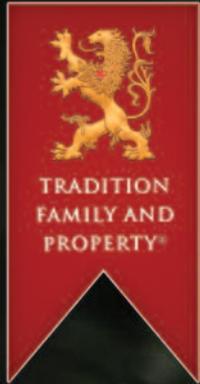


March/April 2018

# CRUSADE

MAGAZINE



# Lenten *Reflections*



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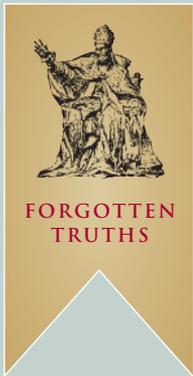
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## To be Chaste is to be Angelic



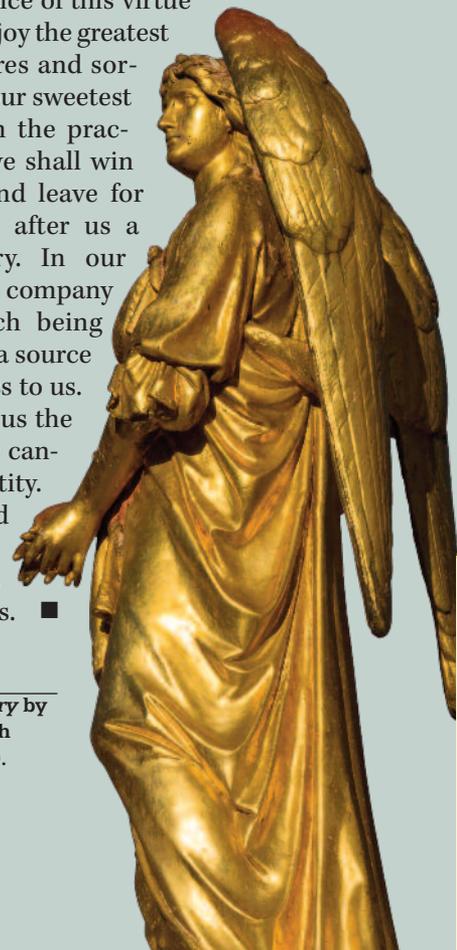
What is there more beautiful, or more excellent than chastity which makes men pure like the angels? Chastity represents in the world the glorious state of immortality. It requires no ornament outside of itself, being its own most beautiful adornment. It makes us pleasing to God, unites us with Jesus Christ, combats the malicious tendencies of the flesh, gives peace to the body, and, possessing in its essence unimaginable joy, it renders all who enjoy it perfectly happy.

It is a shield to our eyes. It dispels darkness and creates brightness. Chastity reins in the flesh and directs it heavenward. It fills the heart with delight and furnishes wings to the soul whereon it may soar to the throne of God. It gives spiritual joy and overcomes sorrow. It curbs the violence of our passions, weakens our inclination to sin and frees the soul from the relentless attacks of the flesh. We may apply to this great virtue the words of Wisdom: "Love her above health and beauty, and choose to have her instead of light: for her light cannot be put out" (7:10).

Chastity ennobles and glorifies whoever possesses it. Do you desire great riches? What is more precious than chastity? She should be our closest companion in life, having the promise that

through the practice of this virtue we will one day enjoy the greatest wealth. In our cares and sorrows, she will be our sweetest comfort. Through the practice of chastity, we shall win everlasting life and leave for those who come after us a steadfast memory. In our home she shall be company to us. Her speech being pure, she shall be a source of joy and gladness to us. Unless God grant us the grace to do so, we cannot practice chastity. With humble and loving hearts we should seek it at His merciful hands. ■

Taken from *Holy Mary* by Rev. Cornelius Joseph O'Connell, pp. 19-20.



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Statue of Christ on the San Gonzalo Confraternity float, Holy Week in Seville, Spain.

© Antonio Ciero Reina | Dreamstime.com

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## CRUSADE

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## THE AMERICAN TFP

The American Society for the Defense of Tradition, Family and Property (TFP) is an organization of lay Catholic Americans concerned about the moral crisis shaking the remnants of Christian civilization. Its earliest origins date back to January 1971, when the first TFP members started to group around the publication *Crusade for a Christian Civilization*. It is a civic, cultural and nonpartisan organization which, inspired by the traditional teachings of the Supreme Magisterium of the Roman Catholic Church, works in a legal and peaceful manner in the realm of ideas to

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



IN BRIEF

### NFL Player Protests Backfire

It seems that National Football League (NFL) games have lost their appeal since players started kneeling during the playing of the National Anthem as a sign of disrespect. TheBlaze.com reports that not only did attendance in the professional football league plummet, but ticket prices and TV ad revenues have gone down. In the meantime, college athletics continues to be more popular. One example can be found in Buffalo, New York. Tickets for a college hockey game sold for \$28, a considerably higher ticket price than the \$4 being charged to attend a professional Buffalo Bills game.



### Poland Proposes Sunday Shopping Ban

Asserting its Christian roots, Poland's lower house voted to phase out shopping on Sundays by 2020. The vote was 254 to 156. Ines A. Murzaku, a professor of Church History at Seton Hall University in New Jersey, believes that Poles not only want to keep up with the Sacred Tradition and the Third Commandment, but also want to erase from their memories the painful past of communist persecution wherein Poles were forced to work on Sundays. "Communists wanted to annihilate God by annihilating the Sabbath; annihilate Christianity by annihilating the Day of the Lord—this was part and parcel of the Communist Party ideology," wrote Murzaku.



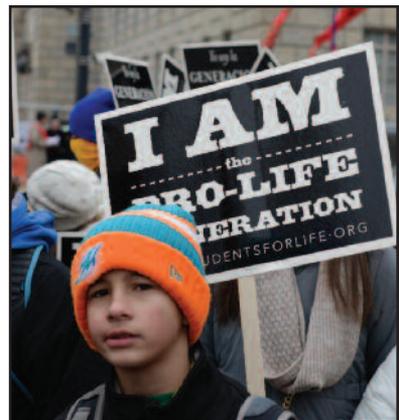
### Homosexual Couples Show Little Interest in "Marriage"

After all their massive efforts and propaganda to promote same-sex "marriage" worldwide, there is mounting evidence that homosexuals are not taking advantage of legal wedded bliss. And many who did ended up in divorce. A report from *The Economist* showed that in the United States, only one in ten homosexuals has entered into

"marriage." In the United Kingdom, only 6,000 out of 9,000 expected "marriages" materialized. A 2016 *New York Times* report also revealed that there were 183,280 same-sex "marriages" in the United States, which equates to roughly one third of one percent of all marriages nationwide.

### Abortion Rate Continues to Decline

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) recently released their abortion data for 2014. The results showed a steady decline of 2% in the number of abortions in the United States, compared to the final figures from 2013, a downward trend that started in the early 1980s. To corroborate the CDC figures, in 2017 twenty-one surgical abortion centers were closed. Since 1991, three quarters of the nation's abortion mills have been permanently closed. Only 515 of the 2,176 clinics now remain open (<http://abortion-docs.org/closed-clinics/>). Furthermore, the states have enacted hundreds of anti-abortion laws.



### Ohio Bans Down Syndrome Abortions

The Ohio State House passed a bill to protect unborn children with Down Syndrome from abortion. House Bill 214, also known as the Down Syndrome Non-Discrimination Act, is sponsored by Reps. Sarah LaTourette (R-Chesterland) and Derek Merrin (R-Monclova Township), and it would make it illegal for abortionists to commit or attempt to commit an abortion based on a diagnosis of Down syndrome. Rep. LaTourette said the bill ends the lethal discrimination against Down syndrome children in the womb. The vote was 63-30. The bill will now be voted upon by the full legislature.





CHRIST IN  
THE HOME

# Instilling Confidence in Children

BY FATHER RAUL PLUS, S.J.

