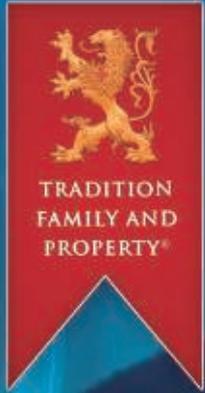


CRUSADE[®]

March / April 2022

MAGAZINE

A man wearing VR goggles is shown in a futuristic digital environment. The background is filled with glowing blue data, charts, and a wireframe globe. The man's hand is visible in the foreground, reaching towards the digital elements.

THE METAVERSE: WHAT IS IT?

WILL IT CREATE A VIRTUAL HELL ON EARTH?

PERFECT CONTRITION

The Golden Key to Paradise

If in an emergency, being aware that our soul is not ready to meet its Creator and that we cannot get to a priest for confession, should we then despair of salvation?

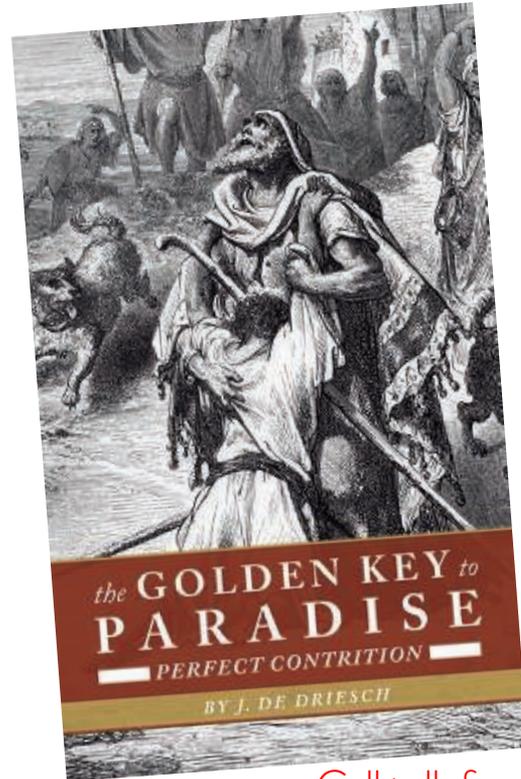
Not if we make an act of perfect contrition! That is, in the depths of our hearts, to confess our sorrow for all our sins for one reason alone; that they offended our Father, and helped crucify His Son, Jesus.

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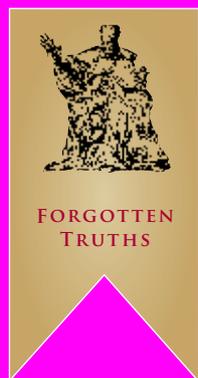
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A Grave Warning to Bishops

BY SAINT BERNARD OF CLAIRVAUX



God has raised you to a condition of dignity so that you might serve the Church in proportion to your high estate. If you should defraud Him of what He hopes of you, He is powerful to cast down the mighty from their seats. If you have not responded according to the obligations of your position, He will expel you from the heights of where He has placed you.

What misfortunes are now desolating the Church of Christ! Although they horrify us more

because we see them from a closer vantage point, they undoubtedly have not failed to reach your ears and shock you.

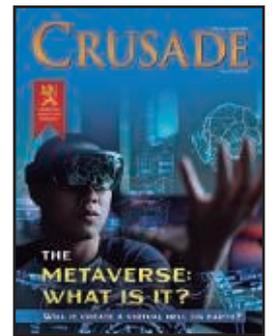
Sometimes in ambush and sometimes making open, flagrant and brazen assaults, the bloody wolf roams every day around the sheep that Christ has won with His Blood. You know very well that this state of affairs does not date from yesterday nor the day before; you know that ever since the beast began to grow, from the time the whelp's teeth began to appear, not a day has gone by without the flock of the Lord being surrounded with snares. From then on, as I must, I have done nothing but sound the alarm and cry out, stirring up the dogs and the shepherds against him.

What your obligation is, and how you must fulfill it, it behooves you to see. It is not for me to give lessons to those who know more than I. ■

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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

Diver Finds 900-Year-Old Crusader Sword

On October 9, 2021, Shlomi Katzin was enjoying a routine scuba dive exploring the Mediterranean waters off the northern Israeli coast when he made an unexpected discovery: a shell-encrusted four-foot sword lying on the seabed, having just been revealed by the shifting of the sand. Archaeologists would later determine that it was about nine hundred years old and most likely belonged to a Crusader knight who participated in the Third Crusade to free

the Holy Land from Muslim rule. The sword, which is made of iron, was preserved in perfect condition by the warm waters and sand of the Mediterranean Sea.



Catholic Indians Expel Feminists from Cathedral

In Bolivia, a group of pro-abortion feminists vandalized the façade of the Cathedral of Santa Cruz de la Sierra while Sunday Mass was being celebrated by the



local Archbishop. As they began to enter the cathedral, a group of Catholic Guarayo Indian women, armed with “chicotes” or handmade artisan whips, proceeded to thrash the feminists and expel them from the cathedral. “We were attending Mass and since no one reacted we ran outside and used our whips to defend the church from the bad things that were happening,” one of the women told local media. The Guarayo Indians of Bolivia were evangelized by Franciscan missionaries in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and to this day, continue to proudly affirm their Catholic identity.

Push for Far-Left Policies Results in Defeat for Democratic Party in Virginia

Having not lost a statewide election since 2009, the stunning election of Republican Glenn Youngkin as the next governor of Virginia in November 2021 was a huge upset for the Democratic Party. Political analysts and commentators have correctly blamed the conservative

shift to Glenn Youngkin's focus on culture and education issues during the Glenn campaign, which resonated with a growing number of Virginians who had become disillusioned with the Democrats' push for far-left policies such as unrestricted abortion, sex education, gender theory and the teaching of critical race theory in schools. According to an article by *Return to Order* author John Horvat II, the November elections were proof that the Culture War is far from over. Cultural issues continue to matter to many Americans.

Study Shows Homeschooled Children More Likely to Thrive as Adults

A recent study conducted by researchers at Harvard University observed that children who homeschool “generally develop into well-adjusted, responsible and socially engaged young adults.” The study found that while homeschooled students were twenty-three percent less likely to attend college than public school students, they were fifty-one percent more likely to attend religious services as young adults than students from public schools. They added, “The difference in religious participation has public-health implications, since those who attend services regularly have substantially lower risks of alcohol and drug abuse, depression and suicide.” The study has significant implications as the number of homeschoolers doubled in the United States since the pandemic began.

New Pro-Life Law Cuts Abortions in Texas by Half

In the first month after the Texas Heartbeat Bill went into effect, the number of abortions in the state of Texas were cut in half. While in September of 2020, 4,313 abortions were committed in the state, by September of 2021, that number had decreased to 2,164. Recognized as the most protective pro-life bill in the nation, the Texas Heartbeat Act prohibits abortion once a baby's heartbeat becomes detectable. The law empowers citizens, rather than the state, to sue abortionists and anyone else who facilitates an abortion of a baby with a detectable heartbeat.

Italian Senate Rejects Radical “Homophobia” Law

After months of heated debate, the Italian Senate voted down a proposed law that would have effectively made it a crime to criticize homosexuality and the LGBT agenda. The extremely radical “Zan Bill” sought to amend Italy's penal code to punish “discrimination or violence based on sex, gender or disability,” punishable by up to a 6,000 euro fine and eighteen months of imprisonment. Numerous organizations, including conservative Italian parties and the Vatican opposed the bill, pointing out that the proposed law constituted a grave threat against the family, freedom of speech and the freedom of the Church to preach Her doctrine on marriage and the family.

Etiquette and Ceremonial: Why?

BY BYRON WHITCRAFT



In a society ever more given to banality, technological gadgets, utilitarian education, vulgar treatment and unbridled sensual pleasure, what role does ceremony and etiquette play? Are manners really important anymore? Would not life be easier without them?

The answer to these questions can be found in the wise and scholarly work entitled *The Rules of Christian Decorum and Civility* by Saint John Baptist de la Salle, founder of the Christian Brothers.

During the lifetime of a man, millions of actions take place—great endeavors like writing a book or small ones such as brushing one’s teeth. Is there any action, great or small, that does not have a purpose or a way to perform it that is more perfect or pleasing to God?

Saint John Baptist de la Salle answers the question with a passage from Saint Paul’s epistle:

“According to the same Apostle, because all our actions ought to be holy, there are none that ought not to be done through purely Christian motives. Thus, all our external actions, which are the only ones that can be guided by the rules of decorum, must always, through faith, possess and display the characteristics of virtue.”

