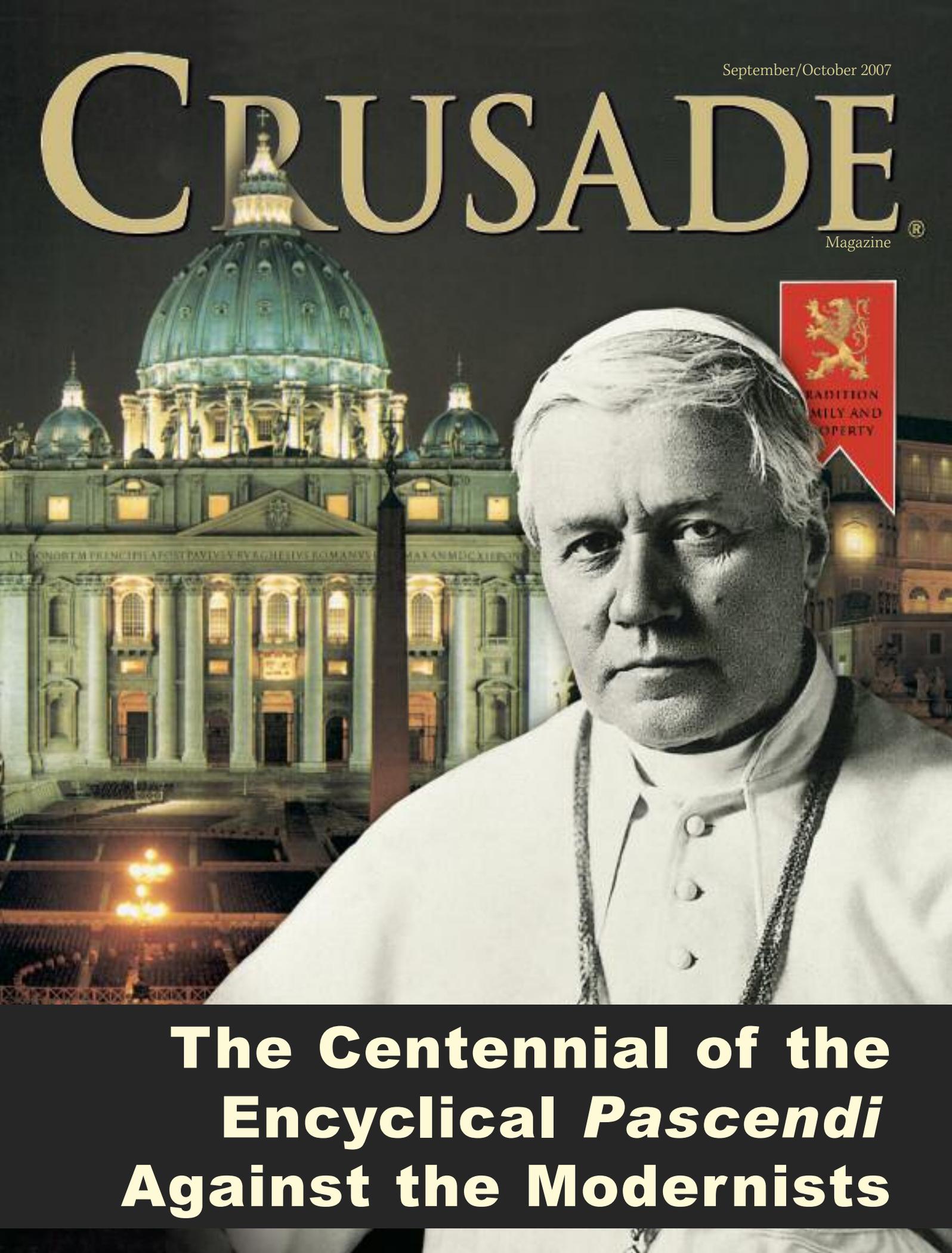


September/October 2007

CRUSADE[®]

Magazine



**The Centennial of the
Encyclical *Pascendi*
Against the Modernists**

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BY PLINIO CORRÊA DE OLIVEIRA

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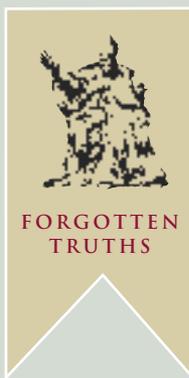
A new Swiss Guard swears allegiance to the pope with the traditional gesture of three extended fingers to signify faith in the Trinity.

Arturo Mari

Be Ye Therefore Wise as Serpents and Simple as Doves*

The following is an excerpt of a Pastoral Letter written by Saint Pius X on September 5, 1894:

Let priests take care not to accept from the Liberal any ideas which, under the mask of good, pretend to reconcile Justice and Iniquity. Liberal Catholics are wolves in sheep's clothing. The priest must unveil to the people their perfidious plot, their iniquitous design. You will be called Papist, clerical, retro-



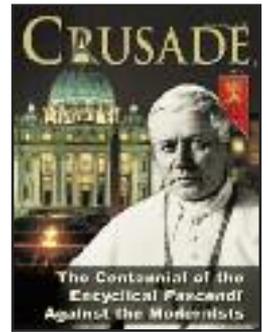
grade, intolerant, but pay no heed to the derision and mockery of the wicked. Have courage; you must never yield, nor is there any need to yield. You must go into the attack whole-heartedly, not in secret but in public, not behind barred doors but in open, in the view of all. ■

* Matt. 10:16.

Father Hieronymo Dal-Gal, *Pius X* (Wesminster, Md., The Newman Press, 1954), 74.

CONTENTS

September/October 2007



Cover:
Pope Saint Pius X
with the St. Peter's
Basilica in the
background.

TFP IN ACTION	
Up to the Challenge in Louisiana	4
COMMENTARY	
No Happy Ending for Abortion	6
COVER STORY	
♦ The Centennial of the Encyclical <i>Pascendi</i> Against the Modernists: "A Move as Important as the Victory in Lepanto"	8
♦ "Mama, I Am Healed!"	13
COMMENTARY	
The Myth of Our Immense Stability	15
REVOLUTION AND COUNTER- REVOLUTION IN HISTORY	
Clash of Cultures	
Part Three: Subjugation of the Aztecs	20
TFP IN ACTION	
Where will YOU be on October 13? Join a Public Square Rosary Rally Near You!	24



Page 4
Challenging boys to
be chivalrous and
strong Catholics.



Page 6 Hollywood and
abortion: No lights, no camera,
no action.



Page 15 Is America
immune to the great
catastrophes that toppled
ancient empires?

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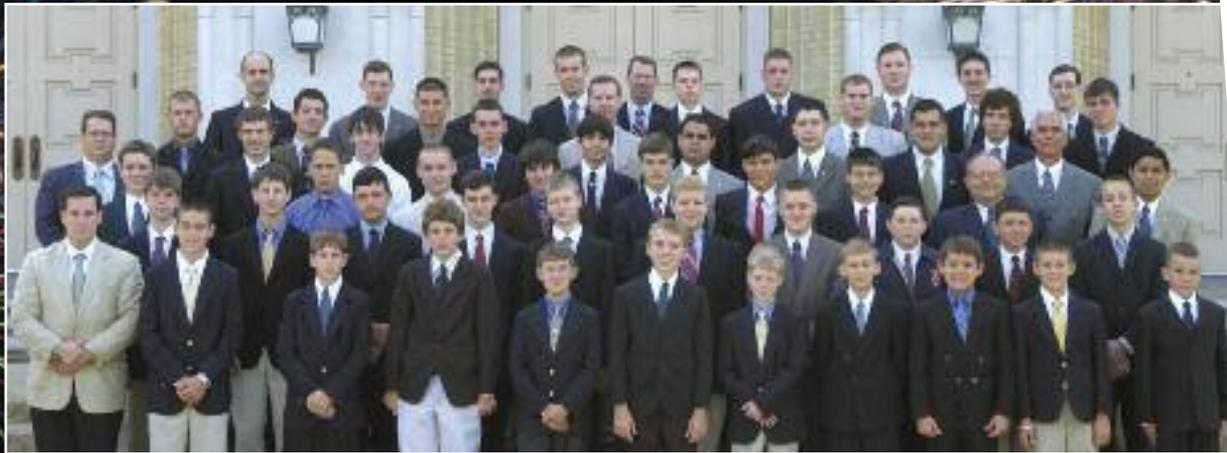
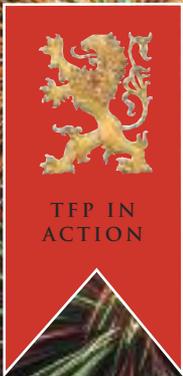
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The American TFP

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

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



Up to the Challenge in Louisiana

2007 TFP Boys Summer Camp

BY JOHN HORVAT II

Above: Participants of the 2007 Call to Chivalry Camp in Louisiana before attending Sunday Mass at Saint Agnes Church in Baton Rouge, La. *Below:* Roark Mitzell mesmerizes camp participants with his medieval warfare and swordsmanship demonstration.

With bagpipes blazing and a large American flag towering above, a massive crowd made way for the curious sight of two long lines of boys marching behind the flag to watch the Fourth of July fireworks aboard the *U.S.S. Kidd* anchored on the Mississippi River in Baton Rouge. From all sides came questions: Who are these boys who act like

such gentlemen? The repeated answer was they are Catholic boys from the nearby Call to Chivalry Camp, ages 12–18, who traveled from afar to attend the program that seeks to provide the right mix of informative talks, action-packed games and manly piety.

From the morning bagpipe reveille to the nightly Rosary procession, the Call to Chivalry Camp is an incredible sight. Co-sponsored by the American Society for the Defense of Tradition, Family and Property (TFP), St. Louis de Montfort Academy and Tradition, Family, Property—Louisiana, this year's camp was held at the Feliciana Retreat Center in Norwood, La., from June 27, 2007–July 5, 2007.

