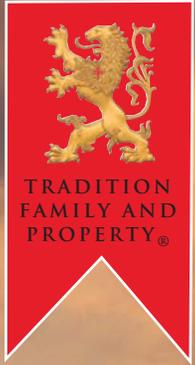


May/June 2005

CRUSADE[®]

MAGAZINE



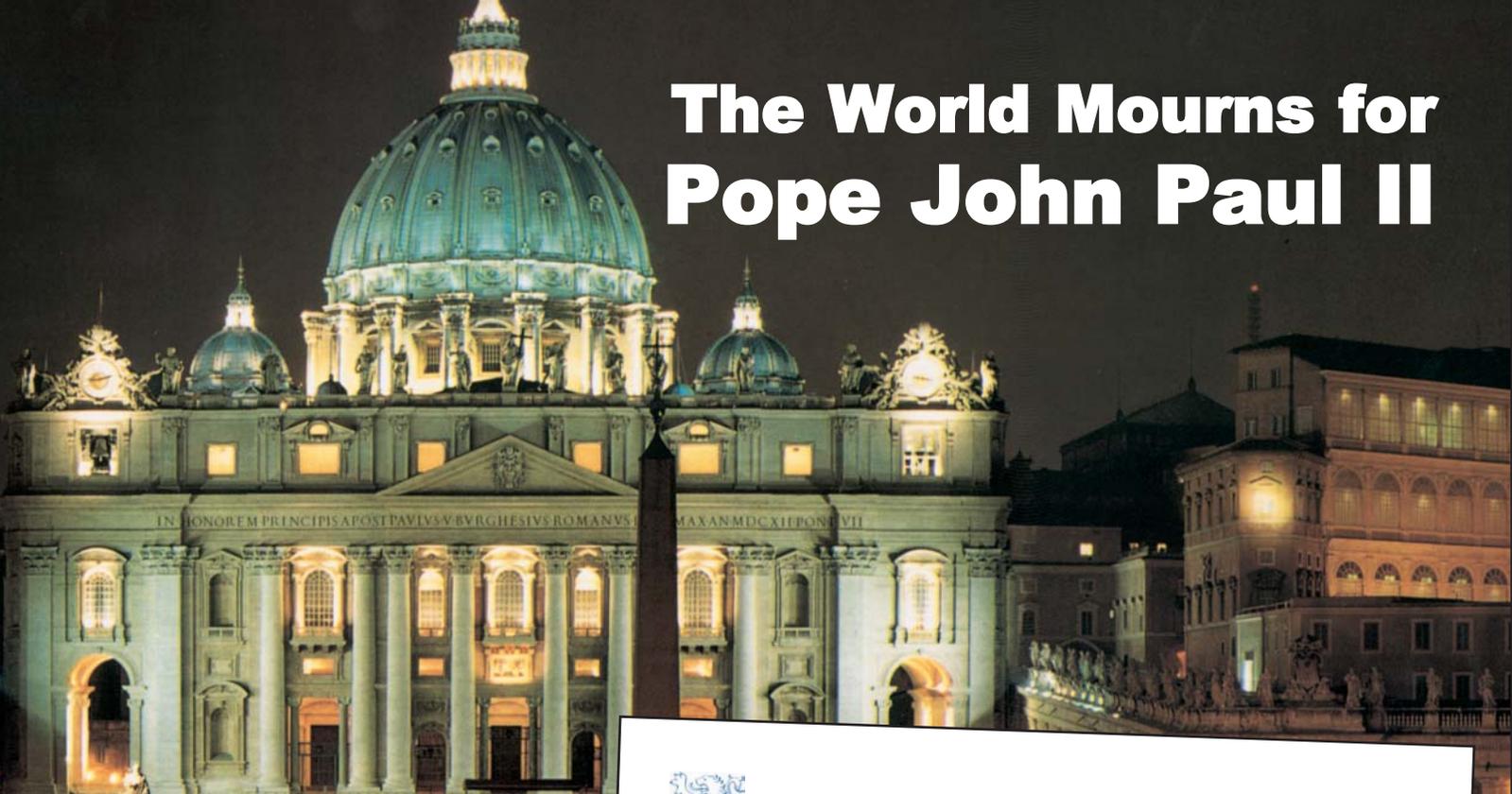
The Message of Fatima

More Urgent Than Ever



America Needs Fatima Progress Report Inside!

The World Mourns for Pope John Paul II



Upon the death of His Holiness John Paul II on April 2, 2005, and amid an outpouring of sorrow from Catholics and non-Catholics alike around the world, TFP President Raymond E. Drake sent letters of condolences to Cardinal Eduardo Martínez Somalo, *Camerlengo* of the Holy Roman Church; Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, Dean of the College of Cardinals; Cardinal Angelo Sodano, the former Vatican Secretary of State; and Archbishop Gabriel Montalvo, Apostolic Nuncio to the United States.

The letter to the right was sent to Cardinal Eduardo Martínez Somalo.



The American Society for the Defense of Tradition, Family and Property
-TFP-

April 2, 2005

VIA FACSIMILE

His Eminence
Cardinal Eduardo Martínez Somalo
Camerlengo of the Holy Roman Church
Apostolic Palace
Vatican City

Your Eminence:

As the universal Church mourns for the death of His Holiness John Paul II, the American Society for the Defense of Tradition, Family, and Property – TFP unites itself to the sorrow and prayers of the faithful around the globe.

On behalf of the American TFP's directors, members, and supporters, please accept my heartfelt condolences at the Pope's passing after so much suffering and struggle.

May the Blessed Virgin Mary, the most faithful spouse of God the Holy Spirit, obtain special graces and strength for Your Eminence and the other cardinals responsible for the Church in the days leading up to the conclave.

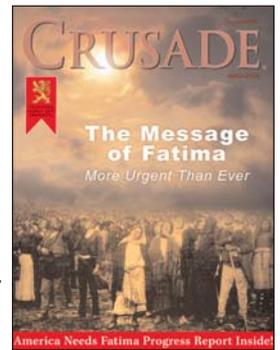
With sentiments of profound respect,

In Jesus and Mary,


Raymond E. Drake
President

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Crusade Magazine is a publication of The American Society for the Defense of Tradition, Family and Property (TFP). Direct all requests and inquiries to: *Crusade Magazine*, P.O. Box 341, Hanover, PA 17331 or e-mail to: crusade@tfp.org. Web: www.tfp.org. Tel.: 888-317-5571, Fax: (570) 450-6352. © 2005 by The Foundation for a Christian Civilization, Inc. This publication includes images from Dynamic Graphics, Corel, and Art Today which are protected by Copyright laws of the U.S. and elsewhere. ISSN 1096-3782 LCCN 98-641433 M-75



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CRUSADE

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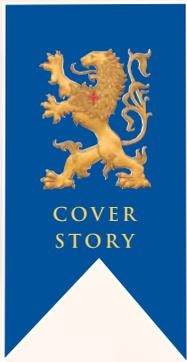
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The American TFP

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

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



The Message of Fatima More Urgent Than Ever

BY LUIS SOLIMEO

When Sister Lucy died recently at the age of 97, some have asked if the passing away of this last visionary closes the Fatima cycle, and if Our Lady's message to the three little shepherds is still valid and current.

To answer these two questions, we must examine the events and heavenly manifestations that occurred 88 years ago from the right perspective.

Importance of the Messenger and Divine Confirmation

An event of this nature is considered significant based on the importance of the person involved, and when its authenticity is proven beyond a doubt.

In the case of the Fatima apparitions, the leading person is the most exalted of creatures, the Blessed Virgin Mary, and God Himself authenticated the apparitions by means of the miracle of the sun, an event of biblical proportions.¹

The Stupendous Miracle of the Sun

The atheist journalist Avelino de Almeida (an unbiased source) described the events at the Cova da Iria in an article titled, "Amazing! How the Sun Danced at Noon in Fatima." Here follows an excerpt of the article published in the anti-clerical Lisbon newspaper, *O Século*:

From beside the parked carriages where many thousands stood, afraid to descend into the muddy soil of the Cova da Iria, we saw the immense crowd turn toward the sun at its highest, free of all clouds. The sun seemed

to us like a plate of dull silver. It could be seen without the least effort. It did not blind or burn. It seemed as though an eclipse were taking place. All of a sudden, a tremendous shout burst forth, "Miracle, miracle!" Before the astonished eyes of the people, whose attitude carried us back to biblical

Afonso Vieira saw it from 30 miles away. Such witnesses exclude all possibility of mass suggestion.³

The Message is Still All-important

An unprecedented miracle, such as that of the "dancing of the sun," would only make sense if the message it confirmed was also unprecedented in the history of heavenly communications. Thus, we should look at Fatima as heaven's message for our times par excellence.

Accordingly, the evils this message predicted are ongoing. Likewise, the solution is also still applicable to our days. What are these evils and the respective solution? Basically, Mary Most Holy came to remind a world steeped in apostasy of the gravity of sin and its consequences, the punishment of hell for unrepentant sinners, and the chastisement of the world for offending God.

To forestall the damnation of so many souls and God's chastisement, Mary Most Holy offered as a solution the devotion to her Immaculate Heart, the Communion of reparation on the First Saturdays for five consecutive months, and Russia's consecration to her Immaculate Heart.

The Blessed Virgin warned that, if her requests went unheeded, World War II would break out and Communism would spread its errors throughout the world, provoking wars and persecutions of the Church. Finally, she promised divine forgiveness and the triumph of her Immaculate Heart, which would be



The anti-clerical newspaper *O Século* reported the miraculous events witnessed by many thousands on October 13, 1917.

times, and who, white with terror, heads uncovered, gazed at the sun that trembled and made brusque and unheard of movements beyond all cosmic laws, the sun seemed literally to dance in the sky.²

John Haffert, who did so much to spread the devotion to Our Lady of Fatima in America and in the world, compiled a well-documented book with testimonies from eyewitnesses of the phenomenon. Among these are some who watched it nine miles away, such as Father Joaquim Lourenço. The writer

followed by Russia's consecration and conversion.

It is painfully obvious that her requests were not heeded in time. World War II broke out, and the errors of Russia spread throughout the world, not only with the implementation of communist regimes in many countries of Europe, Asia and America, but equally through the spread of doctrines and customs that are consistently leading the world to abandon natural and Christian order. Drives for homosexual "marriage," abortion and euthanasia are but a few of these manifestations.

Therefore, although the power of Communism has somewhat waned in its political form,⁴ its cultural aspects are now at their zenith. In fact, divorce, free love, and immodesty find their philosophical systematization and political support in socialism. Communism is merely socialism's extreme form (see box on this page).

In turn, socialism thrives on unbridled sensuality and unrestrained pride—two vices that bring down the barriers of proper behavior and thinking in accordance to the law of God and the order established by Him.⁵

Thus, we must admit that we are still within the phase of the chastisement foreseen at Fatima, and must strive to advance toward what Our Lady promised: the triumph of her Immaculate Heart.

