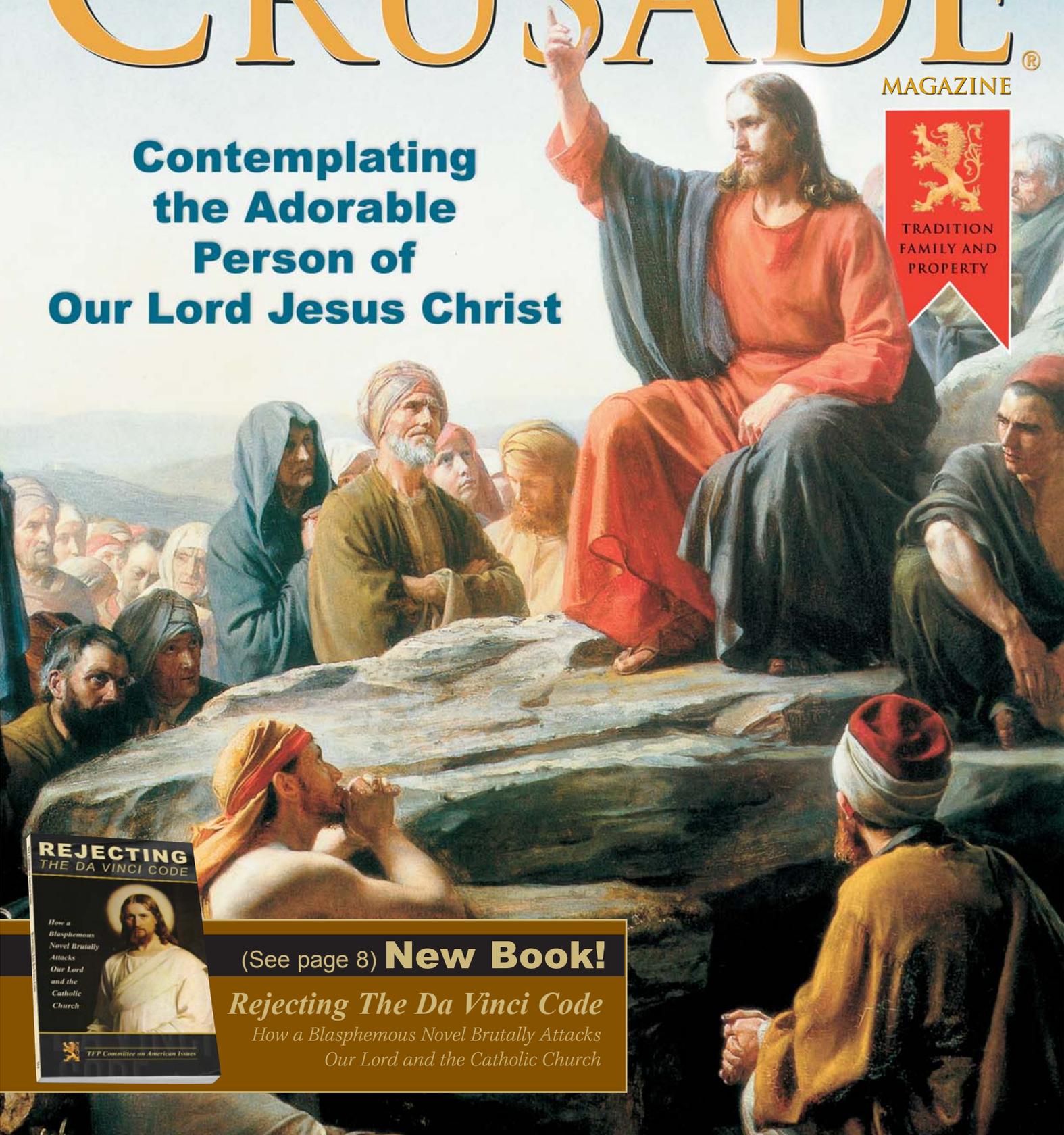
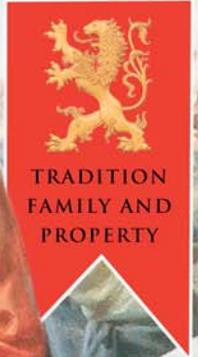


November/December 2005

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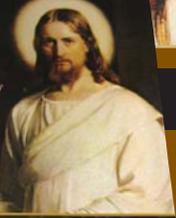
MAGAZINE

**Contemplating  
the Adorable  
Person of  
Our Lord Jesus Christ**



**REJECTING  
THE DA VINCI CODE**

*How a  
Blasphemous  
Novel Brutally  
Attacks  
Our Lord  
and the  
Catholic  
Church*



TFP Committee on American Issues

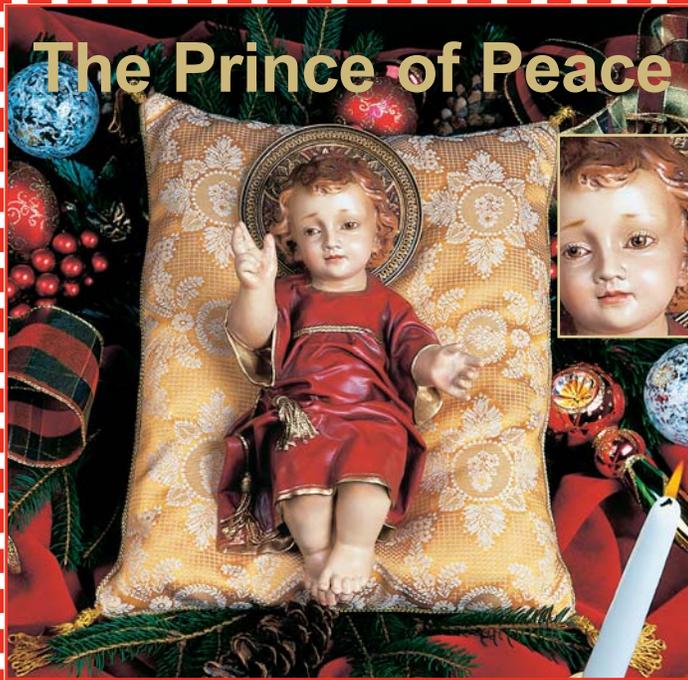
(See page 8) **New Book!**

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**FORGOTTEN  
TRUTHS**

## The Ceaseless Rivalry Between the Cross and the World

BY SAINT LOUIS DE MONTFORT,

FROM HIS LETTER TO THE FRIENDS OF THE CROSS

My dear brothers and sisters, there are two groups that appear before you every day: the followers of Christ and the followers of the world.

Our dear Savior’s group is on the right, climbing up a narrow road made all the narrower by the world’s immorality. Our Master leads the way, bare-footed, covered with blood and laden with a heavy cross. Those who follow Him, though most valiant, are only a handful—either His quiet voice is not heard over the world’s tumult or people lack the courage to follow Him in His poverty, sufferings, humiliations and other crosses that His servants must carry for all the days of their life.

On the left is the group of the world. This is far more numerous, more imposing and more illustrious, at least in appearance. Most of the fashionable people run to join it, though the road is wide and is being made wider continually by the crowds that pour along it like a torrent. It is strewn with flowers, bordered with all kinds of amusements and attractions, and paved with gold and silver.

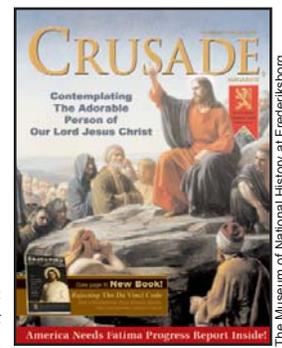
On the right, the small group that follow Jesus speak about sorrow, penance, prayer and indiffer-

ence to worldly things. They continually encourage one another by saying, “Now is the time to suffer and to mourn, to pray and do penance, to live in retirement and poverty, to humble and mortify ourselves; for those who do not possess the spirit of Christ, which is the spirit of the cross, do not belong to Him. Those who belong to Christ have crucified all self-indulgent passions and desires. We must be true images of Christ or be eternally lost.”

“Have confidence,” they say to each other. If God is on our side, within us and before us, who can be against us? He who is within us is stronger than the one who is in the world. The servant is not greater than his master. This slight and temporary distress we suffer will bring us a tremendous and everlasting glory. The number of those who will be saved is not as great as some people imagine. It is only the brave and the daring who take heaven by storm, where only those who strive to live according to the Gospel’s law and not according to the world’s maxims are crowned. Let us fight with all our strength and all our speed that we may attain our goal and win the crown. ■

# CONTENTS

November/December 2005



The Museum of National History at Fredericksburg

Cover: *The Sermon on the Mount* by Carl Bloch

## COMMENTARY

Christmas Traditions for the Family 4

## COVER STORY

Contemplating the Adorable Person of Our Lord Jesus Christ 6

## COMMENTARY

Foreword to New Book  
*Rejecting The Da Vinci Code* 9

## ANF PROGRESS REPORT

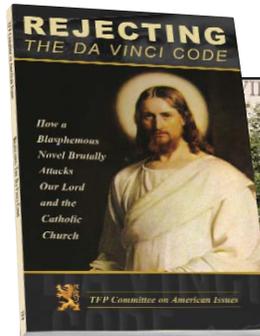
- ◆ *Rejecting The Da Vinci Code* Campaign Full Steam Ahead! 11
- ◆ Three New Vans for Our Lady 12
- ◆ DeGeneres Will Not Play God 13
- ◆ 2005 Kansas Picnic 13
- ◆ Our Readers Write 14
- ◆ Being There at Someone's Final Agony 15
- ◆ A Child of Mary Makes a Difference 15
- ◆ Louisiana Families Suffer, "Southern Decadence" Celebrates, TFP Protests 16
- ◆ *Crusade Magazine* Outreach Survey Results 16
- ◆ "She Was There Protecting Us the Whole Way!" 17
- ◆ Having One's Cake and Eating It Too 17

## INTERVIEW

Population Research Institute:  
Exposing Global Underpopulation 18

## REVOLUTION AND COUNTER-REVOLUTION IN HISTORY

Youthful Jesuits and Spanish Mystics 21



Page 11 Doing something about the blasphemous *Da Vinci Code*!



Page 16 Effective protest against the "Southern Decadence" parade in Louisiana.

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Page 4 Keeping Christmas Christian.