The ten-day program, whose theme was that of Catholic Spain from the Reconquest to the Carlist Wars to the Spanish Civil War, was packed with activities that delighted young men and boys. There was a grueling day hike, a protest at an abortion clinic, a music recital, archery, paintball games, skeet shooting, rock climbing, self-defense classes, a treasure hunt, swimming, chess tournaments and seminars where the boys heard about the exploits of Don Pelayo, El Cid, Saint Ferdinand and so many others.





Top left: Camp participants had an authentic taste of Spain with a meal of "Paella." **Center:** A talk on the Four Revolutions given by John Ritchie. **Top right:** The Rosary procession leading up to the Medieval Banquet (**lower right**). **Lower left:** Talks were enlivened by skits such as one portraying the Siege of the Alcazar of Toledo.

Piety is always an essential element in the camp program, where prayer, the Rosary and Holy Communion are the spiritual arms of these modern-day knights. In addition, they learned that knights are not just historic figures and participants are challenged to adopt the same code of chivalry in their modern-day lives. Whether at the games, learning to respect their

elders or praying before a relic of the True Cross during a "vigil of arms," the young knights were expected to behave like young gentlemen and strive for excellence.

TFP members also provided a special Fourth of July program for the fathers who joined their sons for the day. The fathers heard about today's Cultural War and the Islamic doctrines before joining their sons for a traditional barbecue. Fathers are always encouraged to attend part or the entire camp with their sons.

On the program's final day, parents

A healthy mixture of spiritual, mental and athletic activity helped make the camp a success. Below: A game of "French Football." **Bottom:** Tug-of-war at the Medieval Games.

Participants learned that knights are not just historic figures and they are challenged to adopt the same code of chivalry in their modern-day lives.





The rock-climbing wall tested the boys' determination and endurance.

came for the final festivities. They could see for themselves the results of the united efforts of so many friends, families and supporters in Louisiana who made the camp possible. Parents could watch their sons at the Medieval Games where their individual and team effort skills were put to the test, especially in the final grueling and muddy obstacle course.

After the boys cleaned up from the games, they all came in a Rosary procession to an outdoor pavilion turned banquet hall where a large statue of Our Lady of Fatima presided. The camp was pleased to have as guest of honor Monsignor Robert Berggreen of St. Agnes Parish in Baton Rouge who came frequently to the camp to say Mass and to hear confessions. Several fathers cooked a magnificent Louisiana-style feast that only added to the unforgettable atmosphere of the occasion. Speeches of farewell and gratitude ended the official program.

However, the boys still have much work to do. They must resist the horrible and relentless pressures of today's culture. They must find others who will join them in upholding Catholic values and they must get involved already at their young age in the cultural fight to uphold the values of Christian civilization so threatened today. ■



No Happy Ending for Abortion

BY JOHN HORVAT II

In the early days of women's "liberation," many activists saw abortion as a necessary and even desirable component of the sexual revolution of the sixties. "Freed" from childbearing, women could engage in numerous sexual relationships without consequences. However, like many of the tenets of feminism itself, such attitudes no longer prevail. In the grueling battle over abortion, there is growing public antipathy to this monstrous practice, and there is a growing remorse surrounding abortion that even its most ardent supporters find difficult to ignore and overcome.

That growing remorse is a psychological victory on the part of those pro-life forces whose tireless efforts have put a tiny human face on abortion. They have turned the debate into a moral problem that gnaws at the nation's conscience. It is a matter for which there is no happy ending.

Cultural War in Hollywood

One area where this attitude is reflected is Hollywood, a producer of happy and tidy endings.

American conservatives have fought a long and relentless Cultural War with Hollywood over its regular and shameless fare of violence, profanity, sex and nudity. Because of this, huge portions of middle America have abandoned the movie theater that they once frequented. Hollywood responded by simply writing them off.

The interesting news from the front is that Hollywood is steering clear of abortion, a development that seems to suggest that more than conservatives are disturbed by the portrayal.

In her June 10 article, "On Abortion, Hollywood Is No-Choice,"¹ *New York Times* writer Mireya Navarro reveals a skittish film industry tiptoeing around the abortion controversy. She reports that film characters who become pregnant rarely resort to abortion. They hardly utter the word. Writers will often have their characters conveniently miscarry or even keep the baby to avoid the A-word solution.

A Change of Heart?

Such portrayals hardly represent a

Despite all the rhetoric about "celebrating choice," feminists have been unable to erase the tragedy that inevitably follows abortion. They cannot shake the stigma that comes attached.

change of heart. However, it is indicative of a national uneasiness about abortion that is so sensitive that even “almighty” Hollywood dares not push the envelope.

In her article, Mireya Navarro mentions, “directors of feel-good movies don’t want to risk portraying their heroines as unsympathetic characters.” She quotes Jonathan Kuntz, an American film history professor at the University of California, Los Angeles, as saying, “It’s something that’s going to turn off people on both sides unless you do it just right. It’s no surprise Hollywood avoids it.” She notes that even in films that do feature abortion, such as *The Cider House Rules*, the women do not fare well in their portrayals. Abortion is simply not big box-office matter. Even television, where the market is more fragmented, avoids the topic of abortion to avoid alienating advertisers, affiliates and viewers.

Indeed, Mireya Navarro cites writers who have no problem broaching controversial topics, like nudity, premarital sex and homosexual “relationships.” However, when it comes to taking out abortion references, writers curiously do not scream censorship but seem spinelessly resigned to stay clear of the subject. One writer even meekly defended a network decision to pull an episode of his work as, “the best we could figure out under the circumstances.”

Christopher Keyser, co-creator of the Fox drama *Party of Five*, credits the vibrant pro-life movement as one reason for this attitude. “Even though a majority may favor abortion rights,” he mistakenly affirms, “the minority position is extremely active and vocal.”

In fact, not only is abortion avoided but the opposition to abortion is growing. “In the twenty-first century, abortion is at the top of the taboo heap,” said Robert Thompson, a professor of television and popular culture at Syracuse University, N.Y. “Abortion is not only at the top of it, but it’s climbed higher, where other taboos have fallen off the mountain.”²



Abortion is simply not big box-office matter. Even television where the market is more fragmented avoids abortion to avoid alienating advertisers, affiliates and viewers.

Making Hollywood Tremble

News of Hollywood’s refusal to deal with abortion has set the feminist blogosphere ablaze with recriminations at the film industry for caving in to the conservative and religious right. One commentator even accused Hollywood of fostering a “destructive pro-life culture.”

However, avoiding abortion on film is not about conservatives or their agenda. Hollywood has long ignored that market

niche. Rather, it reflects a much broader public perception that worries the film industry. Unlike so many other countries who have matter-of-factly accepted abortion as a “medical matter,” America is different.

Hollywood trembles because of the American people’s deep ambivalence about abortion. Despite all the rhetoric about “celebrating choice,” feminists have been unable to erase the tragedy that inevitably follows abortion. They cannot shake the stigma that comes attached. Even the most ardent pro-abortion political candidates must cast abortion as a sad and unfortunate necessity that is best avoided.

This happened because an extremely active and vocal pro-life movement has kept the moral reality of abortion before the public. By fearlessly opposing the killing of unborn human life, abortion has taken on a moral dimension that has divided the nation. However, even more importantly, it has divided the pro-abortionists and their sympathizers who now express misgivings and doubts about the barbarous practice.

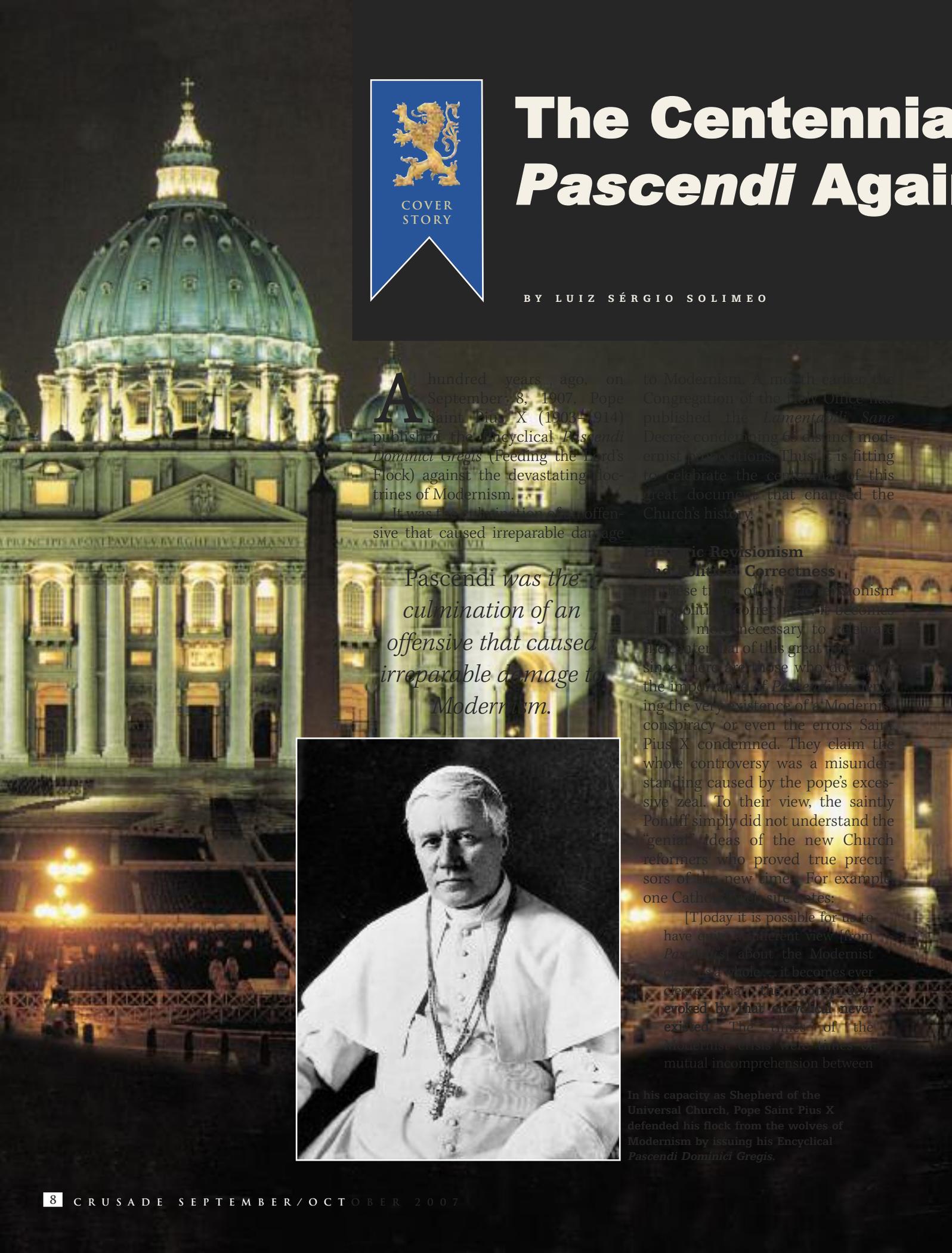
While the battle to end abortion is far from over, the silence in “no-choice” Hollywood screams volumes. ■