There is a profound lesson contained in this counsel. Virtue or vice is present in everything we do or say. Therefore, etiquette has a vital purpose, because it refers to our external actions, whether we are speaking with a friend, dining at our own table or writing a letter to the editor of a large newspaper. There is a proper and an improper way to do things. This gives us food for thought in the midst of the hustle and bustle of our times full of gadgets and distractions.

When we are speaking with someone at table, should we pull our smart phone out of our pocket and look at it? Someone may object, “Where in the Catechism does it say this is not permissible?” True, the Catechism does not mention this sort of thing, but the action itself can be a breach in etiquette and has spiritual ramifications.

That which deals with basic etiquette also applies to ceremony. In reality, etiquette is a collection of small ceremonies. To stand up and give one’s seat to a lady or tip one’s hat is a small ceremony.

Ceremony does in fact play a role in our spiritual life. But why? Would it not be easier to just put a crown on a king’s head and be done with it? Why have a coronation ceremony?

Professor Plinio Corrêa de Oliveira, Catholic leader, writer and founder of the Brazilian Society for the Defense



of Tradition, Family and Property (TFP), answers: “Because Original Sin, having degraded human nature, leads man to do many trivial and caricatural things which lack the beauty appropriate to his nature. So, there has to be something called manners, something else called protocol and still another thing called ceremonial to fix that which men would not do well of themselves.”

Truly, Original Sin has left in the souls of men tendencies that are not appropriate to the sublime calling of each one.

Professor Corrêa de Oliveira continues: “What is a ceremonial? It is a set of gaits and movements idealized according to a structural and calculated plan in which all persons adopt attitudes that are beautiful, aesthetic, those which men would take had they not fallen into Original Sin.”

The love of God is intricately related to ceremony. It could be said that ceremony helps us think of many aspects of God and the Heavenly paradise awaiting us. Does this not increase our love for our Creator?

Unfortunately, the formation of modern man is utilitarian. One could almost say we live in a world in which ceremony is despised. When was the last time someone saw another unlocking a car door for the other before he goes to the driver’s side? Automatic locks made that obsolete. Isn’t this the abolition of a little ceremony? Self-abnegation and sacrifice for another are but a few virtues practiced in that small ceremony.

So, before going to a McDonalds “restaurant” for a Sunday meal, think about the opposite: a fine meal prepared at home and enjoyed with china, candles, a table cloth and good conversation. ■



A Lenten Meditation on an Unconventional Ash Wednesday

BY JOHN HORVAT II

As I went to my local supermarket on Ash Wednesday in 2017, I was surprised by a table outside on the sidewalk with two men in clerical collars. The sign said it all: “Ashes to Go.” They were administering ashes to shoppers.

I had already received my ashes from the priest at church, but I politely asked those manning the table if these particular ashes were Catholic. They said no, that the Catholic ashes were available in the morning; theirs were Lutheran.

I snapped a picture since no one would believe me if I told them what I saw on my way into the supermarket that winter afternoon.

Indeed, I could hardly believe it myself. This is the kind of thing that is not supposed to happen in the public square in America. I thought to myself: “Ashes to Go” at a twenty-first century supermarket? What an unexpected meditation to begin my Lent.

A Lenten Meditation

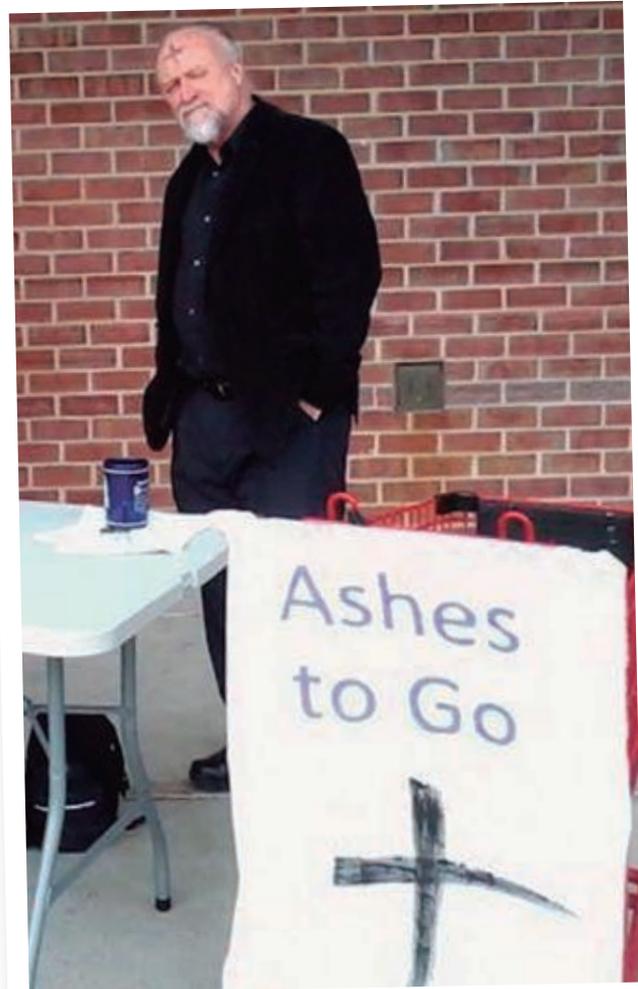
The classical meditation of Ash Wednesday calls upon us to reflect on our mortality and sinfulness as we enter the penitential period of Lent. The ancient practice dates back to the eighth century. When the priest puts the ashes in the form of the cross upon our foreheads, he reminds us that we are dust and to dust we shall return.

However, meditation need not deal exclusively with the intricacies of spiritual life. Broadly speaking, anything can serve as a point of meditation as long as it facilitates a pious communication of the soul with God and helps us know, love and serve God better. Sometimes a casual event at a supermarket can trigger a meditation.

My non-classical meditation on “Ashes to Go” certainly did get me thinking of a broader picture. I could not help but reflect that this incident was one of those only-in-America paradoxes that can be so fascinating to those who want to observe life. Things like this break some old preconceptions about our secular society that is really not so secular. I saw in the fact that so many receive ashes as a sign of God calling the nation to Him. It awakened hope in me amidst a nation in crisis.

Quintessentially American

You have to admit there is something quintessentially American about the idea of “Ashes to Go.” It is part of our admirably practical side that sees problems and works out ways to get something done, and quickly. In this particular



The ashes touch something very profound in the American soul that refreshingly defies the culture.

case, the problem was ashes inside a church and people outside it. The solution was to bring the ashes to a place where everyone goes—the supermarket. First problem solved.

A second problem was how to communicate instantly the fact that the ashes are available at such an unconventional place. The solution was to frame them inside a familiar

The millions of small ash crosses are a rebuke to the secular establishment who would exile God from all aspects of life, and invite Him back.



template of the pickup window or quick service platform—“to go.” One quick glance at the sign made it immediately clear to the shopper in a hurry what was going on.

And yet there is also something superficial in the concept, likewise American. While highly efficient and practical, “Ashes to Go” does somehow participate in the frenetic intemperance of a fast, materialistic and mechanical culture that tends to reduce everything—even the sacred—to a “to go” platform.

It has overtones of pop theology that I obviously do not agree with. However, what really struck me about the incident was the avidity of Americans to receive and wear these ashes, even in the public square.

A Counter-Cultural Message

While the means to administer the ashes used there was arguably very American, the message of the ashes themselves was shockingly counter-cultural. What makes ashes on Ash Wednesday so incredibly powerful is the fact that it is appealing, public and highly symbolic. The ashes touch something very profound in the American soul that refreshingly defies the culture. Liberal media stays carefully away from criticizing it.

It is well known that lines stretch around the block near New York City’s Saint Patrick’s Cathedral as Catholics and non-Catholics alike wait to receive ashes on this special day. All across the nation, people can be seen crowding the churches (and supermarkets) to receive this sooty badge of honor. It is amazing that more Americans flock to church on Ash Wednesday than on Christmas, Easter or any other day.

Even politicians on both sides of the aisle don ash crosses in the hallowed halls of Congress and statehouses. On this one day, at least, no one dares attack this very personal sign of the Faith.

A Public Witness

While the ash cross is a very personal sign, it is undeniably public. And that is the extreme beauty of it.

It cannot be ignored since it occupies the forehead, the most prominent part of the face. At a time when atheists are taking down crosses in the public square, they must watch helplessly as millions wear them proudly on their foreheads everywhere.

As a public witness, the cross commands respect and benefits not only the wearer but those who cannot help but

see it. The dark, somber cross provokes others to reflect on God, religion and repentance.

The Anti-Hollywood Statement

However, the intense symbolism of this tradition is its most striking aspect. This symbol provokes a spectacular clash with our liberal culture that puts self-interest above everything. Nothing could be more contrary to the hypersexualized Hollywood message that life exists to be enjoyed to its fullest. The millions of small ash crosses are a rebuke to the secular establishment who would exile God from all aspects of life, and invite Him back.

