

November/December 2018

CRUSADE

MAGAZINE



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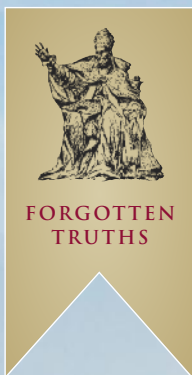
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Mary Most Pure

FROM HOLY MARY BY REV. CORNELIUS JOSEPH O'CONNELL



Mary, though a mother, remained always a virgin. The laws of nature were suspended in her regard. She conceived and gave birth to a son, the Son of God, yet still she remained a virgin without spot or stain in her.

It was fitting that her purity should be the greatest after that of Jesus, her Divine Son. It was befitting her dignity as the Mother of God that she should shine forth in purity

of both body and soul, unequalled by angel or saint. Applying the words of the Book of Wisdom, she is called "a vapor of the power of God, and a certain pure emanation of the glory of the Almighty God: and, therefore, no defiled thing will come into her" (7:25).

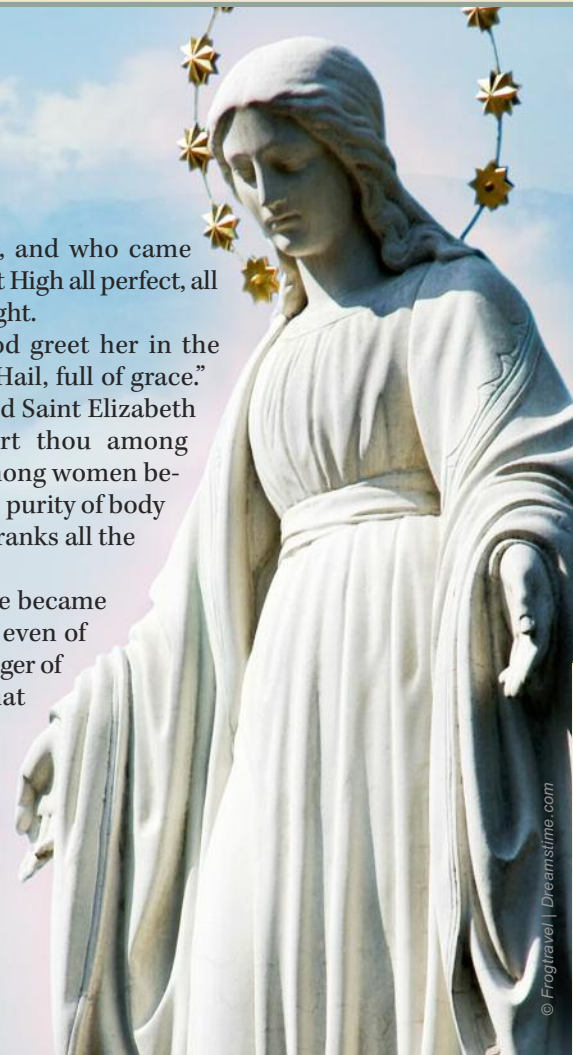
Because of her great purity, Mary has been likened to the dove, the holy Jerusalem, the sublime throne of God, the ark of sanctification and the house built by Eternal Wisdom.

She is spoken of as the queen filled with delights,

resting upon her beloved, and who came from the mouth of the Most High all perfect, all beautiful, all pure in His sight.

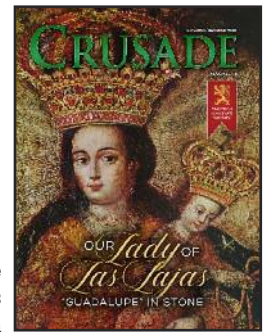
For this reason did God greet her in the words of the Archangel, "Hail, full of grace." The same reason prompted Saint Elizabeth to greet her, "Blessed art thou among women." She is blessed among women because of her incomparable purity of body and soul, whereby she outranks all the saints and angels.

So pure is Mary that she became disturbed at the presence even of an angel. When the messenger of God announced to her that she was chosen to become the Mother of God, she hesitated, and would have declined the honor, had it entailed the loss of her virginal purity, which she prized above all honors. ■



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Miraculous image
of Our Lady of Las
Lajas, Colombia

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Editor: Antonio Fragelli

Associate Editors: John Horvat II, Michael Drake, Norman Fulkerson, Kenneth Murphy, Vincent Gorre

Photography: Gary Isbell, Michael Gorre, Joshua Long

Foreign Correspondents: Charles E. Schaffer, Austria; José Carlos Sepulveda, Brazil; Philip Moran, United Kingdom; Benoit Bemelmans, France; Beno Hofschulte, Germany; Juan M. Montes, Italy; David Nash, South Africa; Felipe Barandiarán, Spain

THE AMERICAN TFP

The American Society for the Defense of Tradition, Family and Property (TFP) is an organization of lay Catholic Americans concerned about the moral crisis shaking the remnants of Christian civilization. Its earliest origins date back to January 1971, when the first TFP members started to group around the publication *Crusade for a Christian Civilization*. 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 Christian 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 TFP sister organizations across the globe, thus constituting the world's largest anticommunist and antisocialist network of Catholic inspiration.



IN BRIEF

Wisconsin Supreme Court Reinstates Conservative Professor

The Wisconsin Supreme Court ruled against Jesuit-run Marquette University when it fired a professor for criticizing a colleague who he believed was refusing students the opportunity to express opposition to same-sex “marriage.” Professor John McAdams was ordered reinstated and provided with damages, including back pay. The court’s majority firmly sided with McAdams, finding that the university’s faculty panel displayed “unacceptable bias” in firing him.

world from raising any flag other than the Stars and Stripes. This is in response to past instances when American embassies flew rainbow flags to promote homosexual “pride” or “rights.” Introduced as “The Old Glory Only Act,” the measure has twenty-six cosponsors, all Republicans.



Pro-abortion, Pro-LGBT Content Removed from Georgetown U. Webpage

Thousands signed a petition launched by TFP Student Action asking Georgetown University to take down a webpage from its law center website that encouraged support for pro-abortion and pro-LGBT groups. As a result, the university removed the content. TFP Student Action director John Ritchie said that more than 13,000 people stood up to defend the unborn and uphold Catholic morality. “Those who truly love God are never indifferent but are ready to defend what is right and good,” he said.

Scientist Decries Social Media for Children

The *Telegraph* reported that Baroness Susan Greenfield, a senior fellow at Oxford University and former director of the Royal Institution of Great Britain, said recently that children’s use of social media is affecting their social skills. She warned



Study Reveals Problems Experienced by Women Who Had an Abortion

Results of a new research study published in the *British Journal of Psychiatry* revealed that women who have an abortion face an increased risk for mental health problems, substance abuse, anxiety and depression. The researchers said that “the results indicate quite consistently that abortion is associated with moderate to highly increased risks of psychological problems subsequent to the procedure.” Data from 877,000 women, including 164,000 who had had an abortion, was analyzed for the study.

that children are losing their ability to think for themselves, empathize and communicate with each other. She said that, “What I predict is that people are going to be like 3-yr-olds: emotional, risk-taking, poor social skills, weak self-identity and short attention spans.”



Major Pro-Life Victory in Argentina

A majority of Argentina’s Senate voted against a bill that would have legalized abortion in that country. Leading pro-abortion forces, such as Amnesty International, George Soros’s Open Society Foundations and Planned Parenthood, with the help of the mainstream media tried in vain to influence the vote in their favor. A flood of provinces came out as pro-life just before the actual Senate vote. Politicians realized that the will of the people was clearly pro-life.

Proposed Law Forbids U.S. Embassies to Fly “Gay Pride” Flag

Representative Jeff Duncan, R-SC, is leading an effort in Congress to ban U.S. embassies around the



Supernatural Love Rightly Understood

BY FATHER RAUL PLUS, S.J.



Some persons imagine that the endeavor to transform their natural love into supernatural love will make them awkward, make them lose their spontaneity, their naturalness.

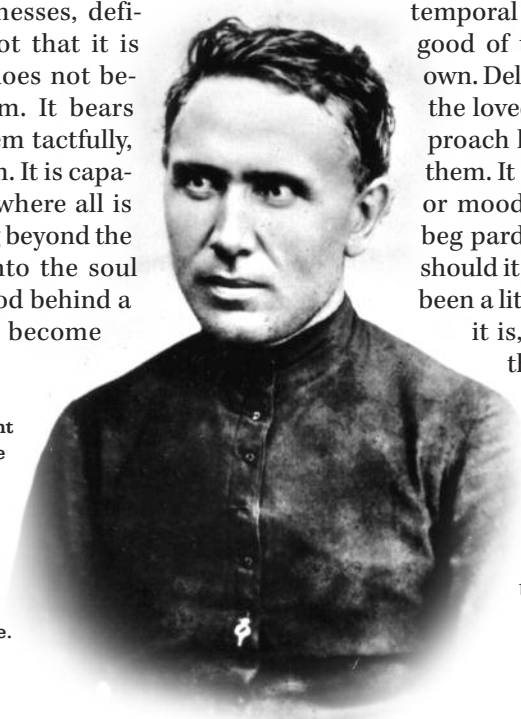
Indeed, nothing is further from the truth, if supernatural love is rightly understood.