Notes:

1. Mireya Navarro, “On Abortion, Hollywood Is No-Choice,” *New York Times*, June 10, 2007, <http://www.nytimes.com/2007/06/10/fashion/10Knockedup.html?ex=1339128000&en=0f2c7cba204dee92&ei=5090&partner=rssuserland&emc=rs>.
2. J. Pender Zane, “Hollywood Tiptoes Around Abortion,” *Raleigh News & Observer*, June 12, 2007.



The annual March for Life in Washington, D.C. Thanks to the extremely active and vocal pro-life movement, abortion is a moral reality in America.



The Centennial *Pascendi* Again

BY LUIZ SÉRGIO SOLIMEO

A hundred years ago, on September 8, 1907, Pope Saint Pius X (1864-1914) published the encyclical *Pascendi Dominici Gregis* (Feeding the Lord's Flock) against the devastating doctrines of Modernism.

It was the culmination of an offensive that caused irreparable damage

Pascendi was the culmination of an offensive that caused irreparable damage to Modernism.

to Modernism. A month earlier the Congregation of the Holy Office had published the *Lamentabili Sane* Decree condemning 68 distinct modernist propositions. Thus, it is fitting to celebrate the centennial of this great document that changed the Church's history.

Historic Revisionism

Modernist Correctness
In these times of historic revisionism and political correctness, it becomes more and more necessary to celebrate the centennial of this great document, since there are those who deny the importance of *Pascendi* by denying the very existence of a Modernist conspiracy or even the errors Saint Pius X condemned. They claim the whole controversy was a misunderstanding caused by the pope's excessive zeal. To their view, the saintly Pontiff simply did not understand the "genial" ideas of the new Church reformers who proved true precursors of the new time. For example, one Catholic web site states:

[T]oday it is possible for us to have quite a different view [from *Pascendi*] about the Modernist crisis as a whole... it becomes ever clearer that the crisis evoked by that encyclical never existed. The times of the Modernist crisis were times of mutual incomprehension between



In his capacity as Shepherd of the Universal Church, Pope Saint Pius X defended his flock from the wolves of Modernism by issuing his Encyclical *Pascendi Dominici Gregis*.

l of the Encyclical nst the Modernists:

'A Move as Important as the Victory in Lepanto'

those who proposed to renew Catholic thinking in its different aspects, exegesis, philosophy, dogmatics and spirituality, [and the Pope]. It also becomes ever clearer that **the modernist system, as a system, was nothing but a construct of *Pascendi***.¹

Saint Pius X, a Sentinel on the Lord's Tower

However, truth is not found in politically correct historic revisionism. Rather, it is found in a serious study of the documents of the time about the Holy Pontiff and the modernists.²

Saint Pius X's unparalleled grandeur stands out by doing such an analysis. One can apply to him the words of Scripture, "I am upon the watch-tower of the Lord, standing continually by day; and I am upon my ward, standing whole nights";³ "The zeal of thy house hath eaten me up."⁴

Modernism and Catholic Liberalism

Modernism did not appear suddenly, nor was it an isolated episode in the Church's history. It was an integral part of the Church's great struggle against those who sought to adapt the Church's teachings and ways of being to the ideas and political regimes stemming from the Enlightenment and the French Revolution.

Pascendi builds upon the themes of its immediate predecessors, *Mirari vos* and *Singularis nos*, written by Pope Gregory XVI in 1832 and 1834, respectively, against the errors of religious indifference; *Quanta Cura* and the *Syllabus*, written by Pope Pius IX in



*One can apply to Saint Pius X the words of Scripture:
"I am upon the watch-tower of the Lord, standing
continually by day; and I am upon my ward,
standing whole nights."*

1864, condemning modern naturalism and rationalism; *Imortale Dei*, *Libertas Praestantissima* and *Satis Cognitum*, written by Pope Leo XIII in 1885, 1888 and 1896, respectively, against the philosophical, political and theological foundations of liberalism.

Thus, Saint Pius X affirms that the "Modernists offer nothing new—we find it condemned in the *Syllabus* of Pius IX, where it is enunciated in these terms:

'Divine revelation is imperfect, and therefore subject to continuous and indefinite progress, which corresponds to the progress of human reason.'⁵

The Conspiracy Is Published as a Novel

The plan to reform the Church was not a construct of *Pascendi*. It could be found in the works of the modernist movement and even in its literature.

In 1905, Antonio Fogazzaro, an Italian writer endowed with great literary talent, published the novel *Il Santo* (*The Saint*). It was placed on the Vatican's Index of Forbidden Books the following year. Notwithstanding the prohibition, an English translation was published in the United States the following year.⁶

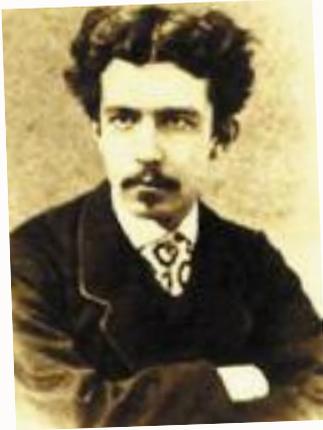
In his novel, the author gradually expounds the principal ideas and goals of the modernist conspiracy. For example, a character participating in a meeting of reformist priests and laity from several countries explains:

Well . . . **there are many Catholics in Italy and outside of Italy who, with us, desire certain reforms in the Church.** We wish them to be brought about without rebellion, and be the work of the legitimate authorities. **We desire reforms in religious instruction, ceremonies, clerical discipline, and reforms even in the highest sphere of ecclesiastical government.** To obtain these ends, we need to create a current of opinion strong enough to induce the legitimate authorities to act in conformity with our views, **be it twenty, thirty, or even fifty years hence.**⁷

Later on, another conspirator speaks and ironizes about the work they are carrying out, "**Catholic freemasonry?** Yes, the freemasonry of the catacombs."⁸ Further ahead in the plot, two priests walk down a dark street looking for a house where the conspirators are gathering. As one of them hesitates, doubting whether they find themselves before the right house, the other exclaims, laughing, "Go in, go in! **There is an odor of Luther in the air; it must be here.**"⁹

"A Silent and Secret Work"

In a letter of August 24, 1908, Father Georges Tyrrell, S.J., explained, "We must wait for the day when, thanks to a silent and secret work, we will have gained a



In 1905, Italian writer and modernist Antonio Fogazzaro put Modernism's ideas and goals in his novel *Il Santo*.

larger following in the Church for the cause of liberty."¹⁰

Father Alfred Loisy (1857–1949), excommunicated by Saint Pius X, stated, "The avowed modernists form a fairly definite group of thinking men united in the common desire to adapt Catholicism to the intellectual, moral and social needs of

today."¹¹ And elsewhere, "The fundamental principle of modernism is, 'the possibility, the necessity and the legitimacy of evolution in understanding the dogmas of the Church, including that of papal infallibility and authority, as well as in the manner of exercising this authority.'"¹²

Hence there cannot be any doubt about the modernist conspiracy's existence and its ultimate nefarious goal.

Saint Pius X Unveils the Modernist Conspirators' Tactics

Having looked at the conspiracy as described by the modernists them-

selves, let us now see how Saint Pius X described it: "**Modernists . . . recruit followers to the extent of forming a secret society** (*clandestinum foedus*) . . . are **injecting the virus of their doctrine into the veins of Christian society.**"¹³ The modernist tactic, the pope said, was to unleash "bitterness and hatred [up]on Catholics who zealously fight the battles of the Church" by accusing them of "ignorance or obstinacy." At the same time, "they seek to make a conspiracy of silence around them to nullify the effects of their attack" and turn into a martyr any of their friends who is punished by legitimate authority. For this reason, the pope emphasizes, "[t]he young, excited and confused by all this clamor of praise and abuse, some of them afraid of being branded as ignorant, others ambitious to rank among the learned, and both classes goaded internally by curiosity and pride, not infrequently surrender and give themselves up to Modernism."¹⁴ And, the saintly pope continues, "What efforts do they not make to win new recruits! They seize upon **professorships in the seminaries and universities, and gradually make of them chairs of pestilence.**"¹⁵

Prominent Modernists

Among the standard bearers of the modernist movement are, from England: Father Georges Tyrrell, S.J. (1861–1909), excommunicated in 1907; the Austrian-Scottish Baron Friedrich von Hugel (1852–1925), a polyglot with European contacts who served as the movement's international coordinator; Miss Maude D. Petre (1863–1943), a former nun and Tyrrell's confidante; from Italy: Father R. Murri (1870–1904), founder of Italian Christian Democracy, excommunicated in 1921; Father S. Minocchi (1869–1903); Father Ernesto Buonaiuti (1881–1946), excommunicated in 1908; writer Antonio Fogazzaro (1842–1911); from France: Father Alfred Loisy

(1857–1940), a rationalist exegete excommunicated in 1908; lay philosophers E. Le Roy (1870–1954) and Maurice Blondel (1861–1949); Father Herbert Marcel (1851–1916), also a philosopher who left the Church in 1902; Father Lucien Laberthonnière (1860–1932), Oratorian, philosopher of religion; Father J. Turmel (1859–1942), historian of dogmas; Father Albert Houtin (1867–1926), historian of religions who also left the Church; Monsignor Louis M. O. Duchesne (1843–1922), early Church historian, director of the French College in Rome who mentored the French priests mentioned *supra*; and from Germany: Herman Schell (1850–1906).