## CRUSADE

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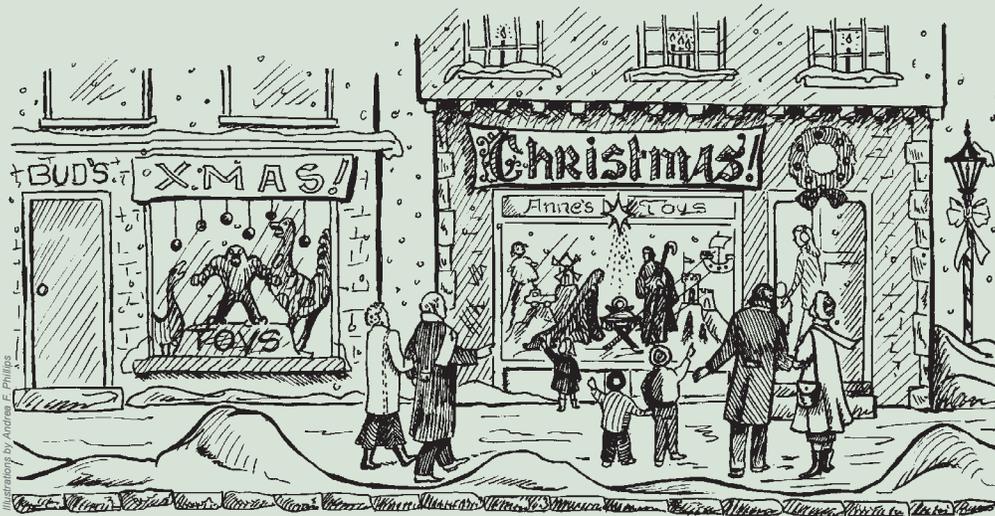
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## The American TFP

The American Society for the Defense of Tradition, Family and Property (TFP) was founded in 1973 to confront the profound crisis shaking the modern world. It is a civic, cultural and nonpartisan organization which, inspired by the traditional teachings of the Supreme Magisterium of the Roman Catholic Church, works in a legal and peaceful manner in the realm of ideas to defend and promote the principles of private ownership, family and perennial Christ-

ian values with their twofold function: individual and social. The TFP's words and efforts have always been faithfully at the service of Christian civilization. The first TFP was founded in Brazil by the famous intellectual and Catholic leader Prof. Plinio Corrêa de Oliveira in 1960. His work inspired the formation of other autonomous TFPs across the globe, thus constituting the world's largest anticommunist and antisocialist network of Catholic inspiration.



# Christmas Traditions for the Family

BY THOMAS DRAKE

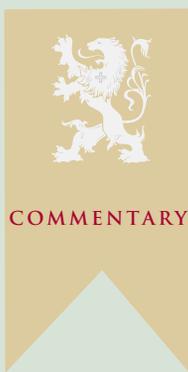


The cold begins to nip at our noses, and memories of past Christmas blessings beckon through our daily chores. We go about our day with a growing inner warmth because the celebration of Our Savior's birth approaches.

Maybe a thought has crossed our minds. Is Christmas just another celebration with presents for the children, family and friends? Or is it something important lost in the mad rush of this neo-pagan, materialistic age?

We all know that the essence of Christmas is really the birth of Our Redeemer of the Blessed Virgin in Bethlehem. The Church invites us in the liturgy to contemplate the many truths and mysteries springing from this historical fact. As a caring mother, the Church prepares us during Advent with prayers, spiritual readings and, in the past, fasting for the moment when history changed forever.

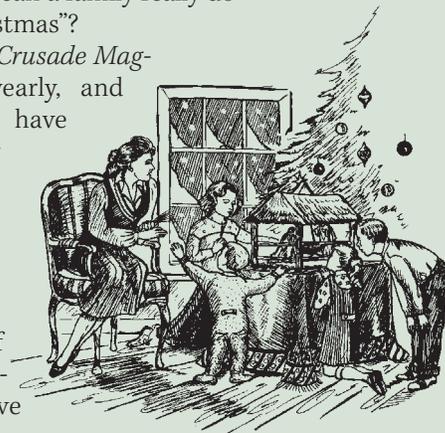
But in an age when the traditional nuclear family of a father, mother and children is considered "out of style," we need to understand how Christmas, as other feasts of the Church, can strengthen the bonds of Catholic family life. One of the most effective ways is to revive or create family traditions. Traditions play an important role in family life by bringing stability and time-



tested certainty. In fact, the family is the most efficient channel of tradition in society, for it is the family that passes tradition from generation to generation, with each generation in turn enriching the tradition it received. In America, there is no other time of year when this role is as evident, for Christmas conveys naturally the idea of a family joined together in religion for joy and celebration.

Now, what about a few extra things to do during this season, to teach the children and their friends something more about Christmas than being excused from school or exchanging gifts? Is there something "new, but traditional" to do for the children? In a day and age when Christmas is smothered by commercialism or attacked by secular humanists, can a family really do an "apostolate of Christmas"?

This is what we at *Crusade Magazine* have asked yearly, and assuming that you have already made plans for Christmas Mass, worked out those lengthy preparations for Christmas dinner and eagerly want to start on the path of some new family traditions, here are twelve





- Consider avoiding stores that advertise “Xmas” gifts instead of Christmas gifts. Better yet, have a word with the store manager. Although X is the old Greek symbol for Christ, used especially in times of persecution, that is largely forgotten nowadays and the X is perceived differently.
- Explain to the children that Santa Claus is a contraction of Saint Nicholas of Myra, who started the tradition of giving presents many centuries ago. When preparing presents, tell stories from his life. In some countries, presents were given on his feast day, or on Epiphany, rather than on Christmas Day when we receive the greatest present of all—Our Lord Jesus Christ.

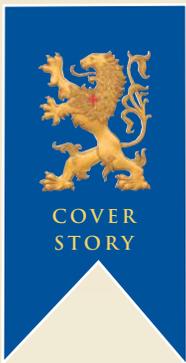
- In some towns, Catholic groups set up life-sized Christmas crèches in shopping malls, town squares or in front of a church. If this is done in your area, please support those engaged in the public expression of our Faith. Let us not allow the real message of Christmas to be removed from public life.

If you have any suggestions, please do send them to *Crusade Magazine*. We would be delighted to hear about them, especially regarding something your family is already doing. ■

practical ideas from us to you and your family:

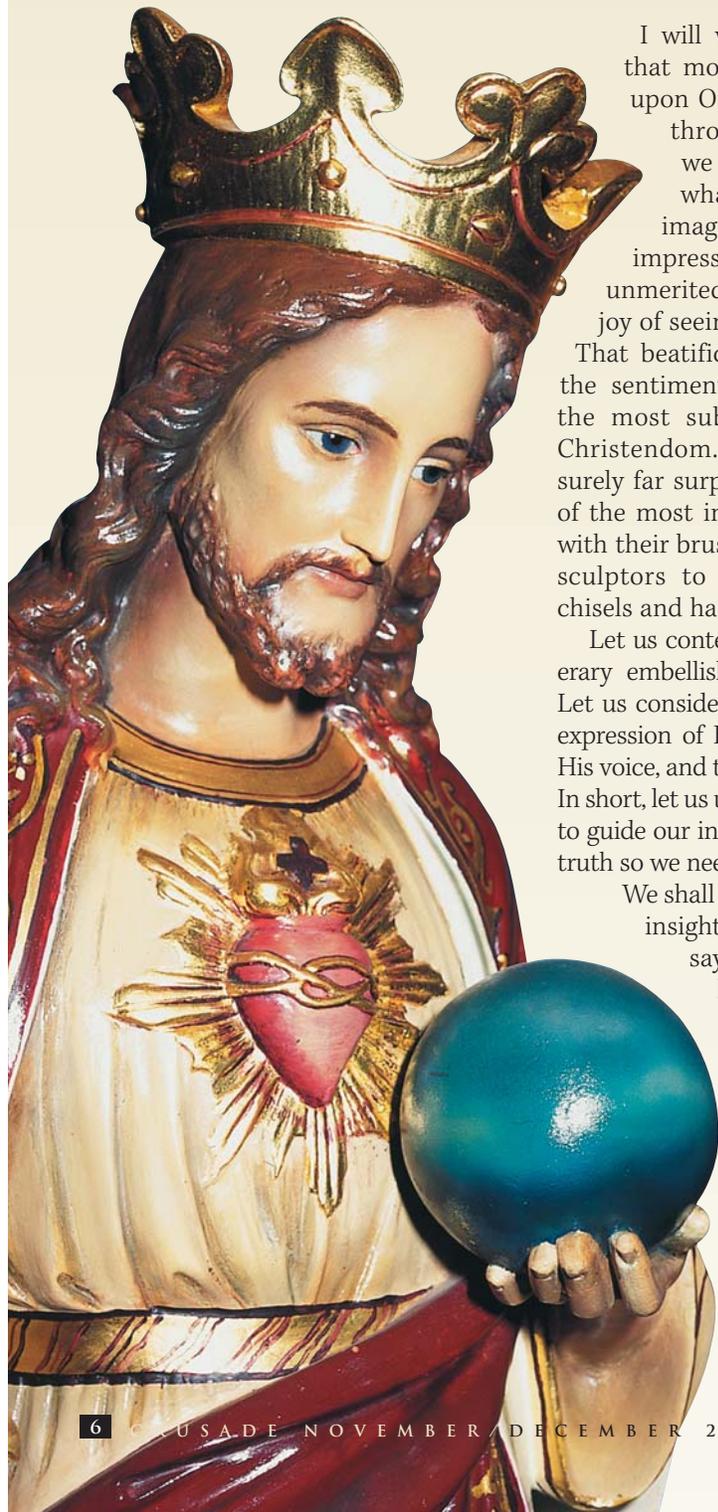
- If you do not have a Nativity set, why not restore the beautiful tradition of the Christmas crèche in your home? Saint Francis of Assisi began this Christmas custom to help our spiritual senses feel the Almighty God coming to us. Or, in the likelihood that you already have a Nativity set, why not invite neighbors and visitors to see your Christmas crèche? Who knows, perhaps the idea will spread.
- Try Christmas caroling as a family or with other families.
- Get together to perform a simple Christmas play, even if it is just for the grandparents to see.
- During Advent, why not give each child a lamb from the Christmas crèche, each with a different color ribbon around its neck? In France, tradition had the mother gather the children around for a nightly “review” of the day. She would move the lamb of the “well-behaved” child closer to the manger, while that of the “misbehaved” child stayed put. Adapt this old tradition to your own timetable. No cheating, little ones!
- If moving lambs is too difficult, have the children each night put a single straw into the Christmas crèche for every good deed done. It should be overflowing by Christmas night to welcome the Child Jesus who is not yet in the manger.
- Make sure that all your outgoing Christmas cards have a religious theme. Try using the postage stamps with a religious theme instead of non-Christian themes.
- Get extra Christmas cards to send to those who cannot reply, especially those who are sick, alone or elderly.
- During the Christmas period—the Sunday before Christmas, on Saint Stephen’s Day or the feast of the Holy Innocents—set an extra place at the table for someone who lives alone. Let us not be like the people of Bethlehem who had no room for the Holy Family.
- *Turn off the television!* When family and friends gather at Christmas, it is a time for conversation, prayer, song and Catholic celebration. Television does not foster any of these.





# Contemplating the Adorable Person of Our Lord Jesus Christ

BY PLINIO CORRÊA DE OLIVEIRA



I will venture a guess and say that most of us have meditated upon Our Lord Jesus Christ, and through our contemplation we have acquired a sense of what He is like. However, imagine the resulting indelible impression were we to have the unmerited grace and inestimable joy of seeing our Savior face to face!