What does it really require?

First of all, does it not require us to fulfill the perfections of natural love? Supernatural love, far from suppressing natural love, makes it more tender, more attentive, more generous; it intensifies the sentiments of affection, esteem, admiration, gratitude, respect, and devotion which constitute the essence of true love. Supernatural love takes away one thing only from natural and spontaneous love—selfishness, the archenemy of love. It demands that everything, from the greatest obligation to the simplest, be done as perfectly as possible. Then by elevating simple human love to the level of true charity, it ennobles the greatest powers of that love.

By suppressing nothing it enriches everything. Better still, it provides in advance against the danger of a diminution in human love. It pardons weaknesses, deficiencies and faults. Not that it is blind to them, but it does not become agitated by them. It bears with them, handles them tactfully, helps to overcome them. It is capable of bestowing love where all is not lovable. Penetrating beyond the exterior, it can peer into the soul and see the image of God behind a silhouette which has become less pleasing.

A good example of supernatural love was Saint Damien of Molokai. He sacrificed his life to help save the souls of the incurable lepers at Molokai. Upon arriving on the island, he found that the state of souls of the lepers was worse than their decomposing bodies. He dedicated his life to rebuilding the foundations of Faith and eventually died as a leper. There was nothing sentimental about this. It was a pure act of selfless, supernatural love.



Supernatural love takes away one thing only from natural and spontaneous love—selfishness, the archenemy of love.

That is the whole secret. Supernatural love in us seeks to love in the manner and according to the desire of God; it requires us therefore to love God in those we love and then to love the good qualities He has given them and bear with the absence of those He has not given or with the characteristics He has permitted them to acquire.

Loving without any thought of self, supernatural love is patient and constant in spite of the faults of those it loves. The Little Sister of the Poor loves her old folk despite their coughing, their unpleasant mannerisms, their varying moods. The missionaries who care for the lepers love them in spite of their loathsome sores.

Unselfish as it is, supernatural love inspires the one who is animated by it to seek the temporal and above all the spiritual good of the one he loves before his own. Delicately it calls the attention of the loved one to his faults, not to reproach him, but to help him correct them. It does not give in to irritability or moodiness; it is quick humbly to beg pardon and to make reparation, should it ever fail. And when there has been a little outburst, how comforting it is, in the intimate converse of

the evening, to acknowledge one's failings, to express sorrow, and to promise to do better in the future with the other's help!

But all this presupposes prayer and a true desire for union with God. ■



COMMENTARY

Our Lord Always Watches Over His Church

The Church is often pictured as Peter's Bark sailing on the seas of history.

Sometimes calm winds fill Her sails and She skims over the waves with lofty and serene grace. At other times, however, the winds howl, the sea churns with frothy waves, lightning bolts crisscross the skies, thunder alarms the sailors, and the ship appears to be sinking.

As the roaring squall tosses Peter's Bark about, the Savior sleeps. With the Apostles, we cry out: "Lord, save us for we perish!" Awakening, Jesus reassures us as He did them: "Why are you fearful, O ye of little faith?" He stands up and in an imposing voice orders the storm to cease and quiets the sea.¹

"It Is Impossible that Scandals Should Not Come"

Today the Church is buffeted by sexual-abuse scandals and cover-ups by ecclesiastical authorities. She is under attack by Her enemies, while uncertainty and confusion shake Her children.

Many do not understand why Our Lord seems to sleep or why He allows evil to penetrate the sanctuary. It apparently contradicts both the Church's promised indefectibility and the holiness

of the Mystical Spouse of Christ. Their faith wavers: If the Church is not holy, She cannot be the true Church of Christ.

Others react by seeking to reform the Church, blaming the crisis on Her tenets, teachings, and Divinely instituted hierarchical structure.

Our Lord promised that the gates of Hell would not prevail against the Church,² and that He would assist Her daily to the end of time.³ However, He did not promise that She would not undergo crises, scandals, and apparent failures.

Much to the contrary, Our Lord's parables about the Kingdom of God, which is His Church, clearly affirmed that good and bad alike would be part of Her until the end of time. Only then will God send His angels to cleanse the earth of scandal.⁴

This earthly life is a period of trial. Thus, some will do evil and give scandal to others. "It is impossible that scandals should not come," says Our Lord, "but woe to him through whom they come!"⁵ Saint Paul explains how these scandals help purify our Faith: "For there must be also heresies: that they also, who are approved, may be made manifest among you."⁶

God permits temptation, but He always provides sufficient grace to resist. Saint Paul teaches: "God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that which you are able: but will make also with temptation issue, that you may be able to bear it."⁷

Expounding on the episode of Our Lord asleep in the boat, Saint John Chrysostom explains that the storm symbolizes the Church's future trials, during which the faithful, the athletes of Christ, will be fortified. After quoting Saint John Chrysostom, Cornelius à Lapide, the distinguished Scripture commentator, cites Seneca to show that even a pagan writer understood the spiritual gain accrued from the struggle against temptation: "Life without temptation is like a dead sea."⁸

The Church is the "House of God" whose cornerstone is Christ.⁹ It is "the Holy City, the New Jerusalem" brought down from Heaven.¹⁰ However, God permits temptations even inside this sacred place, as our first parents were tested in the Earthly Paradise. In this way, our love is purged of all attachments to divine consolation and human concerns.



Living through the present scandals in the Church, one understands better why Our Lord expelled evil doers from His house. The question remains as to why our shepherds don't follow the Divine example...

The Lord Himself Foretold the Scandals

Saint Augustine explains that there will always be some bishops resembling the Good Shepherd and others representing the Hireling. He wrote to Felicia, a virgin who grieved over the scandals then plaguing the Church:

I exhort you not to let yourself be too much troubled by scandals, which indeed were foretold precisely so that when they happen we may remember that they were foretold and not be disconcerted. For the Lord Himself foretold them in the Gospel. “Woe to the world because of scandals. For it must needs be that scandals come: but nevertheless, woe to that man by whom the scandal cometh” (Matt. 18:7)... Thus, there are those who hold the office of shepherds that they may watch over Christ’s sheep; and there are those who hold it for the sake of temporal honors and worldly advantages. These two kinds of pastors, always dying and giving place to others, will both be perpetuated in the bosom of the Catholic Church till time ends and the Lord comes to judgment.¹¹

Finally, facing the errors of Luther and Calvin, the Church affirmed that She is not a “Church of Saints” or “Church of the Predestined” but holds within Her bosom both just men and sinners.¹²

The history of the Church shows clearly that She has always undergone trials. At the very beginning, fierce persecutions sought to destroy Her from without. Immediately afterwards, heresy assailed Her from within.

At the dawn of the fourth century, the Church had to contend with Arianism, one of the most devastating heresies. Arianism denied the divinity of Our Lord and claimed that Jesus was a mere (albeit more perfect) creature, created by the Father to be the divine intermediary in the creation and redemption of the world. However, Arius, the heresy’s founder, affirmed that His nature was not of the same substance as the Father, that the Son was not consubstantial with the Father.

This heresy attacked the very foundations of Christianity. If the Word were not divine, God did not become man, and the mysteries of the Incarnation, Passion, Death, and Resurrection of Our Lord would have no transcendental meaning.

This heresy spread throughout the entire Christian world. So many bishops adhered to it that Saint Jerome exclaimed with rhetorical hyperbole: “The whole world groaned and marveled to find itself Arian.”¹³

Spiritual Homicide and Suicide

In a sermon on the present scandals, Fr. Roger J. Landry, pastor of Espirito Santo parish in Fall River, Mass., opportunely observes: “Scandal is

unfortunately nothing new for the Church.... At each of the times when the Church hit its low point, God raised up tremendous saints to bring the Church back to its real mission. It’s almost as if in those times of darkness, the Light of Christ shone ever more brightly.”

Father Landry mentions the bad example of Pope Alexander VI during the Renaissance. He fathered several children from various concubines and later enriched his children with Church property. Many were scandalized and shaken in their Faith. Luther revolted, apostatized, and started a new religion. Father Landry notes: “Eventually God raised up many saints to combat this wrong solution and to bring people back to the Church Christ founded. Saint Francis de Sales was one of them.”

After mentioning heroic episodes in the life of Saint Francis, Father Landry quotes the saint: “While those who commit these types of scandals are guilty of the spiritual equivalent of murder, those who take scandal—who allow scandals to destroy their faith—are guilty of spiritual suicide.”