Devotion, Conversion and Amendment

When Our Lady appeared in 1917, two

Communism, in its full expression, is an ideology that denies God's natural order and His natural law, which He inscribed on the hearts of all men. It rejects the basic rights to private property, monogamous and indissoluble marriage, and it transfers all personal responsibility to the Party and the totalitarian State. Dictatorship is not a chance fact in communism, but the logical and necessary consequence of its ideology. Denying God, it attaches divinity status to the Party and to the State. For strategic reasons, communism may take on different political forms, including the most apparently democratic ones, and hide behind the most varied labels. Already in the 1930's, it launched the so-called policy of the extended hand, in which it showed to the outside world a smiling, friendly face while, Stalin's iron hand imposed a ferocious, despotic dictatorship in Russia.

events were changing the face of the world: World War I and the Russian Communist Revolution.

World War I was not only one of the bloodiest wars in history, but also set in motion a cultural war that severed the West from the traditions of Christian civilization. This cultural war introduced grossly immoderate fashions, customs and personal behavior. It was the onset of a process that culminates in today's unabashed semi-nudism and complete sexual licentiousness.

While this was happening in the West, Communism dominated one of the most powerful countries in the East, the age-old empire of the Czars. From Russia, Communism advanced militarily and propagandistically throughout the world, spreading wars, revolutions, persecution of the Church, class conflict and social upheaval.

Consequently, a true conversion of humanity would necessarily mean not only a moral and religious transformation

but also a complete regeneration in the political and social fields.

This is why Mary Most Holy showed hell that chastises sin and at the same time mentioned the errors of communism. And she indicated an authentic and sincere devotion to her Immaculate Heart as a solution for these evils.

The Consecration of Russia and Devotion to Her Immaculate Heart

When Sister Lucy asked Our Lord why He did not convert Russia independent of the consecration, He gave the following answer:

Because I want My whole Church to acknowledge this consecration as a triumph of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, so that it may extend its cult later on, and place the devotion of this Immaculate Heart beside the devotion to My Sacred Heart.⁶

Hence, the request for the consecration of Russia to the Immaculate Heart

"Before the astonished eyes of the people, whose attitude carried us back to biblical times, and who, white with terror, heads uncovered, gazed at the sun which trembled and made brusque and unheard of movements beyond all cosmic laws, the sun seemed literally to dance in the sky."

—O Seculo

of Mary was made to propagate and increase this devotion.

Was There a Deadline for the Consecration of Russia?

Much has been written about the formalities attached to Russia's consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary (or the consecration of the world with a special mention of Russia in the formula proposed by Sister Lucy's confessor, which, according to her, was acceptable to Our Lord).⁷ However, there is a particular point that deserves to be addressed here. This point has to do with the most proper moment for this consecration whereby it can have its full effect according to divine designs.

Analyzing the Fatima message, along with the words Our Lord and Our Lady later communicated privately to Sister Lucy, and the events following the apparitions, we are led to conclude that this proper moment was during Pius XI's pontificate (1922–1939).

Analysis of Fatima's Message

After showing hell to the little shepherds, the Most Holy Virgin stated that the establishment of the devotion to her Immaculate Heart was the means by which sinners would avoid going there. And she made a promise:⁸

If what I say to you is done, many souls will be saved and there will be peace.

On the contrary, there would be a chastisement and a new war:

The war [World War I] is going to end; but if people do not cease offending God, a worse one will break out during the pontificate of Pius XI . . . to punish the world for its crimes, by means of war, famine, and persecutions of the Church and of the Holy Father.

Nevertheless, this terrible Second World War could be avoided in case the Holy Father consecrated Russia to the Immaculate Heart of Mary:

To prevent it [World War II and its consequences], I shall come to ask for the consecration of Russia to my Immaculate Heart and the

Communion of reparation on the First Saturdays. If my requests are heeded, Russia will be converted, and there will be peace; . . .

But in case the request went unheeded, the war would come, as well as the expansion of Communism:

If not, [Russia] will spread its errors throughout the world, causing wars and persecutions of the Church. The good will be martyred; the Holy Father will have much to suffer; various nations will be annihilated.

In this case, the effective consecration of Russia would only be carried out



Sister Lucy at the age of 93 as a Carmelite in Coimbra, Portugal. She made it very clear that the request of Our Lady for the consecration of Russia was meant to prevent World War II and its consequences.

after the triumph of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, as a consequence of this triumph:

In the end, my Immaculate Heart will triumph. The Holy Father will consecrate Russia to me, and she shall be converted, and a period of peace will be granted to the world.⁹

Our Lady and Our Lord's Words Confirm This

On April 24, 1941, Father José Bernardo

Gonçalves, S.J., Sister Lucy's confessor at the time, copied some texts written by her.

The seer describes a vision of Our Lady with the Infant Jesus on June 13, 1929 in which the Blessed Virgin communicates to her that the hour had come for the consecration of Russia to her Immaculate Heart. Sister Lucy then adds:

Later on, by means of an interior communication, Our Lady complainingly said to me: "They didn't want to pay attention to my petition. Like the king of France they will repent and do so, but it will be too late.¹⁰ Russia will already have spread her errors throughout the world, causing wars and persecutions of the Church. The Holy Father will have much to suffer!"¹¹

In a letter to Father Gonçalves, dated May 18, 1936, the seer narrates a locution she had from Our Lord regarding the same:

The Holy Father. Pray very much for the Holy Father. He will do [the consecration to Russia], but it will be too late. Nevertheless, the Immaculate Heart of Mary will save Russia. It has been entrusted to Her.¹²

Meanwhile, in 1940, at the beginning of World War II, Sister Lucy wrote to Pope Pius XII asking for the consecration. Nevertheless, she no longer mentions the possibility of preventing the chastisement and the war:

Our Lord promised only to shorten the days of tribulation with which He was determined to punish the world for its crimes through war, famine, and the persecution of the Church and Your Holiness.¹³

The Consecrations

Undoubtedly then, the chastisement predicted in case Russia was not consecrated to the Immaculate Heart of Mary was fully realized. The consecrations carried out afterwards were certainly pleasing to God but, as the historical events clearly show, they no longer had the power to forestall the chastisement.

These were the several consecrations:

- On October 31, 1942, Pope Pius XII

consecrated the Church and the human race to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, and on July 7, 1952, Pope Pius XII consecrated the Russians to the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

- On November 21, 1964, Pope Paul VI confided the human race to the Immaculate Heart of Mary.
- Pope John Paul II made two consecrations of the world to the Immaculate Heart of Mary: in Fatima, on May 13, 1982; and in Rome on March 25, 1984.¹⁴

Fatima, More Important Than Ever

We are in the midst of an unprecedented cultural war in which an aggressive and ideological secularism aims to destroy all that is still Christian in our culture and institutions.

Through judicial activism, orchestrated media campaigns and the entertainment industry, all our basic Christian values are being contested, ridiculed, disdained, blasphemed, ruined and destroyed.

Never has there been so many insults against our Blessed Mother. For example, a Catholic university in Dayton recently displayed a picture of Mary Most Holy among prostitutes.¹⁵ This same university was founded by a religious congregation dedicated to spreading devotion to Our Lady and has the offices of The Mariological Society of America (see also page 10).

To continue fighting for our Faith and our Christian identity, we must become ever more aware of the evils pointed out in Fatima: sin and its consequences, hell, and the chastisement of nations. We must remember that the solution for today's worldwide crisis lies in a true devotion to Mary confiding in her promise in Fatima, ■

"In the end, my Immaculate Heart will triumph."

^{*}For notes to this article, see page 19.

Sister Lucy's Life Before the Apparitions

BY LUIS SOLIMEO

Sister Lucy's recent death started much talk about her life, Our Lady's apparitions, and her mission as the keeper of Heaven's revelations and requests. With this article, we wish to focus on the lesser known aspects of this legendary Portuguese nun's life who, for almost a century, was seen as a link between heaven and earth.

A Portuguese Hamlet

Her memoirs,¹ written simply and directly with an innocent soul's candor, turn back the wheel of time to a Portuguese hamlet in the beginning of the twentieth century.

Aljustrel was a string of houses within the parish of Fatima and the Council of Ourem in the region of Serra do Aire in central Portugal.

In the region, Lucy's family was considered modestly well off as owners of rural property. They cultivated the land and raised a flock of sheep that the children took to pasture in the fields.

Lucy was born on March 22, 1907, the last child of Antonio dos Santos and Maria Rosa. There were six girls and a boy.

Hard-working Christian Life

The dos Santos led a rural, calm and laborious life, for work in the fields began at sunrise. Back at the house, Lucy's mother and older sisters baked bread, prepared the olive oil, tended to ducks, chickens and pigs, sewed, washed and tidied the house. Daily work was done between chores, conversation, merry songs, neighbors stopping in, and beggars passing by.

Her parents had that natural love for the poor, seeing them as their less-fortunate brothers, an attitude so innate to the Catholic spirit. Whatever was left after meals was kept for almsgiving. "It's here," Maria Rosa was wont to say, placing the container in a cupboard. "It's for



The young Lucy dos Santos, shown here at the age of ten, grew up in a deeply Catholic family that labored in the fields of rural Portugal.

the first beggar that comes knocking."

One day a beggar knocked and Antonio answered the door. Before giving the beggar the meal, Antonio asked Maria Rosa if it could be spared. "We have never lacked for giving to the poor," she answered. Gladly, Antonio handed it to the beggar and asked him to pray for him and Lucy. At this, Maria Rosa asked, "And nothing for me?" To which Antonio replied, "It's for you, too, because you and I are one; all that is mine is yours and our children's." "That's fine," she added smiling.

Helper and Counselor

Those with problems often went for counseling to Maria Rosa who was always steadfast, prudent, wise, and discreet. In one instance, when a young girl fell into sin, she appealed to Maria Rosa who treated her kindly and firmly, leading her to repentance and reconciliation with her family.

Lucy's mother was also the local "nurse," summoned at any time of day or night to help a sick person. Whenever the course of an illness lengthened, she had her older daughters take turns with her at the patient's bedside.

On Sunday afternoons, while her chil-

dren and her neighbors' children played in front of the house, Maria Rosa watched them from the doorstep, usually reading a book. She claimed learning so much from the saints' lives that she preferred their "company" to empty talk.

Lucy's First Holy Communion

Prayer was an integral part of family life. Lucy learned to say the Hail Mary while still in her mother's arms. As she was quick-witted and had a good memory, Lucy learned the catechism from listening to her mother teaching it to her siblings and neighbors.

When her older sister Carolina began to attend catechism class at the parish church in preparation for her First Holy Communion, Maria Rosa sent Lucy along despite being only six years of age. When the time came to set a date for the ceremony, the pastor informed the six year old that she could not receive Communion with the others. Upon hearing this, Lucy cried her heart out, leaning imploringly on the good pastor's knees.