A mother of a family, herself a noble and spiritual educator, wrote: “We never succeed in making of our children all that we should like to make of them; and sometimes we do not accomplish anything of what we thought we could accomplish. The role of educator in theory offers many charms but in its fulfillment how many thorns! Not to become discouraged is in itself quite an achievement.”

The most important virtue to engender in the souls of children is confidence. Children always have faults; they develop with age. When one fault is destroyed, another appears. What ought to be developed first is confidence; a confidence which will make them docile solely because they trust that there can be nothing better for them than the arrangements of the persons who are raising them. When their parents seem to torment them or cross them, they truly have their good at heart.

The most enjoyable events are not always the most beneficial. Far from it! Adversity and contradiction are useful for all ages but particularly for the young, to correct their selfish tendencies and strengthen their undeveloped wills. Looking at things from God’s viewpoint, adversity gives the final touch; it adorns as with gold one in whom virtue is deeply rooted.

But how can one call upon this harsh instructor (adversity) to teach one’s very own children? Mothers are too tender to be

*Looking at things from God’s viewpoint, adversity gives the final touch; it adorns as with gold one in whom virtue is deeply rooted.*

perfect educators or rather their tenderness has about it too much sensitivity which, we might say, aggravates the eternal conflict between the spiritual man and the carnal man. Maternal love is often too much hampered by maternal instinct which protests and prevents the challenges that need to occur.

This distinction between real maternal love in the full sense of the word and maternal instinct should be maintained. The author of the preceding lines is aware of the difference and concerned about not confusing them. One of her daughters had a particularly difficult temperament. The mother encouraged herself to exercise the necessary firmness with her just as with her other children: I shall set myself the duty of not being weak, too easy, of not giving in to all their desires. I shall try to give them the reason for my decisions, but I shall believe that I do them a service by putting some obstacles in their path.

Kindness will dictate my conduct; I hope that kindness will render it bearable for them. If I fear the opposition of a strong character and the tendencies of a spirit which promises to be frank and curious in Laura, I fear in her sister the faults arising from an easier temperament which is avid for praise. Will she be able to hold her own with the firmness I should like to see her acquire?

My God, I cannot foresee that; I place her interests as I place my own—into Your Hands. That is the way to act: To try to adopt toward each child the method most likely to succeed, and when that is done, to trust the rest to Divine Providence. ■

From *Christ in the Home*, “Love vs. Maternal Instinct,” by Father Raul Plus, S.J.



# WHY **NOTHING** *Is Sacred Anymore*

BY JOHN HORVAT II

Recently, the word “sacred” was in the news, when White House Chief of Staff Gen. John Kelly lamented the fact that nothing is sacred anymore, especially in light of the brouhaha over the president’s phone call to a soldier’s widow.

“When I was a kid growing up,” he said, “a lot of things were sacred in our country. Women were sacred, looked upon with great honor. That’s obviously not the case anymore, as we see from recent cases. Life, the dignity of life, was sacred. That’s gone. Religion, that seems to be gone as well.”

The cynical reaction of the media to the general’s remarks about the sacredness of a soldier’s death only confirmed the truth of his observation. Indeed, nothing is sacred anymore in today’s political climate. There is nothing that cannot be turned into talking points for the liberal agenda.



There is a sacredness about death, about the mother, now a widow left behind, and the ultimate sacrifice made by her husband which sets them apart from all other human beings.

## Reasons Why Nothing Is Sacred

There are many reasons why nothing is sacred anymore. One of them is because the sacred discriminates. It excludes.

The sacred has always had a note of exclusivity. In its narrow sense, the sacred is anything dedicated or set apart for the service or worship of God. In a broader sense, it can apply to anything that is entitled to reverence and respect. The sacred evokes a sense of mystery and awe since it points to something above and beyond the person seeking to understand it.

Implicit in the rejection of the sacred is the idea that there should be no restraints for anything. It is unjust that there be anything set beyond the reach of others. It is wrong that anyone is recognized as being more than someone else.

Thus, in a society that has lost a notion of the sacred, no one stands out, no prizes are awarded, and disordered passions must never be held in check. Everyone must be equal, whatever the cost. There can be no sanctuary for any privileges. Nothing can be withheld from others. Rather, everything must be available to all.

## Depriving Things of Their Mystery

Nothing is sacred anymore because things have been deprived of their mystery. To those who hate the sacred, the mere existence of mystery affirms an unknowable and superior truth that is not recognized by modern science.

That is why modernity has always had a problem with the sacred. The Enlightenment introduced the idea that the sacred, with its aura of mystery, should be replaced by human reason and empirical observation.

*The suppression of the sacred comes from a denial of spiritual values and ideas that elevate humanity.*

In the nineteenth century, Karl Marx observed the effects of this Enlightenment mentality when he wrote about capitalism's tendency to destroy the sacred. "All that is sacred must be profaned," he said. In a world where nothing is sacred, he believed life would and should be entirely de-sanctified. True to his militant atheism, Marx did not see this as a negative development but rather as something that would facilitate the condition of equality.

The suppression of the sacred comes from a denial of spiritual values and ideas that elevate humanity and teach that there are things that are more precious than life itself. That fact alone makes those things sacred.

### **The Desire to Be Ordinary**

There is nothing sacred anymore because sacred things impose respect. People are expected to see the sacred as special. People should admire, honor, and serve all that is sacred.

*Nothing is sacred anymore  
because things have been  
deprived of their mystery.*

It is a sacrifice that most today are unwilling to make. Instead, they want to be ordinary, and they want to surround themselves with the ordinary. To their minds, the comforts of being ordinary far outweigh the nobility of heroism. A sacred duty triggers no sympathetic resonance in the hearts of those who have opted for the unbridled pursuit of material happiness. An I-don't-want-to-be-a-hero mentality prevails.

Ironically, those who reject the sacred have no problem elevating their ordinariness to the status of something sacred. They are all too willing to turn profane pleasures into sacred entitlements. Thus, sports, entertainment, choices and consumption are considered sacred. Tragically, even some sins are made "sacred" and untouchable.

However, as society decays, even these ordinary things turned sacred begin to come under attack. Even the mild exclusiveness that these ordinary pleasures entail proves intolerable to those who hate the sacred.