Concluding, Father Landry says that Saint Francis “went among the people in what is now Switzerland trying to prevent their committing spiritual suicide on account of the scandals. I’m here to preach the same thing to you.”¹⁴ ■

** This article is taken from the book, I Have Weathered Other Storms: A Response to the Scandals and Democratic Reforms That Threaten the Catholic Church by the TFP Committee on American Issues.*

Notes:

1. Matt. 8:25-26.
2. Matt. 16:17-19.
3. Matt. 28:18-20.
4. Matt. 13 (*in toto*).
5. Luke 17:1.
6. 1 Cor. 11:19.
7. 1 Cor. 10:13.
8. Cornelius à Lapide, *Commentaria in Scripturam Sacram* (Paris: Vivès, 1881), Vol. 15, p. 234.
9. 1 Cor. 3:9, 11; Matt. 21:42.
10. Apoc. 21:2.
11. Epist. 208, 2 and 5, in Charles Cardinal Journet, *The Church of the Word Incarnate* (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1955), pp. 97-98.
12. Fr. Joachim Salaverri, S.J., *De Ecclesia Christi*, in VV.AA, *Sacrae Theologiae Summa*, (Madrid: *Biblioteca de Autores Cristianos*, 1958), Vol. I, no. 1128, p.912.
13. William Barry, s.v. “Arianism,” *Catholic Encyclopedia* (1913), Vol. I, p. 710.
14. Fr. Roger J. Landry, *Answering Scandal with Personal Holiness*, in Catholic Educator’s Resource Center www.catholiceducation.org/articles/religion/re0526.html, 2002.



TFP Road Tour Drums Up Support for the Unborn in the South

BY GABRIEL JORDAN

As the debate over the issue of abortion continues to divide the nation, a group of young volunteers from Tradition, Family and Property Louisiana gathered in New Orleans to begin a ten-day tour in defense of the sanctity of innocent human life. Their road trip, commonly called a “caravan,” traveled to cities throughout Florida, Alabama, Louisiana and Texas. Their endeavors were entrusted to the powerful patronage of the three Archangels, Gabriel, Michael and Raphael.

Off to a Great Start

Leaving bright and early on July 20th, the caravan arrived in Mobile, Alabama in time for lunch hour traffic. In classic TFP style, they seized the attention of the public with “honk for the unborn” signs and the unmistakable sound of the bagpipes.

One of the most impressive reactions came from a pro-abortion driver who was waiting at the light. When he saw the sign “honk against abortion,” he gave a thumbs down and shouted in opposition. At that moment, the TFP volunteer holding the sign turned it around to show the opposite side, which read: “Abortion separates children from parents forever!” Reading this, the man bowed his head and slowly pointed his thumb upwards. As the light turned green, he honked his horn and drove away with a smile on his face.

A busy weekend then began with a campaign in Pensacola, Florida on July 21st. Just like before, Floridians showed their

support for the unborn with lots of honks. Next, the TFP caravan returned to New Orleans to continue its crusade.

The TFP standard and large banner blew in the breeze under sunny skies in front of Saint Louis Cathedral. While some volunteers handed out pro-life fliers, others prayed the rosary and shouted the following slogans:

“A child is a blessing, not a disease.”

“Abortion separates parents from children forever.”

“If you love America, defend innocent life.”

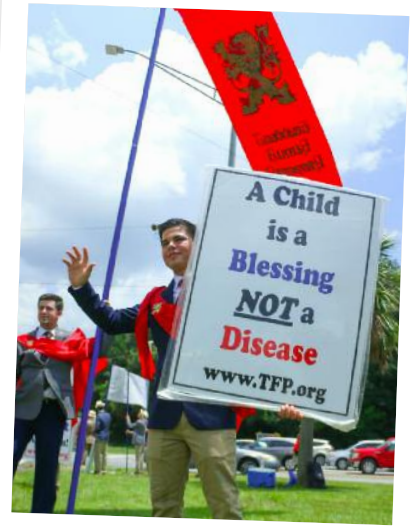
Abortion Advocates Unveiled

During the campaign, one man on a bicycle rejected a flyer then started debating with two TFP volunteers.

The man declared that he was pro-abortion and spoke about teen pregnancies. One of the volunteers asked him, “Is it just for a child to be killed for the mistake of its parents?” To which he responded, “Yes. I am a result of a teen pregnancy and my early childhood was miserable. I wish I had been aborted.” The TFP member then asked if he thought murder was fine. The man skirted the question. After repeatedly being asked the same question, the man finally said, “I see many people who walk the streets who I think aren’t fit to live. Yes, I think murder is okay.” With that, the discussion ended. Before riding away however, the man pointed at two TFP volunteers and said “Here are two abortions that should have happened.”

From New Orleans, the TFP pro-life caravan left for Baton Rouge for the fourth day of the campaign.

Right after they set up at a busy intersection, a woman yelled, “It’s a woman’s choice to kill her unborn child!” More and more, TFP volunteers have been finding that pro-abortionists will readily admit that abortion kills unborn children.



In the Southern summer heat, these young men bring a simple, yet powerful, message to the streets standing up for the unborn children of America.

The old argument that the baby “is just a blob of tissue” falls apart by their own admission.

Pro-lifers Show Their Support

A man drove up, rolled down his window and said, “My horn doesn’t work, but all I want to do is honk!” This was in stark contrast to an older man who drove by and furiously shouted out of his window, “Kill all the babies!”

After the campaign, a TFP volunteer approached a police officer and gave him a Saint Michael’s police medal, thanking him for his service. The officer said, “I’ve seen you all before and I like what you do. You have a good and noble cause. Keep it up and God bless!”

The fifth day of the campaign was at another busy intersection during rush hour. The honks there topped every other intersection.

To stay hydrated under the hot sun, the volunteers drank a lot of water. But this afternoon they reached into the bag and found that it was empty. Just then, a lady and her two daughters came and said, “We were driving by and want to thank you so much! Do you want any water or sweet tea from Cane’s?” They were back in a short time with water and tea. Mr. Cesar Franco, the caravan leader, spoke with the mother and she said, “Thank you so much. We need you!”

From Louisiana the caravan traveled to Beaumont, Texas. Seeing the signs and banners, a lady driving by said, “I’ve got eleven children. You all are right. They’re all a blessing!”

The kindness of the people there was remarkable. A gentleman arrived with water and pizza saying “What you’re doing out here is very difficult and so I wanted to get you all this.”

Winding Down in San Antonio

In San Antonio, the young volunteers campaigned against abortion right in front of the Alamo. Because of the heavy foot



In the streets of a busy intersection in Baton Rouge, these volunteers received deafening honks in support of the unborn children.

traffic, they were able to hand out more pro-life fliers.

A fireman came up, looked one of the TFP members in the eye and said emphatically, “I agree one hundred percent with what you are doing. We need people like you. Keep it up!”

After lunch, they went to another busy intersection with the “honk for the unborn” signs. The vast majority of those driving by were supportive. One man who was begging came by and said, “The babies have a right to live! Ever since abortion was legalized I’ve been disappointed.” Some politicians would benefit from the common sense of this poor beggar.

One woman yelled, “I love to kill babies!” But on the flip side of the coin, two ladies drove up and gave donations to support the campaign against abortion.

The weather was hot. The sun was ruthless. The travel was tiring and uncomfortable. But despite all the discomfort and hardship, every TFP volunteer was ready and willing to push forward and never abandon his resolve to continue fighting to the end—until abortion is made unthinkable and America is truly united as one nation under God. ■

Left and center: The most effective campaign is face-to-face engagement, which these volunteers do with clarity and charity. *Right:* The sacrifice of the volunteers was rewarded by the kind-hearted generosity of this man who brought pizza and water.





OUR *Lady* OF *Las Lajas* "GUADALUPE" IN STONE

© Diego Grandi | Dreamstime.com



BY THOMAS CAMPBELL

On the border between Colombia and Ecuador is a beautiful sanctuary, a wonder to its visitors. What draws thousands of pilgrims from far and wide to this remote mountainous region is the veneration, devotion or simple curiosity to see Our Lady of Las Lajas, an image miraculously and deeply imbedded in the rock on the side of the mountain.

In Spanish *las lajas* means “the rocks.” This miraculous image was imprinted on the rocks of a gorge above the Guaitara River in Colombia near the border with Ecuador. It has the singular characteristic of having been made by angels, for no other explanation will do. The image is situated inside a cave very high in the mountains, and was completely unknown until it was discovered in the mid-18th century by a local woman.

The mystery of the image’s origins remains unsolved. Did angels do it? Or did God Himself do it

as He contemplated the most excellent of all His creatures? The one whom He would make Queen of Heaven and Earth and to whose maternal care the future of His Church would be entrusted.

The Beauty of Las Lajas

The image represents Our Lady with the Child Jesus and also Saint Dominic of Guzman receiving a rosary from Our Lady and Saint Francis of Assisi receiving a cord from the Child Jesus. Scientific examination by German geologists found that these images were not painted with any paint, dye, or other pigment but that the colors were the colors of the rock itself, which penetrated into the rock up to several feet. These images, so amazingly beautiful and stable with no changes since their discovery in 1754 can only be the products of Divine Hands.