Just then, Father Cruz, an exemplary priest and tireless missionary, walked in and asked the reason for the tears. Upon hearing the cause, he called Lucy aside and questioned her in detail.

"Father Pena," he said to the pastor after questioning Lucy, "you can allow this girl to receive. She knows what she is doing better than many of these older ones." The pastor demurred because of her age, but the famous priest replied, "It doesn't matter. I will take the responsibility." And thus Lucy was allowed to receive her First Communion at the age of six.

Mystical Grace

The happy Lucy told her mother all about it and asked to make her first Confession to Father Cruz, which she did. But on leaving the confessional, she realized that everyone else in line for Confession was laughing. Her mother then explained that, in Confession, one must whisper. She had spoken so loudly that everyone had heard her sins. Still, no one heard the priest's advice to her. Sister Lucy tells us herself in her memoirs: "My daughter," said the missionary, "your soul is the temple of the Holy Ghost. Keep it always pure, so that He may continue His divine action upon it."

"At these words," writes Sister Lucy, "I was filled with respect for my soul, and I asked my good confessor how I should do this."

"Go before the altar of Our Lady, and, on your knees, trustingly ask her to take your heart, and prepare it to receive her dear Son tomorrow in a worthy manner. Ask that He may keep your heart for Himself alone."

Sister Lucy continues: "There was more than one statue of Our Lady in the church. But as my sisters were in charge of adorning the altar of Our Lady of the Rosary, I had the habit of praying before this statue, and there is where I knelt again. I asked her with all the fervor of which my heart was capable, to keep my heart for God alone. On repeating this humble prayer with my eyes fixed on the statue, it seemed to me she smiled, and looking at me kindly was telling me 'Yes.' I was filled with so much joy that I could hardly speak."

On the next day, as a last recommendation, Maria Rosa told Lucy to ask Our Lord to make her [Lucy] a saint. She writes of this memorable moment: "When the priest came down the altar steps, my heart beat so hard that it felt as if it was leaping from my chest. But as soon as the divine Host touched my tongue, complete serenity and peace came over me. I felt penetrated by a supernatural atmosphere in which God's presence was so sensible that I seemed to see and hear Him. It was then I asked Him: 'Lord, make me a saint, keep my heart always pure, and for You alone.'"

"Here it seemed to me that our good God said to me in the depths of my heart these clear words: 'The grace granted to you today will always be alive in your soul, producing fruits of eternal life.'"

"I felt so transformed in God! . . . From that day on I lost the attraction I was beginning to feel for the things of the world, and was only comfortable in a solitary place where, alone, I could recall the delights of my First Communion."

A Long Life of Suffering

After these calm and happy times in the bosom of her family, a period of intense suffering began for Lucy's family. By divine permission, the apparitions provoked

Maria Rosa's mistrust of Lucy as well as the destruction of the family's crops by the thousands of pilgrims trampling on their fields.

Many times her mother exclaimed amid the hubbub caused by the apparitions, "Where did the joy of this family go?" Avoiding inquirers and his wife's lamentations, Antonio began to frequent the bar, though Lucy makes it very clear that he never gave himself over to drink, as some writers have written.

Years went by and the bishop of Leiria had to intervene before Maria Rosa accepted the apparitions as a true supernatural occurrence. As mentioned before, Divine Providence permitted this trial for Lucy's and her family's sanctification. Besides, Lucy's mother was a prudent Catholic slow to believe in apparitions before the ecclesiastical authorities examined them.

After all this, came Lucy's separation from her family, her departure for the big city, and later for the convent. She first joined the Dorothean Sisters, and then the Discalced Carmelites in Coimbra.

Perhaps at the moment of her death, Lucy dos Santos remembered the talk with her cousins after the second apparition of Our Lady on June 13, 1917:

Francisco asked, "Why did Our Lady have a heart in her hand that spread to the world that great light which is God? You were with Our Lady in the light that went down to earth, and Jacinta with me in the light that went up to heaven.

"It's because," Lucy answered, "you and Jacinta will go to heaven soon, and I will remain with the Immaculate Heart of Mary for a while longer on earth."

"How many years will you remain?" Francisco asked.

"I don't know; many."

"Was it Our Lady who told you?"

"Yes. And I saw it in that light that she drove into our chests."

And Jacinta confirms the same saying, "Yes, it's like that. I saw it too!" ■

Notes:

1. Lucy Santos, *Fatima in Lucy's Own Words* (Ravengate Press, 1976); see also Lucy Santos, *Fatima in Lucy's Own Words, Vol. 1* (n.p.:n.d.) and Lucy Santos, *Fatima in Lucy's Own Words, Vol. 2: Sister Lucy's Memoirs, Fifth and Sixth Memoirs*, ed. Louis Kondor (Stillwater, Mass.: Ravengate Press, 2002).

America Needs Fatima[®]

May/June 2005

PROGRESS REPORT



Protesting a Vulgar Play at St. Louis University

BY MARK SERAFINO

With prayers, banners and resolve, a group of twenty-one faithful Catholics gathered outside Tegeler Hall at St. Louis University on February 11, 2005 to protest the vulgar and immoral play “The V—— Monologues” that was presented as part of the national “V-Day” celebrations at universities across America. According to the Cardinal Newman Society’s Web site (www.cardinalnewmansociety.org), the play contains vulgarity, obscenity and explicit discussions of sexuality and sexual encounters, including lesbian activity.

Standing beneath a simple banner that read “Boycott ‘V—— Monologues,’”

supporters and friends of the American TFP and America Needs Fatima prayed the Rosary and the Litany of the Blessed Virgin Mary in a peaceful protest in reparation for the offensive play that was presented to students inside the auditorium at Tegeler Hall. They were undeterred by occasional shouts of obscenities, vulgar words and female student’s futile attempt at intimidation.

The protest also counted on heavenly intercessors. Bringing relics of Saint Ignatius Loyola, Saint Maria Goretti and Saint Bernadette, the protesters also asked the intercession of Our Lady of Lourdes, Saint Isaac Jogues, Saint



Concerned Catholics sent a loud and clear message to the administration of St. Louis University that vulgarity is not acceptable in Catholic or higher education.

René Goupil, Saint Jean de Brébeuf and Saint Agatha. After leaving the university, they made the short drive over to Saint Agatha’s Catholic Church to continue their prayers of reparation by assisting at the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass and making the Stations of the Cross. Finally, the night concluded with the protesters venerating a relic of the True Cross. ■

New Statues for the FCA Program

In the last issue of *Crusade*, we had an article titled, “Fatima Custodian Auxiliary Program, Young and Thriving.” We reported on the goals and encouraging early results of this new apostolate of America Needs Fatima involving married couples who dedicate a few hours of their busy week to bring the Fatima message to homes across America. *Thanks to our ANF members’ generosity*, twenty-three statues of Our Lady of Fatima, fresh from the painters’ hands, arrived at America Needs Fatima’s headquarters.

This new effort has swollen the ranks of the selfless, full-time volunteers of ANF who, since 1997, have been visiting homes tirelessly on a daily basis from sea to shining sea. Suddenly, ANF Director Robert Ritchie’s goal of “1,000 statues bringing Our

Lady’s blessings all over America,” is no longer far-fetched.

With fourteen teams currently committed, and others waiting for statues, we now have a total of thirty-seven statues ready to be brought into homes with Our Lady’s message.

This figure brings us that much closer to Mr. Ritchie’s goal of seventy-two visiting statues for 2005.

With Our Lady’s blessing, nothing is impossible, and with Professor Plinio Corrêa de Oliveira’s encouraging words, there is always wind in our sails: “We should always remember that every time we are working to help in someone’s sanctification we are working to reconquer that soul for Our Lady. We may thus confidently pray, ‘Mother, no one has the success of this work closer to heart than thou. Help us, then.’” ■

Each one of these new four-foot Fatima statues will be taken from home to home in a continual pilgrimage across America.





Catholic University Places Mary Most Holy Among Prostitutes

BY ROBERT RITCHIE



The Virgin of virgins suffered a most terrible insult at the Catholic University of Dayton when an “art” exhibit placed her among prostitutes. There are no words to express such an outrage. Above: Our Lady of Seven Sorrows.

If someone hung a picture of your mother among pornographic pictures and prostitutes, you would be upset and protest vehemently this offense.

This is exactly what has happened this March. The Blessed Mother was portrayed in this offensive manner at the University of Dayton, where an “art” exhibit in the Rike Center Gallery depicts “Mary amid images of prostitutes, pornography and firearms that shocked some students and professors” (Benjamin Kline, “UD Exhibit with Porn, Church Images Creating Debate,” *Dayton Daily News*, March 7, 2005).

The “art” exhibit was a mixed-media show called “Heartlands” by Derek A. Cracco, an assistant professor of art and art history at the University of Alabama at Birmingham. According to the *Dayton Daily News*, one collage features the Blessed Mother “surrounded by images of Nevada prostitutes, shown on their actual business cards, which the artist obtained in Las Vegas.”

What made this even more shocking is that the University of Dayton, founded in 1850 by the Society of Mary, is one of the nation’s ten largest Catholic universities. Its particular mission is to honor the Mother of God.

The exhibit had been explained as an exercise of “academic freedom.” The American TFP Web site joined TFP Student Action in asking its readers to protest by sending e-mails to ask that no other such exhibit dishonoring the Blessed Mother be displayed. Please check our Web site at www.tfp.org to express your outrage at this insulting

exhibit and to send in your protest.

Fervent Souls Defend the Virgin Mary

It is beautiful to see that while this blasphemy attempted to spoil Our Lady’s spotless purity, fervent and faithful souls rose to the occasion and consoled Our Lady with prayers, penance and reparation in peaceful protest.

Below are just a few of hundreds of e-mails sent to Dayton University from the online protest mentioned.

☒ Would you, Dr. Curran, place a photo of your mother amid pictures of smut and call it art? How dare you allow a picture of Our Blessed Mother, to be strewn amongst filth? “Give not that which is holy to dogs” (Matt 7:6).

D. W., A student at Christendom College

☒ Mary is one of the greatest gifts Jesus Christ has given us. We should treat Mary with honor, love, devotion and respect. She is our spiritual Mother, Queen of Heaven, and the scourge of Satan. Stop insulting Her and start honoring Her Immaculate and Sorrowful Heart!

C. B., A student at Louisiana State University

☒ I thought this institution stood for more than just “academic freedom.” My prayers rest with the administration; I can only pray and hope that the secularization going on here can stop. Take a firm stand—dare to be Catholic.

C. L., A student at University of Dayton

☒ I viewed the display. It is very upsetting that the university I graduated from would allow this! Please have this removed or remove my name from your annual fund drive list!