That beatific encounter might recall the sentiments derived from viewing the most sublime sacred images of Christendom. Yet the reality would surely far surpass the God-given talent of the most inspired artists to capture with their brushes or of the most gifted sculptors to immortalize with their chisels and hammers.

Let us contemplate Christ without literary embellishment or melodramatics. Let us consider the lines of His face, the expression of His eyes, the resonance of His voice, and the elegance of His bearing. In short, let us use our divine gift of reason to guide our inner vision with the light of truth so we need not grope in the dark.

We shall begin by reflecting on this insight of Saint John: “If any man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar. For he that loveth not his brother whom he seeth, how can he love God, whom he seeth not?” (1 John 4:20) The premise that underlies this question is that man was created not only to know, love and serve God but to help his fellow man do the

same. Since man is made in God’s image, it follows that by studying man we should come to better understand our Creator. Of course, Christ is not merely a man. Being the God-Man, He is principally God. Nevertheless, He is a man in the full sense of the word and by studying man we can come to a better understanding of Christ, and as Our Lord reminds us, “[H]e that seeth me, seeth the Father also” (John 14:9). Thus our meditation is of a philosophical order tested by the Word—a proper and logical approach to our mission.

## King to Victim

During His life in this world, Our Lord exercised aspects of all professions fit for man—from the highest to the lowest. Consider Christ as king. As prince of the house of David and heir to the throne of Israel, Jesus possessed the nobility and grandeur proper to His status. As He entered Jerusalem in triumph that first Palm Sunday, it did not lessen His majesty that He rode on a donkey’s back. To the contrary, the Gospels recount how enthusiastically the people acclaimed Him.

Because His life was one of constant and unremitting struggle, Our Lord was also a warrior. Not only did Jesus defeat and drive out demons, He confronted forcefully the human allies of the Prince of Darkness. Even after He was betrayed, He humiliated His adversaries. When asked if He was Jesus of Nazareth, He answered simply, “*Ego sum.*” With these two words Christ cast His enemies upon their faces with this simple affirmation!

Our Lord personified the fulfillment of the Sacrament of Holy Orders. He was Priest and Pontiff. The priests of the Old

Testament prefigured His priesthood, and every priest thereafter would share His priesthood as an *alter Christus*. On Holy Thursday, Christ was the Priest and Victim of the first Mass that prefigured His sacrificial offering on the altar of the cross.

### **Diplomat to Servant**

Our Lord was a perfect diplomat during His public life. Consider how intelligently He thwarted the Sanhedrin's machinations by avoiding confrontation with artful speech and impeccably judicious rejoinders. Recall the Gospel's account of how the Sanhedrin sought to trap Jesus by asking Him whether it was lawful for the Jews to pay taxes to the Romans. Christ not only avoided giving His opinion but dumfounded His enemies with His reply (Luke 20:22-36).

Consider Christ as a manual laborer. Unthinkable? Have we forgotten the carpenter shop in Nazareth where Jesus worked under the watchful eye of Saint Joseph?

Christ was a servant, though few kings have washed the feet of their subjects. "[B]ut I am in the midst of you, as he that serveth" (Luke 22:27), Our Lord declared, showing how we should live as His disciples.

### **Pattern of All Peoples**

As the perfection and pattern of the human race, Our Lord embodies all the gifts with which His Father has endowed all the people of the earth: pre-

cision, clarity, spirit, vigor, profundity, sense of the sublime, subtlety and diplomacy. Experience teaches us that God has blessed people with gifts particular to themselves, and to the degree people embody the characteristic of their culture, they do not reflect that which distinguishes another.

Our Lord, as we have noted, is the exception to the rule since, as Ruler and Model of mankind, He unites in Himself the gifts and characteristics of every person. Thus at the same time He exemplifies charm and strength to an unimaginable degree, and so it is with the best of every culture and of every land.

### **Moved by the Messias**

By reflecting that Our Lord in His Person reconciles all professions and all peoples, we should get some idea of how His contemporaries must have been struck by His superiority. Those who followed Christ were awed at the outpouring of

His resplendently divine gifts. So moved were the multitudes following Jesus that they forgot themselves in His presence. Recall the Gospel's account of how the crowds that followed Our Lord into the desert were so satiated by His presence that they neglected to bring anything to eat. Of course, in His infinite goodness and power, Christ fed the multitude with a handful of loaves and fishes (John 6:1-11). Furthermore, in Jesus' presence, people sensed something mysterious and entirely beyond their understanding. They saw at last what Saint Peter professed in reply to His question, "Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God" (Matt. 16:16).

### **Perfection of Primordial Lights**

According to Catholic theology, each soul is called to reflect a specific aspect of God by the practice of a specific virtue. This has been referred to as the person's "primordial light." Thus it can be said that as we advance in sanctity, our primordial light becomes more evident. Were we to correspond faithfully to every grace that Christ gives, His light would radiate through us. All souls are called to practice all virtues, but a particular virtue shines before each in a primordial light.

Meditate on Saint Aloysius Gonzaga, the personification of purity, and emulate his angelic chastity. Consider Saint Louis IX, king of France, the embodiment of honor, with uprightness and sincerity written in each line of his noble face. Reflect on Saint Vincent de Paul, an emissary of divine charity, who walked the back streets of Paris rescuing abandoned babies and carrying them in the huge pockets of his cassock to their new homes. Recall Saint Francis of Assisi, who courted poverty throughout his life. Think of Saint John the Baptist, who embodied the rigors of God's call to repentance and penance.

As every virtue reflects its divine Author, Saint Thomas Aquinas con-

*Consider Christ as a  
manual laborer.  
Unthinkable? Have we  
forgotten the carpenter  
shop in Nazareth where  
Jesus worked under the  
watchful eye of Saint  
Joseph?*



**Our Lord, seen here working as a carpenter, shows us that every humble profession can be performed with great dignity.**

cludes that Christ is the perfect expression of all the primordial lights that were, are and will be. To that we may add that every saint is nothing more than a small spark of Our Lord's perfection, an inestimable honor indeed.

### Man of Sorrows

Just as a fruit displays its most beautiful color when it is ripe, so does Our Lord express His full grandeur in suffering, for in suffering we see human misery most clearly. Crushed by suffering, a man groans, moans, cries, flees, weeps, protests and revolts. In the end, a man is humbled. Suffering horrifies man and he is terrified by its prospect, but a man who accepts and even embraces his suffering with courage acquires a quality of soul others will never attain, because suffering tempers a man's soul like fire tempers steel. Only a man who has truly suffered has truly lived.

Jesus did not endure only one form of suffering. He was the Man of Sorrows. Reflecting on His life, we see that He suffered every sorrow a man could possibly

*He was at the same  
time the most  
triumphant and the  
most defeated, the most  
glorified and the most  
reviled, the most beloved  
and the most hated.*

suffer. His soul shone brilliantly with all the facets of a life that is suffering.

### Harmonizer of Contrasts

As with the gifts of the earth, Our Lord possessed irreconcilable attributes. He was at the same time the most triumphant and the most defeated, the most glorified and the most reviled, the most beloved and the most hated.

Christ harmonized professions, people and attributes that could not be reconciled in a mere mortal. These harmonic contrasts blended perfectly in Him because of the fullness of His humanity and His human sanctity but, above all, because of the unfathomable, divine influx of graces that were His as the Sec-

ond Person of the Blessed Trinity.

Having drawn from our meditation on man's gifts a faint idea of Christ, we find that He is the perfect and sublime synthesis of all gifts, and that is precisely why our idea of His Person is so inadequate. Christ's perfection is beyond our present comprehension. "We see now through a glass in an obscure manner: but then face to face" (1 Cor. 13:12).

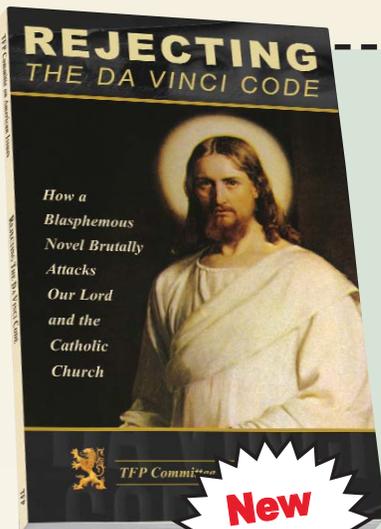
### Answer to Sin;

### Confidence of Sinners

As I noted in my book *Revolution and Counter-Revolution*, a negative and pernicious premise in the fourteenth century stated those who are superior necessarily despise those who are below them. In fact, Saint Peter begged of Christ, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord," (Luke 5:8) because he felt so unworthy of His presence that he wished to vanish from His sight. How can we combat this erroneous view?

We defeat this premise thusly—for Our Lord appreciates affectionately

*Continued on page 10*



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## Rejecting The Da Vinci Code

*How a Blasphemous Novel Brutally Attacks Our Lord and the Catholic Church*

Of late the Church's enemies have employed a new tactic to attack Our Divine Savior and His Church by making use of blasphemous "novels" and "fiction." The role of novels should be to inspire people to live good and upright lives. Blasphemous "novels" can only influence the loss of Faith, and consequently produce lives devoid of virtue and morals. As Paul Bourget once wrote, "One must live as one thinks, under pain of sooner or later ending up thinking as one has lived."

We are pleased to offer you a fitting response to Dan Brown's *The Da Vinci Code* in the form of the recent release: *Rejecting The Da Vinci Code: How a Blasphemous Novel Brutally Attacks Our Lord and the Catholic Church*, written by the TFP Committee on American Issues.

### Some of the topics addressed in the new book are:

- Why *The Da Vinci Code* is deceptive and fraudulent
- How to set the record straight with the hard-hitting facts
- The veracity of Divine Revelation
- How *The Da Vinci Code* undermines the Faith
- The holiness of the real Saint Mary Magdalene
- How heretic gnosticism is the code behind the code
- Why we must counter this wave of blasphemy
- How to stand up for the truth

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# Foreword to New Book *Rejecting The Da Vinci Code*

BY FATHER ANDREW APOSTOLI, C.F.R.

In the last twenty years we have witnessed an amazing increase of literature claiming to present factual evidence that contradicts or distorts longstanding historical facts or accepted values. This is particularly true in the area of religion, especially regarding the teachings of the Catholic Church. But these “new truths” are almost always nothing more than figments of people’s imaginations or their political agendas or their religious prejudices.

Our Lady of Fatima warned us that if we did not heed her message and offer prayer and penance for peace in the world, there would come another and more terrible world war. She also foretold that an “evil was beginning in Russia that would spread its errors throughout the world.” One of the tactics that the Communists used so effectively was what is called “revisionist history.” It is the rewriting of history to accommodate the past to justify their present political or anti-religious philosophy. We have seen examples of this same tactic in the secular press that often now gives us not a balanced view of all the facts but simply an editorialized version of what they want us to believe. The use of the Internet as well as the information provided by many popular talk shows have been able to counter somewhat this trend of distorting facts and help people to reach the objective truth.