### **Denial of the Kingship of Christ**

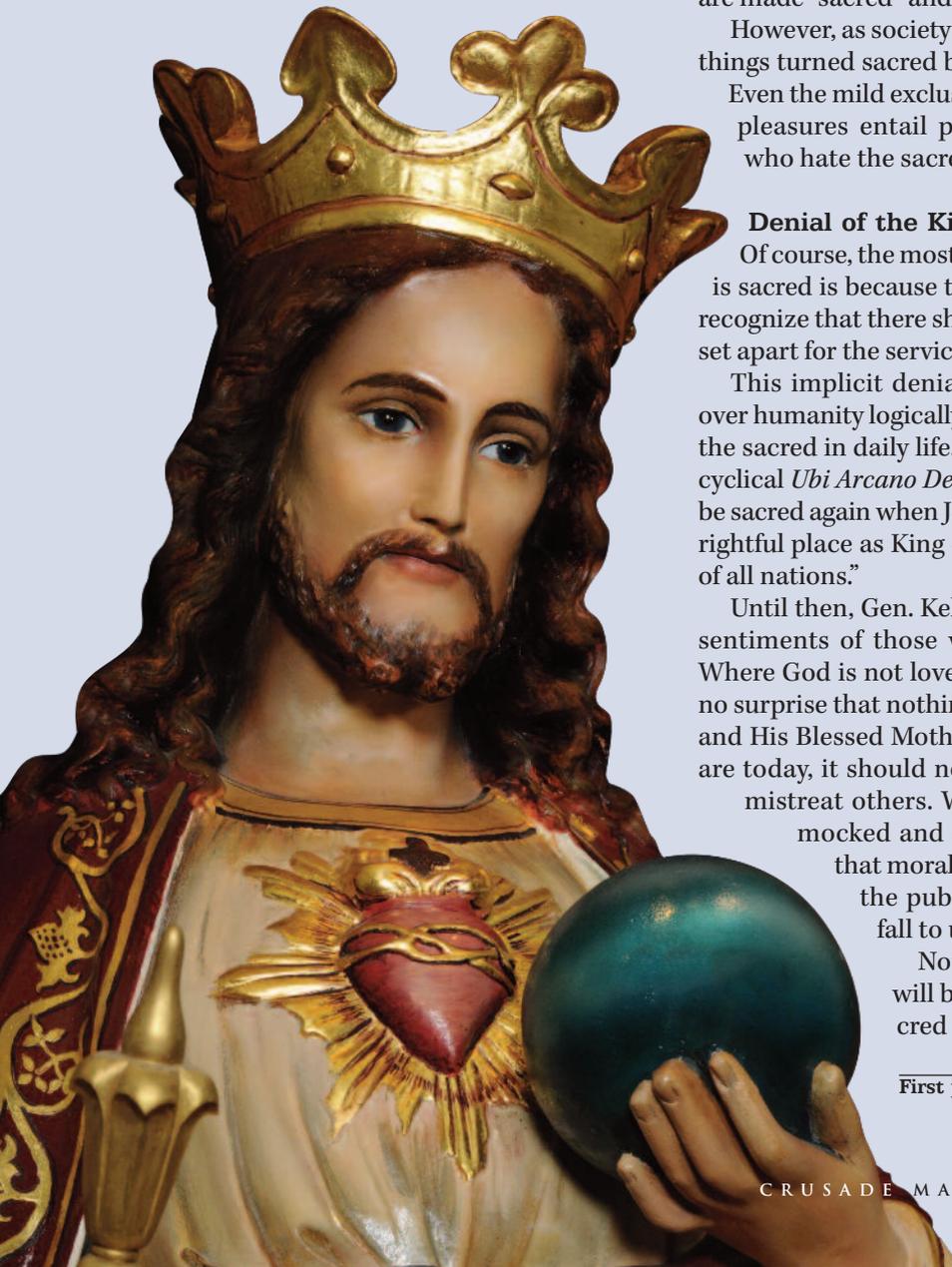
Of course, the most radical reason why nothing is sacred is because the present culture does not recognize that there should be things dedicated or set apart for the service or worship of God.

This implicit denial of the kingship of Christ over humanity logically leads to the suppression of the sacred in daily life. As Pius XI states in his encyclical *Ubi Arcano Dei Consilio* (1922), things will be sacred again when Jesus Christ "reassume[s] His rightful place as King of all men, of all states, and of all nations."

Until then, Gen. Kelly's lament will express the sentiments of those who grieve for the nation. Where God is not loved and adored, there can be no surprise that nothing else is sacred. When God and His Blessed Mother are blasphemed, as they are today, it should not be shocking that people mistreat others. Where God and his law are mocked and despised, it is only natural that morality too will be expelled from the public sphere and that society fall to unimaginable depths.

Nothing will be safe. Nothing will be stable. Nothing will be sacred anymore. ■

First published in *Crisis Magazine*.





A photo of the 1981 March for Life in Washington, D.C.

## 45 Years of *Roe v. Wade*: A Time to Mourn or to Hope?

BY ROBERT NUNEZ

The year 2018 marks 45 years since the legalization of abortion in the United States, and while this anniversary serves as a painful reminder of the millions of unborn lives lost since then, perhaps it would also be good to reflect on how far the pro-life crusade has come.

Indeed, the ongoing battle to defeat abortion has faced overwhelming obstacles, but if there is anything that can be learned from the story of the pro-life movement, it is that it only takes a handful of determined, heroic people, and the grace of God, to turn the tide.

Much has changed since 1973, when the Supreme Court hearing the case *Roe v. Wade* had declared abortion a “constitutional right” and the public and media were heralding it as a victory for sexual liberation. Back then, brave and committed pro-life Americans dared to voice their opposition to abortion, but the public dismissed them as a hopelessly outdated minority. But these pro-life Americans refused to remain silent and stood up to defy the culture of death. When they held the first March for Life

on January 22, 1974, on the West Steps of Capitol Hill, about 20,000 people showed up to rally on behalf of the unborn.

Since that memorable day, the yearly March for Life has grown steadily over the decades from mere thousands, to now over half a million marchers, the vast majority of which are under the age of 30. Neither the freezing January weather, nor the oppressive curtain of silence imposed by a largely unsympathetic media have proven to dampen their resolve. Moreover, inspired by the march in Washington, cities across America and in other countries have started holding their own marches, reverberating America’s indignant opposition to legalized abortion around the world.

The result is that far from being considered settled law, abortion has become one of the most polarizing issues in this nation’s history. An increasing percentage of young Americans now consider themselves to be pro-life in some way while the pro-abortion movement is struggling to replace its aging ranks. The pro-life movement has won

the support of many politicians, who are openly calling for the defunding of Planned Parenthood. A record number of pro-life bills have been passed through state legislation and abortion clinics are closing left and right. In sum, the seemingly unstoppable abortion movement has been put on the defensive, something that would have been unthinkable forty-five years ago.

Firmly committed to defending God’s rights and innocent life, the American TFP has faithfully participated in every single March for Life since its inception in 1974. With their striking red standards fluttering in the wind, large banners displaying bold messages, and the stirring Holy Choirs of Angels marching band, the TFP has been a familiar and inspirational sight at the March for as long as anyone can remember. Over the years, various sister organizations of the TFP from other countries have also made appearances at the March with their own banners, giving an international perspective to the March for Life.



Left: Members of the American Society for the Defense of Tradition, Family and Property (TFP) begin the 45-year tradition of defending the unborn, 1974. Right: The next generation of defenders of the sanctity of life, 2010.



The bold red standards of the TFP will be raised in defense of the unborn until the day that their right to life is legally protected throughout America. Picture of the 1993 March for Life.

The TFP has further expanded its presence to other pro-life rallies across the nation such as the annual “Walk for Life” in San Francisco, and the “Gift of Life Walk” in New York City.

Each year, TFP members and supporters distribute thousands of flyers\* and leaflets to the crowds of marchers, highlighting ongoing challenges to winning the battle against abortion in America. The TFP has always called for consistency in the pro-life movement by opposing not only abortion, but also contraception and the culture of impurity that forms its core.

Yes, the pro-life movement has come

a long way since 1974, yet despite the progress and victories gained over the years, millions of unborn innocents are still being murdered. The ultimate dream of all pro-lifers in seeing abortion eradicated always seems to elude their grasp, and many are tempted to ask the question, “Will it ever end?”

Indeed, 45 years is much to mourn, but there is also much cause for hope.

It is the hope that the scourge of abortion will end in this nation through a continual peaceful and legal fight on every front. While the future remains uncertain, those engaged in the fight for God’s law must never waver in their resolve, for the minute they cease to fight is the moment they prepare themselves for defeat. Pro-life Americans must especially have recourse to prayer and sacrifice, as these have served as the most efficacious means of attaining victories in the past, and so it will be for the future as well. ■

\*For this year’s flyer, *A Tale of Two Marches*, please see pages 22-23.

Members of America Needs Fatima and the TFP join hundreds of thousands of their fellow Americans at the March for Life in 2000, 2011 and 2012.



## Interview with Mr. Gregory Escaro, Director of the Holy Choirs of Angels Band



One of the most recognizable aspects of the TFP in every March for Life is the “Holy Choirs of Angels” marching band. With its brass section, fifes, drums and iconic bagpipes, the TFP band has been a mainstay at the March for Life for many years, uplifting the crowds with their patriotic songs amidst the harsh January weather. *Crusade Magazine* decided to interview band director Gregory Escaro to give readers a little insight into the workings of this musical ensemble.