C. M., An alumna of University of Dayton

☒ Freedom is not absolute. There are obligations and consequences that follow from everything we do. We are obligated to honor and respect the Holy Mother of God, and not blaspheme our Lord for any reason, no matter how “sophisticated” that reason may seem. Freedom is subordinate to natural law and God’s law, which commands us to “honor our Father and Mother.” Is this how you honor your Mother by associating Her with gross evils?

J. K., A student at University of Wisconsin

☒ Some day soon you will stand in front of the Judge who loves His Mother. How will you defend yourself then?

E. M.

☒ As a Catholic mother, I am watching schools very closely to see which would be appropriate for my children to attend. Yours and Georgetown just made the blacklist. I will not send my children to a Catholic college or university that does not uphold our Catholic values.

J. L.



A Personal 'Thank You' to Our Children of Mary

BY KEVIN RITCHIE

Children of Mary is a very special group of friends at Our Lady's service. These devotees are a strong force of ongoing support behind America Needs Fatima. They make possible the continued spread of the Fatima message across America. Furthermore, this group is responsible for bringing Our Lady's Fatima message to thousands every year through the America Needs Fatima home-visitation program; fighting public blasphemy and defending the honor of Jesus and Mary; and reaching out to college students on over 373 campuses.

Since God will only reveal their good deeds and reward their devotion to His Holy Mother on Judgment Day, we would like, at least, to acknowledge their dedication in *Crusade*. This Children of Mary tribute is just one humble way to give thanks to God for Our Lady's devoted souls. They truly make a difference to Our Lady and to our mission!



Lapel Pin

In recognition for these dedicated soldiers of Mary, Fr. Kevin Beaton offers a Mass in their intention every Saturday morning. In addition, their names are placed on a beautifully framed plaque in the main hall at America Needs Fatima headquarters. They receive a poster and a lapel pin of Our Lady of Fatima. On their birthdays, ANF volunteers offer prayers and rosaries for each member. ■

These devotees are a strong force of ongoing support behind America Needs Fatima. They make possible the continued spread of the Fatima message across America.



The main apostolate made possible by America Needs Fatima's Children of Mary is the Fatima home-visitation program carried out by the above custodians throughout the entire country.

Finding the Fullness of Truth

BY GARY ISBELL



Many of the conference participants came to inquire and browse America Needs Fatima's exhibit of statues and publications and were assisted by TFP member Celso da Costa.

TFP members Marc Lascelle and Celso da Costa manned a booth at the first annual Fullness of Truth conference held February 25-27, 2005 in Corpus Christi, Texas titled, "A New Springtime of Catholic Evangelization." Conference speakers included Father John Corapi, S.O.L.T. and EWTN host Father Mitch Pacwa.

More than 2,000 people attended the event. "I have been particularly impressed with the people I've met at the conference. Their desire to spread the Catholic Faith was quite impressive," Mr. Lascelle commented.

One of the pilgrim statues of Our Lady of Fatima was present at the TFP booth. People stopped by constantly to pray before the statue, and many America Needs Fatima members came by to converse and exchange ideas. By the end of the conference, 150 families had signed up to receive a visit from the America Needs Fatima Custodians. ■



Attendees converse with TFP Speaker Byron Whitcraft after his thought-provoking presentation.

The Renaissance: A Rebirth or Regression?

BY FRANCIS SLOBODNIK

On March 11–13, 2005, TFP Speaker Byron Whitcraft treated Kansans in Topeka and Wichita to a presentation titled, “Was the Renaissance a Rebirth or Regression?” Mr. Whitcraft demonstrated with quotes from historical figures and slides of works of art of the time, that, religiously and ideologically, the Renaissance was not a rebirth.

Philosophically, the medieval scholastics used the best from Greece and Rome and discarded that which was incompatible with Christian civilization. Unfortunately, Renaissance man turned his back on Christian civilization and regressed back to the pagan ideas of ancient Greece and Rome, focusing his attention on all aspects of Greco-Roman philosophy, politics, art and culture.

The Renaissance man also introduced esoteric symbols into art as well as a preponderance of nudity. Foretelling present-day free speech trumping all rights, even God’s rights, artistic expression was considered to be an absolute right during the Renaissance. So nudity, which gravely violates the Sixth and Ninth Commandments, was considered acceptable as long as it was in art, which is a contradiction.

The social, political, religious, artistic and cultural corruption of the Renaissance helped to prepare the way for the Protestant Revolution by weakening Europe’s Catholic convictions. The turmoil that resulted caused not just the loss of countless lives, but also the loss of countless souls.

At the end of the presentation, those attending Mr. Whitcraft’s talk would certainly agree that the Renaissance was not a rebirth. ■

The social, political, religious, artistic and cultural corruption of the Renaissance helped to prepare the way for the Protestant Revolution by weakening Europe’s Catholic convictions.

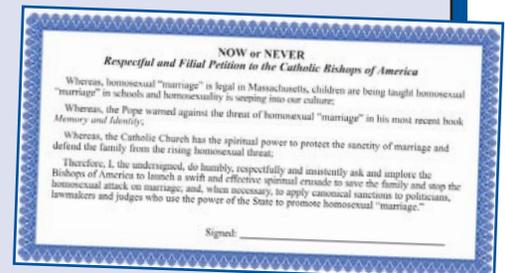
Now or Never Petition Drive Against Homosexual “Marriage”

For years now the homosexual agenda has been seeping into our culture as an alternative “lifestyle.” It is being taught at every level of education, shown as entertainment, seeping into the workforce, and thus being “weaved” into our social fabric.

Now, with homosexual “marriage” legalized in Massachusetts, and the media-backed homosexual minority pushing it on the nation, the American TFP has launched its *Now or Never* Petition Drive.

This mailing was sent to thousands of ANF members with the aim of collecting and sending 70,000 signatures to America’s bishops. It appeals humbly and respectfully to our nation’s shepherds to join this crusade and stop the homosexual culture that is threatening the foundation of our Christian society and the family.

“Even at this late hour, I’m convinced that the spiritual power of the bishops of America is the main thing, perhaps the only thing that can save



Facsimile of the petition to our bishops asking them to lead a crusade against the homosexual culture.

our families and our society,” writes Robert Ritchie coordinator of the *Now or Never* Petition Drive. “That’s why you and I must now urge and support all bishops—each one in his own diocese—to wage spiritual warfare against homosexual ‘marriage’ . . . because this is a great threat to our children and families.”

The Petition Drive appeals to the bishops not only to lead a spiritual crusade—always by peaceful and legal means—against the homosexual onslaught, but also to apply, whenever necessary, canonical sanctions to politicians, lawmakers and judges who use the State’s power to promote homosexual “marriage.” ■



Panel at the Polish League of Families' Conference. From left to right, John Horvat of the American TFP; Anna Sobecka, deputy of the conservative Polish League of Families, and Slawomir Olejniczak, president of the TFP-inspired Father Peter Skarga Association for Christian Culture.

Resisting the Pressure: Poland is Not Alone

BY JOHN HORVAT II

Speaking about the threat of same-sex “marriage” in Catholic Poland is like preparing an inland country for a hurricane. Yet this unlikely “hurricane” is now appearing on their horizon, and many Poles want to know how to deal with the problem, for Poland is expected to award privileges and status to homosexuals with its entry into the European Union.

As a speaker at a March 3, 2005 conference that was organized by the conservative Polish League of Families and the TFP-inspired Father Peter Skarga Association for Christian Culture (*Stowarzyszenie Kultury Chrześcijańskiej im. Ks. Piotra Skargi*), an organization that has been in the forefront of the traditional marriage battle, I was to assure Poles that they were not alone.

Indeed, very few Poles realized how extensive the American resistance to same-sex “marriage” has been, just how important the issue was in the November elections, and how nearly 30 American bishops publicly denounced “Catholic” politicians who support same-sex “marriage” and abortion.

Applying Lessons Learned

While the two countries are quite different, I outlined how lessons from our own American experience are applicable to Poland.

Our American experience has shown that there is an underreported groundswell of reaction against same-sex “marriage.” In this case,

Poles can learn from our experience that they are the majority, despite media and public pressure, and should pursue a persistent and uncompromising strategy.

I recounted how our experience in Protestant America showed just how incredibly effective Catholic bishops are when they speak out against same-sex “marriage” as they did last fall. In Catholic Poland, bishops and priests could be similarly effective.

Same-sex “Marriage” is not Marriage

I pointed out that we must never lose sight of the main issue of this debate: same-sex “marriage” is not marriage because of an insurmountable biological impossibility.

The American TFP’s book, *Defending a Higher Law: Why We Must Resist Same-Sex “Marriage” and the Homosexual Movement*, affirms emphatically that human nature defines the properties of marriage as between a man and a woman with the primary purpose of procreation and the education of children.

A Great Sympathy

Upon leaving, it was hard not to feel a grand sympathy for Poles. In such times, Poles have always had recourse to Mary Most Holy. In that tender devotion that I so often witnessed there, I could sense Providence’s special blessing and a promise that if Poles remain faithful She will protect them from the “hurricane.” ■

The Church’s Doctrine on Contraception Remains Unchanged

BY RAYMOND DRAKE
AND LUIS SOLIMEO

AIDS Prevention Cannot Justify Condoms—Their Use Is Inherently Evil and Ineffective

Recent statements by Cardinals George Cottier and Godfried Danneels stating that condom use is legitimate in certain circumstances to prevent the spread of AIDS are creating confusion among Catholics worldwide and causing enormous scandal.¹

Unfortunately, these high-ranking prelates have joined a growing number of prominent Church figures around the world affirming publicly that the use of condoms is sometimes permissible.

Such statements are particularly unfortunate in the context of a highly sexualized society, and while a powerful and active homosexual movement seeks to impose its ideology upon every nation.

It is with great consternation that we are obliged to oppose the public statements of such eminent cardinals. However, we cannot and will not ignore the infallible teachings of the Supreme Magisterium of the Church in such a delicate matter.

**For the continuation of this article, please visit http://www.tfp.org/TFPForum/catholic_perspective/can_the_church_change.htm
Or call us at 888-317-5571.**



Keeping Vigil with Terri

BY BENJAMIN HIEGERT

As a member of the American TFP's delegation, I did not know what to expect. In front of the hospice, there were people from all over the country. There were students from Virginia's Christendom College and Florida's Ave Maria University, and local activists were very helpful in providing support and advice to newcomers.

There was a continual flow of people who held 24-hour vigils. While the numbers fluctuated, up to 350 protesters gathered at one time. As an example of what went on during those days, we welcomed the arrival of two busloads of about 150 Catholics from Miami. The effort was sponsored by the Miami Archdiocese's pro-life office. We were also heartened by the presence of Sergio de Paz, the president of

the Cuban-American group, *Cubanos Desterrados* ("Exiled Cubans").