Conspiracy Theory?

In dealing with historical conspiracies, there are two errors. One is the simplistic error of reducing everything to mere conspiracies. The second is to also deny, *a priori*, the possibility of any conspiracies. By his very nature, man tends to associate with those who think like him or share the same interests or goals, as the old Latin adage says, *similis simili gaudet* (like rejoices in like). This natural tendency often gives rise to groups, organiza-

tions or movements of people who gather not only to discuss their interests but to coordinate their efforts for victory. History has seen all kinds of conspiracies, cabals, political machinations, military plots, theologians' factions, and so forth. Thus, speaking of a modernist conspiracy whose goal is to change the Church is hardly absurd. Saint Pius X himself speaks of a "secret society."

Modernist Doctrines

Below are quotes that summarize the doctrine denounced in the Encyclical with subtitles to facilitate understanding.

The fundamental error: An alliance of false philosophy with theology

"41. Their whole system, containing as it does errors so many and so great, has been born of the union between faith and false philosophy."

It is an evolutionist, agnostic philosophy that denies the value of human reason and the supernatural, and destroys the basis of theology that are the motives of credibility

"35. Thus do they argue, not perceiving that their determination of the primitive germ is only an *a priori* assumption of agnostic and evolutionist philosophy, and that the germ itself has been gratuitously defined so that it may fit in with their contention."

"6. Modernists place the foundation of religious philosophy in that doctrine which is usually called *Agnosticism*. According to this teaching human reason is confined entirely within the field of *phenomena*, that is to say, to things that are perceptible to the senses, and in the manner in which they are perceptible; it has no right and no power to transgress these limits. Hence it is incapable of lifting itself up to God, and of recognizing His existence, even by means of visible things. From this it is inferred that God can never be the direct object of science, and that, as regards history, He must not be considered as an historical subject. Given these premises,

all will readily perceive what becomes of *Natural Theology, of the motives of credibility, of external revelation.*"

Religion is reduced to an irrational sentiment, the supernatural to a "religious experience" and the divinity of Christ to a psychological phenomenon

"7. However, this *Agnosticism* is only the negative part of the system of the Modernist: the positive side of it consists in what they call *vital immanence* . . . [R]eligion . . . is due to a certain necessity or impulsion; but it has its

"They proclaim that Christ, according to what they call His real history, was not God and never did anything divine."

origin, speaking more particularly of life, in a movement of the heart, which movement is called a *sentiment*."

"10. Therefore the *religious sentiment*, which through the agency of *vital immanence* emerges from the lurking places of the subconsciousness, is the germ of all religion, and the explanation of everything that has been or ever will be in any religion. . . . even supernatural religion; it is only a development of this *religious sentiment*. Nor is the Catholic religion an exception; it is quite on a level with the rest; for it was engendered, by the process of *vital immanence*, in the

consciousness of Christ, who was a man of the choicest nature, whose like has never been, nor will be."

"30. [T]hey proclaim that Christ, according to what they call His *real* history, was not God and never did anything divine, and that as man He did and said only what they, judging from the time in which he lived, can admit Him to have said or done."

"31. [T]hey oppose the history of the faith to real history precisely as real. Thus we have a double Christ: a real Christ, and a Christ, the one of faith, who never really existed[.]"

Dogmas are fruits of sentiments and evolve

"12. Thus, We have reached one of the principal points in the Modernists' system, namely the origin and the nature of dogma. . . .

"To ascertain the nature of dogma, we must first find the relation which exists between the religious formulas and the religious sentiment. This will be readily perceived by him who realizes that these formulas have no other purpose than to furnish the believer with a means of giving an account of his faith to himself."

"13. Hence it is quite impossible to maintain that they express absolute truth: for, in so far as they are *symbols*, they are the images of truth, and so must be adapted to the religious sentiment in its relation to man Consequently, the formulae too, which we call dogmas, must be subject to these vicissitudes, and are, therefore, liable to change. Thus the way is open to the intrinsic *evolution* of dogma."

Not only dogmas must evolve, but also Church structures and the liturgy

"38. From all that has preceded, some idea may be gained of the reforming mania which possesses them: in all Catholicism there is absolutely nothing on which it does not fasten. . . . Regarding worship, the number of external devotions is to be reduced, or at least steps must be taken to prevent their further increase, though, indeed, some of the admirers of symbolism are disposed to be more indulgent on this head. Ecclesiastical government . . . [has to be

in] spirit with the public conscience, which is not wholly for democracy; a share in ecclesiastical government should therefore be given to the lower ranks of the clergy, and even to the laity, and authority should be decentralized.”

In moral matters, Modernists follow Americanism

“38. With regard to morals, they adopt the principle of the Americanists, that the active virtues are more important than the passive, both in the estimation in which they must be held and in the exercise of them.”

Destroying priestly celibacy

“38. The clergy are asked to return to their ancient lowliness and poverty, and in their ideas and action to be guided by the principles of Modernism; and there are some who, echoing the teaching of their Protestant masters, would like the suppression of ecclesiastical celibacy.”

Faith must be subject to science

“17. On the side of science the independence is indeed complete, but it is quite different with regard to faith, which is subject to science . . .”

Likewise, the Church must be subject to the State

“24. In the same way . . . as faith and science are strangers to each other by reason of the diversity of their objects, Church and State are strangers by reason of the diversity of their ends, that of the Church being spiritual while that of the State is temporal. Formerly it was possible to subordinate the temporal to the spiritual and to speak of some questions as *mixed*, allowing to the Church the position of queen and mistress in the same, because the Church was then regarded as having been instituted immediately by God as the author of the supernatural order. But his doctrine is today repudiated alike by philosophy and history. The State must, therefore, be separated from the Church, and the Catholic from the citizen. Every Catholic, from the fact that he is also a citizen, has the right and the duty to work for the common good in the way he thinks best, without troubling himself about the authority of the Church,



Pope Saint Pius X in full pontifical regalia. Among many other errors, Modernism seeks to democratize the Church’s government.

without paying any heed to its wishes, its counsels, its orders—nay, even in spite of its reprimands. To trace out and prescribe for the citizen any line of conduct, on any pretext whatsoever, is to be guilty of an abuse of ecclesiastical authority, against which one is bound to act with all one’s might. The principles from which these doctrines spring have been solemnly condemned by our predecessor Pius VI in his Constitution *Auctorem fidei* [against Jansenists].”

All religions are good because they express religious sentiment; the Catholic religion may be more perfect, but not the only true religion

“14. [W]ith such theories, . . . the way is opened wide for atheism. [O]nce . . . given this doctrine of *experience* united with the other doctrine of *symbolism*, every religion, even that of paganism, must be held to be true. What is to prevent such experiences from being met within every religion? In fact that they are to be found is asserted by not a few. And with what right will Modernists deny the truth of an experience affirmed by a follower of Islam? With what right can they claim true experiences for Catholics alone? . . . In the conflict between different religions, the most that Modernists can maintain is that the Catholic has more truth because it is more living and that it deserves with more reason the name of Christian

because it corresponds more fully with the origins of Christianity. That these consequences flow from the premises will not seem unnatural to anybody.”

Modernism is the synthesis of all heresies, destroys the notion of religion and already contains atheism, to which it leads

“39. And now, can anybody who takes a survey of the whole system be surprised that We should define it as the synthesis of all heresies? What remains, then, but the annihilation of all religion—atheism?”

“6. But how the Modernists make the transition from *Agnosticism*, which is a state of pure nescience, to scientific and historic *Atheism*, which is a doctrine of positive denial[?] . . . Yet it is a fixed and established principle among them that both science and history must be atheistic; and within their boundaries there is room for nothing but *phenomena*; God and all that is divine are utterly excluded.”

“39. The first step in this direction was taken by Protestantism; the second is made by Modernism; the next will plunge headlong into atheism.”

Modernism is nothing but a form of pantheism

“39. For if all the intellectual elements, as they call them, of religion are pure symbols, will not the very name of God or of divine personality be also a symbol, and if this be admitted will not the personality of God become a matter of doubt and the way opened to Pantheism? And to Pantheism that other doctrine of the divine immanence leads directly. For does it, We ask, leave God distinct from man or not? If yes, in what does it differ from Catholic doctrine, and why reject external revelation? If no, we are at once in Pantheism.”

Moral causes of Modernism: Curiosity and pride

“40. That the proximate and immediate cause consists in a perversion of the mind cannot be open to doubt. The remote causes seem to us to be reduced to two: curiosity and pride. . . .

“[I]t is pride which exercises an incomparably greater sway over the soul

to blind it and plunge it into error, and pride sits in Modernism as in its own house, finding sustenance everywhere in its doctrines and an occasion to flaunt itself in all its aspects. It is pride which fills Modernists with that confidence in themselves and leads them to hold themselves up as the rule for all, pride which puffs them up with that vainglory which allows them to regard themselves as the sole possessors of knowledge, and makes them say, inflated with presumption, *We are not as the rest of men*, and which, to make them really not as other men, leads them to embrace all kinds of the most absurd novelties; it is pride which rouses in them the spirit of disobedience and causes them to demand a compromise between authority and liberty; it is pride that makes of them the reformers of others, while they forget to reform themselves . . .”