*Crusade:* Thank you Mr. Escaro for taking the time out of your busy schedule to give our readers some insight into your work. To begin with, could you tell us how the Holy Choirs of Angels Band came to be?

**Mr. Escaro:** I’ve had the honor of serving Our Lady and the TFP since 1994 and from the beginning,

we’ve had musical programs. I believe that the idea for a band originally came from Brazil, where TFP members would play instruments on the streets to get the public’s attention on hot topics such as socialism or abortion. The zeal of these musicians was very inspiring. As you can imagine, we had a very modest start—a couple of trumpeters and some drummers playing homemade drums.

It wasn’t until the year 1989 that the band began to grow and formalize. That year, we held one of our first major demonstrations to defend the honor of the American flag, which was being burned. The zeal of the patriotic hymns and the effect that it had on public opinion really created a cohesion amongst the TFP members in the band organization.

A year later, in 1990, we hired Dominick Cuccia to help improve our budding but still rudimentary ensemble. He is a music major and percussion instructor in New York and Connecticut. With his help and direction, we got more organized and started writing musical routines that we play to this very day.

Since then, over the years, we have added a fife and drum corps, which is a very iconic symbol of the American military heritage. We have also expanded our brass section, and then of course, people especially love the bagpipes.

*Crusade:* It takes a lot of effort to recruit and maintain a marching band. Could you tell us how the band prepares for the March for Life?

**Mr. Escaro:** Well, the recruitment of new musicians is a must. We get most of our recruits from the Saint Louis de Montfort Academy. We also have many volunteers from the TFP, many of whom are alumni of the academy and have already been playing for many years.

While our musicians get experience practicing and performing throughout the year, the really serious work begins after Christmas. On weekends before the March for Life, we assemble the entire band and practice marching in an empty parking lot to acclimate to the freezing weather. It takes a lot of rehearsals to get the band members to march in step and play at the same time, but they are eager to learn and especially excited to use their talents to defend the unborn in Washington, D.C.

*Crusade:* As a veteran member of the TFP who has participated in many pro-life marches over the years, what are some of the challenges you and the band have had to endure?

**Mr. Escaro:** Well, as you know, the fact that the March for Life takes place in the middle of winter is no mere trifle. The band has often had to play in temperatures well below freezing. At that point, instruments often seize up and freeze. An even worse

ordeal is getting your lips frozen to your metal mouthpiece and stuck. We deal with the cold by bundling up in plenty of warm clothing and regularly blowing warm air into the instruments. We discovered that wrapping hand warmers around the valves helps, too.

There are also financial challenges as well. We are not a money-making venture, so we are always open to receiving generous donations and instruments from friends and family to keep our ensemble in good shape.

*Crusade:* Does the Holy Choirs of Angels band play in other events as well?

**Mr. Escaro:** Yes, absolutely. Besides playing for the March for Life, we have played at smaller pro-life rallies. We have been present at pro-traditional marriage parades in Washington and the Bronx and play for the annual October Public Square Rosary Rally in New York City. Closer to home, we play at local memorial services for our military, fire, and police personnel. Christmas, in my opinion, is the most special. The joy of celebrating the birth of Our Savior Jesus Christ always brings a really special grace and music expresses that in a tremendous way. We've played on several occasions for honored guests such as Prince Bertrand of Orléans-Braganza, the Prince Imperial of Brazil, and for esteemed military personnel such as Marine Corps legend Colonel John Walter Ripley and Navy Cross recipient Sgt. Jeremiah Workman.

Occasionally, we have taken our music beyond the borders of our nation. Some of our musicians have had the opportunity of traveling abroad, where they made musical appearances at TFP international university conferences in Germany, France, Austria, and Poland. We have also been helping our dear pro-life Canadians at the March for Life in Ottawa. ■



Staying the course in even the harshest weather, the Holy Choirs of Angels band lends a militant air to the March for Life year after cold year.



The Holy Choirs of Angels band offers these men the opportunity to use their instruments in defense of the unborn and for the glory of God.



# Lenten Reflections

BY PLINIO CORRÊA DE OLIVEIRA



The following Lenten reflections deal with suffering, in the truly Catholic sense of the word. It was by the Cross that our good Lord opened the gates of Heaven for us and it will be through the victory over suffering. Through suffering well accepted, that we will someday be able to enter those Heavenly gates.

The Church is the Mystical Body of Christ. When Our Lord asked Saint Paul on the way to Damascus, “Saul, Saul, why do you persecute Me?” Our Lord was telling him that by persecuting the infant Church, Saul was persecuting Him, Christ. To persecute the Church is to persecute Jesus Christ, and if the Church is persecuted today, it is Christ that is persecuted.

In a certain sense the Passion of Christ is being repeated in our days.

## *The Agony in the Garden*

### First Reflection

*“Jesus therefore, knowing all things that should come upon him, went forth, and said to them: ‘Whom seek ye?’ They answered him: ‘Jesus of Nazareth.’ Jesus saith to them: ‘I am he.’ And Judas also, who betrayed him, stood with them. As soon therefore as he had said to them: ‘I am he; they went backward, and fell to the ground. Again therefore he asked them: ‘Whom seek ye?’ And they said, ‘Jesus of Nazareth.’ Jesus answered, ‘I have told you that I am he. If therefore you seek me, let these go their way.’” (John 18:4–8)*

When Our Lord was arrested, He did two seemingly contradictory things. On the one hand, He spoke in such an authoritative voice that His listeners fell to the ground. On the other hand, He stooped to pick up Malchus’ ear, severed by Peter’s sword, and reattached it to the man’s head. He Who terrified also consoled. The same One Who speaks forcefully replaces the severed ear. Is there not some teaching here?

Our Lord is always infinitely good. He was good to those who sought Him that night as Jesus of Nazareth, and also good when replacing Malchus’ ear. If we desire to be good, we should learn to imitate Our Lord’s goodness. We should learn from Him that there are moments when it is necessary to know how to energetically hurl the enemies of the Faith to the ground, as well as to know when it is necessary to show compassion to those who want to hurt us.

Why did Our Lord say, “I AM He”? Was it only to physically shake those who wanted to arrest Him? Why do such a thing when He would, a little while later, voluntarily give Himself up? The reason is that if He spoke so loudly to the ears, it

was only so He could speak even more loudly to the hearts.

We do not know if those men ultimately profited by the grace they received, but the fear they certainly felt when falling at the sound of the Master's voice was just as valuable as when that same voice shouted, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute Me?"

Our Lord spoke loudly to the ears. Though they fell to the ground, the same voice that struck the bodies and deafened the ears raised the souls that were prostrate by opening the ears of the spirit that were deaf. Sometimes it is necessary to speak forcefully in order to heal.

### Second Reflection

*"Then Simon Peter, having a sword, drew it, and struck the servant of the high priest, and cut off his right ear. And the name of the servant was Malchus." (John 18:10)*

The Redeemer acted differently with Malchus. When He replaced his ear, cut off as a result of Saint Peter's zeal, Our Lord certainly wanted to grant him a temporal good. However, by healing his ear, Our Lord wanted, above all, to open the ear of his soul. So, He Who had healed the spiritual deafness of a few with the forcefulness of His Divine voice, cured the same spiritual deafness of Malchus with words of sweetness, and a physical miracle.

We live in an epoch of terrible spiritual deafness. If there was ever a time when mankind needed to listen to God's voice, ours is such a time; but ours is also an era that certainly has the hardest of hearts.

The Divine Master shows us that, if we want to cure our own spiritual deafness, as well as our neighbor's, He is the only one who can do so, as mere human means are useless.