By wearing the cross on the forehead, we put on the symbol of suffering and redemption. We are reminded of the crosses that we are called to carry in our lives. We reflect upon how we have sinned and offended the good God. It is the symbol of our victory over the modern world that oppresses us.

By wearing ashes upon our foreheads, we don the symbol of our mortality—that dust to which we must return. We are invited to meditate upon what the Catholic Church calls the “Four Last Things”—Death, Judgment, Heaven and Hell. Scripture says that if we ponder these last things, we will not be lost eternally. We are called to penance in contrast to Hollywood’s self-gratification.

The symbolism of the ash cross broaches forbidden subjects banished from our culture that you are not supposed to think about on the way to the supermarket.

Sign of Hope

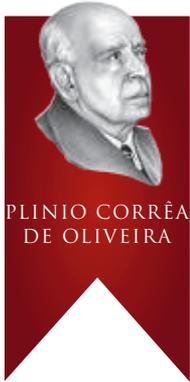
But that is the way God often works. I close my unconventional meditation with the consideration that the fact there is still a strong vein inside American society turned toward things religious and spiritual, is a sign of hope. There is an attraction to things sublime that is spurned by our culture. This yearning for something more is aided by a grace of God that is calling us to Him. And this grace is powerful.

I believe there are many in our postmodern wasteland who clash with the culture and are searching for God. I pray that every day of this Lent might be an Ash Wednesday in which each of us might serve as a beacon to direct those who are searching for Him.

This Lent I will clash with the culture. Wherever I am, I will remember my “ashes to go.” ■

Meditation on the Precious Blood of Our Lord

BY PLINIO CORRÊA DE OLIVEIRA



This article is taken from an informal lecture given by Professor Plinio Corrêa de Oliveira on July 1, 1965. It has been translated and adapted for publication without his revision. –Ed.



"Crucifixion". Taddeo Gaddi (1350-1396). Basilica of Santa Croce. Florence (Italy)

To understand the devotion to the Most Precious Blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ, we should look carefully at the meaning of blood and blood that is shed. By doing this, we can then consider the meaning of the shedding of the Precious Blood of Christ.

We all know that blood is biologically part of our body. However, blood is also intimately associated with the vital element of the individual as a person. That is why we give to the Blood of Christ all the adoration due to Christ Himself.

Our blood is naturally meant to be inside the body. Hence, every time we bleed, it is something of an unnatural or catastrophic nature. Many illnesses, for example, are perceived by bleeding caused by some malfunction inside the body. Bleeding is almost a sign of alarm, which because of its violence, calls attention to the fact that something is terribly wrong with the person.

Besides illnesses, bleeding also calls to mind fighting and crime. For example, the idea of bloodshed instantly calls to mind the blood of Abel, shed by Cain and which, according to Scripture, rose to God clamoring for vengeance. When blood is shed by crime, we sense a profound violence applied to the body that conveys the idea of something unjust, brutal and iniquitous which profoundly disturbs an existing order and clamors to God for the reestablishment of order.

When we consider the infinitely Precious Blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ, many things come to mind. We think of

that blood begotten in the womb of Our Lady. We think of that Blood that was shed, leaving His Body from whence it should never have left. That Blood, like everything else in the Body of Christ, is in hypostatic union with Him and when it leaves His sacred Body, it is as if symbolizing all the dignity of that Body.

We might compare this departure to the juice that comes from the grape to make up wine. That juice represents the essence of the grape, all the best the grape has to give. So also Our Lord's Blood represents the best of blood – the blood of David, the blood of Mary, the Blood of God-Man.

Through a series of unspeakable, violent deicidal actions, that Blood was shed in the scourging, the crowning with thorns, the cross, and torments of all kinds. That Blood was shed by the great anguish of soul when Our Lord, in His agony, began to suffer and sweat blood all over His Body.

That Blood shed and falling on the ground clamorously attests to the insult made to the God-Man. It is a manifestation of how far human wickedness can go. It is a manifestation of

We should avoid all drowsiness, foolish optimism or procrastination in face of evil.

the mystery of iniquity. We see in that Blood how much God tolerates. We are reminded how fallen human nature in this valley of tears (above all when guided by sin and the devil) is capable of going to the extremes of evil shrinking from nothing.

These considerations should lead us to always be extremely suspicious towards evil. We should follow Our Lord's precept: "Watch and pray." Our suspicions are based on the fact that evil is capable of the worst infamies. One can expect everything from it. Thus, we should do great violence to ourselves to fight against it. We should avoid all drowsiness, foolish optimism or procrastination in face of evil. Indeed, failing to combat evil is a true crime since we see that if evil was capable of such horrible acts against Our Lord, it is capable of everything. Evil calls unto other evils and can go to the very depths of all evil.

In a sense, every drop of blood is like a tiny death, for it is a drop of life that goes away.

Our Lord wanted to go through these "deaths" to show how infinite is His love for us.

Looking at this bloodshed, we should note that the mercy of God wanted all that Blood to be shed with unheard-of abundance. All the blood in the Body of Our Lord Jesus Christ was shed, as if to show that He gave us everything, without holding back even one drop, because of His immense desire to save us. One drop of His Blood would have sufficed, yet He shed all His blood to the point that the last drops were mixed with water that left His Side when Longinus pierced His Heart with the lance. He wanted to hold nothing back in order to redeem us.

This superabundance of blood, suffering and offering up of self recalls Our Lord's words: "Greater love than this no man hath, that a man lay down his life for his friends." Considering the devotion to the Most Precious Blood, we might say: "Greater love than this no man hath, than He who gave His life for us."

However, He did even more than just giving His life. He wished to suffer death from the beatings, anguish and the shedding of every drop of blood in His sacred Body. In this sense, every drop of blood is like a tiny death, for it is a drop of life that goes away. He wanted to go through all these "deaths" to show how infinite was His friendship for us.

"Mater Dolorosa" Pedro de Mena, 1628. Monastery of St. Joachim and St. Anne, Valladolid, (Spain)

He wanted to go through all these "deaths" to show how infinite was His friendship for us.

Such considerations lead us to confide in His mercy. If He so wanted to save us, we should understand that we might cover ourselves in His Blood and present ourselves to the Eternal Father.

Begging forgiveness thus covered in His Blood, we should confide that we can obtain it. On the other hand, we must consider how horrible is the eternal destiny of the damned. If Our Lord suffered all these torments to spare us from eternal doom, then this damnation is a very serious thing. So let us meditate on the depths of Hell by considering a drop of the Blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

This inevitably leads us to other considerations. First, we must see how the Blood of Christ calls to mind the tears of Mary, shed along with the Blood of Christ. Our Lord did not want Our Lady to shed any drop of her own blood. He allowed all types of torments against Himself but forbade the powers of evil from raising even a finger against His Immaculate Mother.

Thus, she suffered no physical torments. None of her blood was shed on behalf of humanity, nor would it have had the redeeming force of the infinitely precious Blood of Christ. The entire Redemption would come specifically from the Blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

However, Our Lady did shed a kind of blood: her tears. It would serve as only a kind of complement to Our Lord's Blood. We can say that tears are the blood of the soul. She suffered all the pain of His death and shed tears. That is why it is impossible to think about the Blood of Christ without at the same time considering the tears of Mary that were joined to that Blood and constituted the first tribute of Christendom to complete the part of His Passion that God wanted to be completed — with the suffering of the faithful — so that souls would be saved in great numbers. ■



Photostock-Astralon



THE METAVERSE: WHAT IS IT?

Will It Create a Virtual Hell on Earth?

BY JOHN HORVAT II



The next step in the cyber-revolution is the so-called metaverse, a powerful computing platform that goes beyond anything seen to date. It is marketed as the next generation of the Internet, facilitating intense experiences and opening new markets.

However, no one considers the moral implications of the project. No one asks what the Catholic position on this development should be and if the metaverse will harm souls. Tragically, people see no reason to involve God and morality in a technological invention seemingly outside the private realm of religion. Worst of all, many in the clergy show no sign of acknowledging the issue. It is not even on their radar.

However, the issue is important to the salvation of souls. The metaverse is a metaphysical attack on the Church's worldview. It obliterates the nature of a God-created universe. It will make possible immoral acts that will gravely offend God. Catholics need to be concerned.

God measures the world with a compass. Illustration from a Bible moralisée, c. 1250. Codex Vindobonensis 2554. Austrian National Library.



© Steveheap / Dreamstime.com

What is the Metaverse?

The metaverse is a new realm of fantasy and unrestraint. This next wave of innovation and technology will allow individuals to immerse themselves in a world of their own creation together with others. People will become avatars, that is, cyber-representations of men, women, animals or things that “live” in the cyber-sphere. They will be capable of being wherever they want—be it on the moon, on top of buildings or “in a field of unicorns.” This platform can be inhabited by whatever the collective fantasies dictate—extraterrestrials, angels, demons or anything.