Intellectual causes: Abandonment of Scholastic philosophy

“41. If we pass from the moral to the intellectual causes of Modernism, the first which presents itself, and the chief one, is ignorance. Yes, these very Modernists who pose as Doctors of the Church, who puff out their cheeks when they speak of modern philosophy, and show such contempt for scholasticism, have embraced the one with all its false glamour because their ignorance of the other has left them without the means of being able to recognize confusion of thought, and to refute sophistry. Their whole system, with all its errors, has been born of the alliance between faith and false philosophy.”

“42. They recognize that the three chief difficulties for them are scholastic philosophy, the authority of the fathers and tradition, and the magisterium of the Church, and on these they wage unrelenting war. For scholastic philosophy and theology they have only ridicule and contempt.”

Remedies

Study of Scholastic philosophy

“45. In the first place, with regard to studies, We will and ordain that scholastic philosophy be made the

basis of the sacred sciences. . . . And let it be clearly understood above all things that the scholastic philosophy We prescribe is that which the Angelic Doctor has bequeathed to us [L]et Professors remember that they cannot set St. Thomas aside, especially in metaphysical questions, without grave detriment.”

Rigorous selection of candidates to the priesthood

“49. [D]iligence and severity are to be used in examining and selecting candidates for Holy Orders. Far, far from the clergy be the love of novelty! God hates the proud and the obstinate.”

Bishops’ vigilance over new writings

“50. It is also the duty of the bishops

‘Mama, I Am Healed!’*

From the numerous miracles Saint Pius X performed during his life, we choose these examples as told by Father Dal Gal’s biography of Saint Pius X:

A young Irish girl had her head covered with sores. “If you bring me to Rome to the Holy Father,” she often said to her mother, “I shall be healed, because if Jesus gave His apostles power to work miracles, why should He not have given it to His Vicar on earth?” The child’s importunity finally prevailed upon her mother who, against the doctor’s advice, decided to undertake the journey to Rome.

The brave woman, standing in the midst of an Italian crowd and holding her little daughter’s hand, whose head was almost covered with bandages, presented a pitiable sight to the saintly pope as he moved slowly through the general audience. When he saw the little girl, he put his hand on her head, blessed her and smiled gently at her mother. Suddenly the child called out, “Mama, I am healed!” It is difficult to imagine that Irish mother’s astonishment and joy as she rolled off the bandages from her daughter’s head to find not even the slightest trace of the sores.

The same Father Dal Gal writes:

Among the charismata given by God to Pius X was his power of reading the secret thoughts of men. . . . One day, the superior of the Roman Trappist Monastery of Tre Fontana, faced with a momentous decision, went to the Pope to ask for advice. He had just fallen to his knees before the Holy Father when the superior was given detailed direction and counsel as to the course he should follow, before he had spoken a word on the subject. . . .

Apart from the gift of miracles and reading the secrets of the heart, the Holy Pontiff had the power of prophecy. This was declared at the diocesan and apostolic processes for the beatification. . . .

On an occasion, the pope was giving the Sacrament of Confirmation to several schoolgirls. He noticed one of them was crying and asked her what was the matter. The girl explained that her parents had separated and that now there was no one to look after her. The pope put his hand on her head and consoled her by saying, “Have courage, my child, when you go home you will find things all right.” After the ceremony, the schoolgirl returned home to be greeted by her father and mother who had reconciled. . . .

Pius X keenly felt the approach of the death and destruction soon to befall Europe and often referred to it with a tremor in his voice. “I see a great war coming,” he often said to his sisters who tried to console him, admonishing him not to think of such things. But he refused to be consoled and added gravely, “Yes, but it will be a very great war.” ■

*Adapted from Father Hieronymo Dal-Gal’s *Saint Pius X* (Dublin, Ireland: M.H. Gill and Son, 1954), 208–222.

MIRACLES!

to prevent writings infected with Modernism or favorable to it from being read when they have been published, and to hinder their publication when they have not. No book or paper or periodical of this kind must ever be permitted to seminarian or university students. The injury to them would be equal to that caused by immoral reading—nay, it would be greater for such writings poison Christian life at its very source.”

Bishops must forsake prudence of the flesh and act fearlessly

“51. [T]he Bishops, putting aside all fear and the prudence of the flesh, despising the outcries of the wicked, gently by all means but constantly, do each his own share of this work.”

“55. Let [the Bishops] combat novelties of words remembering the admonitions of Leo XIII. (Instruct. S.C. NN. EE. EE., 27 Jan., 1902): *It is impossible to approve in Catholic publications of a style inspired by unsound novelty which seems to deride the piety of the faithful and dwells on the introduction of a new order of Christian life, on new directions of the Church, on new aspirations of the*



The Battle of Lepanto by Paolo Veronese. Just as the victory of the Catholic fleet at Lepanto in 1571 greatly hindered Islam’s advance in Europe, so did *Pascendi* delay the spread of pantheism and atheism and provided great obstacles to the march of communism.

modern soul, on a new vocation of the clergy, on a new Christian civilization.”

Protection from Our Lord Jesus Christ and Our Lady, who alone crushed all heresies

“58. May Jesus Christ, the author and finisher of our Faith, be with you by His power; and may the Immaculate Virgin, the destroyer of all heresies, be

with you by her prayers. And We, as a pledge of Our affection and of divine assistance in adversity, grant most affectionately and with all Our heart to you, your clergy and people the Apostolic Benediction.”

A Move as Important as the Victory in Lepanto

It is fitting to close this article with the following commentary, written by Professor Plinio Corrêa de Oliveira, to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the Encyclical:

“If Saint Pius X had not furlminated the Modernist heresy, the world would have quickly marched toward pantheism and atheism. As a result, the whole action of communism all over the earth would not have met the enormous obstacles it

did. “The condemnation of Modernism was, therefore, an historical event as important as the victory in Lepanto. Thus, [by canonizing Saint Pius X] Pius XII must be eternally remembered by mankind since he has given us such a great saint as model and protector.”¹⁶ ■

Notes:

1. Pierre Colin, *Modernisme et crise moderniste*, http://www.esprit-et-vie.com/breve.php3?id_breve=63 (emphasis added) (author’s translation).
2. Cf. Émile Poulat, *Histoire, dogme et critique dans La Crise Moderniste* (Paris: Casterman, 1962); Father Arthur Veermerch, “Modernism,” at <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/10415a.htm>; James M. Egan, O.P., S.T.D., *Pius X and the Integrity of Doctrine*, in Episcopal Committee of The Confraternity of Christian Doctrine, *A Symposium on the Life and Work of Pope Pius X*, (Washington, DC: Confraternity of Christian Doctrine, 1946), 56; James J. Kelly, ed., *The Letters of Baron Friedrich Von Hügel and Maude D. Petre: The Modernist Movement in England*, <http://books.google.com/books?id=7osQKEmnXLEC&p>

g=PR19&lpg=PR19&dq=petre+ms+maud+d&source=web&ots=t2AReKA87D&sig=SbcoMGjgqxrRT36I_bBr sT-mF0#PPP1,M1; Thomas T. McAvoy, C.S.C., *The Great Crisis in American Catholic History—1895-1900* (Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, 1957); Francis Beaufort Thornton, *The Burning Flame—The Life of Pope Pius X* (New York: Benzinger Brothers, 1952); Father Hieronymo Dal-Gal, *Saint Pius X* (Dublin: M.H. Gill and Son, 1954); Iginio Giordani, *Pius X* (Milwaukee, WI: The Bruce Publishing Co., 1954); José-Maria Javierre, *Pi?o X*, (Barcelona: J. Flors, 1951); José-Maria Javierre, *Merry del Val* (Barcelona: J. Flors, 1961); Alberto Caturelli, “La Pascendi Dominici Gregis, una encíclica profética,” *e-aquinas* (April 2007), [http://e-aquinas.net/file.php?url=](http://e-aquinas.net/file.php?url=1176067246.pdf&doc=589)

1176067246.pdf&doc=589.
3. Isaias 21:8.
4. John 2:17.
5. Pope Pius IX, *Syllabus*, section I, “Pantheism, Naturalism, and Absolute Rationalism,” note 5, *Welcome to the Catholic Church* on CD-ROM, CD-ROM, version 2.00, Harmony Media Inc., 2001.
6. Antonio Fogazzaro, *The Saint* (New York: G.P. Putnam’s Sons, 1906).
7. *Ibid.* 52 (emphasis added).
8. *Ibid.* 68 (emphasis added).
9. *Ibid.* 285 (emphasis added).
10. Quoted by J. Rivière, *Modernisme*, in Vacant-Mangenot-Aman, *Dictionnaire de Théologie Catholique*, t. X, deuxième partie, col. 2042 (Paris: Letouzey et Ané, 1929) (author’s translation).
11. Cited by Father Arthur Veermerch, “Modernism,” [http://](http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/10415a.htm)

www.newadvent.org/cathen/10415a.htm.
12. *Ibid.*
13. Saint Pius X, *Motu proprio, Sacrorum Antistitum*, Introduction (September 1, 1910) (emphasis added).
14. Pope Pius X, *Pascendi Dominici Gregis*, “On the Doctrines of the Modernists,” ¶ 42, http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/pius_x/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-x_enc_19070908_pascendi-dominici-gregis_en.html.
15. *Ibid.* ¶ 43. All subsequent paragraphs numbers are indicated at the start of each quotation.
16. Plinio Corrêa de Oliveira, “O cinquentenário da *Pascendi*,” *Catolicismo* (São Paulo, Brazil, September 1957).



COMMENTARY

The Myth of Our Immense Stability

BY JOHN HORVAT II

The recent legislative refusal in Massachusetts to put homosexual “marriage” on the ballot has prompted some to question the need to oppose any measures involving public morality. After all, they reason, life goes on regardless of the outcome.