Let us be one with the blind man of the Gospel who shouted to Our Lord, "*Domine, ut videam!*" — "Lord, that I may see!"

Let us take advantage of the celebrations of Holy Week to ask Him to help us to hear, "*Domine, ut audiam!*" — "Lord, that I may hear!" We don't know how Our Lord will heal our spiritual deafness—nor does it matter. Let us fulfil His Divine will whether He speak with the terrible voice of reprimand and punishment or with the sweet voice of consolations. What really matters is that we beseech Him, "Lord, that I may hear!"

Let us at least listen wholeheartedly to Our Lord's voice and, by sincerely opening our souls to the graces He grants us, bring about within ourselves the fullness of the kingdom of Jesus Christ, which the enemies of the Church hope to banish from the face of the earth.



## The Scourging

*"Then Pilate took Jesus, and scourged Him." (John 19:1)*

Pilate thought that, by scourging Jesus, he would satisfy the mob and so be able to set Him free. This is how the weak always think: compromise, give in to evil so as to appease it. However, this only makes things worse.

The torturers bound His hands and brought Him to the pillar amidst blows, shoves, and laughter. His meekness, goodness, and willing unwillingness to defend Himself contrasted with the brutal, senseless, and cruel hatred. Oh foolish illusion that by tying His hands He would be immobilized! It would be enough for Him to say, "Cords, loosen," and they would fall to the ground! Had He so wished, the cords could have also become serpents to attack His evildoers.

What is extraordinary is that He gave Himself up to be scourged. We can imagine His sweet groans, His Most Holy Body writhing in pain, His adorable flesh torn by the whip. This was the flesh of the God-Man! He stood, full of dignity, meek and without protest, conversing with the Eternal Father within Himself.

We can also imagine at that moment the Son

of God, Supreme Governor of all events, thinking about the blessed civilization that would one day be built on the merits of His Passion. Alas, He also saw that at a certain moment the Christian nations would turn against Him and would be dominated by an anti-civilization. Because this world would deny a personal God, it would also deny man's personhood and individuality.

In this flattened anti-civilization, mankind would affirm total equality, thus becoming enslaved to a rebellious communist utopia. This utopia would deny property, and therefore justice; would deny the family, and therefore purity; would deny religion, and therefore all that is sacred; would deny tradition, and therefore history. By inverting all values, this anti-civilization would produce a great chaos, a great vacuum in which the former-Christian peoples would drown. This anti-civilization is the tyranny of matter, of the machine, of anonymity, and of atheism — in a word, the reign of Satan.

Our Lord could have lamented like the prophet David: "What profit is there in my death . . . ?" (Psalm 30:9) What profit is there in my blood, which I shed so generously and so abundantly?

### *The Crowning with Thorns*

*"And the soldiers weaving a crown of thorns, put it upon His head; and they put on Him a purple garment."* (John 19:2)

Our God, crowned with thorns! Does this not prove that God's royalty is the royalty of pain? Let us accept suffering: suffering from humiliations;

*Because this world would deny a personal God, it would also deny man's personhood and individuality.*

suffering from injustice; suffering from the untiring effort to do good; suffering from self-denial. To take suffering out of Christianity is to insult Christ Who accepted a crown of thorns. To be Christian and to be afraid of suffering for God is to reduce God to a mere banker who satisfies our every whim, or to a simple servant who serves us at our bidding. To eliminate suffering from Christianity is to remove its backbone.

Are we only fair-weather friends? Indeed, it is not Christian to be afraid to sacrifice ourselves for Christ, our greatest Friend. Let us not commit the felony of abandoning Jesus on Calvary. Let us not strike a blow to His face, wounded for love of us, by sinning. Let us not be heartless hyenas, but rather "meek, and humble of heart" as He. (Matthew 11:29)

### *The Carrying of the Cross*

*"And bearing His own cross, He went forth to that place which is called Calvary, but in Hebrew Golgotha."* (John 19:17)

Each one of us has a cross to carry. Each one of us would like to be something he is not, to have something he has not, to be able to accomplish something he cannot. We need to let go of being what we are not, having what we have not, and accomplishing what we cannot; this is the way for all of us.

May Our Lord give us a love of our cross just as He had for His. Instead of bearing the Holy Wood with disgust, our Redeemer embraced and kissed it because He was fulfilling His mission on earth. Our cross consists in fulfilling our mission. Let us embrace it tearfully, but lovingly. And let us say, "I will never cease to ask for strength, and I will thus carry my cross to the height of my Calvary!"

Our Lord bore every pain as though He were a king going to his coronation. He did this with dignity, with serenity, steadfastly, and without hesitation. Nothing was spared Him, whether physically or spiritually. He entered into the depths of suffering with the resolution of a hero, thus appearing before the justice of the Eternal Father resplendent with pain. This is how He saved the human race: with each step, the worst happened to Him, yet He accepted everything, entirely, without asking for





for anything, but nonetheless, did so without measure.

Why? Because of the gravity of our sins. We should feel deep sorrow and regret at the sight of Him, the Innocent One Who bore sins with the sinner. He Who was most pure, most sacred, carried them for me! This should stir us to a great trust. One who was redeemed at such a price need only ask to obtain the necessary grace to practice virtue and the good that will lead him to Heaven.

Today, Our Lord's pains are caused by the blasphemies and scorn against the Catholic Church, as well as the worship of the idols of a pagan society: egalitarianism, sensuality, revolt, impurity, murder, theft, adultery. Which of God's commandments are not transgressed today? What is my attitude in face of this situation?

Facing my sins and the insufficiency of my atonement, I must kneel, strike my breast, and firmly resolve to sin no more

### Second Reflection

*"When Jesus therefore had seen His mother and the disciple standing whom He loved, He said to His mother: 'Woman, behold thy son.' After that, He said to the disciple: 'Behold thy mother.' And from that hour, the disciple took her to his own."* (John 19:26-27)

Saint John the Evangelist was at the foot of the cross also representing a sort of summit. His love had reached a high point. He was the "beloved" disciple.

On Holy Thursday, he had rested his head on Our Lord's breast and heard the pulses of the Sacred Heart of Jesus then beating with love for all mankind. Later that night, just as the other apostles, he had slept and fled. However, he was the virgin

any delay. He never asked anyone to pity Him. The suffering was such, that, at times, His strength failed, but He immediately arose and went on.

This thought helps me overcome my faint-heartedness! If I wish to meet Our Lord Jesus Christ in His sublime beauty and sanctity, I must embrace my own cross, too.