We traveled from Pennsylvania by car and joined the protest with a statue of Our Lady of Fatima. With our capes and standards, we were privileged to help organize some of the Rosary processions.

Many protesters had a very clear idea of the religious and moral significance of what was happening and were simply acting upon the Church's very clear teaching on death by starvation. It is hardly the extremist portrayal as the mistaken media reported.

Sometimes one had the impression that there were more reporters than protesters. The pictures I have seen on television and newspapers focused on those very few protesters that appear



The statue of Our Lady of Fatima edified the many courageous protesters who prayed the Rosary in procession at the hospice for Terri.

extreme, provocative or overly emotional. Nothing could be further from the truth. What I found was that the large majority were completely normal and law-abiding. The people I met and addressed were truly concerned Americans who would not stand by silently while an innocent woman is starved to death. ■

Conservative Conference at Gettysburg

BY JOHN RITCHIE



Students gather around TFP Student Action's table at the Gettysburg Conservative Conference.

On February 26, 2005, the Second Annual Gettysburg Conservative Conference was held in the Gettysburg College's ballroom, which is a few paces away from the historic Civil War battlefield. Organized and hosted by the College Republicans and other conservative students on campus, the event attracted students throughout the state. Many speakers addressed the gathering and delivered striking presentations, including Catholic University of America Professor Lee Edwards, Foundation for Individual Rights in Education (FIRE) president David French, and former U.S. Congressman Pat Toomey (R-Pa.). TFP Student Action was invited to have a table at the event to display its books and publications. Students showed special interest in the TFP's ongoing activities promoting traditional moral values and opposing the Cultural Revolution on college campuses. Petitions to President Bush were also collected in support of the Marriage Protection Amendment. TFP volunteers were happy to attend this conference, and are grateful to the College Republicans at Gettysburg College for the invitation. ■

Made for Heroism

BY MICHAEL GORRE



Made for Heroism is a four-page, bi-monthly publication of TFP Student Action written for boys ages 12 to 18. Its mission is to keep in touch with the many boys we meet at TFP youth programs and activities and continuing the spirit of camaraderie developed at those heartening events. *Made for Heroism* provides wholesome reading, inspiring Catholic stories of courage and valor from the saints' and heroes' lives, and a few mind challenges such as riddles with the promise of a worthy prize.

If any of our readers knows a boy who may be interested in receiving *Made for Heroism*, please contact Mr. John Miller at madedforheroism@tfp.org. ■

TFP
VIEWPOINT

Saving Terri Schiavo

TFP Calls on America to Reject Roe v. Wade's Bitter Fruits

Two weeks before Terri Schiavo's death by "legal" starvation, the American TFP published an ad in The Washington Times pointing out the great moral danger our country places itself in if it accepts such practices as "legal." The consequence of ignoring natural law is none other than social tyranny. To see such practices happen in a country that proclaims itself as the apostle of freedom is frightening. The statement concludes with an urgent appeal to President George W. Bush and the Senate for the nomination of federal judges with the courage necessary to defend natural law and reverse the nation's deplorable moral slope since Roe v. Wade.

America Is Unsettled Over the Case of Terri Schiavo

Fifteen years ago, she suffered brain damage that left her totally dependent on others for basic care, including nourishment. Pursuant to a court order, this nourishment is scheduled to end March 18, when Michael Schiavo, her estranged husband and guardian, will have her feeding tube removed.¹ Bob and Mary Schindler, Terri's parents, have been battling in the courts to prevent their daughter's death by starvation.

Terri Schiavo's Condition

Food and water are all Terri needs to stay alive. Reliable healthcare specialists testify that she is not comatose and can improve substantially with physical therapy. Many neurologists believe that eventually she could feed herself and even move from her wheelchair into her bed.²

Every Human Being Has a Fundamental Right to Life

Man's fundamental rights stem from his free and rational nature. No human law can abrogate these fundamental human

rights. Man's inviolable right to life is the first right and therefore the basis for all others.

For a guardian to claim, or a court to grant, the "right" to dispose of a charge's



Terri Schiavo underwent an excruciating starvation process that ended in her death after thirteen days. Above: Terri responds to her mother's caresses.

life is tantamount to saying that the person is not a human being but a thing; chattel that the guardian has—as stipulated in the maxim of Roman law—the right "to make use, enjoy the fruits, and dispose of."

Yet nobody has the right to reduce a

human being to chattel, be that human being a defenseless embryo, a totally dependent newborn, an elderly person, or one debilitated by trauma or illness.

Consequently, under natural law, no mother has the right to intentionally abort the child in her womb or to starve her newborn. Likewise, no family member or government official has the right to starve an innocent woman to death simply because she is disabled and burdensome.

Natural Law Binds Everybody in All Times

This natural law that protects the right to life and all other fundamental human rights is man's perception of the eternal law, the sovereign and divine will that created and ordered all things. Natural law sets the rules for moral behavior and should be the cornerstone of all human positive law.

Accordingly, the maxims of natural law are knowable by human reason. Almost 2,000 years ago, in his letter to the Romans, Saint Paul stated that the pagans knew the demands of this law, because they are "written in the hearts."³ That the ancient Greeks knew this is attested by the verses of *Antigone* (442 B.C.) in which the dramatist Sophocles writes of the "unwritten and unchanging laws" that govern human behavior.⁴

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Petition to Save Terri at Pennsylvania Campuses

BY JOHN RITCHIE

You would have been blind to miss members of TFP Student Action and Saint Louis de Montfort Academy at two Pennsylvania college campuses on two separate occasions in March. They collected petitions at Gettysburg College and at Penn State University urging Governor Jeb Bush to redouble his efforts to save Terri Schiavo from court-ordered starvation in Florida. They also distributed a flier titled, "Judging Terri: Thou Shalt not Kill."

Many students at both Pennsylvania campuses signed the TFP petition, eager to weigh in on such a crucial debate and to affirm the God-given right to life against the proponents of euthanasia. "Let me sign that," said a concerned woman at Penn State. "I doubt they would treat a dog the way they are treating Terri. Keep up the good work!" However, other students openly expressed their shameful morbidity. One such student stated, "People that aren't enjoying life don't deserve to live." "Just let her die!" shouted several students. Some took initiative to help the campaign. A student on a skateboard at Gettysburg College asked for a stack of petitions. "I'm going to get my whole class to sign these," he said.

Thus, the abortion mentality—the relentless march of the death culture—is spilling into other fields of society. Abortion kills unborn children. Euthanasia kills the elderly and the defenseless. The manner in which Terri's case was handled could not only determine the lives of many innocent Americans but the future



of the republic. Let us continue to pray that our political authorities

have the courage to protect innocent life, oppose the implementation of euthanasia in America, and do better than what another "political authorities" did in the name of Rome some 2,000 years ago. ■



Calling the attention of students at two Pennsylvania campuses, TFP volunteers passed out flyers and collected numerous signatures in support of keeping Terri Schiavo alive.

TFP Decries Terri Schiavo's Death:

The Nation is Stained with Shame and Humiliation

BY JOHN HORVAT II

The American Society for the Defense of Tradition, Family and Property (TFP) registers its indignant protest and heartfelt mourning at the cruel, shameful death of Terri Schiavo's starvation and the culture-of-death mentality that led to her execution.

Terri Schiavo's only crime was to be disabled and defenseless! She lost her liberty when she was denied independent counsel and, more importantly, an independent guardian. Her dogged determination for life was underscored by her thirteen days resisting death.

The nation is stained with shame and humiliation by her slow, painful public execution. Terri was abandoned to her

fate since the courts failed her and those vested with legitimate authority either felt powerless or simply refused to intervene.

The Schiavo tragedy extends well beyond family and friends. Millions of stunned and concerned Americans look upon the great sin committed in their names with astonishment, disbelief, shame and disgust. The true, hideous and vile face of court-ordered euthanasia is exposed and should serve as a wake-up call for all Americans to redouble their efforts and oppose today's culture of death.

The TFP looks toward Heaven, beseeching Mary's motherly intercession, asking God to have mercy on Terri, Florida and America. ■

...continued from page 15...

Natural Law Anchored in Divine and Eternal Law

When human laws are not based on these “unwritten and unchanging laws,” they are based on the will of legislators and judges. Whereas laws based on natural law bind with all the strength of human nature, those based on the will of legislators or judges bind only with the strength of their ability to enforce compliance.

However, on the strictly natural plane, the will of one man is equal to that of any other; therefore, no man can impose his will on others. Only a law backed by a will superior to man’s can bind other men. This superior will is that of God, the supreme legislator.⁵

Society Without Natural Law Leads to Tyranny

When natural law and its ultimate foundation in God’s eternal law is denied, either all law becomes impossible or it is left at the mercy of human caprice and easily becomes tyrannical. The power of legislators and judges becomes unlimited and consequently, through the approval or interpretation of laws, the greatest aberrations are imposed on society.

The “glorious freedom of the children of God” (Rom. 8:21) is abandoned and society sinks into a tyranny where the most sacred rights are cut down and trod underfoot.

From *Roe v. Wade* to Terri Schiavo

In 1973, the Court created the “right” of a mother to kill her unborn child. This decision was molded by a philosophy opposed to natural law and based on a mistaken notion of liberty.

Those who subscribe to this false philosophy naturally tend to take it to its final consequences, pressing for the creation of other “rights” equally detached from and opposed to natural law, such as embryonic stem cell research, human cloning, the practice of homosexuality, pedophilia, same-sex “marriage,” and euthanasia.

Terri Schiavo’s death by starvation is the logical progression of the unnatural philosophy stemming from *Roe v. Wade*.

Human Life Is Not Measured by Material Usefulness

Human life is a precious gift, indeed the greatest gift one can possibly receive in the natural order. It cannot be quantified, and its usefulness does not depend on others or society. First and foremost, human life is a personal and unique gift. Every human being is different and a masterpiece of the Creator.

The *quality* of human life does not

When natural law and its ultimate foundation in God’s eternal law is denied, either all law becomes impossible or it is left at the mercy of human caprice and easily becomes tyrannical.

depend on its material *usefulness* or exercise. Rather, this quality stems from the intrinsic value of human life, from the intellectual substance that is individualized in a specific human being.

The priceless gift of human life is present in the fragile newborn who cries when hungry and smiles when comforted; in the unconscious or crippled patient lying motionless on a hospital bed; in the aged man who has come to the end of his strength. Fragility and dependence provide charity—that most sublime Christian virtue—with an occasion for disinterested sacrifice and devotion. These lives so dependent on others possess a true and superior usefulness, one that ennobles and sanctifies the human race.

Human Life Is Never Reduced to Vegetative Life

Saint Thomas Aquinas affirms that “the intellectual soul contains virtually what-

ever belongs to the sensitive soul of brute animals, and to the nutritive souls of plants.”⁶ Thus, in common with the plant kingdom, men are born, grow and nourish themselves; in common with the animal kingdom, they have sensibility and movement; and in common with the angels, they have a spiritual life, intellect and will.