People will do superhuman (and sinful) acts that will seemingly have no consequences. It will create conditions for extreme unrestraint and frenetic intemperance. While the platform will not change what really exists, it powerfully creates the lie that one’s imaginings are more real than reality.

This massive virtual platform is much more than an extension of the Internet, which allows people to look into the world wide web. This phase will “embody” the Internet

No one asks what the Catholic position on this development should be and if the metaverse will harm souls.

by putting people in the middle of it. In this new realm, imagination rules.

A Process of Imagining and Destruction

The metaverse needs to be understood in the context of a process that goes back in history. It is not something that suddenly appeared on the horizon. It is the product of modernity’s continuous effort to put humanity, not God, at the center of all things.

Indeed, modernity has an obsession with imagining new worlds without God. During the eighteenth-century Enlightenment, philosophers introduced systems that rejected traditional social, religious and political ideas. They introduced new ways to stretch reality to its limits by developing new technologies, philosophies and lifestyles.

Modern times ushered in the glorification of the individual. Society became a collection of persons, not a social unit. Thomas Hobbes (1588–1679) claimed society was a “sandheap of individuals,” each guided by self-interest and kept in order by a strong rule of law described in his book, *Leviathan*.

Thus, modern individualism tended to destroy the external structures—tradition, custom or community—



© Hobsonphoto2017 / Dreamstime.com

Thomas Hobbes (1588–1679) claimed society was a “sandheap of individuals,” each guided by self-interest.

that encumbered self-interest. It destroyed many moral institutions that facilitated the practice of virtue in common. It created a fast-paced order in which man became the center of everything, and religion was relegated to being a private, secondary matter.

Postmodernity Shatters Society

Modernity’s order was shattered by the postmodernity of the sixties, which proposed freeing the imagination and removing all moral restraints. Postmodernism took individualism to an extreme through the use of new technologies, philosophies and lifestyles. Society was turned upside down by psychedelic drugs, the rock music culture and the sexual revolution.

By the same logic in which modernity idolized self-interest, the postmodern individualist makes the “right” of self-gratification the only absolute right—even when such behavior is self-destructive. The postmodern individualist seeks to destroy those internal structures—logic, identity or unity—that impede instant gratification. Postmodernity’s “deconstructed” narratives isolated individuals even more and drove them to create their own realities outside of God and His moral law.

However, modernity and postmodernity were still somehow anchored to an external reality that people could not escape entirely. There were physical and ontological limitations that kept the imagination in check. A man might self-identify as something he wasn’t, but the desire did not alter the perceived reality. Further, his imaginings were not evident to all around him.

Enter a New Phase of Perceiving Reality

The introduction of the metaverse is now facilitating the altering of reality. It is part of what many futurists call a *Fourth Industrial Revolution*.

Following the footsteps of modernity and postmodernity, the next step in the process of creating a world without God is destroying the present manners by which people perceive nature, existence and being. It involves empowering the imagination to the extreme.

This project is not the stuff of science fiction anymore. It is discussed in establishment media like *The Wall Street Journal*. All the social media companies are putting the pieces of the metaverse in place. Mark Zuckerberg just renamed Facebook, calling it Meta. He will be investing \$10 billion and hiring ten thousand new employees to build this new world. All the wrong people are involved in setting up this secular and fantasy space where God and morality have no role.



“The metaverse is going to be the biggest revolution in computing platforms the world has seen—bigger than the mobile revolution, bigger than the web revolution,” says Marc Whitten of Unity Software in a *Wall Street Journal* feature article.

The mechanics of this revolution are already envisioned. It proposes a three-dimension parallel universe of virtual and augmented reality where digital avatars will meet together in unlimited numbers. People will be fitted with specialized glasses and even advanced haptic gear, consisting of skin suits that allow them to feel and touch remote things in real-time. Participants can even mix the real world with the imaginary one.

Daren Tsui, chief executive of Together Labs, Inc., says: “The avatar experience will feel so real that you can hardly tell the difference between a virtual meeting and a physical meeting. And the virtual experience will be better.”

Creating a World of Illusion Without Consequences

There are three major problems with the metaverse.

The first one is that it encourages people to detach themselves from reality by creating a delusional world without consequences or meaning. People are free to defy nature by doing impossible things, like walking on the moon or watching a baseball game from the pitcher’s mound. The most absurd things become possible inside an imagined world unmoored from reality.

People are no longer bound by time and can travel to what they imagine is the past or future. Even death is overcome with avatars and algorithms conspiring to bring back what will appear to be deceased relatives or historical figures with which one can converse and interact.

People are free to simulate doing things to others (who may or may not exist) or even cut off their arms without consequences. Every fantasy, even the most macabre, can become a reality in the metaverse. It will thus open up dark and sinister spaces that will facilitate sinful acts or their simulations.

Such a lonely world disconnected from reality can feed the unfettered passions that hate all moral restraint. A space like this can quickly go from Alice in Wonderland to an insane asylum. The frenetic intemperance of the present Internet and social media are already causing immense psychological and social problems. How much more exponential will be the damage caused by the metaverse's abilities to drown people in their frenzies and depressions?

The Destruction of Identity

The second reason to be concerned about the metaverse is that it equates identity with choice. The postmodern paradigm already allows a person to self-identify as something else. However, that identification exists only in the mind of the deluded person. The public can generally perceive the illusion.

However, the metaverse changes that perception. The person becomes the perfect model of that which is desired and cannot be. The person need not be a person but can be an animal, plant or thing. A person need not be a single being but a cacophony of beings without unity in this world of fantasy.

This lie of identifying the self with freedom is made possible by the metaverse. Existentialist philosopher Jean-Paul Sartre wrote that "man is freedom," which makes people essentially limitless. In his book, *Being and Nothingness*, Sartre said that "Freedom is nothing other than a choice that creates for itself its own possibilities."

The metaverse is the realization of this distorted idea of freedom that revolts against the contingent limitations of human nature and the governance of God. It seeks to turn individuals into the gods of their fantasies where the one True God has no role.

The Demolition of Metaphysics

However, the most dangerous aspect of the metaverse is its demolition of the metaphysical vision of life that leads the soul to God the Creator.

Everyone, even children, engages in metaphysics. Human nature and especially the soul demands a rational understanding of self and the universe. Thus, a classical definition of metaphysics is a philosophical inquiry into ultimate principles and causes. By engaging in metaphysics, individuals seek out the nature of things that exist and fit them into a coherent vision.

A true vision of things makes painfully clear the finite and contingent nature of every human being. However, through an understanding of the designs of Creation, people see that the goal of existence transcends physical and social limitations. They pursue this path to the Creator, Whose perfections are reflected in Creation. This process confers meaning and purpose on life as souls strive toward their final end in God. They seek sanctification as the full realization of who they are.

The Transhuman Revolution

The philosophies that inform the metaverse are contrary to this classical metaphysical vision. There is no attempt to understand the nature of things but only the limitless experience of random choices and events. This "transhuman" notion of the world understands humanity as a process in

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Indeed, it is a much more
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© Michael Garre

constant evolution. “Great Reset” engineer Klaus Schwab describes this next phase as the coming “fusion of the digital, biological and physical worlds.”

The idea of the metaverse is consistent with the outlook of *New York Times* bestselling author Yuval Noah Harari. A frequent writer on these subjects, he openly envisions a future without the soul, free will, a unified self or God. His is an algorithmic world of random experiences where one is whatever one comes to be. He holds there are no religions but only powerful fictions, like the metaverse, where people will “create entire virtual worlds complete with hells and heavens.”

Professor Harari is not alone in believing in this chilling future. He speaks for a progressive class of scientists, businessmen and scholars from Big Data and Silicon Valley, who are all on board with the task of changing human nature and reality through artifices like the metaverse. They make no secret of their rejection of God’s Creation and moral order.

The Need for Rejection

These are urgent concerns in the face of the coming metaverse. Not all its applications will contain the full dose of these destructive plans for humanity. However, the general direction is leading to a brave new world without God. Such conclusions do not come from conspiracy theories but are openly revealed by the metaverse’s promoters.

Thus, the metaverse must be rejected because its worldview is contrary to that of the Church. It is afflictive that something this big can appear on the horizon, and many shepherds of souls have little or nothing to say about it. In today’s godless society, the apostasy from the practice of the Faith is caused much more by technological inventions like these than abstract theological disputes.

Equally afflictive is that people do not wish to see where this will lead. History shows that when people give free rein to their passions, it ultimately ends in nihilistic despair. The overwhelmingly intemperate experience of metaverse pleasure will eventually demand the more intense sensations of existentialist pain. Thus, modernity’s decay process will run its full course: From self-interest to self-gratification to self-imagining to self-annihilation.