Behold, Your Queen

The arrangement of colors in the image gives a breathtaking sense of majesty. There is no doubt that one is standing in the presence of a Queen. The burgundy of her dress is a warm, rich red embroidered with a golden floral pattern, giving the impression of the garment of a Queen. Her long hair flows freely in such a way that it appears to be a royal mantle. The way in which the hair is arranged reinforces the notion of majesty. Her eyes sparkle with a pure and friendly glow.

The two crowns are very beautiful, rich and royal. They were added by the faithful later in thanksgiving for graces received.

Looking at Our Lady's face, one can observe how she watches from on high with a serious and probing gaze. She is not smiling. She has the royal look of a person who elicits respect from her loving subjects because of her quiet, yet confident, strength.

In addition to her majesty, the image found at



The crowns adorning the Infant King and His Heavenly Mother were added by locals as a token of their affection for their Monarchs.

Las Lajas expresses her gentle motherhood. Even though she is not looking at her Child directly, she has an enormous intimacy with Him. It is almost as though the two are one in love and intention. She extends this maternity to the sinner who kneels before her. She is also his Mother. She is extremely

kind and motherly. How good and safe the Child Jesus feels in her arms! What throne could be more worthy of Him? He is almost at play, with the liberty of a child.

It is curious to note the relationship between Mother and Son. Frequently their images present them gazing at each other, but not in Las Lajas. They are so accustomed to being together that they have no need to look at each other in order to sustain their mutual attention.

This image is a masterpiece reflecting both the majesty and the maternity of Our Lady.

The Divine Infant

By contrast, the Child Jesus is very amiable and is turned toward the suppliant. Thus, instead of having the classic picture of a serious Child and a smiling Mother, here we have the opposite. One could say that He is distributing the gifts while she appears as a Queen. He is merciful because He is seated in Our Lady's arm. He communicates to the person who prays a little of His happiness in being with her.

Upon further study, it appears that the Child is very small in comparison to His Mother. His face and attitude are those of an older boy, notwithstanding the small size. Is this a mistake or is it meant to express something? It appears that it expresses His wisdom at each stage of His life. He did not have the weaknesses or lack of reason of a normal child. His wisdom was perfect at every age of His life. So, this apparent incongruence actually communicates the theological truth that even when He was very small, Our Lord was already conscious of everything He did, as an older boy would be.

The Story Behind the Image

Back in the eighteenth century, María Mueses de Quiñones, a local woman from the village of Potosi, Colombia, often walked the six miles between her village and the neighbouring one of Ipiales. One day in 1754 as she was making the journey, she approached the place called Las Lajas (the Rocks), where the trail passes through a deep gorge of the Guaitara River. María never liked this part of the trail because there were rumors that a cave in Las Lajas was haunted. Such superstitions remained among the converted Christian Indians.

María was carrying her daughter Rosa, a deaf-mute, on her back. By the time she had climbed to Las Lajas she was weary and sat on a stone to rest.

The miraculous image of Our Lady of Las Lajas was found nestled in a gorge above the Guaitara River in Colombia near the border with Ecuador.

He is merciful because He is seated in Our Lady's arm. He communicates to the person who prays a little of His happiness in being with her.

The child got down from her back to play. The next thing María knew Rosa was at the cave shouting (remember, she was mute!): "Mommy, there is a woman in here with a boy in her arms!" María became very frightened. This was the first time she had ever heard her daughter speak! She didn't see the figures the girl was talking about, nor did she want to. She grabbed the child and ran on to Ipiales, fearful that the rumors of a haunted cave were true.

When she told people what happened nobody took her seriously at first. There was general bewilderment among María's friends and acquaintances in Potosi when she told them what had happened. Thirsting for the supernatural, the Indians listened to her, asked her many questions, and commented among themselves about the singular event, but



© Diego Grandi | Dreamstime.com



It was then that all saw stamped on the rock face a magnificent image of the Blessed Virgin Mary, holding her Infant Son, with Saints Dominic and Francis kneeling at their feet. The Virgin extended a Rosary to Saint Dominic and the Infant a Franciscan cord to Saint Francis.

Our Lady with the Child Jesus and also Saint Dominic of Guzman receiving a rosary from Our Lady and Saint Francis of Assisi receiving a cord from the Child Jesus. The scientific examination of these images by German geologists found that they were not painted with any paint, dye, or other pigment but that the colors were the colors of the rock itself, which penetrated into the rock up to several feet.

took no further action. However, as the news spread, some asked if maybe it was true. After all, the child was now able to speak.

A few days later Rosa, disappeared from home. After looking everywhere, the anguished María realized that her daughter must have gone to the cave. Ever since Rosa could speak, she often said that the woman was calling her back to the cave. María ran to Las Lajas to find her daughter. Approaching the cave, María saw Rosa kneeling in front of a splendid woman and playing affectionately with a child who had come down from His mother's arms to let the girl enjoy His divine tenderness.

Looking up at her mother with child-like simplicity, little Rosa said, "Mother, the *mestiza* called me." In Spanish, a *mestiza* woman is one who has half Spanish blood and half indigenous blood, as was already common in the colony of that time. Our Lady appeared as a *mestiza* woman, to indicate that she is truly mother of the Indians, mother of the Spaniards and mother of the children of both, who were then forming the Latin

American race.

María fell to her knees before this beautiful spectacle; she had seen the Blessed Virgin and Jesus. She was no longer afraid.

Back in her village, María kept quiet about the event. But frequently she and Rosa went to the cave to place wild flowers and candles in the cracks of the rocks. The months went by with María and Rosa keeping their secret. Shortly thereafter, Our Lady performed a spectacular miracle that prompted the news of the marvelous presence to spread throughout lands near the rocky banks of the Guaitara River.

Unexpectedly, Rosa sickened and died. Her grieving mother carried her body in her arms to the grotto in order to beg the Virgin for help. Reminding the Virgin of Rosa's solicitude in bringing her candles and flowers, she begged Our Lady to bring her back to life. In answer to her prayers, the Queen of Heaven and Earth performed the miracle of the child's resurrection. María told her employers in Ipiales about the extraordinary event.

Moved by the news, they went with priests, distinguished persons and many local people to the apparition's site.

It was then that all saw stamped on the rock face a magnificent image of the Blessed Virgin Mary, holding her Infant Son, with Saints Dominic and Francis kneeling at their feet. The Virgin extended a rosary to Saint Dominic and the Infant a Franciscan cord to Saint Francis.

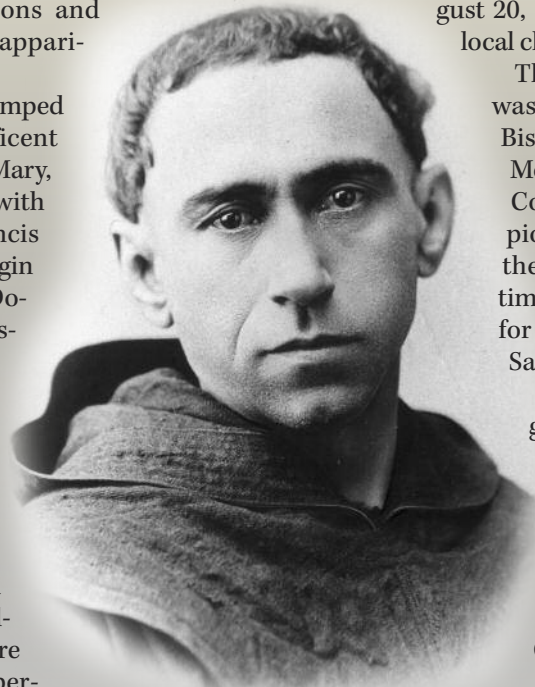
Discovered at Last!

That was when the marvelous picture of Our Lady on the wall of the grotto was discovered. María Muese de Quinones could not recall noticing it until then. Her delicate and regal features are those of a Latin American, perhaps a Native American. Her abundant black hair covers her like a mantle. She looks about fourteen years old. The natives had no doubt: this was their Queen. The image of Our Lady in Las Lajas looks closely identical to the image of Our Lady of Guadalupe, given to Juan Diego several hundred years before.

The image of Our Lady of Las Lajas, as that of Our Lady of Guadalupe, has spanned the centuries without losing its brilliance. In the case of Las Lajas, the Divine Painter used a fade-proof method. After German geologists bored core samples from several spots in the image, they determined there was no paint, no dye, or any other pigment on the surface of the rock; the colors are the colors of the rock itself, and they penetrate into the rock evenly for several feet!

As devotion to the image grew, a good road replaced the old trail. In the early to mid-twentieth century a tasteful Gothic church was built over the cave. The church is of Gothic revival architecture

Dedicated as a minor basilica in 1954, the church erected to house the image of Our Lady of Las Lajas is of Gothic revival architecture and was built from 1916 to 1949.