There are not three “souls” or vital principles in a human being. Rather, there is but one spiritual and immortal soul, which contains the two lower dynamic principles.⁷

To say that a patient is in a “vegetative state” is to speak metaphorically. The patient is still a human being, not a plant. Though the body’s debilities do not permit the patient’s soul to display its full splendor, that soul is still there. It is present in all its rationality, and therefore the patient is entitled to all the fundamental rights inherent to a human being.

While it is legitimate to use the expression *persistent vegetative life* as a technical simplification for medical purposes, one cannot turn a description of the patient’s state into a definition of the patient. One cannot attribute to a technical description a philosophical meaning it does not have. Even when in a state of “persistent vegetative life,” a human being remains a human being.⁸

Of What Use Are Human Rights If the Right to Nourishment Is Denied?

If man has a fundamental right to life, then he has a fundamental right to nourishment, since life depends upon nourishment. This right surpasses the right to private property. If a starving person has no other means to feed himself, he may take food from others who need it less. The inability of a newborn or a disabled person to feed himself does not diminish his right to nourishment.

It is not compassion but cruelty to deny an innocent human being food and water until he dies. This is to subject him to a slow and excruciatingly painful death. To paraphrase Madame Roland, “O compassion, compassion, how many

crimes are committed in your name!”

The Rights of Patients in a “Persistent Vegetative State”

A joint statement of the Pontifical Academy for Life and the World Federation of Catholic Medical Associations defined the rights of patients in a so-called persistent vegetative state as follows:

In particular, vegetative state patients have the right to:

1) Correct and thorough diagnostic evaluation, in order to avoid possible mistakes and to orient rehabilitation in the best way;

2) Basic care, including hydration, nutrition, warming and personal hygiene;

3) Prevention of possible complications and monitoring for any possible signs of recovery;

4) Adequate rehabilitative processes, prolonged in time, favoring the recovery and maintenance of all progress achieved;

5) Be treated as any other patients with reference to general assistance and affective relationships.⁹

John Paul II: There Is a Moral Obligation to Provide Nutrition and Hydration

Pope John Paul II has stressed the moral obligation to provide adequate nourishment to patients in conditions such as Terri Schiavo’s:

I should like particularly to underline how the administration of water and food, even when provided by artificial means, always represents a *natural means* of preserving life, not a *medical act*. Its use, furthermore, should be considered, in principle, *ordinary* and *proportionate*, and as such morally obligatory, insofar as and until it is seen to have attained its proper finality, which in the present case consists in providing nourishment to the patient and alleviation of his suffering.¹⁰

Vehement Appeal to Government Representatives

The American Society for the Defense of Tradition, Family, and Property (TFP), along with many other pro-life, pro-family organizations, urges our government representatives to intervene decisively in

Terri Schiavo’s case.

We urge Congress to approve and President Bush to sign into law the Incapacitated Persons Legal Protection Act of 2005 and any other effective legislative measures.

We urge President Bush to nominate and the Senate to confirm federal judges with the courage necessary to honor the unchanging norms of natural law and reverse the nation’s deplorable moral slide since *Roe v. Wade*.

We urge state governments to take similar steps in their jurisdictions.

The terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 opened one of the most decisive phases of our history. Dangers we did not imagine just a few years ago threaten America today. To face them victoriously, we need more than the concerted and dedicated sacrifices of the nation. We need the support of Divine Providence.

We can count on this blessing if as a nation we turn the tide of moral relativism and honor God and His law. ■

March 16, 2005
The American TFP

Notes:

1. Although Michael Schiavo refuses to relinquish his legal rights as Terri’s husband and guardian, he is reportedly living with another woman with whom he has had two children. See “Parents ask judge to let Schiavo divorce her husband,” CNN, Mar. 1, 2005 at www.cnn.com/2005/LAW/03/01/b.rain.damaged.woman.ap.

2. See Eugene F. Diamond, “Assisted Nutrition and Hydration in Persistent Vegetative State” at www.cathmed.org/publications/positionpapers.html; Statement of the Catholic Medical Association: Regarding the provision of artificial nutrition and hydration in the case of Mrs. Terri Schindler-Schiavo, Feb. 2005, at www.cathmed.org/newsroom/new/releases.html; Steven Ertelt, “Terri Schiavo Can Still Be Rehabilitated, Nobel Prize-Nominated Doctor Says,” LifeNews.com, Mar. 7, 2005, at www.lifenews.com/bio748.html;

and sworn statements by Dr. William Scott Russell at www.hospicepatients.org/william-scott-russell-md-05-01-affidavit-re-terri-schiavo.html and by speech language pathologist Sara Green Mele, M.S. CCC-SLP, at www.earnedmedia.org/mele.htm.

3. Rom. 2:14-15.

4. “Zeus [God] did not announce those laws to me. / And Justice living with the gods below / sent no such laws for men. I did not think / anything which you proclaimed strong enough / to let a mortal to override the gods / and their unwritten and unchanging laws. / They’re not just for today or yesterday, but exist forever, and no one knows / where they first appeared. So I did not mean / to let a fear of any human will / lead to my punishment among the gods.”

Sophocles, *Antigone*, [Ian Johnston, trans.] at www.mala.bc.ca/~johnstoi/sophocles/antigone.htm

. (Our emphasis.)

5. “Once we grant that human laws can impose a moral obligation, it is easy to prove that their binding power is derived from God. For this power supposes superiority over the consciences of men. But whence do men derive such superiority? Not from themselves, because all men are equal by their nature. This power therefore, must be derived from God, who alone is the superior of all men and has power over their consciences.” Fr. Charles Coppens, S.J., *A Brief Textbook of Moral Philosophy*, revised by Fr. Henry S. Spalding, S.J. (New York: Schwartz, Kirwin and Fauss, 1924), p. 63.

6. *Summa Theologica*, I, q. 76, a. 3. See also I, q. 78.

7. “We must therefore conclude that in man the sensitive soul, the intellectual soul, and the nutritive soul are numerically one soul.” *Summa*, I, q. 76, a. 3.

8. See *Address of John Paul II to*

the Participants in the International Congress on “Life-Sustaining Treatments and Vegetative State: Scientific Advances and Ethical Dilemmas,” Mar. 20, 2004, www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/speeches/2004/march/documents/hf_jpii_spe_20040320_congress-fiamc_en.html.

9. Pontifical Academy for Life and World Federation of Catholic Medical Associations, *Joint Statement on the Vegetative State*, made at the International Congress on Life-Sustaining Treatments and Vegetative State: Scientific Advances and Ethical Dilemmas in Rome, Mar.10-17, 2004, www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_academies/acdlife/documents/rc_po ntacd_life_doc_20040320_joint-statement-veget-state_en.html.

10. *Address of John Paul II to the Participants in the International Congress on “Life-Sustaining Treatments and Vegetative State.”* (Emphasis in the original.)



Our Readers Write...

We print on this page a very small selection of the hundreds of e-mails received during our campaign to save Terri Schiavo. Contrary to what the media says, America is largely a moral America.

✉ This goes to the core of who and what we are as Catholics. We cannot let her starve to death. Let her parents take care of her.

A.G. via e-mail

✉ Your personal courage in sustaining God's Fifth Commandment sends a mighty message to a world losing its moral compass.

A.B. via e-mail

✉ Removing nutrition from Terri Schiavo is murder even under court order.

Please allow Terri's mother and father to take her home and care for her. Please don't sentence her to a slow, agonizing death by starvation.

M.M. via e-mail

✉ Life is God's gift! If God didn't want her to live He would have called her home already. My prayer is that your

decision is to please let her live.

F.A. via e-mail

✉ Thank you for the best and clearest description of natural law I have read. The extension of Roe v Wade to the murder of this young woman is quite understandable. We are indeed barbarians to allow a return to such barbarity.

J. via e-mail

✉ This decision regarding whether Terri will live or die will effect the lives of many. Today infants are murdered before they are born. What will become of the disabled, alzheimer's patients, etc. if the court in Florida allows Terri to die?

B.K. via e-mail

✉ What is 'dignified' about a slow and painful death caused by the withholding of nourishment and hydration?

H.D. via e-mail

✉ We should all reject this 'dying with dignity' catch phrase with a passion. Just like the 'woman's right to choose', it is but another euphemism for legalized murder.

D.M. via e-mail

✉ The citizens of this country should not allow the activists judges to get away with killing Terri Schiavo. We, the people, should not sit back and content ourselves that the law was followed because a judge said so. Please do not forget Terri Schiavo

C.P. via e-mail

✉ If they decide to kill Terri, it will be a terribly symbolic act of another form of legalized murder in this country. I really hope this event serves to wake people up to the far-reaching consequences of moral relativism. If we can kill innocent human beings like Terri, where are we headed? We should pray that God have mercy on our country and intervene for Terri Schiavo!

S.B. via e-mail

From cover story on page 7...

Notes:

1. "So the sun stood still in the midst of heaven; hasted not to go down the space of one day." (Josue 10:13).

2. John M. Haffert, *Meet the Witness* (Ave Maria Institute, 1961), 107.

3. Haffert, *supra* note 2, at 64-65. There is good photographic documentation of this event some of it in Mr. Haffert's book.

4. We must not forget that Communism continues strong in China, Cuba, Laos, North Korea and Vietnam. In Russia, though the political system has ceased to be communist, key positions are still occupied by apparatchiks from the Soviet era.

5. Cf. Professor Plinio Corrêa de Oliveira, *Revolution and Counter-Revolution*, at http://www.tfp.org/what_we_think/_rcr_book_online/rcr_intro.html

6. Letter of Sister Lucy to Father

José Bernardo Gonçalves, S.J., written from Tuy (Spain) May, 28, 1936 in Pe. Dr. Antonio Maria Martins, S.J., *Memórias e cartas da Irmã Lúcia*, (Porto, 1973, L.E.), 415.

7. In a letter to Pope Pius XII dated October 24, 1940, Sister Lucy writes:

Most Holy Father, our good Lord in several intimate communications has not stopped insisting on this request, promising lately to shorten the days of tribulation with which He was determined to punish the world for its crimes, through war, famine, and the persecution of the Church and Your Holiness, if you will consecrate the world to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, with a special mention for Russia. (Pe. Martins, *supra* note 6, at 433).

8. "The Message of Fatima," at http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_20000626_mesage-fatima_en.html

9. "The Message of Fatima," n. 7, *supra* note 8: "In the "Fourth Memoir," Sister Lucy adds: "In Portugal, the dogma of the faith will always be preserved, etc. . . ."