Dan Brown’s book, *The Da Vinci Code*, is in my opinion, a classic example of “revisionist history.” It is not the first example and I am sure it will not be the last. Almost thirty years ago a book appeared that tried to claim that Jesus never rose from the dead but that His disciples, wanting to keep the memory of His good life and holy teachings alive, came up with the idea of saying He rose from the dead. For a group of fishermen and other unsophisticated individuals to come up with such an amazing fantasy would be incredulous. Yet many people were excited over the book but it eventually faded away!

I predict the same thing will happen to *The Da Vinci Code*. But while it is popular it is important to counter its many distortions with the facts and especially the truths of Christian Revelation. The

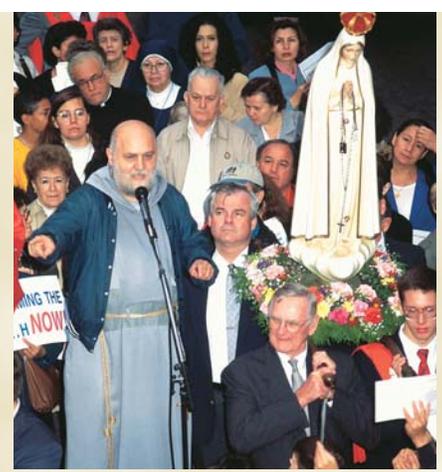
book, *Rejecting The Da Vinci Code: How a Blasphemous Novel Brutally Attacks Our Lord and the Catholic Church*, written by the TFP Committee on American Issues, is just the book we need to set the record straight.

*The Da Vinci Code* novel is filled with distortions, especially sexual distortions and perversions, which have simply been read back into the life of Christ and the history of the Church. We saw this a few years ago with another book that tried to present Jesus as a homosexual. These gross distortions are in great measure the result of the moral confusion and perversion, coupled with an almost obsessive hatred

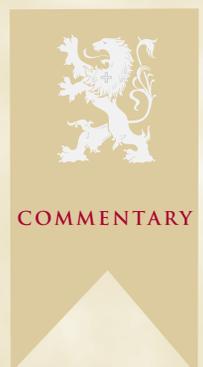
*“This fine book provides an issue-by-issue analysis of the distortions of Catholic teaching found in The Da Vinci Code. It then offers a refutation of these distortions with a clear presentation of true Catholic teaching.”*

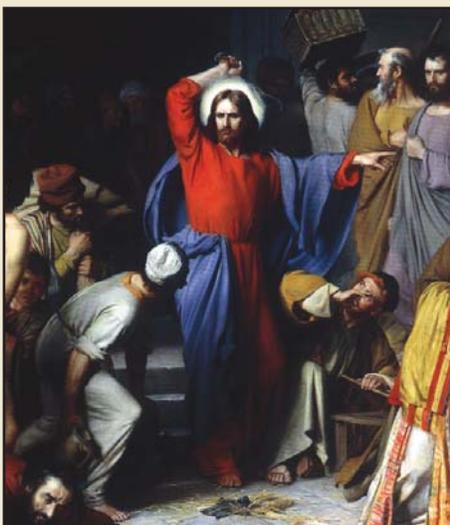
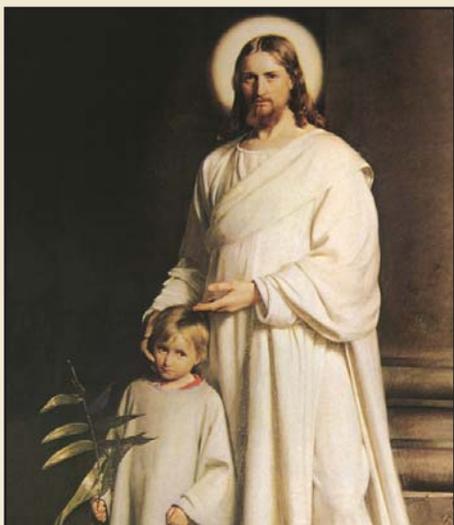
of religion that characterize our times. Part of the blame must also be traced to the fact that many Catholics today are very poorly catechized in their faith. Their lack of clear knowledge of the fundamental truths of the Church makes many of them gullible to believe *The Da Vinci Code*’s distortions, because they are unable to distinguish truth from deliberate falsehood. Often today people will claim something as true just because the media says it is. This is especially difficult when an author quotes “experts” to support his distorted claims. In the end, these “experts” are no more than other “revisionists” proclaiming their own distorted agendas.

I encourage the readers of *Rejecting the Da Vinci Code* to study it well. This fine book provides an issue-by-issue analysis of the distortions of Catholic teaching found in *The Da Vinci Code*. It then offers a refutation of these distortions with a clear presentation of true Catholic teaching. This will prove useful in many ways. First, it will strengthen the faith of any Catholic who reads it. Second, it will serve as an apologetic handbook to counter the distortions made by Dan Brown. Finally, it will prove very useful to help those who have become confused or begin to question their Catholic faith as a result of *The Da Vinci Code*. I highly recommend this book and commend its authors. ■



Father Andrew Apostoli has been a faithful supporter of our anti-blasphemy campaigns. In the above picture Father Apostoli addresses a large crowd of protesters against the blasphemous film *Dogma* in New York City, 1999.





The understanding of the God-Man is difficult, but in this understanding lies our guiding star. Perhaps the best way to help define the indefinable is to meditate on the vicissitudes of His reactions in face a variety of circumstances He came across during His earthly life. (*Christ and Boy* (far left) and *Casting Out the Money Changers* (near left) by Carl Bloch.)

*Continued from page 8*

everything that is virtuous, no matter how small, as a reflection of His Father's perfect goodness, for Christ is the rebuttal to Satan's lie that the great must despise the small. Our Lord hates evil, but all that is good, however modest, is a tiny spark and expression of the divine that delights Him. Since He is Virtue itself, He necessarily abhors every taint of evil. He loves any sign of virtue in the sinner and longs for the sinner's repentance and conversion. If Our Lord loves every form and measure of virtue, He loves even the shadow of virtue. Should He find a seedling of virtue surrounded by the weeds of vice, He will nurture and cultivate this fragile sprout.

When a soul is in a state of mortal sin, it is dead because it no longer produces good works, and yet it is the sinner's faith that moves his heart to repentance and to seek God's forgiveness in the sacrament of Penance. This faith is a true faith the sinner has only because God sustains it. Otherwise the sinner would have lost it, and his heart would have hardened and died.

Thus we may understand why great sinners have approached their Redeemer with confidence. Saint Mary Magdalene washed Jesus' feet with perfume and dried them with her hair. From his cross, the good thief Saint Dismas begged his crucified Savior to remember him when he came into His kingdom.

Their confidence was emboldened

because Our Lord is Truth and Goodness, and when the smallest vestige of truth and goodness comes in contact with Him it expands and is fulfilled. It is attracted to Him rather than repelled. Fear gives way to faith. It is capital that

*Our Lord hates evil, but  
all that is good,  
however modest, is a  
tiny spark and  
expression of the divine  
that delights Him.*

we understand this aspect of Our Lord.

#### **Fear of the Just**

But how is it, you may ask, that Our Lord can inspire fear? It is because God is unfathomable, and while His existence can be known by reason, His nature cannot be fully comprehended by our unaided intellect. Were we to behold Him without divine assistance, we would disintegrate. Without the sun we cannot see, but if we were to stare at it without protection, its rays would blind us. Man himself was created to know, love and serve God. The light of His Holy Spirit enkindles our primordial light and illumines our way, but were we to look upon God's face without His divine protection, we would surely die. Hence Moses' encounter with God in the form of a

burning bush (Exod. 3:2-4).

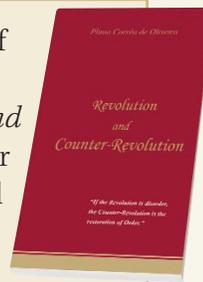
Our Lord did not manifest His qualities all at once during His earthly life. He revealed them little by little until after His crucifixion, and through His resurrection He manifested His unmistakable divinity for all to see.

#### **Alpha and Omega**

"[T]he fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom" (Ps. 110:10), but it is not its end. The fact that we yet live in this vale of tears and have not been consigned to the unquenchable flames of hell is reason enough to approach our Blessed Redeemer with complete confidence. Our continued presence in this world is a sign that He sees in us the seed of a good He loves, even if its fruit is far less sweet than we imagine.

May the light of Christ, born in our souls at Baptism, light our path in the growing darkness of a world that has lost its way and lead us safely home to Paradise. ■

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# America Needs Fatima®

November / December 2005

PROGRESS REPORT

## Rejecting *The Da Vinci Code* Campaign Full Steam Ahead!

BY JAMES BASCOM



As part of a nationwide effort to protest *The Da Vinci Code* book and Hollywood's shameless plans to make it into a movie, members from America Needs Fatima, TFP Student Action and St. Louis de Montfort Academy passed out fliers and collected signatures at Penn State University at State College on September 12, 2005 and at Millersville University on September 19, 2005.

*The Da Vinci Code* novel is an insulting and blasphemous distortion of Our Lord Jesus Christ's life and of the early Catholic Church. It claims that Christ married Saint Mary Magdalene, they had a child together, and Saint Mary Magdalene was actually meant to be Pope.

"Nothing could be more offensive to Catholics than Dan Brown's book," said

TFP volunteer Cesar Franco as he distributed fliers and collected petitions at

*"Yeah, we were just speaking about you in class. They said you don't have the right to be out here doing this, but I defended you guys because you do have the right to do this."*

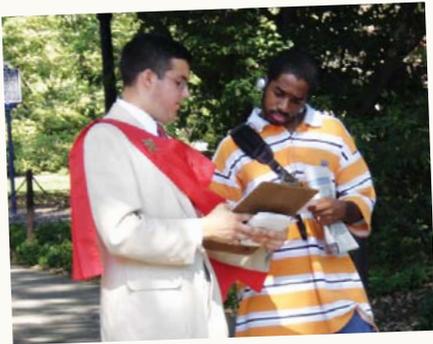
the Allen Street Gates of Penn State University's main campus at College Park, Penn.

TFP volunteers voiced their categorical rejection to *The Da Vinci Code* and the author's brutal attempt to sow doubt and confusion in the minds of Catholics, especially those without a solid grasp of history or Church teaching. "Many people who at first didn't see a problem with the book changed their minds and signed our petition after discussing the issue with us," observed James Miller, a TFP Student Action member. "This campaign is making a difference."

A Penn State University student reported, "Yeah, we were just speaking

**Below: Members of TFP Student Action collect signatures, hand out "Stop *The Da Vinci Code*" fliers and engage in heated debates at Millersville University.**





Above: Scenes of the campaign at Penn State University, College Park. The topic of blasphemy is a hot one for Americans across the nation.

about you in class. They said you don't have the right to be out here doing this, but I defended you guys because you do have the right to do this."