Saint Ezekiel Moreno Díaz, OAR, was a member of the Order of Augustinian Recollects; he was born on April 9, 1848 in Alfaro, La Rioja, Spain and later served as a missionary to the Philippines.

and was built from January 1, 1916 to August 20, 1949, with donations from local churchgoers.

This breathtaking structure was designed by the pious Bishop of Pasto, Saint Ezekiel Moreno Dias. A great saint of Colombia, he was the champion of the struggle against the liberal heresies of the time, and was also responsible for spreading devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

In 1952, Pope Pius XII granted a canonical crowning of Our Lady of Las Lajas, and in 1954, the Gothic church erected to house the image was dedicated as a minor basilica, with the presence of the entire Colombian Episcopate.

The Greatest Marian Artist of All Time

In the course of the two thousand years in which the Church has spread throughout the world, artists have frequently created images of Our Lady according to the type of women of their time and region. This has happened in paintings, sculpture, stained-glass windows, and other forms. The most ancient statues of her attest to this fact. In the remote days of the Church, statues of Mary Most Holy depicted her with a Mediterranean appearance. As the Faith spread among the Nordic people, blond and blue-eyed representations of Our Lady appeared.



© Markpittimages | Dreamstime.com



© Rafal Cichawa | Dreamstime.com

Above: The main nave of the church with the miraculous engraving at the back. The church rests on the side of the mountain as can be seen.
Right: Mosaic showing Our Lady of Las Lajas being venerated by locals over the arched right side entrance to the Basilica.

The modeling of images according to the regional feminine physical aspect is agreeable to Our Lady. This is proved by the fact when she impresses her image on some object in order to perpetuate the memory of an apparition or when she appears to a seer who then later describes her to an artist who will interpret the seer's description into a painting or sculpture.

In Mexico, for example, Our Lady of Guadalupe stamped her image with Mexican characteristics on Juan Diego's tilma (the cloak worn by Mexicans), where she can be seen standing on the moon and obscuring the sun that is behind her. The Aztecs worshiped the sun and the moon as gods, and the sight of this powerful lady overcoming their gods was the catalyst in the Mexicans' conversion. In Colombia, God performed the prodigy of printing

[...] a Queen who displays in her gaze a kindness so exalted that she moves us to trust her entirely.

Our Lady of Las Lajas on a rock.

She directs her eyes toward the Latin American people, heeding their supplications, orienting and commanding them. Meanwhile, the Child Jesus enters the intimacy of those who arrive at the Queen's feet—a Queen who displays in her gaze a kindness so exalted that she moves one to trust her entirely.

Today, an enormous quantity of mementos and tokens of thanksgiving attest to the devotion and gratitude of the Colombian people since the time of the apparition.

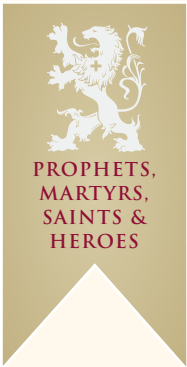
Could it be mere coincidence that in the thirteenth century, Our Lord came to Saint Dominic and Saint Francis and asked them to save His Church from deterioration caused by the unfaithfulness and secularization of many of the clergy and people. Now, through the images on the rock in a cave in Las Lajas, God is asking each of us to restore the health and vigor of His Church, promising the unfailing supernatural help from Himself through the Blessed Mother. ■



One of the many walls at Las Lajas covered with plaques with expressions of gratitude or petitions from devotees from around the world.

WHO WAS THE REAL *Santa Claus?*

BY THOMAS RYDER



So long accustomed to hearing the name “Santa Claus,” how many know its original form was Saint Nicholas and referred to a revered bishop of the Catholic Church? The true story of Santa Claus begins with a young orphan boy named Nicholas, who was born during the third century in the village of Patara. At the time, the area was Greek but is now on the south-

ern coast of Turkey. His wealthy parents, who raised him to be a devout Christian, died in an epidemic while Nicholas was still young. Obeying Jesus’ words to “sell what you own and give the money to the poor” Nicholas used his whole inheritance to assist the needy, the sick and the suffering. He dedicated his life to serving God and was made Bishop of Myra while still a young man. Bishop Nicholas became known throughout the land for his generosity to those in need, his love for children and his concern for sailors.

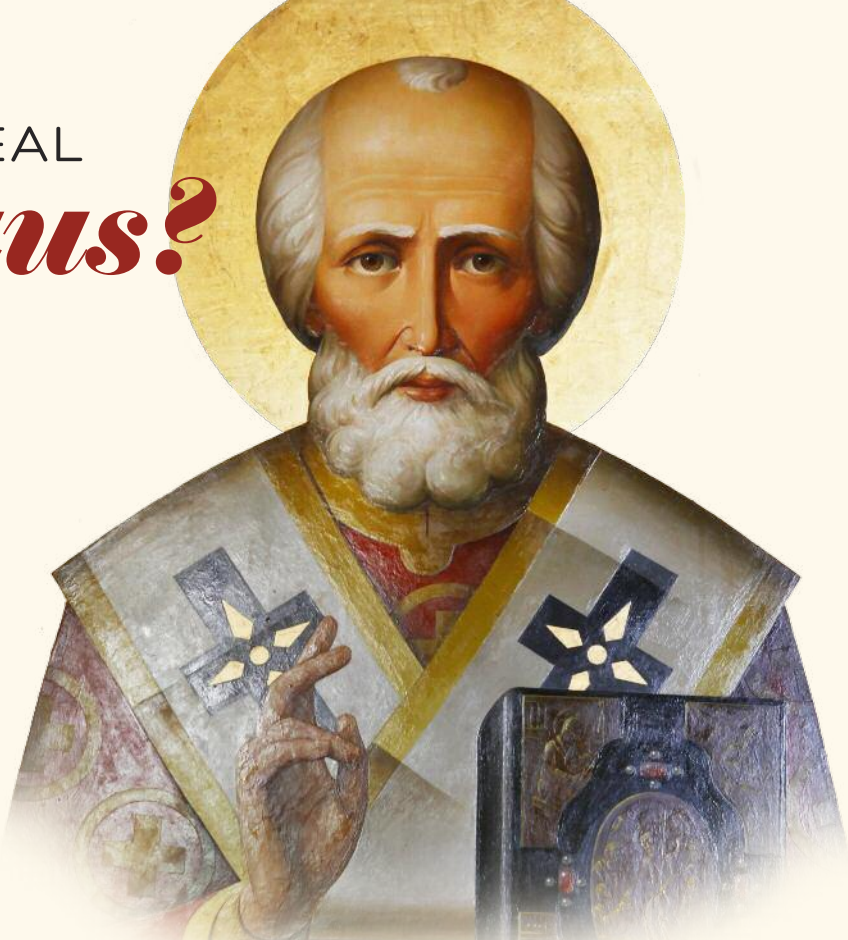
Under the Roman Emperor Diocletian, who ruthlessly persecuted Christians, Bishop Nicholas suffered for his faith. He was exiled and imprisoned. After his release, Nicholas attended the Council of Nicaea in 325. While there, he condemned Arianism. Saint Methodius asserts that thanks to the teaching of Bishop Nicholas, Myra alone was untouched by the Arian heresy, which denied the divinity of Christ.

Fighting against paganism with the same vigor as he opposed Arianism, Saint Nicholas was tireless and often took strong measures to eradicate paganism from his domain. Among the temples he destroyed was that of Artemis, the principal in the district. The evil spirits fled howling before him.

He was also the guardian of his people in temporal affairs. The governor Eustathius had taken a bribe to condemn three innocent men to death. At the time fixed for their execution, Nicholas came to the place, stayed the hands of the executioner, and released the prisoners. Then he turned to Eustathius and convinced him to admit his crime and express his penitence.

In France three small children wandered away while playing and became lost. An evil man, who was a butcher by trade, lured, captured and killed them. Saint Nicholas appeared and appealed to God to restore them to life. Happily, the children then returned to their families. This is just one of many stories of Saint Nicholas that shows why he is regarded as the patron and protector of children.

Several stories also tell of Nicholas and the sea. When



he was young, Nicholas endeavored to grow in holiness by making a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. As he walked where his Savior had walked, he sought to more deeply experience Jesus’ life, Passion, and Resurrection. Returning by sea, a mighty storm threatened to wreck the ship. Nicholas calmly prayed. The terrified sailors were amazed when the wind and waves suddenly calmed, sparing them all. For this reason, Saint Nicholas is the patron of sailors and voyagers.