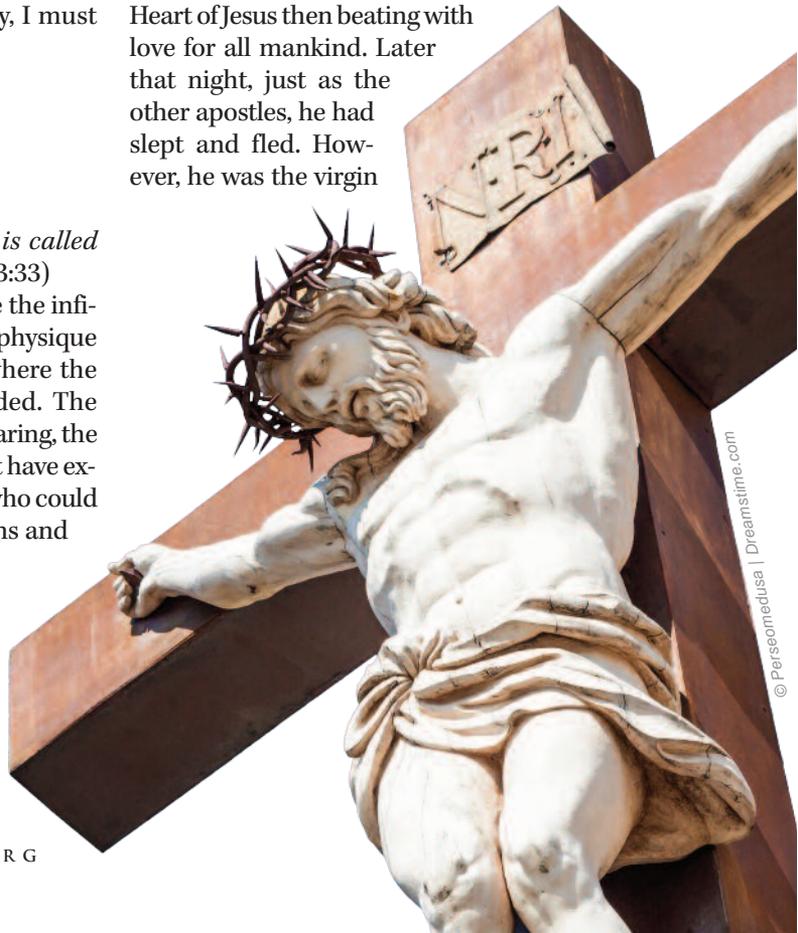
## The Crucifixion

### First Reflection

*"And when they came to the place which is called Calvary, they crucified Him there."* (Luke 23:33)

Prior to the crucifixion, we can imagine the infinite beauty of Our Lord, the beauty of His physique and the luminosity of His Sacred Face, where the aesthetic principles of the universe resided. The grace of His gestures, the elegance of His bearing, the sobriety of His manners and goodness must have exerted a strong attraction. When He spoke, who could imagine the tone of His voice, its inflections and unique capacity of expression?

But when He was nailed to the cross, He was deformed, without beauty, and one massive, bloody wound. This great victim was innocence itself. He had never sinned. He was the personification of virtue. He never had the need to make up



Apostle, the beloved Apostle, and virgin souls, even in deplorable situations, find the means and strength to fulfill their duty.

On the other hand, God protects virgin souls. God attracts virgins to Himself. Thus, not only did Saint John have the honor of being the disciple of love, but also of being present at that summit of love when Our Lord died on the Cross. In this way he represented all the Apostles and rescued the Apostolic College from complete disgrace.

Furthermore, in this zenith of love he received the ultimate reward, because there can be no greater gift than for a person to receive Our Lady as a present. When Our Lord said, “Woman, behold your son,” and then to Saint John, “Behold your mother,” he received a priceless gift.

### Third Reflection

*“One of the soldiers with a spear opened His side: and immediately there came out blood and water.” (John 19:34)*

Our Lord had already died when the soldier, known as Longinus, pierced His side. In this way, Our Lord’s Sacred Heart shed the last drop of blood, the last drop of water, for our salvation. What extreme mercy! What extreme goodness! What extreme compassion!

All the blood in the Body of Our Lord Jesus Christ was shed, to show that He gave us everything. He did this without holding back a single drop, because of His immense desire to save us. One drop of His blood would have sufficed to save the world, yet He shed all His blood to the point that the last drops were mixed with water. He wanted to hold back nothing in order to redeem us.

My God, how many times have I pierced the Heart of Jesus like the lance of Longinus? It could have been through grave sin; but certainly through my chronic habit of indifference, which is the reason I do not change, I do not progress nor do I want to progress. I see others progressing, but I can’t be bothered.

According to tradition, Longinus was blind in one eye. A bit of the water gushing from Our Lord’s side fell on his blind eye, which was healed, and he later became a saint. Who knows, maybe I will also receive this grace of becoming a saint. Oh Lord, at the moment of Your death, I beseech You to grant me this grace.

### Fourth Reflection

*“And taking Him down, he wrapped Him in fine linen, and laid Him in a sepulcher that was cut in stone, wherein no man had yet been laid.” (Luke 23:53)*

Lord Jesus, I contemplate Your body taken down from the cross, Your humanity seemingly crushed,



© Antonio Clero Reina | Dreamstime.com

and Your infinitely precious blood shed during Your Passion. Oh, Man of sorrows, your soul and body suffered as much as a man could suffer.

As long as this world exists, You will be our model of suffering with all its nobility, strength, gravity, sweetness, and sublimity. This is a model of suffering not only considered rationally, but also from the infinite perspective of faith; a suffering understood theologically, as a necessary penance and an essential means of sanctification.

Through the infinite merits of Your Most Precious Blood, grant our minds the necessary clarity to understand the role of suffering in our lives and grant us the strength required to truly love it.

It is only by understanding the role of suffering and the mystery of the Cross that humanity can save itself from the tremendous crisis it undergoes. It is just this understanding of suffering that can save from eternal punishment those who, even at the moment of death, reject Your invitation to accompany You on the Via Dolorosa.

Multiply on Earth souls who love the Cross. This is the marvelous grace we ask of You this Holy Week in the twilight of our civilization. ■

# Saint Katharine Drexel

BY ROBERT E. RITCHIE



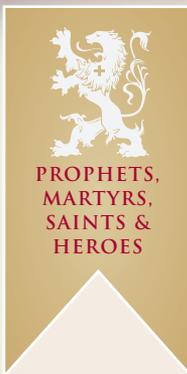
Saint Katharine Drexel, the second American canonized saint, was born into a wealthy family in Philadelphia in 1858.

Her father was an international banker and philanthropist accustomed to spending each evening in prayerful vigil. Although her mother passed away a few weeks after Katharine's birth, her stepmother Emma Bouvier, wealthy in her own right, along with a nanny, brought up Katharine and her sisters in a most devoutly Catholic atmosphere.

The new Mrs. Drexel made sure that there was an oratory in the house and set a regular time in the girls' schedule for daily prayer. The family made certain that the children were surrounded with friends who echoed their Catholic beliefs and behavior. When Katharine was 15 years old, her parents took her to Rome where they were invited to have an audience with Pope Pius IX. It would be an experience that marked her soul very deeply.

Aided by her excellent Catholic formation, her growing virtues and the

Working amongst the poor in Philadelphia in the early 1900's, Saint Katharine Drexel is the Church's answer to urban decay and poverty.



subsequent graces that God gives to generous souls, Katharine was ready to apply the maxims that her parents taught. It could be said that their wealth was a loan from God to accomplish the mission of His choice.

In 1889, at an audience with Pope Leo XIII, Katharine requested that the Holy Father send some nuns to staff some of the schools and missions she was financing. His answer was surprising. "Why not become a missionary yourself?" On February 12, 1891, Saint Katharine professed her vows and founded the Congregation of the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament.

She used her fortune, more than \$20 million, to bring the Catholic faith to those less financially fortunate, especially the American Indians and African Americans. During her lifetime, she opened and supported 60 schools and missions for the purpose of spreading the Faith. The last eighteen years of her life were spent in prayer and suffering, completely immobilized by serious illness. She died on March 3, 1935.

The life of Saint Katharine Drexel is an enigma in the materialistic and sinful society of our day. To think that someone would spend their entire fortune on those less fortunate is unthinkable in today's world. One would also ponder that the direction of Saint Katharine's parents was indispensable in forming her saintly disposition and generosity. Modern parents would do well to take their example seriously.

Let us pray to Saint Katharine for the grace of generosity. Those who are blessed with fortune should think carefully about the proper use of it. Those who do not have monetary means should think of how to use the other gifts that God has given to them for His glory. ■

*"If we wish to serve God and love our neighbor well, we must manifest our joy in the service we render to Him and them. Let us open wide our hearts. It is joy which invites us. Press forward and fear nothing."* —Saint Katharine Drexel





# AMERICA NEEDS FATIMA®

MARCH/APRIL 2018

PROGRESS REPORT

## Victory Against Satanic Pentagram in Boca Raton, Florida

BY JOSHUA LONG

It's December 1, 2017, and the waves of the Atlantic are crashing against the soft beaches of Boca Raton, Florida. They rush forward, then recede, a series of little victories and tactical retreats. Over and over again, as the tide rises, the ocean water seeks to change the earth around it. With unending determination, it continues on its ageless mission, and ultimately, succeeds. The stubborn land slowly crumbles, and over many years, the shapes of continents change.