10. "This is an allusion to the promise Our Lord made to Louis XIV through Saint Margaret Mary Alacoque. Our Lord promised to grant the king a life of grace and eternal glory, as well as victory over his enemies, if he would consecrate himself to the Sacred Heart, let It reign in his palace, paint It on his banners, and have It engraved on his coat of arms. As of 1792, after Louis XVI had been imprisoned in the Tower of the Temple, this request

had still not been heeded. This king then made the vow to consecrate himself, his family, and his kingdom to the Sacred Heart of Jesus if he regained his freedom, the crown, and royal power. It was too late: the king left prison only for his execution." (Antonio A. Borelli, John R. Spann, Plinio Corrêa de Oliveira, *Our Lady at Fátima: Prophecies of Tragedy or Hope?* (American Society for the Defense of Tradition, 1994), 75 n. 4.

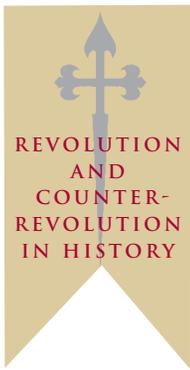
11. Pe. Martins, *supra* note 6, at 465.

12. Pe. Martins, *supra* note 6, at 415.

13. Pe. Martins, *supra* note 6, at 433.

14. Cf. Borelli et al., *supra* note 11, at 79-82.

15. Cf. http://www.tfp.org/what_we_do/index/dayton_protest.htm



Chapter XV

Christians Set Back the Turks in the Mediterranean

Part One: Malta

BY JEREMIAS WELLS

After the onslaught and occupation of Spain, North Africa, the Middle East and exposed areas of southern Europe by the Arab Moslems, continual warfare existed along the fault lines between the implacable foes. In the eighth century, the Christians halted the Moslem advance and slowly but inexorably pushed the invaders back along the lines of demarcation, until another wave of predators came rolling out of the East.

Background of Turkic Predatory Culture

When using the term “Turks,” we are speaking about a group of people sharing the same language and culture who formed several empires hostile to Western civilization. The tribal groups that moved westward across the Eurasian steppes were not ethno-genetically related but included people of many ethnic origins; nor did they possess a common physical appearance, though the ancient Turks probably came from the same Mongolian lineage. The journey from Mongolia to Europe over at least a couple of thousand years could be likened to a long bus ride. At each stop some passengers get off and others get on. Very few of those who started the journey are still on the bus at the end.

Their entire economic activity was devoted to livestock herding that supplied all their needs (food, clothing, tents and so forth.) and forced them to maintain a nomadic, wandering way of life in search of better pasturage. This brought them into contact with civilized, agricultural societies that the warlike nomads constantly raided and plundered. This avaricious tendency to acquire stolen wealth was revealed when

several renegade tribes such as the Huns, Avars and Magyars broke through the barriers into central Europe in the first millennium after Christ.

Archeological evidence shows that a Mongolian type of people began to expand westward along the steppes at about the same time they became efficient horseback riders. The steppes extend from Mongolia, past the northern edge of the Gobi desert and the southern end of the Altai Mountains, through modern Kazakhstan. The grasslands then skirt the Aral Sea and the southern extension of the Ural Mountains, (which divides Europe from Asia), passes north of the Caspian and Black Seas and ends at its western terminus, the Hungarian Plains. Beyond that point, the Turks could not occupy any territory until they learned to govern farming communities.

Early Turkic Steppe Empires

The first Turkic empire of the steppes

developed on China's northwest border in the fourth century A.D. when a group of ruling clans organized the previously decentralized tribes into a cohesive political unit. Known to the Chinese as the Hsiung-nu (Xiongnu according to the ever-changing academic spelling), these people established the imperial paradigm for the next several hundred years. Although they exhibited a certain political talent, the nomadic herdsmen still maintained their cultural habits, for they had no permanent houses, dressed in animal skins, ate raw meat and drank blood.

In order to keep a standing army and his supreme authority, the ruler (soon to be called a kaghan and eventually a sultan) recognized the essential element of his success: the necessity of military expansion to provide tribute as a reward for loyal service. Their plundering activities forced the Chinese to build their famous Great Wall, and on the western end a spin-off group crossed the Volga



The above illustration is a digital interpretative of what the Grand Harbor of Malta may have looked like in 1565. (1) Fort St. Michael is on the peninsula of Senglea. (2) Fort St. Angelo stands at the edge of Birgu. (3) Across the harbor to the left stands Fort St. Elmo.

Photo composition by Alvaro Zapata



Map showing the site of the Great Siege of Malta, 1565.

and displaced the Iranians as masters of the steppes. Known by the Byzantines and Europeans as the Huns, they terrorized western Eurasia and forced the Germanic tribes into the Roman Empire with the predictable results. At this stage in world history, empires of this nature reach a point of diminishing returns and decentralize into smaller kingdoms.

The cycle, however, continued. While Turkic empires rise and break up, they begin to control merchant and farming populations. Central Asia at the close of the first millennium had become a military state in which a conquering nomadic elite ruled an agrarian population, and the commercial routes from which they derived revenues. As their power and control moved westward across the steppes, another powerful influence was moving in the opposite direction: the compelling religion of Mohammed.

The point of convergence between the two earth-shaking powers occurred in the historically volatile region south of the Aral Sea (Transoxiana) that has spawned or cradled many violent forces throughout history. Attracted by the concept of Holy War and the promise of increased wealth from commercial proj-

ects and tribute, the Turks found the new religion quite congenial to their militaristic predisposition. Islam gave a religious justification to the Turkic way of life. So the Turks immersed themselves in their new identity with more depth and fervor than any of their predecessors.

Out of this cauldron of cultural and migratory unrest, the Seljuk Turks emerged as the new empire builders. Initially a bedraggled mercenary tribe of barbarous uncleanness, they broke free from the migratory currents and established a powerful empire through conquest. They rolled through Iran, captured Baghdad and occupied the better part of Asia Minor, which cut the Byzantine Empire in half, thus provoking the Crusades. All pastoralist empires reach a point when opportunities for booty and tribute diminish and they begin to fragment and decentralize. However, the rolling waves of Turkic migration continued and brought a more sustained and dangerous threat to Western Civilization.

Early in the fourteenth century, a tribe of mercenary warriors combined the ferocity of migrating Turkic horsemen with fervor of the Moslem *jihad* to attract other tribal leaders to their banner of holy

warfare and conquest. "Undefined by the ways of civilized living," as one admiring Arab historian put it, the Osmanli or Ottomans carried their brand of border warfare into the heart of Europe. In their inexorable march, they crossed the Dardanelles into the Balkans and in 1453 captured Constantinople. By the early decades of the next century, they occupied the Danube River Valley up to and including Budapest. (For details see chapter II, part one of this series, July/Aug. 2002.) Here we pick up the story as it pertains to the Mediterranean.

Significance of Malta

The rise to power of the Ottomans was accomplished by an accompanying indifference, spiritual infidelity and selfishness of many Christian leaders. When, however, the capacity for evil appears ready to suffocate the existence of mankind, the heroism and self-sacrifice of a handful of men with an enormous capacity for good renews the strength of the Christian side in the eternal battle.

Three Catholic leaders still had some fight left in them: Philip II of Spain, though somewhat deliberate and dilatory; Pope Pius IV who reconvened the Council of Trent and published the decrees that renewed the Catholic spirit; and most of all Jean La Valette, Grand Master of the Knights of Saint John of Jerusalem, now known as the Knights of Malta. After they had been driven from Rhodes by the Turks, Charles V settled them on Malta with the stipulation that they try and slow down the ravages of the Moslem corsairs who were abducting women and boys by the tens of thousands to be sold as slaves.

La Valette, both abbot and military commander, took over direction of the Hospitallers in 1557. Since he was at Rhodes when it fell in 1522, he knew what was coming. Ardent in prayer as well as in preparations, he used all the resources available to strengthen the fortifications. He also built up a large fleet whose naval strength began to alarm not only the Moslem pirates, but also their Turkish superiors in Constantinople. Commanded by experienced navigators, the vessels of the Order gained superiori-

ty because of the Knights' toughness, bravery and skill. Moreover, as true religious, they were fortified by vows of chastity and obedience; and as an order of chivalry inspired by the Faith, they professed a militant form of Catholicism.

Sultan Suleiman I

Under Suleiman I, ironically called the Magnificent, the Turkish Empire reached its greatest territorial expansion through the use of terror: immediate execution by decapitation of prisoners of war, mass kidnapping and enslavement of subject populations and slave raids by the sultan's Barbary pirates among other atrocities. His own subjects fared little better, for the penalty for adultery was death by stoning; and for thievery, the amputation of a hand. This brutal culture spread to the sultan's family life—if it can be called that—for he had his eldest son strangled along with his grandson because of his imagined treason. Four years earlier, harem intrigue resulted in the strangling of another son and his five children, including a three year old.

Harem intrigue also contributed to the Siege of Malta. One of the more enterprising Maltese Knights seized a fabulously wealthy commercial vessel belonging to the harem's chief eunuch and to Suleiman's daughter and several concubines. One can imagine the cries for revenge in the harem when they discovered their loss. But the principal reason was strategic: the island stood in the way of further Ottoman expansion in the Mediterranean. Sitting only 58 miles south of Sicily, the Knights of Saint John prevented the Turks from sweeping down on Sicily and Italy and carrying flame and sword into southern Europe. Suleiman, like his grandfather Mohammed II before him, wanted to humiliate the Christians by feeding his horses on the high altar of Saint Peter's Basilica in Rome.

Suleiman's commanders set sail in the early spring of 1565 with 170 fighting ships, about 80 transports, with 40,000 foot soldiers backed up by 25,000 sailors. Against this formidable array stood 700 knights and about 8,000 serving brothers, all professional soldiers, and the townspeople.