Within a century of his death he was celebrated as a saint and his tomb in Myra became a popular place of pilgrimage. Because of the many wars and attacks in the region, some Christians were concerned that access to the tomb might become difficult. For both the religious and commercial advantages of a major pilgrimage site, the Italian cities of Venice and Bari vied to obtain Saint Nicholas’ relics. In the spring of 1087, sailors from Bari succeeded in spirited away the bones, bringing them to rest in a seaport on the southeast coast of Italy. The translation of the relics did not interrupt a phenomenon, referred to as the “manna of Saint Nicholas,” which is said to flow from his relics to this day. According to legend, the bones of Saint Nicholas secrete a sweet liquid, called manna, that has healing powers. It is one of the great attractions that draws pilgrims to his tomb from all parts of Europe.

An impressive church was built over Saint Nicholas’ crypt. To this day many faithful journey to honor the saint who had rescued children, sailors and the unjustly accused through his generosity and the countless miracles attributed to his intercession. The Nicholas shrine in Bari was one of medieval Europe’s great pilgrimage centers and Nicholas became known as the “Saint in Bari.” To this day pilgrims and tourists visit Bari’s great Basilica di San Nicola. ■



AMERICA NEEDS FATIMA[®]

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2018

PROGRESS REPORT

Rosary of Reparation vs. Satanic Sideshow

BY RACHEL SLOBODNIK

Day 1: Rosary of Reparation in Little Rock, Arkansas

On August 15th, the feast day of Our Lady's Assumption, nearly 300 Catholics gathered in front of the Arkansas State Capitol to take a stand against the devil and his nefarious works. This large-scale effort was made possible on extremely short notice due to the generous financial support and prayers received from friends of America Needs Fatima.

Participants were armed with rosaries and holy water, surrounded with signs, banners and bagpipes, and with the statue of Our Lady of Fatima. In contrast to the beautiful statue of the Queen of Heaven, the Satanic Temple would be parading a 9-foot-tall statue of the demon Baphomet, with a young boy and girl at his side staring up at him, beguiled



Hundreds of Catholics rallied at the state capitol in Little Rock, Arkansas to protest the Satanic Temple's attempts at erecting a statue of Baphomet next to a monument of the Ten Commandments.

and fascinated.

Those assembled to offer reparation ranged in age from infant to elderly. Many were local, but others traveled from surrounding states, knowing that what affects one affects us all, and that silence will only allow for the spread of more evil. Buses carrying over eighty people traveled seven hours from Topeka, Kansas.

As soon as their signs came out, asking those driving by to "honk against Satan," the participants received many honks of support. Overall, they received a very positive response, other than a few unpleasant passersby and one loud "Hail Satan" from a driver.

After the rally, José Walter Ferraz, along with a family from Arkansas, delivered 25,000 online petitions in support of the



Armed with rosaries and bold signs, young and old alike voiced a firm "no!" to the latest maneuver of the satanic offensive, which seeks ultimately to normalize satanism in America.



Ten Commandments monument to Governor Asa Hutchinson.

Day 2: The Satanic Temple and its Scandalous Statue

Satanists brazenly paraded their 9-foot-tall, one-ton demon Baphomet statue to the Arkansas State Capitol grounds and unveiled it near the famous Ten Commandments monument. They demanded a court-ordered placement of the statue right next to the monument. The Satanic Temple claims its event was about “religious freedom.” In fact, they even called it “The Satanic Temple’s Rally for the First Amendment.” Many of the signs made their intent difficult to ascertain. Some examples were “Support Religious Pluralism” and “Religious Liberty for All.”

Satanism is not a religion. Satanists worship no god, only hating God and His creation. In the days leading up to August 16th, the Satanic Temple led a type of sinister, multi-state caravan with its Baphomet statue in tow, trying to get Americans accustomed to the devil. Whether the average American realizes it or not, that is what is at stake here: our Christian identity as a nation.

The media were there in full force to cover the event. Had it not been held in mid-August, the gathering might have been mistaken for a Halloween gala due to the dark and goth-like costumes worn by participants. The only flash of color was provided by a large rainbow umbrella (not a cloud in the sky) and a bright red Baphomet mask worn by one young man.

According to a press report, the statue was purposely designed to “have a functional purpose as a chair where people of all ages may sit on the lap of Satan for inspiration and contemplation.” (NewYorkCBSlocal.com, 1/6/2014)



José Walter Ferraz delivers over 25,000 signatures to Governor Asa Hutchinson.



The Satanic Temple’s sinister nine-foot statue of Baphomet depicts a young boy and girl standing at his side. It was designed to allow children to climb up and sit on his lap.

Sister Lucia of Fatima said about the July 13, 1917 vision of Hell that were it not for Our Lady’s promise they would go to Heaven someday, the children would have died of fright from witnessing the reality of Hell. Similarly, if it were not for our confident trust in Our Lady’s promise of triumph at Fatima we too could die of fright at the prospect of a culture where people sit on the lap of Satan for “inspiration and contemplation.”

May Our Lady of Fatima and Saint Michael the Archangel defend us in battle. ■



Satanists held their own rally at the capitol the next day. Under the pretext of “religious freedom”, they demanded the right to erect their own statue right next to the Ten Commandments. The contrast between the dignified, prayerful Catholic rally the day before and the vulgarity and agitation of the satanists was evident.



Our Readers Write



"Praying the rosary changed my life"

Dear Robert,

I felt compelled to email you and share my story of how praying the rosary changed my life.

I was born a cradle Catholic, but fell away from my Catholic faith when I married a Protestant man in my twenties. With a turbulent marriage and the loss of my dear mother, I gradually left my faith.

Through the years, I attended churches of different denominations (off and on) and eventually I became a member of a Wesleyan Anglican Church. I was happy there, but over time I felt something was missing. My feelings confused me and I couldn't understand my discord. Honestly, I felt like I was lost in the desert and I couldn't quench my thirst.

At this time, I could barely pray, because I couldn't verbalize my feelings, since I didn't understand them myself. I was in this dark night for several months. Then, one day, I heard a small still voice tell me to pray the rosary. It threw me for a loop, and I thought I was imagining things and went about my business. Another few days went by and low and behold I heard the same voice (a little more insistent) "Pray the Rosary." This time, I finally listened.

I didn't have a rosary, but I purchased one online. The day it arrived, I walked upstairs to my bedroom and began to pray the rosary for the first time in many years. What happened next was a miracle. It transformed me. I felt so much love and peace that it radiated throughout my entire body and I was consumed in it. If I could, I would have stayed there in that serenity forever.

I am a testament of how powerful the rosary is and how much our dear Mother Mary loves all her children. This experience happened to me in April of 2014 and I'm happy to say that after 28 years, I was

called back to my Catholic faith. Not only that, but my husband converted 5 months later. I'm so blessed and thankful that I was called and came back home.

I am a huge advocate of the rosary. I do not go anywhere without one. Padre Pio said that the Rosary is a powerful weapon, and indeed it is.

Thank you, Robert for all the good work you do. May God and our lovely Mother bless you abundantly.

G. M., via e-mail

Fatima Centennial Rosary

I received my three rosaries from you yesterday; they are just the right size for me. But people see them and ask: "where did you get that rosary?" Well, there goes another one!

Now I just hope they will pray the rosary also. I've had to re-order another for myself.

Thanks again for the rosaries.

D. S., Bismarck, N. D.



Thank you so much for the rosary. I love it and will pray it a lot. I am not a Catholic but I had a rosary a long time ago, which came up missing, so I thank you for this one. God bless you all. I pray for your Lady to help you.

E. J. H., Independence, Mo.

Praise for ANF Custodian

"Some months back, I was invited for the first time to pray at the house of a lady from my parish with the visiting statue of Our Lady of Fatima. There were 33 people there. What a joyful and blessed

experience. Rex Teodosio brought the statue down from Chicago, and what a beautiful, lifelike statue of Our Lady it was! It was neat to see what my monthly support of this program looks like! Rex has been doing this for many years. He did an excellent job with the program and presentation. How good to pray with



others who love Our Lady like I do. I am hoping that those same people will join me at the October Rosary Rally which I will be leading.

I enjoy reading your *Crusade Magazine*. I especially enjoyed seeing what you look like, Robert Ritchie, and reading the interview you did in the magazine giving the history and facts surrounding the starting of the Public Square Rosary Rallies. I know that you and your staff are very dedicated in loving Our Lady through promoting and sacrificing for the message of Our Lady at Fatima. Thanks for helping me come closer to Our Lady through all the prayers and sacrifices that you all do for your members and supporters.

I am still taking baby steps in all of this, but I am being converted back to our loving Father and Jesus through Mary, by the power of God's Holy Spirit and through God's holy and eternal hand in my life. This wouldn't be happening if very unexpectedly, you and your organization hadn't sent me that first letter many years ago."

W. K., Madison, Wis.



Have something you'd like to share? Send us your feedback by writing to crusade@TFP.org



A Not *Uncommon* Victory

BY JACK BURNHAM

The most successful anti-blasphemy protest we've held so far in 2018 was against the powerhouse online streamer of homegrown videos—YouTube.com. As the image on the right indicates, they were allowing one of their channels called "HostDesecrator" to post three videos of the HostDesecrator brutally who desecrates what he claimed were actual consecrated communion hosts.