It's the first of December, and the tide is rising among the Catholic faithful in Boca Raton. A group of over 200 supporters of the Catholic Church gather in protest against the erection of a satanic pentagram in the town's Sanborn Square. The day is warm and windy, with the sounds of Atlantic waves crashing against Florida's sandy outer perimeter nearly audible over the low rumble of traffic that makes its constant flow through the heart of Florida's small but affluent former Spanish settlement.

The protest, organized by America Needs Fatima and the American Society for the Defense of Tradition, Family and



Over 200 hundred protesters joined America Needs Fatima to make a stand against the display of a Satanic Pentagram in a public park in Boca Raton, Florida.

Property (TFP), with the indispensable assistance of local resident, Mr. Sergio de Paz, took place at 12:00. While it began with only a handful of supporters, the crowd soon grew to over 200 participants. Old and young, Floridians and travelers from many states, all were there to keep Boca Raton's public square free from satanic influence.

The Satanic Pentagram, a metal structure close to six feet tall and crudely painted red, had been denied placement in the park, and while there were still marks in the green grass from where its creators had planned to place it, the park was empty of all monuments, save for a large, beautifully constructed Nativity Scene occupying one corner of the park.

The 300-pound metal pentagram was the brainchild of a local teacher, Preston Smith, who teaches eighth grade English at Palm Beach Junior High School. The monument had the phrases "In Satan We Trust," "One Nation under Antichrist" and "May the Children Hail Satan" scrawled across



This bold and beautiful banner says it all: the faithful recitation of the rosary is the solution for our times.



wooden placards mounted in its center. The pentagram had been displayed in the park for a very short time earlier in the year, but was removed after having been torn down several times by an unknown party.

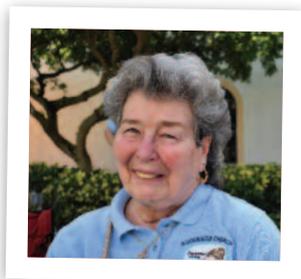
The protesters were gathered around the large red and white America Needs Fatima banner and with a rumbling sea of powerful voices were led in recitation of the Holy Rosary by TFP member and Fatima Custodian José Ferraz. Over and over again the sound made by their prayers crashed against the stone of surrounding buildings, the nearby trees, the cars rushing by, the ears of the public on that beautiful day. Cheered on by many of the passers-by, the protesters were met with very little resistance. In fact, some of the local pedestrians even joined in, filling the ranks gathered beneath Our Lady of Fatima's banner even more.

Residents of Boca Raton had not wanted the pentagram in their park. "It was terrible," says Lana, a young Boca resident who vehemently opposed the presence of the satanic icon. "It was a horrible thing to have to walk past every day. Such a negative presence, especially at this time of year. It's good to see so many people out here standing up against that kind of thing."



Dorothy, a registered nurse at Holy Cross Hospital, came out with her Respect Life pro-life group to join the rally.

"I'm sorry that it ever got this far, but I'm so glad that we have these brave people out here today standing up for their beliefs. I'm so glad the Satanists are backing down. It makes me feel wonderful. It really does. You know, Our Blessed Mother said that the rosary is more powerful than any weapons of war, and that we should take up that rosary and pray. And our prayers will be heard and answered. I believe that with all my heart. These rallies give me hope for my children and my grandchildren."

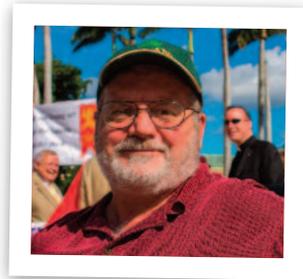


Peter, a resident of Fort Lauderdale, unable to walk, gets around on a small motorized scooter decked out with protest signs and rosaries. When questioned about the possible return of satanic activity in Boca Raton, he shares his cautious but determined outlook for the future.

"They'll be back. This isn't over. But, hopefully not as strong. The key to anything is persistence. If they do come back next year, here, or anywhere, we'll be there to meet them. Our thought process is going to be the same. Year after year we'll meet them head-on, and in time all there will be is Faith. This can't go on forever. I think the majority of



folks are against this kind of thing. But they are scared to speak out. They need to see this kind of resistance happening. They need to know that there are others, many others, thinking the same things they are, and taking action. They need to soak up the message that this sends. It's about family. It reflects everything that is good and hopeful, and society needs to see more of this."



Peter ended his interview by blessing himself and rejoining the ranks beneath the America Needs Fatima banner.

By 1:00 the rosary had been said, the wind had died down, and the rally started to dissipate. The tide was receding, for now. The protesters went their separate ways, leaving the park nearly empty. In one corner still stood the Nativity Scene, where ceramic shepherds and two loving parents knelt next to an empty manger, waiting in peaceful anticipation for Christmas to arrive. ■



# Catholics Oppose Heretical Speaker at Misericordia University

BY JOSHUA LONG

It was freezing in Dallas, Pennsylvania on the morning of December 17, 2017, with a cold wind that whipped spirals of snow across the white lawns surrounding Misericordia University.

Established in 1924 by the Sisters of Mercy, Misericordia is a Catholic co-educational four-year liberal arts college, in the Diocese of Scranton, Pennsylvania. Home to over 2,500 students, Misericordia hosted its annual winter commencement celebration.

The American Society for the Defense of Tradition, Family and Property (TFP) and America Needs Fatima were in Dallas to protest the appearance of Father James Martin, S.J., a Jesuit priest and editor of *America Magazine*, who was at the college to deliver the keynote speech. The protesters trekked across Misericordia's campus to stand in front of the college's North Gate, beneath the TFP's red and white banner.

Father Martin made headlines recently by insisting that the leaders of the Church radically change their position regarding homosexual and transgender lifestyles, going so far as to suggest that the Catholic hierarchy find ways to incorporate LGBT persons within the structure of the Church itself. This heretical stance flies in the face of centuries of Church teaching, and seeks to replace the solid principles upon which the Church has been built with a shaky foundation of radical and unquestioning acceptance.

On learning that Father Martin was asked to speak at a Catholic college, the American TFP and America Needs Fatima, organizing an online newsletter and email campaign, quickly recruited Catholics who would stand in opposition to Father Martin's appearance at Misericordia University. Flanked by bold banners made especially for the event, the group of protesters rallied in the cold at the college entrance for hours. Reciting the mysteries of the Holy Rosary, and singing traditional Catholic hymns, the protesters at the gate drew a lot of attention.

Local police, with several patrol cars and as many as ten officers, were on the scene. An ambulance stood at the ready, and campus safety patrolled



*Top:* braving the bitter cold, Catholics unite in defense of the Church's teaching on same-sex "marriage." *Center:* Director of America Needs Fatima, Mr. Robert E. Ritchie, speaks with members of the crowd, thanking them for their support. *Right:* Calling boldly for reparation, this banner leaves no doubt as to the seriousness of promoting false teachings.



nearby. However, the most attention seemed to come from commuters driving past on their way to the commencement celebration. Many young people stopped on their way onto the grounds, and several TFP members, including Mr. Robert E. Ritchie, were able to engage passers-by in conversation. Most agreed that there was something askew with the idea of a Catholic college hosting a talk given by a Jesuit priest advocating acceptance for practices condemned by the Church.