Another supportive student approached, "You know why I like the Catholic Church? Because it never changes. Its principles are firm and it never backs down. It doesn't conform to the secular popular culture and the ever-changing trends. Its doctrine is solid."

"Your flags are glorious!" said yet another passerby, glad to see the TFP at work.

One fellow apparently had nothing better to do with his time than parade back and forth on the sidewalk in silence, pretending to read a copy of *The Da Vinci Code* held at eye level. He did not stop to discuss the issue.

The American TFP has already distributed 225,000 protest postcards across the country as part of a nationwide effort to stop *The Da Vinci Code* blasphemy. A new Spanish version of the protest postcard has also been launched. Including the petitions collected at Penn State and Millersville Universities, 42,585 individuals have signed this protest.

Despite a curt and unexplained denial by Random House for permission to quote from *The Da Vinci Code*, a new book by the American TFP, *Rejecting The Da Vinci Code*, is hot off the press. The TFP has also set up a "Rejecting The

*Da Vinci Code* Campaign Central" page on its Web site, [www.tfp.org](http://www.tfp.org), to keep the public informed on this huge effort against blasphemy and generate e-mail protests.

According to ANF Director Robert Ritchie, "Starting next year, we are gearing up our Kansas office as Protest Central. We hope to coordinate a thousand protests across the nation as a statement that God-fearing Americans will not accept insult and blasphemy

against the Sacred Person of Our Lord Jesus Christ."

Order today the "Stop *The Da Vinci Code*" flier and the new *Rejecting The Da Vinci Code* book, and join us in defending the honor of Our Lord and the Catholic Church by calling Maria at (888) 317-5571.



## Thanks to Our Benefactors...



### Three New Vans for Our Lady

Our Lady's Fatima Custodians extend a warm thanks to all who aided in the purchase of three new vans. Because of their generosity, thousands of Americans continue to receive Our Lady of Fatima in their homes and hearts. Thank you for keeping them on the road for Our Lady!





# DeGeneres Will Not Play God

BY JOHN HORVAT II

Protesters can claim yet another case where protesting has proven effective. The Hollywood remake of the comedy *Oh God!* planned for this summer will not be going anywhere soon.

Last fall, Hollywood announced with fanfare the news that Jerry Weintraub Productions would be filming a remake portraying God as a wise-cracking cranky individual full of defects and imperfections. As if that were not bad enough, the so-called Supreme Being was to be played by the avowed lesbian talk-show host Ellen DeGeneres!

That was before thousands of protest fliers went out nationwide. Prior to the production of this offensive depiction of our Creator, the America Needs Fatima

campaign asked its members to sign and send protest postcards to the film producer, Jerry Weintraub, and its distributor, Warner Brothers.

Since then, there has been a strange silence over the whole production. Web sites report no details about the progress of the filming that was supposed to have taken place this summer.

Perhaps the mystery can be explained since Ellen DeGeneres has just announced that she will not be starring in the film, citing a "busy schedule" and her "disappointment with the script" (AP, September 3, 2005).

"The movie production is off," says Campaign Director Robert E. Ritchie. "After a massive protest by our mem-

bers, no one wants to talk about it anymore. It's dead in the water."

Mr. Ritchie reported that the blasphemous production *Jesus Has Two Mommies*, a theater play portraying the Virgin Mary as a lesbian, was not shown last Christmas season at its usual venue in Massachusetts after massive protests. Similar results can be seen in other productions where Catholics stood up for God and His Mother. The important thing is for Christians to make their voices heard. *Let's continue the good work so far, continue to stand up for the Faith, and continue the fight against rampant anti-Catholic blasphemy!* ■

## 2005 Kansas Picnic

BY FRANCIS SLOBODNIK

Over 200 Kansan supporters of the American TFP and American Needs Fatima had an enjoyable day at their annual picnic on Saturday, September 17, 2005, at a farm near Topeka, Kan.

The day began with a presentation by TFP Director Mr. Luiz A. Fragelli on the subject of innocence, a subject so forgotten today.

After Mr. Fragelli's presentation, the annual puppet show *The Deliverance of Sister Cecilia* was performed. Based on Sister Cecilia's biography who lived in Czechoslovakia during the Soviet occupation after World War II, she resisted the communists, smuggled priests out of the country and fled to Austria.

Right before dinner a statue of Our Lady of Fatima was carried solemnly to Her place of honor, crowned and asked to reign over the day's events. After din-

ner there were wholesome games and activities for children of all ages followed by a family hayride.

At twilight, the outdoor Rosary procession began. The sight of a path illuminated by torches and candles winding through the pasture, with Our Lady of Fatima carried by strong, devoted men, was a moving experience for all. In addition to the Rosary, the Litany of Loretto was recited and the crowd sang several Marian hymns.



Above: A scene from *The Deliverance of Sister Cecilia*, a puppet show enacted by children of TFP and ANF supporters in Kansas. Left: Children with their parents, grandparents, brothers and sisters board three wagons for the hayride at the Kansas event.



The day concluded with the Chinese shadow play *The Story of An Ungrateful City*, based on a story written by Professor Plinio Corrêa de Oliveira.

The event provides an annual occasion for like-minded Catholics of all ages to pray together and encourage one another to meet the challenges of today's society. ■



# Our Readers Write...

Dear Robert,

I received one of your recent letters with the enclosed *Crusade Magazine*, and it is ironic that one of the topics discussed within the magazine was homosexuality.

I attend Mass and take Communion daily. During Mass we are encouraged to invoke our petitions openly, and my petition was "for the end of abortion and homosexuality." I was approached by the pastor of our church to remove the word "homosexuality" from my prayer. I asked why and he said that I should show compassion for the "gays" in our community. I changed my prayer "for the end of abortion, perversion and immorality."

A substitute priest humiliated me from the altar and

said, "What does [perversion and immorality] mean?" Naturally I was dumfounded. I didn't say anything—one of the ladies in our church started crying, and a gentleman shouted, "She should be able to say whatever prayer she wishes!" The church was in a complete uproar. The substitute priest later came over to me and apologized. He said he was under a lot of stress working at the local prison.

I feel that our church is under attack by the forces of evil, and the evil one is always trying to creep into our midst. Any comments?

*Please pray for our parish.*

Sincerely,  
C.W.

## WE RESPOND:

Dear C.W.,

Thanks for taking the time to write. I am glad our magazine has been of service to you.

In your letter you ask me if I have any comments on the fact that on praying "for the end of abortion and homosexuality" publicly in your church, you were reprovved twice by your pastor and substitute priest, respectively. They feared the mention of "homosexuality" could be interpreted as a lack of compassion toward "gays" in your community.

Do not be misled by this unfortunate exercise of sophistry. No matter what term is used, rest assured that "gay" and "homosexual" are one and the same.

The Church has a very clear definition for the actual practice of homosexuality. In article 2357 in the Catechism of the Catholic Church we read:

Basing itself on Sacred Scriptures, which presents homosexual acts as acts of great depravity, tradition has always declared that "homosexual acts are intrinsically disordered." They are contrary to the natural law. They close the sexual act to the gift of life. They do not proceed from a genuine affective and sexual complementarity. Under no circumstances can they be approved.

Of course, we Catholics are filled with compassion and pray for those who struggle with the tendency to homosexuality. As Catholics we also pray for those who fall into the practice of homosexuality that they may repent and rise again. But also as Catholics we are conscious of the great difference between those who struggle with a weakness and those who are hardened in their sin and wish to impose this depraved and unnatural vice upon society in opposition to Christian morality and natural law.

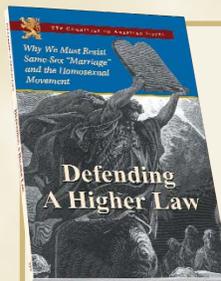
Like abortion, the error of homosexuality has gone public with the support from government and media. As such, it can only be pleasing to God that you ask publicly "for the end of abortion and homosexuality." Your pastor and sub-

stitute priest should have nothing to fear. Your prayer is perfectly grounded in Catholic doctrine and charity.

As a suggestion, you might like to read our recent release, *Defending a Higher Law*, which clears up every "myth" and "fog" in this respect. You might even consider giving a copy to your pastor and substitute priest. The book may help them to clarify the issue for the congregation. There may be some in church who are struggling under the general label of "gay" when they are really meritorious souls fighting a temptation, and there may be others who are deceiving themselves that their homosexual lifestyle does not jeopardize their salvation.

The only one that profits from "myths" and "fog" is the evil one who wants our confusion and perdition. Christ our Lord and His Holy Catholic Church deal in pure light and clarity, and making it available to all is the greatest act of charity and compassion.

In Jesus and Mary,  
Robert Ritchie



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### **Defending a Higher Law**

BY TFP COMMITTEE ON  
AMERICAN ISSUES

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# Being There at Someone's Final Agony

BY REX TEODOSIO

Although our program is called Home Visitation and we visit schools, church and meeting halls, retirement homes and hospitals, on some occasions we have the heavy responsibility to visit the dying.

By happenstance, while giving Fatima presentations in the Albany, N.Y. area, I agreed to take the statue to a home of a dying man. His daughter, Alice O'Reilly, bravely described him as being very ill, and her urgent request compelled me to agree despite the late hour and the long drive.

I realized the importance of being there the moment I saw Mr. O'Reilly. He wasn't just ill, he was in agony, and in a few hours he would be facing his Creator and Judge.

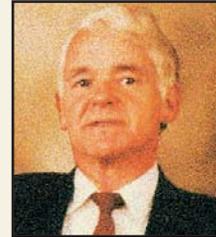
For the statue's visit, a family member stopped the intravenous morphine drip so

he would be lucid. This caused him to wince at the increasing pain, yet through it all Mr. O'Reilly gathered enough energy to smile at Our Lady and to welcome her to his home. It took a heroic effort on his part to be gracious to his illustrious guest.

Throughout the Rosary, which the whole family recited together, I could distinctly hear him make an effort to pray with us.

Before Our Lady's visit, Alice had explained to her father about the merits of suffering. Afterward, he declined his medication with a smile and a twinkle in his eyes. "I would like to offer this to Jesus and Mary," was his edifying explanation.

When I left the house, I asked Our Lady to remain with him in his most diffi-



Left: Mr. Thomas O'Reilly. Right: Fatima Custodian Rex Teodosio with the statue of Our Lady of Fatima he takes to homes.

cult hour. Several hours later, Mr. O'Reilly passed away peacefully.

As we remember Mr. O'Reilly in our prayers, we are reminded of the many trials we face during our life, but no trial is as grave as our final agony when the devil makes his final assault. It is especially then that we should imitate Mr. O'Reilly and seek help from the Blessed Virgin. ■



## Child of Mary Tribute

### A Child of Mary Makes a Difference

BY KEVIN RITCHIE

Maria Laczkoskie is the oldest of seven children and lives in southern Pennsylvania. Her parents introduced her to America Needs Fatima and she became a member at a very young age. As Maria grew up, devotion to Our Lady became the center of her life. The Children of Mary attracted her because she "wanted to make a deeper commitment to an organization fighting the enemies of the Church on every level."