ANF's protest focused on what we considered to be the most malicious and offensive video. This blasphemous video showed a host being held in a needle-nose plier while an off-screen person lights a butane torch and thoroughly burns the sacred host beyond recognition.

Continually praying for Our Lady's assistance, ANF and our supporters and friends gathered 57,177 protest signatures. To heighten public awareness, we sponsored five web advertisements on Catholic websites and five display ads within the newsletters of those sites. We also ran a very large email campaign of our own, asking our recipients to sign the petition as well. Finally, we boosted Facebook Ads across the Catholic world.

After just one month, one of the three Host Desecration videos was taken down. In Germany, where a TFP sister organization sent out our protest petition to its contacts, two of the three videos were off YouTube.com in Germany only three weeks into our petition protest.

Protests Work and God Hears Our Prayers

People ask why America Needs Fatima protests blasphemies. They worry that we are just "bringing more attention to them." Yes, we bring bad publicity to these things. However, ask any business person if they want people protesting their business

for any reason; the answer will be a resounding "No."

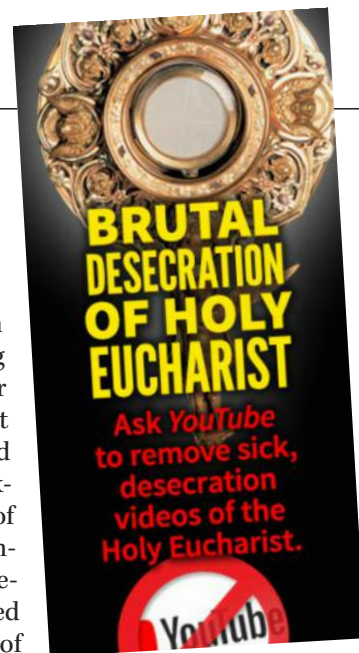
The American TFP and its America Needs Fatima campaign have had the honor of protesting public blasphemy since 1978. Our first campaign was against Planned Parenthood. They had printed a brochure with an extremely disrespectful depiction of Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception on its back cover. To defend Our Lady's honor we gathered almost 2,000 people in a rally of reparation in front of Planned Parenthood's headquarters in downtown New York City. Planned Parenthood, in a rare gesture, issued a written apology before the protest was over. That was the first effort.

Why Blasphemy?

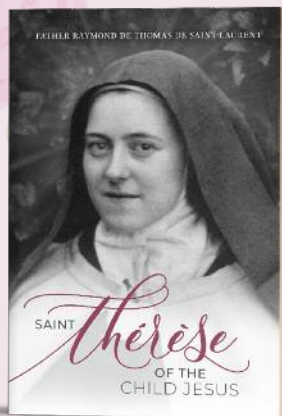
The principle motivations of sin are power, profit, prestige, pleasure, and security. Blasphemy offers the sinner none of these. So, this sin is performed out of pure hatred for God. Such hatred of God makes blasphemy an especially grave sin. This hatred is also why it must be denounced and fought.

Unfortunately, blasphemy is now part of the mainstream. And this mainstreaming is extremely damaging to Catholics, causing an accelerated loss of faith and tepid indifference to the love of God and our holy Catholic Faith.

Nothing is more rewarding to a Catholic than upholding God's rights, His glory, and His honor. Protesting blasphemy in today's relativistic society carries out the healthy function of reviving the notion of good and evil. It makes people think, helps them decide for God, and deters them from sin. That's why no one will ever stop America Needs Fatima from exposing these blasphemies and fighting them with Our Lady's help. ■



Over 180,000 Copies of *Saint Thérèse of the Child Jesus* Distributed



Thanks to the generous prayers and donations of friends across the country, ANF was able to launch a huge campaign to get this precious spiritual gem into the hands of many needy Catholics.

Knowing the confusion and doubt that is rampant even among today's faithful, Robert Ritchie rushed to print this powerful book about the most beloved saint of our times, Saint Thérèse of Lisieux. Over the summer of

2018, *Saint Thérèse of the Child Jesus* made its way into nearly 200,000 homes, helping countless Americans deepen their love for Our Lord Jesus Christ and His Holy Catholic Church. ■

CALL (888) 317-5571 to order your copy and our friendly support staff will be happy to assist you!

Christmas CAMPAIGN



As Christmas approaches we Christians find ourselves up against a PC wall. Can we even say “Merry Christmas” without fear of offending someone? Below, America Needs Fatima is giving you ten ways to keep Christ in Christmas. This year, make 2018 the best Christmas ever by proudly showing everyone around you the true reason for this beautiful season.

1. Never say “Happy Holidays:”

Avoid “X-Mas” also. Wherever you go, wish others “Merry Christmas!” at the supermarket, on the phone, in emails. You’ll be surprised. Many will appreciate your conviction.

2. Decorate your lawn and home:

Hang beautiful Christmas ornaments from your doors and windows. Pick up some large poster board and markers at the bookstore and make signs that read, for example, “Just Say Merry Christmas!” Write with big clear letters. Tape one sign to your window facing out for everyone to see. Place another on your door. Encourage your friends to do the same.

3. Send Christmas cards:

Send Christmas cards with a religious message to your friends. Mention that you will pray for them. You can also send a card to your town mayor or elected representative. Also, look for an opportunity to write a letter to the editor of your local newspaper about Christmas. Letters receive avid and wide readership.

4. Share a Christmas meditation:

You can find several beautiful meditations on our website at www.ANF.org and click on Resources/Articles/Liturgical Seasons/Advent.

5. Organize a public square nativity scene:

Set up a nativity scene in your town square or in a visible public place. Invite your friends to help. Be creative. Sing traditional Christmas carols like *Silent Night*. Pray the Joyful mysteries of the

rosary as a group. Meet for refreshments afterwards. Talk about the meaning of Christmas. Keep it simple.

6. Plan a Eucharistic adoration:

Find an adoration chapel near you, ask your friends to join you for a holy hour before Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament in honor of Christmas. You can even advertise the event in your church bulletin a few weeks in advance. After your holy hour, go out for dinner, or get a good cup of coffee or hot cider and have a discussion about the significance of Christmas.

7. Visit the sick:

Those suffering in hospitals and nursing homes faintly remember the joy of Christmas. Illness, pain and loneliness overwhelm them. It is a work of mercy to visit the sick. You can bring them Christmas cheer. Your local nursing home likely welcomes visitors. Take something to give away, for example, Miraculous Medals. Everyone likes them. To order Miraculous Medals, call (888) 317-5571.

8. Prepare yourself:

Advent prepares us to celebrate the birth of Our Lord worthily. We should erect a throne in our souls to receive the King of Kings. For that reason, it is an excellent time to make a good confession before Christmas and make sacrifices. For example, give up watching TV or surfing the Internet.

9. Write Christmas cards to our troops:

Thank them for their sacrifice and service. Show them your support. Wish

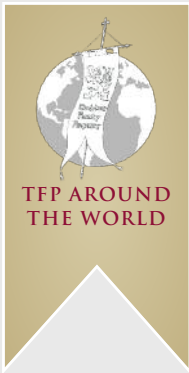
the troops a blessed Christmas and tell them you will remember them in your prayers or thoughts during Midnight Mass. Remind them people back home appreciate the military.

10. Don’t let secularists purge Christmas from the public square:

Christmas is vehemently opposed by secularist groups such as the ACLU, Freedom From Religion, and Americans United for Separation of Church and State. If these pressure groups had their way, nativity scenes, Christian Christmas carols, and religious symbols would be swept from the public square.

Matt Staver, founder and chairman of Liberty Counsel, explains:

“In contrast to a publicly sponsored nativity scene on public property, a privately sponsored nativity scene on public property does not need a secular symbol to be constitutional. For example, some towns allow private citizens to put up signs or displays on public property. In that case, if a church sponsors a nativity scene on public property, there is no requirement that a secular symbol be placed within the context. The requirement of the secular symbol only arises when a nativity scene is sponsored by the government. To avoid any confusion, the privately sponsored nativity scene should probably have a sign acknowledging the private sponsorship.” ■



Reports from Across the Atlantic: European Crusade for the Family

BY BENTLEY HATCHETT

Today, the LGBT lobby has a major presence in essentially every city in the West. One has the reputation for being in the vanguard of the homosexual movement. That is, of course, Amsterdam. It could even be considered a sort of Mecca for the sexual revolution. Indeed, people travel from far and wide to visit it because of its moral permissiveness on sexuality and drugs.

What better place for TFP Student Action's European Crusade for the Family to conclude its inaugural caravan? Unbeknownst to the organizers of the campaign, however, the day they arrived was the same day that an LGBT march would kick off an international Pride Week.