Taking a Catholic Position in the Face of the Metaverse

Thus, Catholics should take a position on the metaverse. The Church has always opposed fantasy worlds provoked by unrestrained vice, alcohol, drugs or strange philosophies. The metaverse is no different. Indeed, it is a much more powerful platform that can lead souls astray. Its pervasive nature will make it much harder to resist.

Thus, Catholics should be aware of three things in the face of the coming metaverse.

The first is to be aware that the metaverse, like the Internet, will be a platform for immoral and sexual behaviors that lead powerfully to the perdition of souls. It will be much worse since the person will be immersed in these situations and even feel their sensations. It will make such sinful activities more common since there will be no physical victims in these simulations and thus make them seem to be without consequences.

The second is to be aware that the metaverse, like video games, will be a platform that will serve as means of escaping from reality. The effects will be much worse because the aim is to make absurd and impossible things appear more real than reality. Immersing oneself in this world can only make worse the horrible addictions of those who escape reality through other means.

Finally, the metaverse is a parallel universe without God that will never satisfy the soul. The explosion of experiences it makes possible will only make people more unhappy and lonely. This is because souls are satisfied by God alone and not the creations of those who make themselves gods.

Rejecting the metaverse means embracing the means of grace that allows the faithful to confront life’s difficulties. It means confiding in the Blessed Mother who will lead us to her Son. This Catholic alternative affords the person the greatest amount of happiness possible in this vale of tears.

The metaverse will not be a paradise where all live in harmony with human nature and others. Indeed, a world dominated by delusions, absurdity and the denial of being, where meaning and purpose are obliterated and bizarre fantasy rules must be called by another name. The secular visionaries of the metaverse are designing a virtual Hell on earth. ■



AMERICA NEEDS FATIMA®

MARCH/APRIL 2022

PROGRESS REPORT

The Day After: What Is Our Dream for a Post-Roe America?

On the forty-ninth annual March for Life in Washington, D.C., the American Society for the Defense of Tradition, Family and Property (TFP) joined pro-life multitudes nationwide, asking God for a post-Roe future.

The reason for this hope is that the U.S. Supreme Court may soon decide the fate of *Roe v. Wade*.

Since 1973, *Roe v. Wade* has hidden behind a mask of “settled law.” This exalted status is completely undeserved by the shoddily written *Roe*. For nearly fifty years, it has divided America, and over this half-century, the exhausted left has run out of arguments with which to defend it.

Regardless of pending judicial decisions, the legal underpinnings of this disastrous death sentence for more than sixty million unborn Americans are crumbling.

From every perspective, *Roe* has failed.

“*Roe* must go” is the full-throated cry from millions marching nationwide.

What happens when *Roe* finally goes?

We must start thinking about *the day after*.

What do we want a post-Roe America to look like? What should be our post-Roe dream for America?

Step 1: Resist the Temptation to Go 1972

The temptation will be to turn a post-Roe America into the pre-Roe nation. However, pro-lifers know that nothing will be resolved if we only return to the pre-Roe situation of letting the states decide the legal status of abortion in their jurisdictions.

A post-Roe America must end all procured abortion nationwide. We cannot rest until all fifty states are freed from this moral scourge that stains the nation’s honor.

Step 2: Abortion Is a Non-negotiable Moral Issue

We must continue to frame the debate as a non-negotiable moral issue. This is our most successful strategy against the pro-abortionists. They had hoped to cast abortion as a simple women’s health issue. They failed. By highlighting procured abortion as a non-negotiable moral issue, pro-life America forced the public to make a right or wrong judgment: Is the slaughter of the innocent unborn a moral good or a moral evil?

Procured abortion is intrinsically evil. On this higher ground of moral debate, the left must admit its denial of God’s Law and objective morals.

Step 3: Procured Abortion Is One of Many Interconnected Moral Issues

A post-Roe America must realize that procured abortion is just one among many interconnected moral evils.

Thus, first and foremost, a post-Roe America must be consistent. It must denounce the sins of impurity that gave rise to *Roe*. It must boldly challenge the sexual revolution of the sixties that ruined so many lives and families. It must contritely rebuild the now-destroyed social mores and institutions that safeguarded the family, society and religion.

Abortion made today’s apocalyptic social destruction possible by removing the consequences of the sexual act.

A post-Roe America must understand clearly that procured abortion is just the effect of a profound revolt against God’s moral law.

A post-Roe America must uphold and praise true marriage (the lifelong union of one man and one woman to the exclusion of all others) and the mutual fidelity of the spouses.



The TFP and American Needs Fatima have attended every March for Life in Washington, D.C. since 1973. This statement was distributed during this year’s march and other pro-life marches around the country.

A post-Roe America must reject the entire sexual revolution, from contraception and no-fault divorce to the present LGBTQ+ agenda in all its moral horror.

Step 4: Return to God and Order

It is not just *Roe v. Wade* that is collapsing. The whole liberal order that gave us *Roe* is also crumbling. What will replace it? America is at a crossroads and must choose a road. The left wants to impose communism on the country. That is no direction for America to take!

Instead, a post-Roe America must boldly and unashamedly dream of a full return to God and ordered liberty.

Such a task is not impossible since the left itself is destroying the liberal premises upon which our promiscuous society is built.

A return to order, morality and God by a post-Roe America will not come by imposing a set of rules or court rulings (as the left does). It must come from conversion.

The American TFP calls upon all Americans to look beyond *Roe* to a great return to order. Let us confide in the triumph of Our Lady’s Immaculate Heart, as promised by her at Fatima.

January 21, 2022
The American TFP



Fighting Satanism under the Banner of the Virgin

BY TONIA LONG

In early November 2021, America Needs Fatima mobilized supporters in Wisconsin, Chicago and Indiana to protest an After-School Satan Club at Carmel High School, in Carmel, Indiana. It was a very large school, boasting 5,300 students and over 700 faculty and staff. ANF sent many of their full-time volunteers to join locals at Carmel to pray in protest and reparation.

What was our surprise when we found out that the Satanic club was forced to shut down on November 11, just two days before our rally!

One of our Marian activists received this email on November 11, 2021:

“A few minutes ago, Evan Olwell received a phone call from a lady involved with **Unite Carmel**, the local Carmel, Indiana group that protested the Satanic club at the beginning of the school year. She was emotional on the phone. She told him that *the club is shutting down!* She wondered if we were still going. He responded we were since one of the reasons for the rally was to do an act of reparation.

“Initially, we had feared that doing it the rally on Saturday will give us less exposure. It seems Our Lady moved the target in front of the arrow again. Little did we know that there is a state band competition at the school that day and a basketball game. Not only are students and parents from that school going to be there, but students and parents from other schools as well. The pressure seemed to be too much for the principal. What an incredible example of how public opinion works.”

We thanked God for this victory, but we still needed to make that act of reparation. A bus picked up participants from Milwaukee and Chicago, and a crowd of over seventy converged on Carmel High School.

The chilly winds and freezing temperatures would have been discouraging, but many showed up nearly half an hour early to pray. “The day was about thirty-two degrees but the wind was strong. Some had neglected to wear something for the extreme cold,” said Rex Teodosio, who organized the event. “Instead of returning home, they improvised. One girl was wrapped in a blanket. But since she was wearing flip-flops, her feet were frozen numb. People got whatever extra warm clothing they had in the car and started passing them out to those in most need.”



Catholics gather under gloomy skies in front of Carmel High School in Carmel, Indiana, to protest the Satanic indoctrination of its students. Members of America Needs Fatima joined many local parents, succeeding in closing the school’s doors to the After School Satan Club.



The participants made up for the cold weather with their ardent enthusiasm. “No one complained that it was cold. The spirit of sacrifice was very apparent among the participants,” according to Mr. Teodosio.

The prayer warriors prayed six rosaries, sang hymns to Our Lady and used slogans to inform passing traffic of the purpose of the rally.

Many participants were local, though some came from far distances. One couple drove ten hours all the way from Pennsylvania, declaring, “We just knew that we had to be here today to fight for Our Lady.”

And where physical presence was impossible, many offered their spiritual support with prayers and sacrifice. “A friend of mine is an alumnus from this high school,” a man explained, “he couldn’t make it since he lives in Texas, but said that he was going to pray along with us from there.”

The rally was a tremendous success, so much so that one man called out: “Next week, we are going to host another rally for anyone who wants to attend!”