Her greatest accomplishment in life was getting through college without losing her faith or doubting the fundamental Catholic principles her parents had taught her. "My parents taught me what they had learned from Plinio Corrêa de Oliveira and what he laid out in his book *Revolution and Counter-Revolution*. It really helped me understand the decay of Christian culture and the crisis in the Church."

When talking to her about college, it became clear campus life was not easy. She remarks, "So many Catholics today like to think they can be like everyone else and still

practice purity and the commandments." In addition, she takes Our Lady of Fatima's words about how "people who love Our Lord do not follow the fashions" and "most souls

go to Hell for the sins of the flesh" very seriously. "A lot of people look at you when they see you dressed with feminine dignity and modesty and see you come from a big family. It's a big part of our family apostolate, but expect to be persecuted!" she says emphatically.

It should be no surprise that ANF counts thousands of young people like Maria among its members. Thanks to this young warrior for Our Lady, ANF is destined to spread Our Lady of Fatima's message far into the future. ■



America Needs Fatima counts on thousands of young Children of Mary like Maria.



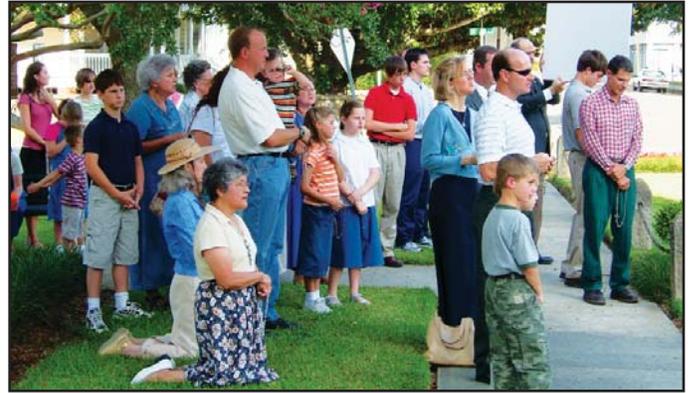
# Louisiana Families Suffer, "Southern Decadence" Celebrates, TFP Protests

BY MICHAEL WHITCRAFT

In the wake of Hurricane Katrina's devastating damage to New Orleans and to the Gulf Coast, everyone is turned to those suffering from this great disaster. However, while Louisiana families suffered, participants in the homosexual festival called "Southern Decadence" reveled in the streets of Lafayette, La.

The TFP protested the celebration of an unofficial "Southern Decadence in Exile" event held in downtown Lafayette at 5 p.m. on September 7, 2005. The event is often characterized by lewd behavior, wild revelry and public indecency.

According to the organizers' Web site, the revelers planned to hold a three-block parade from one bar to another. The American TFP's Web site asked its readers to petition Lafayette City Mayor-President Joey Durel to stop this "unofficial" three-block parade on the city streets for the sake of public decency and out of respect to the climate of mourning for



Catholics gather for an act of reparation in Lafayette, La., while two dozen revelers "paraded" in disrespect to a climate of mourning for hurricane victims.

the hurricane victims.

This protest and others helped move Mayor-President Durel to declare the parade had no permit and would not be allowed on the streets. While a "parade" of some two dozen people took place on the sidewalks, the TFP organized four dozen souls and prayed a Rosary in reparation and other prayers outside Lafayette's Catholic Cathedral before a statue of Our Lady of the Assumption, patroness of the Acadians. ■

## Crusade Magazine Outreach Survey Results

1. Is Fatima's message still timely? <b>Yes</b> 95% <b>No</b> 0% <b>Not sure</b> 5%	Our Lady of the Rosary in order to obtain peace for the world and the end to the war, for She alone can be of any avail." Should ANF help more people pray the Rosary every day? <b>Yes</b> 95% <b>No</b> 1% <b>Not sure</b> 4%	7. Columbia Pictures is making <i>The Da Vinci Code</i> into a movie. This insulting book says that Jesus and Mary Magdalene had a child and that the Catholic Church is a fraud. Should ANF try to stop <i>The Da Vinci Code</i> from becoming a movie? <b>Yes</b> 92% <b>No</b> 3% <b>Not sure</b> 5%	<b>No</b> 0% <b>Not sure</b> 1%
2. How do people best learn about Fatima? <b>Radio</b> 2% <b>Television</b> 29% <b>Conferences</b> 4% <b>Pilgrim Virgin Statue Home Visits</b> 28% <b>Audiovisual aids</b> 6% <b>Movies</b> 6% <b>Other</b> 25%	5. America Needs Fatima (ANF) was instrumental in stopping eBay from selling consecrated Hosts online. Should ANF continue working to stop such sacrileges? <b>Yes</b> 100% <b>No</b> 0% <b>Not sure</b> 0%	8. Our Lady asked for penance and amendment of life at Fatima. Do most Catholics obey Her requests? <b>Yes</b> 13% <b>No</b> 52% <b>Not sure</b> 35%	10. If mankind continues sinning, do you think God will send a chastisement to the world in your lifetime? <b>Yes</b> 51% <b>No</b> 4% <b>Not sure</b> 45%
3. Do you think devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary can still bring world peace? <b>Yes</b> 95% <b>No</b> 0% <b>Not sure</b> 5%	6. The blasphemous play <i>Jesus Has Two Mommies</i> has not shown after we protested it. Should ANF continue protesting such blasphemies? <b>Yes</b> 98% <b>No</b> 1% <b>Not sure</b> 1%	9. Should America Needs Fatima continue reminding people about Our Lady's requests for amendment of life? <b>Yes</b> 99%	11. Which ANF mission is most important? <b>Pilgrim Virgin Statue Home Visits</b> 9% <b>Promotion of devotion to the Rosary</b> 53% <b>Stopping blasphemy</b> 23% <b>Retreats for students</b> 11% <b>Conferences for families</b> 4%
4. Our Lady said, "Pray the Rosary every day in honor of			



## “She Was There Protecting Us the Whole Way!”

BY THOMAS DRAKE

Hurricane Katrina left an unprecedented path of destruction in its wake of pain and loss, but amidst the horror there are always stories of hope.

Carmen Peters, a Child of Mary through America Needs Fatima, lives with her husband and family in Long Beach, Miss., one of the areas hardest hit on August 29, 2005. Since the Peters' home was thirty feet above sea level, they did not evacuate. Still, given the dire prognostics, and feeling the need for special protection, they placed their statue of Our Lady of Fatima on their coffee table and prayed. Carmen relates:

We placed [the Fatima statue] in the center of our den on a coffee table with candles around her. The house behind us received two feet of water; next door received two feet of water, and across the street received four feet of water. As to our home, the water barely made a puddle under the front door and at the edges of each bedroom. Also, a huge oak tree fell westward away from our bedroom. If it had fallen eastward, it would have taken the north end of our home. She was there protecting us the whole way! ■

Carmen Peters' home after Hurricane Katrina passed over Long Beach, Miss., along the Gulf Coast.



## Having One's Cake and Eating It Too

BY MICHAEL WHITCRAFT

On July 29, 2005, Senate Majority Leader Bill Frist officially endorsed federal funding for embryonic stem cell (ESC) research, an issue of pivotal importance in the pro-life struggle. Should the government refuse ESC research funding, it would weigh heavily in favor that an embryo is a human life with all the God-given rights and privileges inherent to it.

Presently, U.S. law is ambiguous on the issue. While abortion, cloning and ESC research remain legal, a person who murders a pregnant woman can be tried for two murders.<sup>1</sup> However, Senator Frist's senate-floor statement clouds the waters. He first defended the fact that an embryo is a complete human life, then opined the government should fund embryo-killing research. He stated:

I am pro-life. I believe human life begins at conception. It is at this moment that the organism is complete—yes, immature—but complete. An embryo is nascent human life. It's genetically distinct. And it's biologically human. It's living. This position is

consistent with my faith. But, to me, it isn't just a matter of faith. It's a fact of science.

... We were all once embryos. . . . [T]he human embryo has moral significance and moral worth. It deserves to be treated with the utmost dignity and respect.

I also believe that embryonic stem cell research should be encouraged and supported. . . .<sup>2</sup>

His position is in direct conflict with that of President Bush's position and it damages the pro-life movement that has been gaining ground over the past years. It is inconsistent and incoherent.

In light of this, the American TFP through its Web site launched an e-mail campaign, asking Senator Frist to clarify his position. It asked Americans to pose the following questions to Senator Frist:

1. You have stated that you support performing fatal experiments on nascent, but complete human life. Would you also support such experiments on mature human life? If not, why not?

2. If you believe nascent human life can be sacrificed ethically on the altar of scientific research, why not sacrifice it for the convenience of the mother as well? And if you feel this is justified, how can you continue to call yourself a pro-life politician, benefiting from the votes this position brings with it?

Senator Frist would not want to answer these questions. *Tough*. At this stage of the game, the politics of having one's cake and eating it too no longer fits the bill. Polarized America demands definition and clarity from its politicians.

“What is truly at question here is not scientific research,” said American TFP Vice President John Horvat. “Senator Frist himself admitted that embryonic stem cell research has not produced any results. This is politicking, plain and simple.” He added, “Every American deserves straightforward answers and that's what we hope to get from Senator Frist.” ■

### Notes:

1. See the Unborn Victims of Violence Act of 2004 (H.R. 1997), commonly known also as the Laci and Connor's Law.

2. Frist Comments on Stem Cell Research, July 29, 2005, [http://frist.senate.gov/index.cfm?FuseAction=Speeches.&Speech\\_id=257](http://frist.senate.gov/index.cfm?FuseAction=Speeches.&Speech_id=257) (last visited September 19, 2005).



INTERVIEW

# *Population Research Institute:* **Exposing Global Underpopulation**

*An Interview with Joseph A. D'Agostino*

*Joseph A. D'Agostino is vice president for communications at the Population Research Institute (PRI) since October 2004. He obtained his bachelor's degree from the University of Chicago and was the associate editor of Human Events, a conservative political magazine. Mr. D'Agostino is a convert to the Catholic Faith.*

*In an interview with Crusade, Mr. D'Agostino explains PRI's mission and approach to the overpopulation myth that is promoted globally by the culture of death.*

**Crusade:** What is the Population Research Institute?

**Mr. D'Agostino:** The Population Research Institute (PRI) is a predominantly Catholic, pro-life, anti-population control organization headquartered in the Greater Washington, D.C. area. We have a full-time official in Lima, Peru, and we work with pro-life activists around the United States and the world, particularly those associated with our Family Life International (FLI) project. Father Paul Marx, O.S.B., Ph.D., founded PRI in 1989 as part of Human Life International. We became an independent organization in 1996, and Father Marx is still closely affiliated with us.