As one prominent Catholic couple, rejoicing over the ballot initiative’s defeat, wrote in a *Boston Herald* editorial, “On May 17, 2004, the day marriage was made legal for everyone in Massachusetts, we looked out our window to see—contrary to apocalyptic predictions—that the sun had actually risen. Life went on quite normally not only that day, but every day since.”¹

Indeed, those who defend public morality seem given to apocalyptic predictions. They see dire consequences in a future that never seems to arrive, and through it all life goes on. So many appear willing to live and let live as the most horrible, aberrant lifestyles co-exist along with traditional families.

The Issue of Homosexuality

This impression of stability is especially true in the debate over homosexual “marriage” or the acceptance of homosexual behavior. Controversy rages, yet society seems immune to the effects of moral decadence.

There is great opposition to homosexual “marriage” in the United States as evidenced by petitions, amendment votes and other traditional marriage initiatives that have shown an amazing capacity on the part of grassroots activists to stop such “marriages” from becoming law. However, these efforts face great obstacles. Activists fight a confrontational subculture that uses every artifice of manipulation in the arena of public opinion to achieve its goals, and desensitizes Americans by pushing the envelope to ever more shocking levels. And yet through it all, the sun still rises.

Thus, annually, cities worldwide are the



Shocking moral degradation in news headlines are frequent and the lack of apparent Divine intervention is perplexing to many.

scenes of so-called Gay Pride parades where the most disgusting displays offending Christian morality and public decency are witnessed, and where unnatural vices are seen as sources of “pride.” These celebrations are but a way to make this “pride” manifest before all.

The Catholic Position

The Catholic Church’s consistent teaching about homosexuality aggravates the gravity of such offenses even more. Not only is the practice of the homosexual act “intrinsically disordered,” as the Catechism affirms, but it is also grievously sinful. Saints, moralists and theologians have reaffirmed the extra gravity of this

“The day marriage was made legal for everyone in Massachusetts, we looked out our window to see—contrary to apocalyptic predictions—that the sun had actually risen.”



The malls and supermarkets, full of material goods, give the superficial man a misleading idea of unshakable stability. However, the man of faith, knows that true and lasting stability is only guaranteed in the fidelity to Him Who revealed Himself to Moses as, "I am Who Am."

sin against nature throughout the Church's 2000-year history.

And yet many Catholics, by yielding to this abhorrent subculture, defy openly the Church's position with apparent and disconcerting impunity. In so doing, they adopt an intimidating attitude toward the Holy See and seek to make the Church retreat in face of this sin and prevent the Church from accomplishing its teaching and sanctifying mission.

In fact, it can be observed that, in face of all this controversy, ordinary life in America goes inexorably on. Nothing seems to shake the impression of an immense stability and prosperity that has so dominated American life.

A Real Order of Stability

Such an overwhelming sensation of stability creates the impression of futility in opposing moral deviation. Those who promise fire and brimstone as punishment are always disappointed, for these rarely smite offenders.

There is an element of truth in America's immense stability. It is rooted in that the Universe's very order is enormously stable and normally does not suffer catastrophic disasters. Observing the heavens, the personal experience of all is a prodigious order that, since creation, moves with incredible regularity. On its part, the earth mirrors that same regularity in its

rotations and the seasons that normally follow their course.

Of course, disasters do happen on earth, but these are the exceptions and not the rule. Overflowing rivers subside eventually, volcanoes return to their slumber and earthquakes desist in their rattling. In this way, the order of the universe presents an enormous stability to man by returning to the mean.

It is only proper that this stability should fill men with respect, admiration and security. God created this stability for man to feel secure. In His infinite goodness, He wanted all men to have during their short time on Earth this feeling of security that provides the environment for the normal development of the individual and the practice of virtue.

This regularity finds resonance inside man himself. All that is orderly inside man exults upon seeing the surrounding order of the universe. All the senses feel great joy and well-being, perceiving an order that corresponds to a profound order inside man himself.

Taking Conclusions

From this stability, man comes to understand that he can know science through reason, which in turn allows man to understand and harness nature to serve him and improve his life. Regular objective observation is the basis

Modern materialists developed a technical notion of progress. They reduced the material advantages derived from their understanding of the universe into an end rather than a means.

The stable order just described is real but it can also be precarious. It depends on man's fidelity to God and the natural order He established. It is enough for man to break with this natural order for that stability, which seemed so unshakable, to come tumbling down to the ground.

of all development and true progress of man. Yet from this observation, one can easily make the wrong conclusions.

Based on this stable empirical order, modern materialists developed a technical notion of progress. They reduced the material advantages derived from their understanding of the universe into an end rather than a means. The stability of reason and science led to the idea of universal progress so much a part of secular modernity. It was a naturalist notion of an order of the universe maintained without God. From this was deduced the conclusion that progress, despite occasional inconveniences, will never be derailed.

Despite the instability of these post-September 11 times, this attitude still prevails. It is a notion of stability that is based on individual experience; it is little reasoned but profoundly felt. It is this strong feeling of stability that so confounds the activist who defends public morality, and reasons logically and correctly that acts have consequences.

Another Notion of Stability

Thus, it is true that the impression of an enormous stability has some basis in reality. However, it is not the entire story. There is another aspect of this stability that is profoundly reasonable and explains the need to defend public morality, and that aspect is that the idea of an eternal stability is an illusion. The stable order just described is real but it can also be precarious. It depends on man's fidelity to God and the natural order He established. It is enough for man to break with this natural order for that stability, which seemed so unshakable, to come tumbling down to the ground.

Examples Given

This is something that can be verified on a personal level. Men's normal lives are stable as long as one makes a reasonable effort to practice virtue. However, that stability is precarious when vice is introduced. By seriously breaking one's

link with virtue, through, for example, the vice of drug addition, stability can easily degenerate into permanent personal disorder. The same can be said for personal adherence to civil law. The minute a person puts himself seriously outside the law, his stability, which seems so unshakable, is lost and his life is precipitated into disorder and drastic change.

And so it is with morality in society, that is to say, the regulation of free actions with the view of perfecting man's rational nature. As long as the links with God and the natural order are maintained, one can expect stability. However, the minute society gives in to its disordered passions and vices, that order comes tumbling down toward ruin and death.

Some might object that moral law is knowable to reason and therefore it is not necessary to be linked to God. However, the Church has affirmed that religion and morality are linked. Without religion, the complete observance of moral law is impossible because part of the moral law prescribes duties to God Himself and helps man sense the obligations imposed by the Divine will. In addition, man's fallen nature causes him to lack complete control over his passions, thus inclining him to sin, so that unless man is supported by Divine aid, man is unable to observe the full moral law for any length of time.

Indeed, once society breaks that precarious link, all things are possible. Scriptures says, "deep calleth on deep."² History is full of examples of decadent societies that crumbled. Seemingly undefeatable empires were reduced to ruins. It is unreasonable to think that America, which has always assumed that it is immune against disaster, cannot also fall victim to catastrophe.

A Broken Link?

One might further object that the present state of morality has reached such a deplorable state that the precarious link with God and the natural order has already been broken. While it is true that iniquity appears to reign everywhere, it is also true that things often take a long time to

Mindful of the lessons of history, the activist is consumed with zeal to maintain the delicate link between God and society, and fights tooth and nail to prevent any advance, no matter how small, which would jeopardize this stability.

collapse. For example, the human body can show amazing resilience in resisting years of abuse before finally succumbing to death. So also societies can be mired in decadence for decades before collapsing. Yet the fact remains that after a long deterioration there often is a breaking point in the link with the natural order that determines a breakdown.

The Activist's Role

It is here that the activist is vindicated for defending a higher moral law. The activist is motivated to fight in view of avoiding an impending danger caused by abandoning morals. While the activist may use apocalyptic imagery to persuade, the activist actually seeks to maintain the link with God and the order He established and thus keep society from tumbling down.

On a practical level, the effect of sin is disorder since it places man outside the order proper to his nature. The greater the number and the degree of sin, the greater is the concrete effect upon society as a whole.

However, beyond these mere practical considerations, Saint Augustine teaches that man is

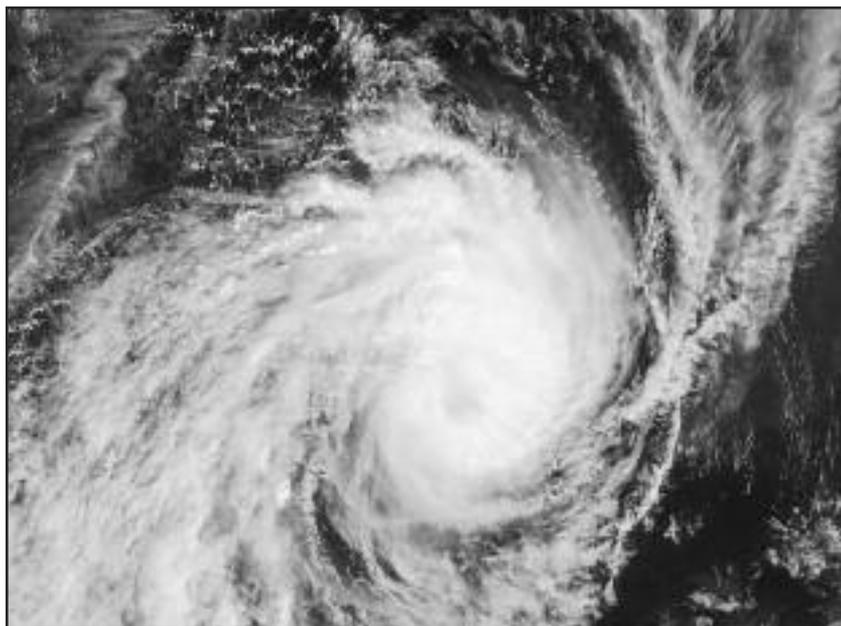
judged and punished for his sins individually in the afterlife. However, since nations have no afterlife, the collective sins of nations are punished on earth.³ Thus, when the sins of nations reach an apogee, God exercises His justice upon them. As Our Lady of Fatima warned, the punishments for sin include war, famine and the persecution of the Church.