“The goal of the campaign was to shut it down, to offer an act of reparation and to proclaim to the American public that society still rejects Satan vehemently,” Mr. Teodosio said. “In the process, we also proclaimed to the world the strength of the devotion of those fighting under the banner of the Virgin.” ■



TAKEN FROM ANF'S PUBLICATION, *BATTLELINES*



A True Apostle

Patrick was excited to help from the moment he received a text from America Needs Fatima (ANF). A “Drag Queen Story Hour” was scheduled at the Staten Island Children’s Museum in Staten Island, New York, and he was passionate about leading a rosary rally there.

On October 9, he and nineteen other fervent Catholics gathered outside the museum with homemade signs and their special “Drag Queen Story Hour” protest banner (see photo) supplied by ANF.

“Prayer is important, but if the Apostles had just stayed inside and prayed we would never have the Church we have today. We need to perpetuate the Faith by going out and fighting for what is right,” declared Rally Captain Patrick.

The rosary rally was a victory for Our Lady with many honks of support from those who appreciated this show of Faith.

Our Lady Answers a Prayer in Salt Lake City

A Utah resident named Ed prayed daily to Our Lady, pleading, “Please tell me what I can do for you!” when he received a phone call from America Needs Fatima asking him to lead a pro-

test rally.

Ed had never been a rally captain; in fact, he had never attended a rosary rally before! But he knew Our Lady had answered his prayer and he agreed to lead the rally right away.

On September 25, members of The Satanic Temple gathered on the capitol steps in Salt Lake City to promote their Satanic abortion campaign. On Our Lady’s side, Ed and a large group of the faithful assembled to protest and to make reparation to God for this abomination.

“It was a great blessing for me to be there,” the rally captain admitted. “It was good to see men, women, teens and children all there to protest this evil.”

Thank You, Saint Paul Catholic School

Our readers always hear about how America Needs Fatima captains protest the evils in our culture. This time, however, we have a story about a rally captain who supported the courageous good. It all started with Saint Paul School in Bristol, Connecticut, which recently defended its Catholic identity by refusing to humor biological sex-denying students.

Wanting to support Saint Paul’s, we decided to organize a rosary rally of thanksgiving. Mary, a resident of Bristol, agreed to lead the rally.

On October 9, Mary, her husband David and ten faithful Catholics stood near Saint Paul’s at the perfect rally location. “It was a loud, busy intersection,” Mary reported, “and we received many positive responses from the drive-by community at large. We were under the protection of her mantle.”

Thank you, Mary, our courageous prayer warriors and Saint Paul Catholic School for upholding Catholic teaching.

School Board Insanity

Residents of Saline, Michigan were shocked when their school board approved a graphic and obscene sex education program.

Rally Captain Paul invited parents, clergy and the local community to a rosary rally in protest outside the school board meeting in September, and was delighted to find out that America Needs Fatima (ANF) would also send out invitations.

Paul reported: “We had a great turnout of about sixty people. We pray this rally will help bring sanity to the school board!”

We at ANF are grateful that Our Lady inspires rally captains in school districts all across the country. As Paul said, “School boards take advantage of parents who don’t know about proposed changes, and a rosary rally helps get the word out.” ■

If you want to defend Our Lord and Our Lady like the Americans in this article, please contact Jose at (844) 830-3570 or e-mail Protest@TFP.org!

Miracles DO Happen

“I got your thank you note in today’s mail. I was so pleased with it. You can count on me always, Mr. Ritchie. I am an old lady now at eighty-two years old and I have a partly autistic son who I named Brett. My husband left us when my child was six weeks old. Brett and I struggle from month to month, but God always helps us every month. My son Brett is a miracle child. When he was 4 years old, he could not speak. He’d been going to school to learn how to speak since he was two. The teachers felt sorry for him, so they still included him in the school Christmas play, but just to ring the bell. My mom and I were praying for him to speak for over four years now. That night, he rang the bell in the play just like he was told, then grabbed the microphone and very clearly spoke his first words ever! “Merry Christmas,” he said to all! After that, he could speak just like you and I. Everyone in the place was crying that night. I was as white as a sheet and almost fell over. Just imagine: **God gave us a miracle with Brett!** I wanted you to know our story, Mr. Ritchie. I hope you will share my story about Brett with many people. How God answered my prayers after four and a half years! Brett and I are both firm Catholic people! Please pray for us.”



© Ilse-erika Szasz-Jelham / Dreamstime.com

he was the author of the book, I knew then why my printer had stopped working. The Good Lord wanted me to finally investigate the book and see that it directly related to the parish retreat that I was attending and studying. Things like this are not mere coincidence; they are divine interventions of a sort, meant to develop a deeper devotion. And in this instance; a deeper devotion to Blessed Mary, and the sacred relevancy of her to our personal lives. Needless to say, I am reading the book fervently, and enjoying it very much. Thank you for having sent it.”

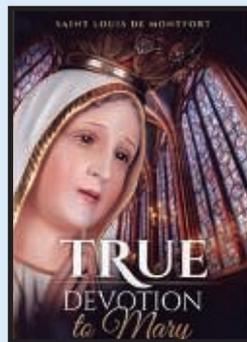
L.W., Waterford Works, New Jersey



© Erievsky / Dreamstime.com

C.F., Thibodaux, Louisiana

“Just had to write to explain why, after one and a half years, I finally made a donation for the *True Devotion to Mary* book you had mailed to me. When I received it, I really had no idea what the book was truly about, and just put it aside. I figured that I would look at it later and investigate it then. For some reason, I put it on my printer, and it just sat there. Well, about a week ago, my printer wouldn’t work. In the process of resolving the issue, I removed all the things from my printer, which included the package with the book inside. I finally decided it was time to investigate the book. And what a surprise that was in store for me. When I removed the book you sent finally from the package it came in, and saw



“Thank you for the beautiful letter. I am ninety-five years old and cannot walk. I am in a Franciscan Religious Monastery and the nurses push me around in a chair. I entered the convent from the eighth grade. My dad did not go to church, so I entered the convent for the intention of his conversion. After I had been in the convent some time, my father left my mother and our home, and left home to go live with another woman. I felt so very saddened, but kept up with my prayers for him. About sixteen years later, I was called to go to the hospital because my dad was going to die. But I was actually so happy, because I found out he had finally gone to Confession and received Communion. I thanked God, and hugged Dad. I was so happy he was reconciled with God and the Church at long last.”

Sister D.M., Lemont, Illinois



As pro-abortion advocates engaged the TFP members, they formulated insults.

Feminist Rants at Columbia University

BY DOMENICK GALATOLO

“Diversity” and “tolerance” are highly prized at Columbia University in New York City. Yet these same secular “values” were thrown to the wind when students came face to face with a peaceful TFP Student Action event on the Ivy League campus.

On October 28, 2021, TFP Student Action organized a campaign against abortion at Columbia University as part of its week-long Saint Brendan’s Caravan that reached four states.

“Thanks for coming out,” said one student. “I watch your videos.”

But leftists couldn’t believe their eyes. “They’re allowed to do that here?” questioned a group of students walking to class. “Make it [TFP] go away.”

One feminist told a TFP volunteer that “no women on campus” would ever support the pro-life campaign. Yet at that very moment, a young woman came up, saying, “Thank you so much for coming.” The feminist yelled in frustration, “Seriously!? Come on!”

Moments later, another young lady with courage joined the debate, challenging the lies of the abortion movement on campus.

Insults That Turn into Compliments

As pro-abortion advocates engaged the TFP members, they formulated insults.

“You’re so medieval,” said one, expecting an adverse reaction.

“Thank you for the compliment,” was the response he did not expect.

The insult was a compliment because Christian civilization flourished in the Middle Ages. And the virtues of Catholic chivalry continue to inspire faithful men to this day, including TFP Student Action volunteers.

It did not take long for a hostile crowd to gather in front of the members and their banner, which read, “Pray and act to end the sin of abortion.” Screams and insults filled the air.

One TFP volunteer was spit on.

Pro-Abortion Thieves Thwarted

A pro-abortion student stole a box containing hundreds of “10 Reasons to Protect the Unborn” flyers and dumped them on the lawn, where TFP volunteers were, fortunately, able to retrieve them. After about one hour, campus security asked TFP

Student Action members to relocate to the public sidewalk. As TFP members processed to the new location singing *God Bless America*, a screaming horde heckled and followed them.

Again, a pro-abortion woman attempted to run off with a box of TFP flyers. But John Ritchie, TFP Student Action director, quickly jumped in front of the fleeing thief and stopped her from stealing the pro-family literature. When her path was cut off, she dumped the TFP flyers on the sidewalk. Then a second feminist grabbed the box and tried to run away with it, but her attempted theft was also thwarted.

Two homosexuals performed lewd acts while dozens of pro-abortion activists applauded around them with loud whoops of approval. Sin begets sin, and never has it been more apparent how the abortion movement is synonymous with the homosexual revolution.

Finally, TFP volunteers prayed three Hail Marys to conclude their event. As they made the Sign of the Cross, the other side unleashed a vicious barrage of curses against God.