Arriving early, TFP Student Action-Europe was able to set up its campaign in front of the historic Central Station long before the crowds arrived. Naturally, this venue provided the volunteers with a high volume of foot traffic to distribute their leaflets. In the words

of one Brazilian man who passed by, "I can't believe that they [the TFP] are here too. . ."

Despite the large number of people traveling for Pride Week, the Student Action-Europe members reported that the overwhelming response was positive. At first, this may seem curious, but as one of the Dutch organizers of the campaigns explained, the people of the Netherlands are so exasperated by the constant bombardment of LGBT propaganda that anything contradictory is seen as a breath of fresh air.

This trend is apparently not limited to Holland, as the reaction of a group of British tourists demonstrates, "Just the other day there was a demonstration of homosexuals and even pedos [pedophiles] in London. They were doing absolutely disgusting stuff in public. I'm glad to see somebody's taking the [wind] out of them."

In one notable instance, a young man



A young volunteer takes time to explain the pro-family position to a curious passerby in Amsterdam.

who had previously been debating with one of the members and who appeared to be under the influence of drugs assaulted one of the campaigners and stole his cape. As he attempted to flee with the symbol, he was chased down by several members of the public and some of the TFP volunteers. After running for about three city blocks, they were able to stop him and retrieve the stolen property.

Having exhausted their supply of literature, the action concluded around 1:30 p.m. with some 5,000 leaflets distributed.

Commenting on the event, Mr. Hugo

TFP Student Action—Europe Statement of Purpose

TFP Student Action-Europe is launched. It aims to affirm, disseminate and defend Catholic principles not only from student to student, but from students to families and society.

We embrace the dogmas of the Holy Catholic Church in their fullness

A panoramic view of what is happening on the European continent gives us the inescapable conviction that it is no longer possible to live in the regime of separation between religious conscience and civic conscience as if the latter should not be inspired by the former; between academic conscience and religious conscience; between a professor's conscience and that of a faithful Catholic; between the conscience of those that govern and that of those who ought to be self-ruled, as if social life were

not affected by abandoning the immortal principles that have oriented humanity so far.

Unfortunately, Europe took the path towards evil ever since an exaggerated separation between Church and State turned into a dangerous prejudice against Catholicism.

For decades, the ill-fated prejudice that a good citizen is one educated in destructive secularism, who defends it in public life, has caused Catholicism to be removed from the consciences of citizens and rulers.

This is the cause of the almost complete dissolution of moral values and customs, and the loss of Christian identity, paving the way for all forms of violations of the natural and Divine law such as the legalization of abortion, euthanasia and homosexual relations, as well as the spread of gender ideology even to primary schools.

Facing today's catastrophic, de-natured and threatening panorama, our Catholic consciences rise up in face of the disgraceful cowardice and disillusionment in all sectors of social

Bos, head of Civitas Christiana and one of the principal organizers of the demonstration, said that the campaign in Amsterdam proves that the strength of the sexual revolution's dominance over public opinion is largely a myth. In the future, he hopes to have more such actions in Holland and looks forward to others following suit.

Elsewhere in Europe...

Continuing its German tour in defense of the family, the TFP Student Action-Europe caravan visited four more cities.

The first of these was Dusseldorf, an area known for its wealthy populace and shopping centers. Despite braving the hottest day of the caravan so far, the nearly thirty volunteers gladly stayed in the sun for hours distributing their fliers and shouting slogans. This joyful suffering in the service of Christ the King no doubt obtained special graces for them. The public—both locals and tourists—turned out to be quite engaged, both in favor and against.

After completing the action in Dusseldorf, the next campaign took place in Kevelaer. This one however, was unique in that it was not a mere physical campaign, but a spiritual one. In front of the miraculous image of Our Lady Comforter of the Afflicted, one of the most popular patronesses of both German and Dutch Catholics, the volunteers prayed not just for personal

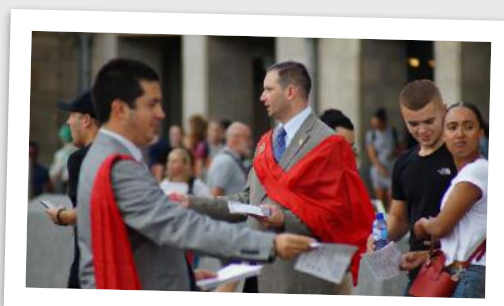
graces, but also for an end to the moral sickness that today afflicts the West.

The next day, the caravan stopped in Duisburg, a city known for its industrial and seafaring history. When they arrived, they were shocked as rainbow flags were draped all around the streets. Evidently, this was due to one of a series of European-wide LGBT festivals taking place there the following day.

Rather than being discouraged by this, the TFP members actually managed to use it to their advantage, as could be seen in some of their exchanges with the public. In the words of one of the younger volunteers, "One man asked me what business I had in talking about this issue [gender theory] in Germany as a non-German. My answer was simple; if

the LGBT movement is international, then the pro-family movement should also be international."

Later that afternoon, the caravan took to the streets of Dortmund's commercial district. Fortunately for the TFP volunteers, the area was totally filled with people, allowing them to distribute hundreds of fliers in a short period of time. Overall, the campaigns were received very well. Aside from a few individuals who expressed their displeasure by ripping up the leaflets and throwing them on the ground, the TFP members observed almost no real negative reactions. ■



Above: Even in ultra-liberal Amsterdam, TFP volunteers were surprised to find the public responsive. Volunteers distributed over 5,000 fliers on the first day alone.



Right: TFP volunteers assemble in front of the famous cathedral of Cologne, Germany to begin a full day of campaigning in defense of the family. The large banner is written in German, English and Dutch.

life. Therefore, supported on the centuries-old authority of the Holy Catholic Church, TFP Student Action-Europe declares that it embraces all Her dogmas in their fullness, without any restriction; and that it will never tread any path other than the Catholic Faith.

Our Goal: Defend the Christian Order

TFP Student Action-Europe demonstrates with consistent and unequivocal actions that the institutions of tradition, family and property are the backbone of every society seeking to grow toward a Christian order in a Christian state. Therefore, wherever it finds misconceptions or distorted truths, TFP Student Action-Europe will strongly defend truth and fight error.

We have in mind especially those youths whose indifference we will strive to overcome. We also combat those who call themselves Catholics but who peacefully coexist with today's neo-pagan and anti-Christian spirit. We have neither pessimism nor fear of sacrifice, evil trends that beset many

good Catholic-educated young men.

We will fight for good ideas against bad ones. We are not fighting people, but ideas.

Conclusion

We are not alone. We hold fast to the perennial principles that guide our spiritual formation. We stand with religion, against which men's errors and pride have never prevailed. We therefore stand for the highest interests of the Catholic cause and of Christian Civilization.

We make our own the words of Prof. Plinio Corrêa de Oliveira—founder of the Brazilian Society for the Defense of Tradition, Family and Property and inspirer of twenty-eight TFPs and sister associations on five continents:

"In times of great crisis there are two types of men: those who are overwhelmed by the crisis and those who rise up to resist the trend of events and so change the course of history." ■

THE LEGEND OF THE *Christmas Tree*

BY ANDREA PHILLIPS

What Christmas would be complete without the glittering fir, filling the house with color and warmth?

But whence the custom of the Christmas Tree? The pine fir certainly wasn't present in Oriental Bethlehem, when Jesus was born. Rather, palm trees grow in the East, and are often depicted around the Crèche.

So, why don't we decorate a palm tree, rather than a fir tree? Is the custom even Christian, we may ask?

Indeed, that Christmas tree standing in our living room has an ancient, wonderful history. And though the custom began pagan, it was "baptized" and adopted by the wisdom of a great saint.

Saint Boniface was an Englishman who lived in the eighth century and who felt called to evangelize the German nation.

One of the pagan German gods was a great oak tree called "Thunder Oak" in honor of the god Thor. Every winter, the locals offered a sacrifice to Thor, usually a child, under the mighty oak.

One year, fired by holy anger, Boniface decided to do away with the barbaric custom and bravely showed up with an ax just in time to prevent the killing. Before the astounded revelers, he proceeded to hack away at the massive trunk.

Legend has it that a miraculous gust of wind pushed down the tree at the first blows. Impressed that the "god" did not strike down the daring priest, the pagans accepted Christianity.

As the giant oak collapsed, standing there was a small fir tree that, somehow, escaped destruction.

Pointing to it, the holy man said:

"This little tree, a young child of the forest, shall be your holy tree tonight. It is the wood of peace... It is the sign of an endless life, for its leaves are ever green. See how it points upward to heaven. Let this be called the tree of the Christ-child; gather about it, not in the wild wood, but in your own homes; there it will shelter no deeds of blood, but loving gifts and rites of kindness."

Thus using strength and tact, Saint Boniface did away with an idol.

So as you gather around the Christmas Tree this year, share its holy origins with your children, so they may not only love its lights and colors, but also the rich Catholic heritage that is theirs. ■