Our mission statement is to document abuses of human rights in the name of population control; to make a case against the widely held, but fundamentally erroneous, development paradigm that places economic and population growth in opposition to each other; and to articulate the material and social benefits of moderate population growth. We also pursue the agenda common to

all truly pro-life organizations: being against abortion, artificial contraception, euthanasia; and being in favor of traditional marriage and of family-friendly societies and economies, all of which are essential to maintaining healthy populations. PRI specializes in the question of population in the pro-life movement.

*“The world's upcoming population problem is in fact underpopulation.”*

**Crusade:** Who is the head of PRI?

**Mr. D'Agostino:** Steve Mosher, the first person to document the obscene forced abortion in Communist China as part of its coercive population control program, is our president. We like to note that Mr. Mosher is widely recognized as one of the world's leading authorities on the population question. His writings demonstrate overpopula-

tion being a myth, and that the efforts of population controllers to reduce human numbers have led to massive human rights abuses and undermined the health of women and children. He witnessed the population-control nightmare when he was the first American social scientist to live in rural China during 1979–1980. He saw pregnant women hunted down by the population-control police and subjected to forced abortion for violating China's hideous one-child-per-family law.

**Crusade:** Doesn't PRI believe that the world faces overpopulation, as so many groups and organizations do?

**Mr. D'Agostino:** Not at all. The world's upcoming population problem is in fact underpopulation. Since the early 1970s, the world's fertility rate—the total number of children the average woman will bear in her lifetime—has decreased from 6 to 2.9, and it continues to drop. Replacement rate fertility, in the absence of major wars, epidemics or famine, is 2.1 children per woman. In Europe, Japan and North America, cultural and economic changes opposed to family and children, combined with contraception and abortion, have led to a catastrophic decline in fertility that will destroy most of those societies in the next few decades if current trends continue. In the Third World, billions of dollars of population-control funds, combined with the encroaching materialistic and hedonistic values from the apostate

West, have reduced fertility rates dramatically. The world faces a labor shortage to support its economies and, especially, to support its aging population. Worker-to-retiree ratios will drop sharply over the next few decades, raising the question of how all these retirees will be supported, and it will eventually raise the question of how these countries will be populated.

**Crusade:** What societies face destruction and why?

**Mr. D'Agostino:** The apostate Catholic countries of Italy and Spain are particularly badly off, but all the Western European nations, Canada and Japan face extinction. Many other countries, such as the United States, may be only two decades behind. For example, the fertility rates of Italy and Spain hover slightly above one child per woman. Simply put, the Western world's countries are committing national suicide. Many of these nations are importing large numbers of immigrants in order to supply labor to their economies. These immigrants, particularly the Moors in Europe, are too many and too culturally different from their new countries' populations to assimilate, and they are contributing to the cultural and demographic suicide of these nations.

**Crusade:** Don't many people disagree?

**Mr. D'Agostino:** Not really. The exact figures are in dispute, but no one can deny that the populations of most Western nations are aging rapidly, are not having enough children to replace them, and, with the possible exception of the United States, their immigrants are not assimilating at all. If current trends continue, these nations will certainly collapse within a century. Even such bastions of political correctness such as the United Nations Population Division (UNPD) forecast massive aging and drops in Western populations over the



Mr. Joseph A. D'Agostino

*“Not only are people choosing to have fewer children the world over, but AIDS has dramatically reduced population growth in some Third World areas.”*

next 50 years.

**Crusade:** Could you provide us with some specific numbers?

**Mr. D'Agostino:** The UNPD makes low, medium and high projections. In recent history, the low projections have been usually correct because the UN prefers to overstate population growth. But I will use the medium projections so that I cannot be accused of exaggeration based on my perspective. The UNPD projects world fertility rate will drop to 2.05 children per woman by 2050. That means human beings will cease to have enough children to reproduce themselves. In other words, the continued existence of the human race will be threatened. “Fertility levels in the 44 developed countries, which account for 19 per cent of the world population, are currently very low,” says the UNPD’s 2004 World Population Prospects report. “All

except Albania have fertility below replacement level and 15, mostly located in Southern and Eastern Europe, have reached levels of fertility unprecedented in human history (below 1.3 children per woman). Since 1990–1995, fertility decline has been the rule among most developed countries. The few increases recorded, such as those in Belgium, France, Germany, the Netherlands and the United States, have been small.”

Not only are people choosing to have fewer children the world over, but AIDS has dramatically reduced population growth in some Third World areas. No one knows if a future epidemic disease may arise. Says the UNPD, “In Southern Africa, the region with the highest prevalence of [AIDS], life expectancy has fallen from 62 years in 1990–1995 to 48 years in 2000–2005, and is projected to decrease further to 43 years over the next decade before a slow recovery starts. As a consequence, population growth in the region is expected to stall between 2005 and 2020.”

As a consequence of the lack of children, a dramatic increase in the number of the aged will occur. “In developed countries, 20 per cent of today’s population is aged 60 years or over and by 2050 that proportion is projected to be 32 per cent. The elderly population in developed countries has already surpassed the number of children (persons aged 0–14) and by 2050 there will be [two] elderly persons for every child,” the UNPD reports. “In the developing world, the proportion of the population aged 60 or over is expected to rise from 8 per cent in 2005 to close to 20 per cent by 2050.” Who is going to take care of all these old people? Who will pay their medical bills? Given the advance of the culture of death, mass euthanasia would be considered.

The population of Europe’s 47 nations is projected to decline from 728 million this year to 653 million in 2050 and that population will be much older than today’s. Greater longevity and immigra-



*“Simply put, the Western world’s countries are committing national suicide.”*

unless they agree to be sterilized. In Peru, the government has admitted that many Indian women were forcibly sterilized by that country’s population control campaign in which 300,000 women were rendered barren. These sorts of things go on in Third World countries around the world as government officials and medical professionals seek to enforce population control policies on people who have “too many children.”

**Crusade:** What does PRI do about these misconceptions and abuses?

**Mr. D’Agostino:** We conduct research and education to inform people about what is going on. We disseminate our work through a weekly e-mail called the *Weekly Briefing*, two printed newsletters and the occasional investigative report. We give interviews to reporters and make presentations before groups that invite us. We also meet with members of Congress and their staffs from time to time in efforts to get the federal government to end its support for population-control programs, including those disguised as family planning or AIDS prevention programs. PRI tries to motivate its members to take action by writing their local newspapers, calling their congressmen, getting involved in their local schools, or working to spread the flowering culture of life and defeat the rank culture of death.

Anyone who would like more information about PRI and the topics discussed in this interview should contact us at Population Research Institute, 1190 Progress Drive, Suite 2D, P.O. Box 1559, Front Royal, VA 22630 USA. Our telephone number is (540) 622-5240 and our Web site is [www.pop.org](http://www.pop.org).

*And pray for a return to pro-life and pro-family attitudes around the world! ■*

tion will prevent most nations’ overall population figures from dropping too drastically, but at what cultural and social costs? Italy will go from 58 million to 51 million, France will go from 60 million to 63 million because of its large immigrant population, Spain will remain unchanged at 43 million, and Russia will go from 143 million to 112 million—and we at PRI consider these figures optimistic.

The UN has projected that if the original 15 European Union nations want to keep the same worker-to-retiree ratios they had in 1995 by 2050, they will have to increase their already high immigration rates by 15 times. In 2050, they would have to import half the world’s annual population growth at a time when poorer countries will have become desperate to keep young people.

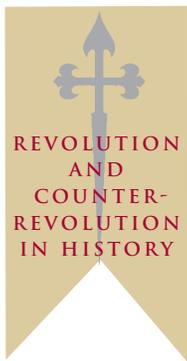
**Crusade:** Given these projections, have governments around the world eased up on their population-control programs?

**Mr. D’Agostino:** Some have, some

have not. China’s Communist government still enforces its shameful population-control program on its 1.3 billion subjects with a vengeance. Imagine living in a country where it is illegal to have more than one or two children. Imagine the incredibly oppressive nature of a policy that affects every single family in the country. If any family exceeds its quota, fines ranging from half to ten times the average annual household income can be imposed, the husband and wife could lose their jobs, and medical or educational benefits may be withheld from the couple’s children.

Isn’t it odd to hear so little about this massive, systematic abuse of human rights from Western media organs, feminist groups, and organizations that claim to stand for reproductive choice such as International Planned Parenthood or the UN Population Fund?

Other countries abuse human rights in the name of family planning or population control. In Mexico, poor Indian women with children are often denied medical care by government clinics



## Chapter XVII

# Youthful Jesuits and Spanish Mystics

BY JEREMIAS WELLS

In closing out this section on the Catholic Reformation, we should reflect on the extraordinary sanctity of just a few of the many privileged souls who achieved the most perfect union with God possible on this earth. There is a sizeable minority of people in this country who have indicated they are becoming increasingly disturbed over the steady stream of filth flowing into their lives from the surrounding environment, especially when pre-adolescents and other innocents are exposed to a new vocabulary of depravity. Conversely, a study of the lives of saints who devoted their lives to purity and innocence from their early years can be quite edifying.

### Youthful Jesuits— Stanislaus Kostka

Although the son of a powerful Polish senator, Stanislaus Kostka consecrated himself to God at his first use of reason and gave as much time as possible to prayer and study under his mother's supervision. At fourteen the holy youth went to the Jesuit College in Vienna accompanied by his tutor and older brother (by two years). Initially lodged with the boarding students at the college dormitory at Emperor Ferdinand's expense, the fire of his divine love had a profound effect by enkindling the spiritual outlook of his companions.

Upon the death of Ferdinand, his irreligious son and successor, Maximilian II, withdrew his charitable support, forcing the three Polish academics to take lodg-

ing imprudently in a Lutheran house. There the virtue and piety of Stanislaus so irked his worldly, impious companions that they began to persecute him. Under these trying circumstances, the valiant teenager increased his prayers and austerities leading to worse mistreatment and even violent blows from his brother. After two years of physical abuse, the oppressed youth fell dangerously ill and asked that the Blessed Sacrament be brought to him, but the Lutheran landlord strenuously objected.

In deep affliction, Stanislaus appealed to Saint Barbara, the patron saint of the students, for help and later that night she brought two angels who gave him the body and blood of Our Lord. Our Lady appeared to him in a separate vision, told him the hour of death had not yet come and to continue his devotions in the Society of Jesus.

The Jesuit officials in Vienna hesitated to receive him, fearing a blast of outrage from his politically powerful father. Stanislaus slipped away one morning and traveled by foot to Dillingen on the Danube River in Bavaria to meet with Saint Peter Canisius, then the provincial at the Jesuit College. To test his vocation, Peter had him wait on tables and clean the dormitory, which he did with edifying diligence and humility. After three weeks, Peter sent him on to Rome where Saint Francis Borgia received him with great joy. The dedicated youth received the habit on October 28, 1567. In the short



**Saint Stanislaus Kostka**  
(1550–1568) as a young boy.



**Born of a princely family, Saint Aloysius Gonzaga (1568–1591) set aside the glitter of court life to join the ranks of the Jesuits.**

time on earth that remained to him, he fulfilled all his duties with perfect exactitude in order that all his actions coincided with the will of God. When he had a premonition of his imminent death the following summer at the age of seventeen, he prayed to Our Lady that she take him on the feast of her Assumption, to which she lovingly complied. When his coffin was opened two years later, his body was found to be whole and incorrupt, exuding a pleasant fragrance that all described as otherworldly.