Meeting New Friends in the Good Fight

Local Catholic students joined the campaign even when the debate between pro-life truth vs. pro-abortion ranting intensified. “We appreciate your presence at Columbia,” said one young Catholic. “We need Christ. . . [and I’m] sorry that we have a lot of debauchery on campus. Thank you so much for being here.”

These brave souls stood shoulder to shoulder with the men of TFP Student Action and took the abuse of the pro-abortion opposition without fear but with real courage.

Operation Saint Michael

After this epic campaign, the caravan went to the 17th Precinct of the New York City Police Department in Manhattan. Outside the station, TFP members held signs thanking the police. Their banner read, “Saint Michael, protect the police so they can protect us.”

One officer was profoundly moved. “You will never understand how much we appreciate your support until we reach Heaven,” he said. “I sincerely thank you. I really mean it.”

Soon a cop invited TFP volunteers to enter the precinct, where they passed out Saint Michael medals to a group of appreciative officers. “This is your home. Come any time,” they said. ■



New Yorkers Sound Off on Police Defunding

BY DOMENICK GALATOLO

Don't trust *The New York Times* to tell you what real New Yorkers think about defunding the police. Instead, try stepping into the street and meeting people face to face on the issue. That's what TFP Student Action volunteers did recently. And their experience was extraordinary.



In gratitude for the Saint Michael medals and support, the commanding officer gave TFP volunteers New York Police Department pins.

We Will Never Forget

TFP volunteers made their way through heavy traffic to Manhattan's 1st Precinct, the police station that first responded to the tragic September 11 terrorist attack. Outside police headquarters, they displayed signs: "God bless those who serve with honor," "Honk for our police," and "Order, Yes—Anarchy, No."

As soon as the policemen heard the TFP bagpipers and loud honking outside, they invited them in. "This is a huge morale booster," said one of the police officers. Inside the precinct was a newly dedicated museum to the heroes of 9/11. But better than the museum was the honor TFP volunteers had to meet a living hero, a policeman who went into the burning towers several times, saving more than thirty people.

In the museum, the unassuming officer pointed out clothing and other items that belonged to the police officers who sacrificed their lives on that fateful day. There was also the hood of a destroyed patrol vehicle.

In gratitude for the Saint Michael medals and support, the commanding officer gave

TFP volunteers New York Police Department pins.

"Doing God's Work!"

At three different locations in New York City, TFP Student Action held campaigns to support law enforcement. At Penn Station, pedestrians and drivers showed enormous support. One woman on the street happened to be on a video call with her son in Colorado, a police officer. She showed him the campaign on her phone and expressed her gratitude.

"God bless the police," said another. "They are doing God's work!"

Police officers blared sirens in gratitude, and undercover officers discreetly flashed their badges.

One driver was reluctant to honk.

"Why don't you honk your horn?" asked a TFP volunteer.

"You're not supposed to honk in New York City."

"Just do it once for the men who put themselves on the line for us."

"Okay," he replied, blaring his horn with hundreds of others.

Overwhelming Support

Staten Island was off-the-charts supportive. Seconds after TFP members stepped out of their van, the thunderous honking erupted. For two hours, almost every driver blared their

horn. You couldn't hear yourself talk and some TFP volunteers developed minor headaches from the high decibel levels.

Neighborhood teenagers on bicycles came to see what the noise was about. They soon found the campaign more entertaining than their bike ride and spent time encouraging drivers to honk for the police.

At this location, two retired firemen joined the campaign. "You are braver than any cop or firemen I have ever met," said one of them. "You just go out and say the truth without fear."

A moving car threw eggs at TFP volunteers. However, the eggs missed their intended target and splattered on the pavement.

From a former criminal came this unexpected comment: "Even when I was a criminal I would not say 'defund the police.' I have been caught more than once doing illegal activities. [But] God tells me I need to respect the law for the better of mankind."

Why Do New Yorkers Love Their Police?

New Yorkers understand that original sin exists. They know evil people take advantage of unsuspecting victims. They also know that when things go bad, they can always count on the police to come to their aid and put their lives on the line. When civilians usually run away from danger, the police deliberately run towards it.

Without law enforcement, society would fall much faster into disorder and anarchy. New Yorkers understand this. Most Americans understand this. The solution to the crisis in society is not to destroy the last vestiges of order but to restore them. The real solution is to turn back to God.

Saint Michael, patron of police officers, pray for us! ■

Thawing Hearts through Rosary Rallies

BY STACIE HISERMAN

It is no secret that the world's detestation of both the police and of a Christ-centered Christmas has escalated year after year. America Needs Fatima's response has been to counter the coldness with a message of love for our officers and the Holy Family, and this past year was no different.

On November 13, 2021, rosary rallies were held across America in support of police officers who daily put their lives on the line for our protection.

Then throughout Advent, hundreds joined in the Keep Christ in Christmas Rosary Rallies held in public places to honor the Infant Jesus, and in turn through reparation lead our nation back to its Christian roots.



IN MEMORIAM

Antonio Fragelli: A Catholic Who “Ran the Race and Fought the Good Fight”

BY ROBERT RITCHIE

With deep sadness, the American Society for the Defense of Tradition, Family and Property (TFP) mourns the passing of Antonio Fragelli on December 19, 2021. He will be greatly missed. His Catholic sense was authentic, deep and inspiring. He served the TFPs with generosity and zeal for over forty years.

He was born in the State of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, on December 31, 1962. Five months later, through the intercession of Saint Thérèse of the Child Jesus, Antonio was miraculously cured of hydrocephalus. This remarkable occurrence drew the Fragelli family deeper into the practice of the Catholic Faith.

Antonio was educated in his native city and later at a TFP boarding school for boys in Buenos Aires, Argentina. He spent a short time in Ecuador, then several years of formation at the TFP House of Studies of São Bento in São Paulo, Brazil.

At a young age, Antonio followed the example of his father, Luiz Antonio Fragelli, and joined in the TFP activities. He was known in TFP circles as “Mr. Antonio” to distinguish him from his father, who was “Mr. Fragelli” to everyone.

Mr. Antonio: Serious, Discreet and Reliable

From the onset, Mr. Antonio assumed various roles and responsibilities in the TFP because of his serious and responsible character.

His first post of responsibility was to head a TFP boys’ school in Spain in 1984—1985, under difficult circumstances and few resources. In 1986, he managed the main TFP House of Formation for Youth in São Paulo, Brazil.

At the request of Professor Plinio Corrêa de Oliveira, Brazilian TFP founder, Mr. Antonio relocated to South Africa, where he spent a year engaged in TFP activities.

Dignity and Elevation of Soul

At the time of Mr. Antonio’s TFP involvement in South Africa, a beautiful story illustrates his dignity, unpretentiousness and elevation of soul.



Mr. Antonio with his father, charismatic leader of the TFP, in an International Congress in Brazil, in the 80s. Above, family photo in 2010. On the left, as the great apostle of Fatima, on a pilgrimage.

After his first year, Mr. Antonio returned to São Paulo, Brazil, for a month of rest. He met with Prof. Corrêa de Oliveira to discuss plans and whether to continue working in South Africa, advancing the Counter-Revolution in that nation. On being asked if that is what he desired, Mr. Antonio confided to Prof. Plinio that his stay there had affected his health, which was never robust. He thus was not inclined to return.

“I appreciate your openness and honesty,” said Dr. Plinio, “and I want to commend you on the fact that I see your disposition to return had I so insisted. I also noticed that even if, upon returning, your health would have deteriorated, you would not have blamed me for this suffering. I appreciate your attitude of soul.”

Thus, in 1990, Mr. Antonio moved to the United States to help the American TFP. He began by heading the youth formation department, to which duty he gradually added other responsibilities.

Mr. Antonio’s dignity, elevation of soul and spirit of sacrifice permeated his character and actions and was a source of admiration to his brothers in the TFP.

Crusade Magazine and America Needs Fatima

Still in 1990, though painfully short on help, Mr. Antonio took over the TFP bi-monthly magazine Tradition, Family, Property Magazine. At the time, it had only a few hundred subscribers. Under his direction, the publication changed its name to Crusade Magazine, which eventually became a powerhouse of Catholic Counter-Revolutionary thought in the United States by reaching 200,000 qualified readers.

Mr. Antonio edited Crusade Magazine and contributed articles, often to the back cover section, which dealt with the subliminal destructive inroads of today’s cultural revolution. This aspect of the counter-cultural battle was particularly dear to his heart.

Operative and Practical Wisdom

Mr. Antonio also had a good dose of operative wisdom. He had the gift of thinking long-term and picking the right person for the right job, which gave things a calm, enduring purpose. He was remarkably efficient in heading large projects in the America Needs Fatima campaign. His management philosophy was based on this phrase of Saint Teresa of Avila, “No hay que hablar; hay que orar y obrar.” (One need not talk but pray and act.)