The Siege

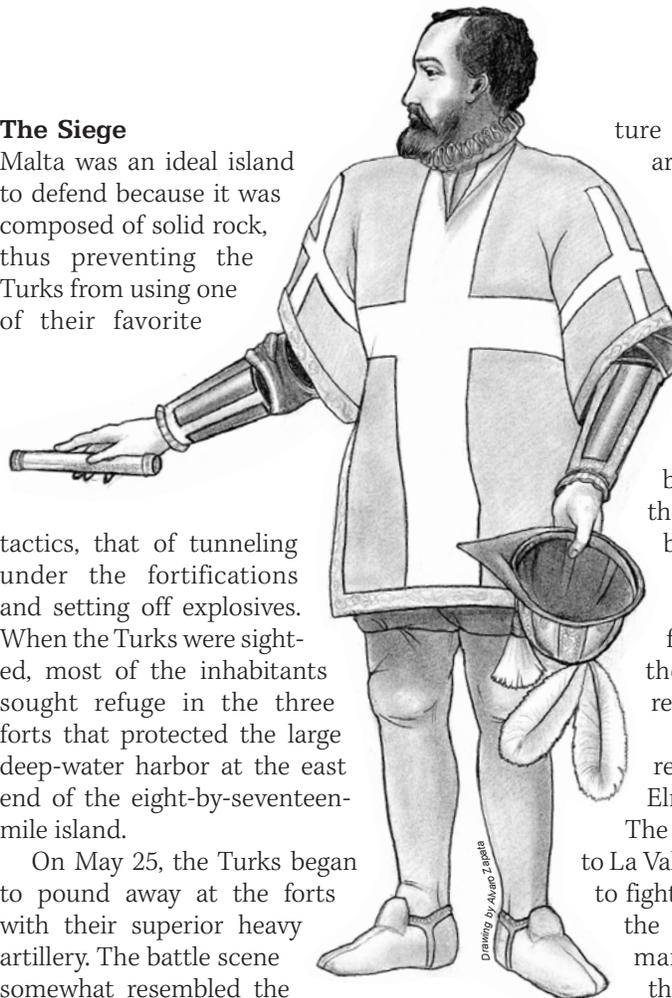
Malta was an ideal island to defend because it was composed of solid rock, thus preventing the Turks from using one of their favorite

tactics, that of tunneling under the fortifications and setting off explosives. When the Turks were sighted, most of the inhabitants sought refuge in the three forts that protected the large deep-water harbor at the east end of the eight-by-seventeen-mile island.

On May 25, the Turks began to pound away at the forts with their superior heavy artillery. The battle scene somewhat resembled the profile of a lion's mouth with the jaws open and the tongue partially protruding. At the tip of the tongue stood the smallest and weakest fort, Fort St. Elmo. Upon that vulnerable position the Turks concentrated their fearsome bombardment.

La Valette was no sentimentalist. Outnumbered roughly 7-1 ratio, he was fully aware that the majority of men under his command—if not all—would die. In the natural order of things, he was faced with what can only be termed a superhuman task. The improbable success could only be accomplished by a man who had renounced the world and abandoned himself to God. The purpose of his life was to use the gifts and prerogatives he had received from God for His glory. Nothing else mattered but the defense of Malta and, by extension, that of Christendom.

The Turks continued to pulverize St. Elmo not only from the heights overlooking the fort but also from the two points on the opposite sides of the harbor, thus enveloping the doomed struc-



**Jean La Valette (1494-1568),
Grand Master of the Knights
of Saint John of Jerusalem**

ture with 180 degrees of artillery fire. La Valette at first sent in reinforcements and had the wounded ferried back to Fort St. Angelo on Birgu under cover of darkness, but the Turks countered this with an effective blockade. Along with the 6,000 to 7,000 cannon balls hurled at St. Elmo, the Moslems attacked with several large forces of infantry, but the valiant defenders repulsed each attack.

After two weeks of relentless pounding, St. Elmo was ready to fall. The knights sent a message to La Valette asking permission to fight the final battle out in the open. The great commander replied that, if they didn't want to follow orders, he would send in troops that would. Shamed by the

rebuke, they agreed to stay inside the small fort and fight to the end. La Valette knew that Philip II was organizing a relief force and, in order to succeed in the island's defense, every inch of territory had to be defended to the death.

Incredibly, St. Elmo held out for another two weeks. Typical of the courage of these knights was that shown by two defenders who were so badly wounded that they had to sit in chairs while wielding their two-handed swords to face the final onslaught. The outside measurement of the fort was 250 yards at its longest by 150 yards and the square inside was the size of two tennis courts; yet the Turks suffered 28,000 casualties, including 8,000 dead, against 1,500 dead for the Christians with 4,000 wounded. Mustapha Pasha, commander of the Turkish land forces, exasperated by the great resistance, had the hearts of the captured knights ripped out of their bodies. La Valette, in turn, decapitated all his prisoners and forbade any more to be taken.

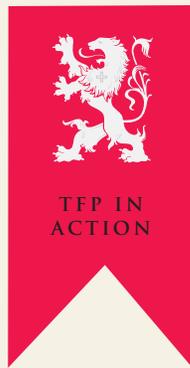
All that was left to the defenders after the fall of St. Elmo on June 23 were the two peninsulas Senglea and Birgu, the latter with the more substantial fort at its tip. The Moslems spent three weeks preparing for the final assault, which they launched from the landward side and from vessels in the harbor. Adding to the devastation was the Turkish cannon, now placed a mere quarter of a mile away on Corradino Heights. Throughout July and into the first week of August, assault after fierce assault smashed away at the crumbling fortifications. La Valette, a man of ingenuity, invented new weapons; an engineer of skill, he improved the fortifications even under murderous fire; a leader of wisdom and nobility, he refused to withdraw all the fighting men into Fort St. Angelo, for then the Turks could concentrate all their fire on one position. Furthermore the women, children and noncombatants who had worked and suffered for the Christian cause would thus have been exposed to the Turkish atrocities.

The constant bombardment had reduced the landward walls to rubble. On Birgu, several breaches were opened and on August 19 the Turks were on the verge of breaking through when the 71-year-old white-haired Grand Master rushed into the breach, rallied his troops and hurled the enemy back outside the walls. During another attack later that night the old man was seen, this time with a pike in hand, urging on his troops. However, his greatest asset was his dauntless courage in what must have seemed to be a hopeless situation and his unshakable faith in God. Furthermore, he knew that physical death is not the worst of evils.

But the situation was not hopeless. Philip II, exasperatingly deliberate as usual, had finally put together a relief force. The 8,000 Spaniards came ashore on September 7 and engaged the still numerically superior Turks. The latter, however, were broken in spirit and weakened in disease. They were eventually routed as they fled to their ships. Only 600 battered and bruised defenders were left, but they had triumphed in spirit long before the relief force had landed, and for that they could only thank God and La Valette. ■

Bibliographical Note

By far the most exciting version of the Siege of Malta is, Ernle Bradford, *The Great Siege* (London, 1961) though our statistics come from a shorter version, Eversley Belfield, *Sieges* (London, 1967). For the westerly, Turkic journey through the Eurasian steppes we consulted, C. V. Findley, *The Turks in World History* (Oxford U. P., 2005) and Denis Sinor, ed., *The Cambridge History of Early Inner Asia* (Cambridge U. P., 1990).



TFP Student Action at CPAC

BY JAMES BASCOM

On February 17–19, 2005, TFP Student Action members attended the thirty-second annual Conservative Political Action Conference (CPAC), held at the Ronald Reagan Building in downtown Washington, D.C. The largest gathering of conservatives in the country, CPAC 2005 was hosted by 68 of the most prominent conservative organizations in Washington, D.C. Nearly 4,500 conservative leaders, politicians, intellectuals and university and high-school students came to meet and learn from one another; discuss current political, economic and social issues; and strategize about the future.

TFP Student Action Director John Ritchie, as well as TFP members Cesar Franco, John Miller, and John Bascom, attended with Mr. Mario da Costa and Mr. Preston Noell of the TFP Washington Bureau. From the TFP display booth, they collected over 500 surveys and distributed more than 3,000 pro-life and traditional marriage fliers and hundreds of copies of *Crusade*.

Hundreds of university students from across the country attended this year's CPAC, and this year's group was particularly concerned with social

issues, such as abortion and same-sex "marriage," which are the center of the culture war waged on campus. Many expressed their appreciation for the TFP's focus on the traditional marriage issue. "This is my favorite table every year," said one student, "you are always fighting on recent issues like homosexuality."

However, on the last day of CPAC, there was a panel discussion on "Conservative Principle and Unresolved Issues: Differences Within the Family." One such issue was same-sex "marriage," and Patrick Guerriero of the Log Cabin Republicans, a homosexual advocacy group, was scheduled to speak.

Same-sex "marriage," like abortion, is not an "unresolved issue" for conservatives! In response, TFP Student Action distributed 1,000 fliers titled, "Is Same-Sex 'Marriage' an Unresolved Issue for American Conservatives?" To read it, visit http://www.tfp.org/what_we_do/index/cpac_statement.htm. ■



Above: TFP member Cesar Franco chats with participants while conducting surveys at the TFP booth.

Left: One of the sessions during the annual Conservative Political Action Conference (CPAC).



"The First Communicants" Jules Octave Triquet, Museum of City of Rouen, France

'THE FIRST COMMUNICANTS'

BY M. TAYLOR

If an artist ever captured “atmosphere,” Jules Octave Triquet did so in “The First Communicants.” His masterful brush depicts a First Communion in a medieval church in France circa 1900. A Sister of Charity, in the once beloved habit of the order, watches the procession.

In this painting, the artist achieved natural mood as well as supernatural unction. It pulls us in, lifts our spirits and soothes our wounds. The scene is steeped in what the great Catholic thinker, Plinio Corrêa de Oliveira, described as “that ‘mystical’ atmosphere of the Middle Ages that inspired the artist and attracted the angels.”

The peaceful church; the reverent faithful in their modest garb; the first communicants in their bridal gowns and pious attitude; the straight candles symbolizing their Faith; the cadence of the procession; the calm, attentive sister—all speaks to us of order, discipline, peace and tranquility. The filtering light from the stained-glass windows renders all that is white whiter, all that is light lighter, and recalls the angelic song of that first Christmas night, “Glory to God in the highest: and on earth, peace to men of good will” (Luke 2:14).

Yes, there is “Glory to God in the highest” in this ceremony, one of the most moving in the Catholic Church. All is in order as it should be. God is exalted while men adore. From the architecture of the church to the last detail in the attitude and dress of those attending and participating, we see reverence.

Here, the communicants approach the altar to receive their Eucharistic Lord for the first time,

wearing a spotless bridal gown, the symbol of the purity of their souls after their first Confession. Thus, the innocence of the atmosphere is symbolic and real. There is calm because there is order. There is peace because there is submission to God’s Law. There is innocence because there is virtue.

Something in this atmosphere guarantees these children’s future.

In stark contrast to this idyllic painting was a recent Confirmation ceremony. From the bare concrete walls of the flying-saucer-shaped church to the “Christian” rock ‘n’ roll band to young girls distributing Holy Communion in miniskirts, I wondered where I was. The altar was a twisted metal table in the middle of the precinct, and all pews were arranged stadium-like around it. *Where is the tabernacle?* I finally spotted it in a crevice within another twisted metal column-like structure in a corner of the “church.” After the confirmands processed out, children and adults overran the altar looking for friends and family, talking as if they were in their living room.

Certainly, there were people of good will here, but the atmosphere negated reverence and peace. As I watched the young teenagers leave, all I could think of was their vulnerability.

As an artist, I wanted to forget this scene.

Ceremonies such as the one painted by Triquet remind us of what is lost. Let us beg the Eucharistic Lord to restore to His Church “that mystical atmosphere . . . that inspired the artist and attracted the angels” giving glory to God in the highest and, on earth, peace to men of good will. ■

The scene is steeped in “that mystical atmosphere of the Middle Ages that inspired the artist and attracted the angels.”