That same God Who is the creator and maintainer of the enormously stable universal order holds that order in a delicate balance depending on the solidity of man's fidelity to Him.

To the activist, the fact that the sun rises with regularity is not a proof of God's indifference toward man's transgressions. Rather, the activist is filled with admiration and respect for God's goodness. However, the activist has a lively and continuous notion of the precariousness of the order of things. The activist interprets events through the prism. Mindful of the lessons of history, the activist is consumed with zeal to maintain the delicate link between God and society, and fights tooth and nail to prevent any advance, no matter how small, which would jeopardize this stability.

Thus, in the present Cultural War, it is not enough to be concerned only with individual sins. The Catholic must work to prevent the nation from abandoning natural and divine law. One must fight to maintain the moral infrastructure of customs, laws and institutions that safeguard public morality. And when iniquity prevails, the prayers of the faithful must rise up to God asking Divine aid and implore His mercy lest that precarious link be severed and that immense and benevolent stability be shattered. ■

Saint Augustine teaches that the collective sins of nations are punished here on earth. The effects of sin send tremors through society, and God exercises His justice when nations and societies turn against Him.

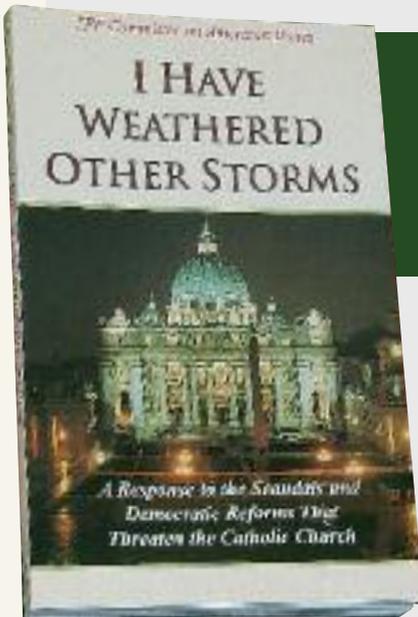


Notes:

1. Peter Meade and Rosanne Bacon Meade, "Social Evolution Starts in Mass.," *Boston Herald*, June 12, 2007, <http://news.bostonherald.com/editorial/view.bg?articleid=1005992>

2. Ps. 41:8.

3. Cf. Saint Augustine, *The City of God*, <http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/120101.htm>. The thesis that nations are rewarded or chastised in this earthly life is an underlying thesis found throughout *The City of God*, but particularly in Books IV and V.



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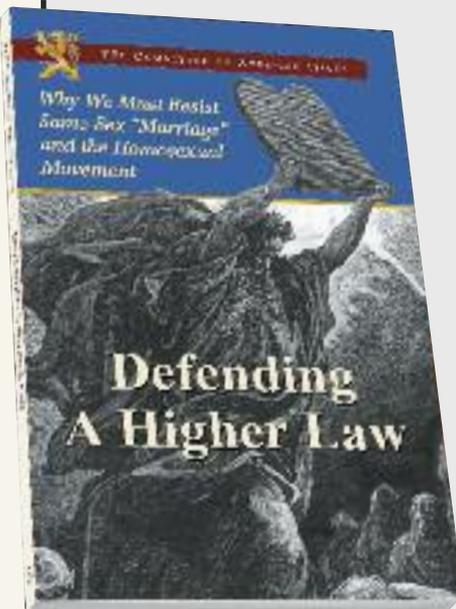
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Defending A Higher Law exposes the false myths surrounding the same-sex “marriage” debate. It presents compelling arguments that demonstrate why public morality must be upheld for the sake of its own life. Above all, it reaffirms the perennial teachings of natural law and the Catholic Church, providing answers to the arguments raised by those who undermine traditional marriage and family. Following are some points the book covers:

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- ◆ Why “true homosexual love” is impossible
- ◆ What is the false conception of compassion?
- ◆ Explanation of the Vatican’s 2003 Condemnation of Homosexuality.

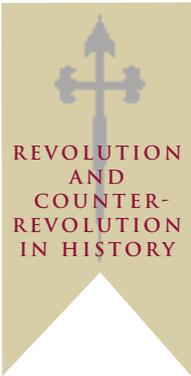
Both of these books have been highly recommended by bishops and other religious such as Bishop Robert Vasa of Baker, Oregon; Reverend Father John Trigilio of the Confraternity of Catholic Clergy; and many others.



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Clash of Cultures

Part Three: Subjugation of the Aztecs

BY JEREMIAS WELLS

In the forefront of his mind, Cortes always maintained a vision of where he wanted to go and how to utilize all available means to get there. While his soldiers were constructing the town of Vera Cruz, the diplomatic and shrewd conquistador forged an alliance with the Totonacs, an Indian tribe located along the Gulf Coast that deeply resented the exploitation of the Aztecs.

When five Mexica tax-gatherers arrived at their capital city of Cempoala to collect the annual tribute and the usual levy of sacrificial victims, Cortes advised the Totonac cacique to have them arrested. Eventually, he saved them from execution and returned to Moctezuma thus maintaining an open channel of communication with the powerful emperor. But the astute commander had also forced the Totonacs to rely on Spanish protection, for without that protection Moctezuma would certainly have retaliated.

Cortes had complete control over his emotions and allowed only one exception to affect his usual self-control: He vehemently despised human sacrifice and the resulting cannibalism. After the alliance was cemented at Cempoala, the Christian general ordered the cacique to destroy his idols. Not only did the cacique refuse but ordered his troops to assemble. A military confrontation was avoided as Doña Marina, the Indian translator, reminded the Cempoalans of Moctezuma's waiting vengeance. The hideous images were then sent smashing down the sides of the temple that was then cleaned, whitewashed and adorned with an altar, a cross and an image of the Blessed Virgin.

The March Inland

On August 8, 1519, Cortes with close to 400 conquistadors, 15 horses, 6 artillery pieces and approximately 1000 Totonacs, used chiefly to carry the bag-

Though a sinner, Cortes had faith in victory for he was spreading the Faith and conquering territory for the Christian Empire—to him the same thing—and God was on their side and to Him nothing was impossible.

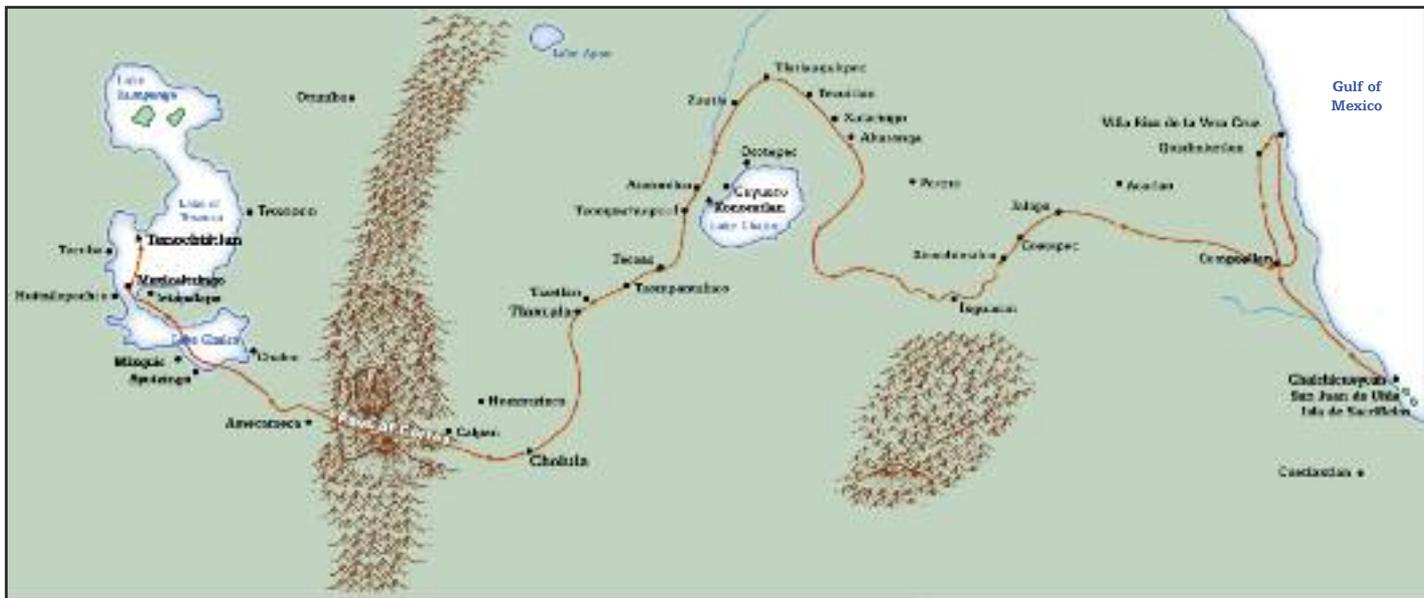


Portrait of Moctezuma attributed to Antonio Rodriguez, c. 1680-1697, Museo degli Argenti, Florence.

gage, set out for Tenochtitlan (modern Mexico City). He left behind him a hundred-man garrison at Vera Cruz, mostly the older and less robust, for it was recognized that the physical demands of the expedition would be beyond what the ordinary soldier could endure. In front of him, he faced uncharted territory, difficult terrain, abrupt weather changes and millions of ferocious, cannibalistic natives. Along their 250-mile journey, they would have to pass through three mountain ranges with volcanic peaks between 14,000 and 17,000 feet high that flanked passes 10,000 feet high and arrive at an extensive inland lake complex, itself 7,000 feet high.

Toward the end of the third week, the Spanish entered the land of the Tlaxcalans, a fiercely independent tribe that refused to submit to Aztec authority. Nevertheless, they were equally suspicious of the Spanish and attacked their advance guard as it crossed into their territory.