He was responsible for the America Needs Fatima membership services, phone communications, correspondence, book publishing, direct mail design and execution and general planning and material production. Most recently, Mr. Antonio headed the America Needs Fatima online, web-site presence and video department, raising the e-mail subscriber list to 420,000 readers.

Mr. Antonio’s zeal and reputation in organizational matters led a friend to remark on his death, “God must have wanted Mr. Antonio to help organize some big operation in heaven.”

A Trusted and Respected Friend

TFP members and friends will always remember Mr. Antonio as a trusted and respected friend. At the collective



In his earlier years, Mr. Antonio devoted much of his time to the education and formation of Catholic youth. Here he is seen teaching at a TFP boys’ school in Spain in 1984.

level, he added cheer and joy to everyday life, as when he inaugurated and maintained the tradition of serving homemade pizza on Friday nights. This became a well-loved TFP tradition.

On a personal level, Mr. Antonio was a trusted friend to the troubled or tempted in the TFP. He acted as a guardian angel. In a discreet and direct manner, he inspired trust. Many confided their troubles to him. He rescued them from the tumultuous waters of doubt, temptation and discouragement by his disinterested friendship, good advice and brotherly support. I am one of the many who benefited from this fraternal gift.

A Profound Catholic Sense

About the Catholic sense, Prof. Corrêa de Oliveira says, “Our Lord is the vine, and we are the branches. The closer we are to the vine, the more life-sap we will have in us. In the same sense, the Holy Church is the vine, and we are the branches. The more we are united to it, the more sap we will have in us. The more united we are to the Church, the more our thoughts are her thoughts, the more our spiritual life will be deep and intense and the more complete will be our Catholic sense.”

Mr. Antonio was not only enthusiastically faithful to the Holy Catholic Church in its doctrinal teachings but was also deeply imbued with a Catholic sense. Both enabled him to navigate a host of thorny situations successfully, always finding the Catholic and sensible solution to each.

Although his Catholic sense was rooted in his Brazilian, Portuguese and Italian ancestry, Mr. Antonio was enthusiastic about everything Spanish. His favorite times were when he could steal a few days and go to Spain to visit the shrines, imbibe the culture, enjoy a good paella, visit friends and watch a bullfight.

However, what he most liked was the strong, direct spirit of the Spanish saints, such as Saint Teresa of Avila, who wrote: “Let nothing disturb you, nothing frighten you. All things pass. God does not change. Patience achieves everything.”

Exceptional Filial Devotion to His Parents

In recent years, Mr. Antonio shouldered with cheer and devotion the support and care of his ailing parents. His father died in 2020 after years of anguished suffering from Parkinson's disease. Mr. Antonio oversaw his daily care and many needs. He also touchingly supported his mother, displaying veneration, love and devotion, a sharp contrast to modern children's neglect of elderly and ailing parents.

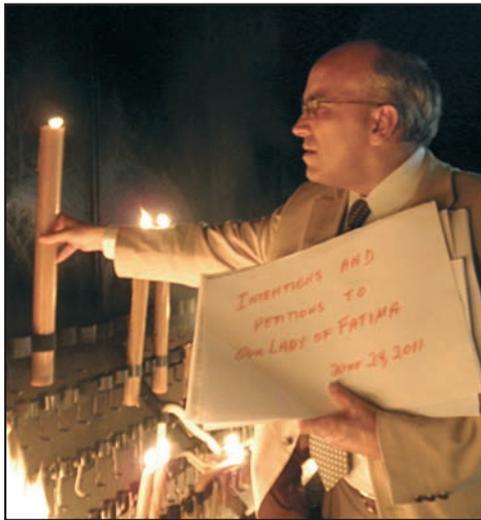
Mrs. Fragelli had left behind a secure, comfortable and pleasant life in Brazil to endure decades of adventure and challenging times to follow her husband in his leadership role in the TFPs in Ecuador and the United States.

Mr. Antonio ensured that his mother's lifetime of dedication would not go unsupported and unrewarded. He was determined that his mother not wait for eternal life to receive her just reward, resolving to cushion the sufferings of her declining years with noble generosity, service and filial dedication. Mrs. Fragelli referred to Mr. Antonio as "the son of my soul," a touching monument to motherly love and filial devotion.

Mr. Antonio's Final Days

Mr. Antonio contracted the Chinese COVID-19 virus while working and traveling in the line of duty. Flu-like symptoms gave way to viral pneumonia and prompted his hospitalization. Canon Ross Bourgeois from the Institute of Christ the King in Pittsburgh heard his final confession and gave him the Last Rites and Apostolic Blessing. Mr. Antonio expressed to his sister, Teresa, how happy he was to have made his confession. On her asking him if he was afraid, he said, "I long to see the face of God."

He only worried about two things: the care of his mother and Purgatory. Hours later, he was induced into a coma and intubated. While the prognosis of the disease was initially hopeful, an infected gall bladder signaled that Divine Providence was calling him.



Mr. Antonio delivers petitions and candles to the shrine of Our Lady of Fatima in Portugal, 2011.



Above: A man of many abilities, Mr. Antonio conducts a choir of TFP members during Holy Mass.



A visit to Block Island in Rhode Island offers a rare moment for rest and contemplation.

As his final agony approached, veteran TFP member and old friend Michael Gorre stood by his bedside, praying and consoling him in this most decisive time in life, when the soul passes into eternity and appears before the Judgment Seat of Almighty God.

His last minutes were blessed and calm. Michael Gorre prayed the Litany of the Dying, the Litany to Saint Joseph, other prayers for the dying and the Holy Rosary in his hospital room. At the recitation of the Fourth Sorrowful Mystery, the final steps of Mr. Antonio's own Via Crucis began. By the end of the Fifth Sorrowful Mystery, holding the crucifix in his hand, Mr. Antonio passed away peacefully. Mr. Michael held his arm and said, "Mr. Antonio, you ran the race. You fought the good fight."

Mr. Antonio Fragelli passed into eternity on Sunday, December 19, just before the 6 p.m. Angelus.

The news was relayed to the other TFP members who offered a Rosary for the eternal repose of Mr. Antonio's soul. "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints". (Psalm 116:15)

Prayers Requested

In closing, these words are both a tribute and a request for prayers, sacrifices and especially Masses for Mr. Antonio's soul. The last thing he would have wanted from his family, brothers and friends would be for them to cease praying for him after his death. Instead, he would have wanted Masses and good works to be offered for his soul to help him to heaven as soon as possible.

Mr. Antonio would also definitely not want people to fuss about him. He would have said in a few words, "Yes, thank you. Please pray for me, and get on with the fight."

To which, we reply: "Dear Mr. Antonio, you go to celebrate Christmas in Heaven with our TFP brothers, with Prof. Plinio Corrêa de Oliveira, with the angels and saints, and above all, with Our Lady and the Holy Trinity. Here below, we vow to carry on the fight! Pray for us. Amen!" ■



"Hip Hip Hurray!," 1888. Peder Severin Krøyer. Gothenburg Museum of Art.

THE TEMPERATE JOY OF ORDERED SOCIETY

BY ANTONIO FRAGELLI

This colorful painting by Peder Severin Krøyer portrays not only a joyful moment but it is also a scene saturated with civilization. The attitudes, the posture and the dress of all betrays the benefits of a multi secular process of Christian civilization which our modern world is fast leaving behind. The strong bond and comradery among the participants indicates a deep level of friendship among the dinner participants. The occasion is obviously a happy one where a mix of friends and family are celebrating either an important anniversary or maybe a common business achievement.

For the twenty-first confused century we live in, there are aspects that have become of capital importance to point out. The men are men and the ladies are true ladies and all are happy to be who they are; they could not imagine anything else. The men have all stood up for the toast while the ladies in their very feminine and dignified nature remain seated.

The joy and happiness is real and yet temperate. There is no overindulgence in drink or rough attitudes. These

men, being in good company, experience a moment of true joy among friends. They drink because they are happy, they don't drink to become happy. True happiness comes from within and not from without. It comes from order and orderly souls who live in temperance guided by principles and not the search of the next sensation or the stock market.

Contrast this scene to certain modern parties fully based on material and physical sensations. These parties run at the sound of a beat. There is a constant disorderly movement. People drink with no temperance that ends with repulsive hangovers if not an overdose of some sort and a total sense of emptiness. The chaotic frenzy of these gatherings are geared toward passing sensual pleasures and the suppression of all rational thought or elevation of the soul.

These are two different worlds, two different ways of living, two different stories: one short lived, ephemeral, shallow and soul-empty: the other, fully lived and long lasting with a bridge to eternity. ■