### Saint Aloysius Gonzaga

Aloysius was born in March 1568 into one of the most illustrious families in Christendom—his father (the Marquis of Castiglione) and his mother had served at the court of Philip II of Spain; a cousin was the Duke of Mantua; and a Gonzaga often sat in the College of Cardinals (three in the sixteenth century). When the boy was about four, his father, Don Ferrante was given command of 3,000 Milanese soldiers

destined to protect Philip II's North African possessions from the Ottoman pirates. Aloysius accompanied him to the training camp. The young prince (all male Gonzagas were princes of the Empire) went from the quiet of the castle nursery to the excitement of an army camp where he marched around in his little uniform firing off his small arquebus. One afternoon during siesta, he snatched a supply of powder, ran off to the castle and fired off an artillery field piece that disturbed the entire camp. When the marquis embarked for Tunis, he prudently sent Aloysius back to his mother, for the recoil of the cannon had almost killed him. Moreover he was picking up the language of the camp, not realizing its evil meaning. All the days of his life, he considered this episode the greatest sin he ever committed; and he turned away from any step that would draw him to the world.

With Don Ferrante away at war, his mother, Donna Marta, directed his upbringing; and the piety and love of God that lay inside the holy youth rose to the surface. Donna Marta had consecrated the boy to God under the patronage of the Blessed Virgin. When the lord of Castiglione heard about it, he had Pope Gregory XIII annul the vow. He expected his son to inherit his rank and estates, develop military prowess and govern the Gonzaga dominions. But Aloysius decided even as a child that he would honor his mother's vow.

At the age of seven, he began to pray the Little Office of Our Lady and soon added the Rosary and other devotions and austerities. In order to prepare him for his future duties, Don Ferrante left him and his younger brother in Florence at the court of the Grand Duke of Tuscany (Francesco de Medici) for two years. Fortunately, the boys were assigned to a separate house with a tutor and priest in residence. One day while studying the mysteries of the Rosary, he became so inflamed with a burning love of Our Lady that he consecrated himself to her by an irrevocable vow of chastity. Henceforth, he refused to look upon the face of a woman; and the Mother of God rewarded him with a special grace by preserving him from any temptation against the virtue of purity.

To complete their early education, the boys moved on to the palace of their cousin, the Duke of Mantua. A few weeks after arrival, the innocent youth came down with a serious malady for which the physicians prescribed strict abstinence in his diet. Once the illness had passed and the prohibition lifted, the youthful penitent still maintained the strict fast as a special devotion. At the age of twelve, he, along with his brother Ridolpho, returned to their family palace of Castiglione and he began his practice of finding some isolated room to spend long hours in prayer and divine contemplation.

During that summer, the great Cardinal Charles Borromeo made an apostolic visit to their diocese. He preached to a huge crowd in the cathedral among whom, in their reserved places sat Donna Marta and her thoroughly impressed son. The holy adolescent may have developed a meek and retiring nature, but interiorly he possessed abundant resourcefulness and courage, for he managed to obtain a private audience with the busy archbishop. Each saint instinctively recognized the sanctity in the other. When Saint Charles discovered that such a high degree of perfection had been reached by one who had as yet not received the Blessed Sacrament, he declared that he would administer it himself. And so the boy-saint received his First Holy Communion from the hands of the glorious Saint Charles.

In 1581 Philip II summoned Don Ferrante to his court in Madrid to resume his office of chamberlain and his sons to act as pages for his oldest son, Don Diego. Here the struggle for the boy's future vocation began, for Aloysius abandoned the use of jewelry and rich, colorful clothing and spent his free time in the city with the Jesuits, all of which displeased his father. Finally, Donna Marta revealed to her husband that her son wanted to become a Jesuit priest and resigned herself to a barrage of unjust anger. A few days later, Aloysius sought an interview with his father, with the same distressful results. The Marquis then called upon his cousin, a high-ranking churchman and eventual Cardinal, to examine the boy; he reported the latter definitely had a voca-



**Saint Teresa of Avila (1515–1582) established the Discalced Carmelites and was made a Doctor of the Church for her contributions to ascetical and mystical theology.**

tion and that it was God's calling. Over the next few years the discussions continued, but in the end the maturity of the young saint's intellect and his quiet inner resolve conquered the proud, imperious disposition of the Marquis.

The determined young man finally entered the novitiate in Rome in November 1585, but he was not destined to reach ordination. When a plague broke out five years later, he volunteered to care for the victims in a hospital by changing their clothes, making the beds and performing other loathsome tasks. His saintly life of devotion to the passion of Christ and His Blessed Mother, his patroness, came to an untimely but glorious end when he himself succumbed to the disease and died. Saint Aloysius' confessor for his last months, the famous Saint Robert Bellarmine reported after his death that the holy youth never committed a mortal sin.

### **Spanish Mystics— Saint Teresa of Avila**

Teresa de Cepeda y Ahumada, born at Avila in 1515, took another route toward sanctification, for though personally moral in her habits she was initially indifferent to any higher religious calling. In her early adolescence, she developed a voracious habit of reading romantic novels that interfered with any spiritual outlook. The problem was exacerbated by the frequent visits of her cousins, also from the lesser nobility,

who were her only playmates. These frivolous, worldly girls had totally given themselves over to the diversion of amusing conversation. Teresa under the influence of these activities became overly concerned about her appearance, the care of her hands and hair and the use of cosmetics for which she severely condemned herself in later years, though the teenager had no evil intention.

Don Alonso, her reasonably responsible father, after watching his daughter drift into religious indifference placed her in an Augustinian convent of nuns as a boarding student. Little by little the sixteen year old began to forget about her vanities and immersed herself in work, study and prayer, especially the Rosary and the liturgy of the Mass. By corresponding to the influence of the holy nuns around her, Teresa could see that the poverty, hard work and penance produced in them a radiant joy in contrast to the discontented and unhappy faces of many in the world. After eighteen months a serious illness forced her to return to her father's house. Recuperating among relatives in the countryside, she reflected on the short, unsatisfying span of mortal life, the eternal existence of God the fact that she had lived her life thus far for no good purpose. During this mental struggle, the voice of the world, which she later identified as the devil, tempted her with its alluring possibilities and represented the religious life as one of trials, hard work and suffering. Nevertheless, reflection on the life of Christ strengthened her will to become a nun. Teresa entered the Carmelite Convent of the Incarnation at Avila in November 1535.

Shortly after her profession a year later, a far more serious malady afflicted her, characterized by fits of fainting and a violent pain in her heart. Once again she sought relief in the quiet countryside of her relatives, which gave her the opportunity to experiment in mental prayer. When her torments increased with a burning fever and sharp pains over her entire system, Don Alonso brought the patient invalid back home in Avila. One day during the summer heat, she slipped into a deep coma and appeared to have stopped breathing. Those in the room declared that she had died and began to

say the prayers for the dead and a grave was dug. But Don Alonso for two days adamantly refused to believe that his daughter was dead. Finally, as he was about to order the funeral to proceed, Teresa opened her eyes and complained, "Why have you brought me back?" Some time later, despite her condition of total paralysis, she returned to the convent where she edified all with her extraordinary patience and long-suffering in her slow improvement.

### **Carmelite Reform**

The Order of Our Lady of Mount Carmel traces its origin with some validity back

*Teresa could see that the poverty, hard work and penance produced in them a radiant joy in contrast to the discontented and unhappy faces of many in the world.*

to the Prophet Elias, but the earliest historical evidence takes us only to 1210 when Saint Albert, Patriarch of Jerusalem, wrote a constitution for the hermits on top of Mount Carmel. As soon as other communities were founded in the area, the hermits were put to death by the Moslems who were reconquering the Holy Land and had no tolerance for holy monks. Saint Louis of France brought several there and gave them a convent in 1254. They flourished in England and Italy, especially at universities under the generalship of Saint Simon Stock, famous for receiving the brown scapular from the hands of Our Lady, and changed from an eremitical to a mendicant order. Mount Carmel was destroyed by the Moslems in 1291 and the monks were beheaded while singing the *Salve Regina*.

By the time of Saint Teresa, a softness and ease of living had crept into the convents, with frequent visits from outsiders and lack of quiet necessary for contemplation because of interminable conversations. As she increased in spiri-

tual perfection and her health improved, she came to deplore these distractions. A window of opportunity opened when some high Church officials (a papal nuncio, an apostolic visitor, etc.) caught the spirit of the Council of Trent and allowed the indefatigable but frequently ill saint to establish a reform (discalced) convent based on the ancient rules in Avila in 1562. During the next fifteen years, while she was founding sixteen more convents, she induced Saint John of the Cross to do the same for the Carmelite friars. Then the window of opportunity slammed shut.

The more easy-going friars—fathers of the Observance (calced)—had been harboring a deep and increasing resentment toward the reform for some time. When the benefactors of the reform began to die and the discalced friars moved toward establishing a separate province, the Observance attempted to destroy their independent existence. They kidnapped Saint John in Avila, severely whipped him, took away the distinguished habit of the reform and forced him to wear their robe and then took him to the calced monastery in Toledo. He wasted away for nine months locked up in a narrow, dark, airless room with an unpleasant smell that had once been a closet. His diet consisted of bread and water with an occasional sardine or two. The only change of scenery he had was when he was taken to another room three times a week to be flogged. Finally, through his own ingenuity and miraculous assistance, he escaped. The steadfastness, courage and sufferings of both saints succeeded in the end, for discalced friars and nuns became a separate province in 1580 and totally independent a short time later. The bodies of both Carmelites remained miraculously incorrupt even after several relocations and both were declared Doctors of the Church for their contributions to ascetical and mystical theology. ■

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### **Bibliographical note:**

The story of the young Jesuits was pieced together from several sources. For Saints Teresa and John, we used the outstanding biography by William Thomas Walsh and Crisogono de Jesus, respectively.

# From the Editor

While 2005 nears its end, another year will soon begin, and 2006 brings with it new hopes, horizons and battles to be fought. Indeed, it can be said that never has virtue, kindness, respect and everything that is true and good been more challenged. But what may be difficult for the weak soul may be in fact a superb way to prove our love to God and His Holy Church for the strong soul.

With such thoughts in mind, and upon bended knees, we beseech the Divine Child through the intercession of His Virgin Mother, who is also ours, to grant our readers and faithful friends a greater zeal and an even greater determination in the battles that lie ahead.

We take advantage of this end-of-year message to express our heartfelt gratitude for all you have done to help keep *Crusade Magazine* going and we assure you that nothing inspires us more than the hope that we may be in some way helping you in your daily battles in fighting the “good fight.”