Both sides brought their main forces quickly into action. The Spanish had augmented their small numbers with hundreds of friendly locals collected along the route. The Tlaxcalans numbered between thirty and forty thousand. Both the Spanish cavalry and the infantry fought in compact units, allowing them to hold a small perimeter; and their weaponry, cannon, arquebuses, crossbows and Spanish steel carried the day despite the overwhelming numerical odds against them. Three days later, the Indians tried again with even more devastating results due to a lack of unified leadership and coordination. With casualties climbing, they sued for a halt to



Map showing Hernando Cortes' march to Tenochtitlan, capital of the dreaded Aztec Empire.

the fighting and agreed to the Spanish terms, realizing that they had a common interest: detestation of Moctezuma and the Aztecs.

After the victory, Cortes remained in his field camp for about a week where he entertained ambassadors from both Aztecs and Tlaxcalans and eventually accepted the hospitality and friendship of the latter. This proved to be a momentous occurrence of inestimable value, for Tlaxcala was not only a large city that bitterly resented the oppression of the Aztecs but also the capital of an Indian federation that included 500 square miles and 150,000 families.

However, the soldiers were tired out physically and psychologically. Yes, once again Cortes had judged the situation perfectly, chosen the proper response and flawlessly executed his strategy. But how long could this successful streak last? One miscalculation or some unforeseen adverse circumstance, and they all would wind up on the cutting block, sacrificial victims for the demon-god Huitzilopochtli.

Several of the leading officers came to his tent and suggested that they return to Vera Cruz and find their way back to Cuba. The resourceful commander rose once again to the occasion with confidence and his powerful presence. He answered that indeed fifty-five men had

already been killed and they were in a precarious position, but that it was better to die as courageous men than to live without honor. Moreover, there was less risk in going forward than in retreating. He closed by remarking that he, though a sinner, had faith in victory for he was spreading the Faith and conquering ter-

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ritory for the Christian Empire—to him the same thing—and God was on their side and to Him nothing was impossible. The strength of Cortes' faith and the depth of his confidence along with his exceptional persuasiveness once again convinced his soldiers to follow him. Three weeks later, to get some rest, the Spaniards moved into Tlaxcala, where close proximity and mutual admiration bonded the two forces together. With the addition of the new allies, the odds against success narrowed considerably.

The March Continues

The Spaniards rested a few weeks and resumed their journey on October 13 to the fabled capital of the Aztecs. Cortes took a calculated risk by choosing a route that passed through Cholula, a city of 100,000, friendly to Moctezuma, and a risk it was, for an elaborate trap had been set for him.

After a night's rest in the center of the city, 2,000 Cholulans entered the Spanish camp to serve as escorts, but in reality to set up an ambush as the Spanish attempted to leave. But Cortes, already forewarned, encircled them and with sword and musket cut them to pieces. The Cholulans waiting outside to spring the trap rushed in to help, but Cortes anticipating the move had placed his cannon in a position that commanded the avenues and mowed them down. At the sound of gunfire 5,000 Tlaxcalan allies charged into the city to finish the massacre. When the dust and smoke cleared, 6,000 Cholulan warriors lay dead along with a number of priests who had committed suicide by setting themselves afire in their chief temple, because they felt their gods had forsaken them. Cortes rebuilt the temple as a shrine to the Blessed Virgin Mary.

When word of the disaster that had befallen his allies reached Moctezuma, his ambivalent, superstitious nature

caused him to become immobilized with uncertainty. He ordered many human sacrifices and locked himself up in the great temple for days, fasting, praying and drawing blood from all parts of his body. Finally he sent permission to Cortes to visit him in his sumptuous, ornate island-city on the lake.

Arrival at Tenochtitlan

Of all the great confrontations between the most illustrious leaders in history, none exceeded this one in pageantry and splendor. And yet it proved to be one of the most curious, for the two groups had almost nothing in common other than the fact that they were both human. The depravity of the Aztec life had virtually extinguished the notion of right and wrong, good and evil, among its people. The Spanish on the other hand represented the spear point of Western civilization, not always perfect, occasionally immoral, but nevertheless the advanced guard of those ideals imbedded in civilized life.

Cortes and his men were quartered in a spacious palace that had once belonged to the emperor's father. In the following days several meetings took place between representatives of the opposing cultures. Moctezuma mentioned how ancient Mexican folklore told about a powerful sovereign who ruled over his ancestors and one day left during a dispute. He went on to declare that he firmly believed that eventually descendants of that sovereign would return from the direction of the rising sun and subjugate their lands.

Cortes cleverly confirmed the story and claimed he had come in the service of a great lord to convert the Mexicans and save their souls. The devout commander went on to say that the Aztecs must renounce their idols and end human sacrifice, cannibalism, sodomy and other vices. The Aztec monarch responded that politically he would recognize the Spanish King as his lord, that materially whatever they wanted was theirs, but that religiously he adamantly refused to retreat one bit; his priests would not allow it.

During the first week, the emperor and chief priests accompanied Cortes

and his officers on an inspection tour of the great temple in the center of the city. When the Catholic captain-general went inside the main shrine at the top to Huitzilopochtli and saw inches of dried blood on the walls, pools of blood drying on the floor and braziers of recently ripped out hearts sitting on the altars before demonic images, his usual self-control vanished. He denounced the Aztec culture in the severest terms. After his words were translated, the furious priests made menacing threats and the Spanish officers went for their

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weapons. Moctezuma with great difficulty kept the antagonists separated and Cortes left. He now realized neither side ruled Mexico, Huitzilopochtli did.

With tensions mounting in Mexico City, Moctezuma began to cause problems among the Spanish allies on the coast. To alleviate the pressure, Cortes countered by resorting to another bold maneuver: He abducted the intriguing monarch and brought him quietly but forcefully to Cortes' palace. With momentum behind him and Moctezuma as his puppet-emperor the Catholic commander moved against his principal enemy Huitzilopochtli.

Two wooden shrines sat at top of the great temple, a blue one for the god of rain and one painted blood-red for the demon-god. Cortes with a handful of men climbed the steps and entered the latter and was immediately confronted by several priests. An argument ensued, whereupon he leaped to the top of the altar with an iron bar in his hand and took a smashing blow to the head of

Huitzilopochtli that knocked off his golden mask. The situation escalated as reinforcements arrived from both sides along with Moctezuma who once again negotiated a solution favorable to the Spanish. The Aztecs themselves would remove the pagan images, carefully and methodically to avoid any further damage. The shrines were scrubbed down with lime. After a solemn procession where a *Te Deum* was sung, one was dedicated to Our Lady and the other to Saint Christopher.

Owing to the volatile situation, an interruption to this progress could be expected from several quarters, but it is sad to relate that when it came, it came from another Spaniard: his old nemesis, Diego Velasquez, who became obsessed with a spirit of vengeance. He sent Panfilo Narvaez, a rather nasty individual, with 900 men and close to a hundred horses to find Cortes and hang him. He left 120 men in Tenochtitlan and raced to intercept the new threat. However, meanness is no substitute for intelligence and craftiness. As both sides negotiated through emissaries, Cortes was able to buy off half the opposing army. In the battle that followed, Narvaez was easily overwhelmed and captured

The Sad Night

Unfortunately, Cortes' absence gave the Aztecs an opportunity to breakdown his fragile control over the Valley of Mexico. Pedro de Alvarado, left in charge at the capital, had none of Cortes' diplomatic skills and provoked a general uprising of the nobles during which Moctezuma was killed and Alvarado was forced to barricade himself in the Spanish palace-compound. The Captain-General with his army augmented by the new arrivals and dozens of horses rushed back by a forced march to extricate his fellow countrymen from certain death. With water and food dwindling, they fought their way over the western (Tacuba) causeway and out of the city. During the escape, known as *La Noche Triste*, (The Sad Night) Cortes had lost over half his army, with only 500 men and 23 horses surviving. He worked his way around the northern lake (Zumpango) in the valley system, fought another pitched battle

and finally reached Tlaxcala.

Despite the devastating setback, the implacable commander was determined to retake the Valley of Mexico. He trusted that God would not allow them to perish and lose such a great and noble land. During the next few weeks, several ships arrived from the Caribbean and Spain carrying soldiers, horses, supplies and powder. Whatever their original destination, Cortes enrolled the men into his army and sequestered the horses and supplies.

Methodically and with singular determination, the farsighted commander tightened the noose around Tenochtitlan by subjugating all the cities and towns bordering the lake system to his authority. He built 13 brigantines armed with cannons to control the lake. In late May 1521, with the island-city completely blockaded, Cortes accompanied by 86 horsemen, 118 soldiers carrying crossbows or arquebuses, 700 swordsmen, 75,000 Tlaxcalans and other natives began the assault against at least 250,000 Aztecs.

Dividing his land forces in three columns, he attacked along three of the causeways against fierce opposition. Success was measured by the number of feet gained per day. Finally the Spaniards and their allies penetrated the city and moved toward the center from three different directions. Carnage, destruction, disease and famine reigned supreme. The Tlaxcalans, whom Cortes had trouble controlling in the heat of battle equaled the Aztecs in violence. The conquistador commented that no race, however savage, had ever practiced such fierce and unnatural cruelty as the natives of these parts. In mid-August 1521, after eighty days of brutal fighting, the new emperor was caught trying to flee, which effectively ended the siege.

The very qualities that contributed to Cortes' success in bringing Christianity and Western civilization to the New World militated against any enjoyment of that success in a complicated story that we end here. The effort by the new government to bring a balance between the colonizers to exploit the land on the one hand and that of the Franciscan



Map of the lake district of the Aztec capital, showing the causeways leading to Tenochtitlan.

Friars to evangelize and educate the Indians on the other belongs to the history of the various nations involved.

Epilogue

On December 12, 1531, Our Lady of Guadalupe appeared to Juan Diego at a location two or three miles northeast of Mexico City. In order to authenticate her request to Bishop Zumarraga that a church, eventually a famous basilica, be built there, she left on his cloak a miraculous image of herself as the

Immaculate Conception. Five years later, the Church recorded that over five million Indians had been converted to Catholicism. ■

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