a rapture never before experienced. Suddenly Anthony threw open the door and folded His enraptured host in his embrace. The saint begged Tiso, for the love of Him whom he had just beheld, never to speak of this apparition to anyone during his lifetime. With deep emotion, Tiso promised, and it was not until after the saint's happy death that he related what he had seen on that memorable night. Whenever he related the vision, tears welled up in his eyes, and his heart thrilled with emotion.

No doubt our Divine Savior wished to reward Tiso for his generous hospitality to the poor Franciscan friar, by allowing him to be an eyewitness of one of His familiar colloquies with the humble religious. Tiso himself later left the world, renouncing all honors and his vast estate, to be clothed in the coarse sackcloth of the Franciscans. After some years of fidelity to the rule of his Order, he died a holy death two years after St. Anthony had entered into his eternal reward. †

News from the Apostolate: FATIMA CONFERENCE IN CLEVELAND

On June 6 & 7 2009, the Fatima Center held a conference in downtown Cleveland. Nearly 400 people attended the event, all of whom found the conference stimulating and edifying.

The speakers for the weekend were Father Nicholas Gruner, *Catholic Family News* Editor John Vennari, and Dr. David Allen White, Retired Professor of Literature at Annapolis Naval Academy.

The conference focused on the real dangers to the Faith and to the life of the Christian we now face; a danger greater in our country than perhaps ever before.

These dangers come from outside the Church, such as the increasing number of laws that attack Christianity (such as the new "Hate Crimes" legislation that virtually outlaws certain aspects of the Holy Scriptures), and the threats to the Faith that come from "inside" the Church, such as the modernist orientation of Vatican II, and from the Liturgical Revolution's New Mass.

In one of his two lectures, Father Gruner explains that dangers to the Faith come not only from the external forces, but can also come from our own defects and weaknesses:

"The Faith is in danger and, in fact, the [Third] Secret tells us where some of the dangers come from. We already know, of course, from the teaching of the Saints and the Doctors of the Church, where the danger to the faith comes from. It comes in part from our pride. It also comes from our sloth.

"I think it's St. Thomas who tells us that the people in the age before Antichrist fall because of their sloth. Sloth is one of the seven capital sins; it is very little understood today. But I want to first of all point out the dangers to the Faith which are in our time. We know that the Third Secret concerns the period of Church history after 1960 and



before the triumph of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. We know, therefore, we are in that period; we know that we are faced with these dangers.

"Our Lord poses a question, followed by a statement. He asks, 'When the Son of Man returns, do you think He will find Faith on Earth?' He appears to be talking about our time. The statement He makes is as follows: 'that even the elect would be deceived (at that time) if it were possible'.

"First of all, none of us know that we are among the elect. But the dangers to the Faith are so insidious that even the elect would be deceived, if it were possible. The tricks and stratagems of the devil would cause everyone to lose their way to Heaven, if God were to allow it.

"So when Our Lady says to us, again, 'Only Our Lady of the Rosary can help you,' you are very safe in taking that literally, because She means it literally. One of Her promises to St. Dominic is that the Rosary will overcome vice, decrease sin and overcome heresy. So if we recite and pray the Rosary sincerely and perseveringly, Our Lady will see to it that, if we have fallen into heresy, She will pull us out of it."

Rosary Rallies such as the one organized in Cleveland are an important part of the Fatima Center's ongoing work to spread the full Message of Fatima through every legitimate means: print medium, internet, radio, television and public conferences. Details about the Cleveland conference, as well as the beautiful Rosary Procession we organized in downtown Cleveland, appear in the next issue of *The Fatima Crusader*. †

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

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