By one o'clock the stream of commencement attendees had slowed to a trickle, the rosary had been said, and rally cries had been chanted. The red and white banners were carefully rolled up and stowed away, and the group by the North Gate disbanded. They made the trip back across the frozen grounds, though this time the snow no longer made a sound beneath them, having been packed tight by the many feet of those who braved the winter cold to defend Church teaching. ■



### 2017 Centennial Public Square Rosary Rallies

“We held a Fatima candlelight vigil and rosary the night before the rally and then the rally the next day. I have to thank you very much. It has really opened people’s eyes. We had many people come—at least 59 altogether for candlelight rosary vigil, and 80 expected for the actual rally the next day for the noon rosary. It was excellent; saw and prayed with many people! So may God bless you and Our Blessed Virgin of Fatima keep you safe.”

*D. T., Abiquiu, New Mexico*



“Thank you for giving my family and me the opportunity to do the Public Rosary Rally. At noon on Saturday, October 14, 2017, my children and I put up your banner outside our garage in view of the street. We prayed the rosary together. We have been doing this for the last few years. We gather about twenty of us, young and old. The children from out of state get on the speaker phone on their smart phones and say it with us that way. It is really beautiful and important to us to pray together, especially now.”

*C. C., Madison, Wis.*

### America Needs Fatima Apostolate

“You awakened me and restored me into the Faith and faith in Mother Mary’s intercession. Thank you. You really made a difference.”

*S. P., Charlottesville, Va.*

“I am getting so many blessings and happiness since I started praying the rosary and I want to be a role model for my kids, so one day they will watch and learn and start praying the rosary.”

*S. M., Monsey, N.Y.*

“I am keeping the beautifully written article on the Miracle of the Sun. It’s so amazing! God bless each of you for what you do to spread devotion to Our dear Lady. She’s my best friend!”

*J. M., Akron, Ohio*

### Fatima Centennial Rosary

“Thank you, thank you, thank you, it is so beautiful! I was so surprised! I was supposed to be in Fatima and Lourdes this week, but the travel agent messed up so I had to cancel. That is why I am so happy about the white centennial Fatima rosary arriving the same week I was supposed to be in Fatima! I feel it came directly from Mary herself!”

*F. L., Huntington Beach, Calif.*

“Thank you for the beautiful rosary beads. I’ve just returned to the Church after a LONG ABSENCE, and these beads will help in my journey.”

*V. N., Alpharetta, Ga.*



Have something you’d like to share?  
Send us your feedback by writing to  
[crusade@TFP.org](mailto:crusade@TFP.org)

## Christmas Open House 2017

BY ANTONIO FRAGELLI

On December 10, 2017, the traditional open house was held at the America Needs Fatima’s national headquarters in Spring Grove, Pennsylvania. Supporters, friends and neighbors were welcomed to the beautiful property for a unique Christmas Open House experience.

The event afforded nearly 400 guests the opportunity not only to visit with volunteers and tour the various office buildings, but also to experience an authentic and truly memorable Christmas celebration. Upon arriving at the main house where some of the activities took place, visitors were greeted with elaborate Christmas décor complete with a large ten-foot





# CUSTODIAN'S

## CORNER

### Monica's "Rosary Reversion"

BY KENNETH MURPHY

The two best stories are conversions (non-Catholics embracing the Faith) and reversions (non-practicing Catholics returning to the Faith). Recently in Wilmington, California, Monica told me her own reversion story. Monica was a cradle Catholic but sadly never understood the rosary. As she reached adulthood, she was bombarded by anti-Marian propaganda and one close friend even convinced her that the Bible proves the rosary is "demonic."

Thankfully in September 2017, a better friend asked Monica to join her in someone's home to see a Fatima presentation. Monica was skeptical and uneasy, but decided "let me give this a try."

At the conclusion of the Fatima presentation the attendees were asked to make a daily rosary pledge as Our Lady at Fatima asked. These pledges are written and sent with petitions to Fatima, Portugal. When Monica received hers, she thought, "I can't make a promise I won't keep; I will pledge to pray only one rosary a year!" And with that she handed in her paper and went home.



Figuring that it would be better to complete her commitment sooner rather than later, she went to YouTube to relearn and pray her one and only rosary for 2017. "That wasn't too bad, only twenty minutes," she realized. Days later, based on the previous search, YouTube recommended videos on the power and promises of the rosary. She was especially touched by God's biblical promise: "I will put enmity between the serpent and the woman and She will crush his head (Genesis 3:15)." With that Monica saw the rosary not only as a powerful prayer but as a weapon against the devil! As Monica watched, listened and learned she continued to pray the rosary each day.

Later, Monica went to Mass in Wilmington and recognized me as the Fatima custodian who months before asked her to pledge to pray the rosary. She spread the good news that her promise of one rosary a year had led her to praying it every day. Blessed with many graces, Monica says, "Now I am a vigilante to defend and promote Our Blessed Mother!" And she does! Filled with enthusiasm Monica is now asking her family and friends "Whose side are you on; God's side or the devil's? Join Our Lady in crushing the head of the serpent with her rosary!" ■

To schedule a Fatima visit in your home, call (888) 460-7371.



Christmas tree richly decorated with beautiful ornaments. Evergreen wreaths and red-ribboned garlands were everywhere, and the main attraction—an elaborate Nativity Scene—fascinated all who saw it. Crackling wood fires blazed in the fireplaces throughout the historic 1911 house, a fitting backdrop to the lively conversations and conviviality that permeated the rooms.

Other delightful attractions were the delicious Christmas treats and musical presentations. As the guests savored the assortment of cheeses, finger foods, cookies and home-made hot apple cider, they were entertained by live performances

of Christmas carols performed by the Saint Louis de Montfort Academy's choir and band. The guests joined in the caroling, creating a truly joyous Christmas atmosphere.

For the children young and old, the appearance of Saint Nicholas was a delightful surprise. They were excited to receive small bags of chocolate from Saint Nicholas who also narrated the story of the real Santa Claus to all present.

As the program came to a close, visitors young and old and from near and far, gradually departed, warmed by the joy and marvels of a fitting celebration in honor of the coming of the King of Kings, the Infant Child Jesus. ■

# *A Tale of Two Marches* REASONS FOR HOPE **AND** CONFIDENCE

On the occasion of this 45th annual March for Life, the American Society for the Defense of Tradition, Family and Property (TFP) joins the legions of Americans nationwide who oppose the continued slaughter of innocents through abortion. We stand with those who see abortion as one of a whole spectrum of issues—from the attack on marriage to euthanasia—that is destroying America’s moral fiber.

As we march, we must address new challenges in the face of an America that is increasingly divided and fragmented. Indeed, pro-abortion activists will also be organizing their own counter-marches this year. These marches—like last year’s Women’s March—are displays of rage against traditional morality.

The annual March for Life and the other side’s Women’s March make for a tale of two marches. The future of America depends on which march prevails.

## Reasons for Hope

For those who have long fought this important battle, we can look with joy on many victories that are the results of our prayers, sacrifice and efforts. While we have not won the war, neither has the abortion movement. We have won many battles that we were told could not be won.

Consider this fact. For the first time in decades, the majority of Americans call themselves pro-life. While those who claim this mantle may not be one hundred percent pro-life, it does show that being pro-life has become mainstream. People are no longer afraid of being on the right side. Pro-lifers are now found everywhere, and the pro-abortion movement is on the defensive.

In 2017, we closed down 21 surgical

abortion centers. Since 1991, three quarters of the nation’s abortion mills have been permanently closed. Only 515 of the 2,176 clinics now remain open (<http://abortiondocs.org/closed-clinics/>). Furthermore, the states have enacted hundreds of anti-abortion laws. Clearly, the other side is retreating.

In these 45 long years, we have legally, peacefully, and prayerfully attacked the Culture of Death on all sides. We have reduced its funding, restricted its movements, laid prayerful siege to its clinics, filmed its lies, counseled confused mothers, set up parallel maternity centers for them, provided ultrasound pictures and prayed in the public square for forty days and nights. We are marching forward, and we thank God for rallying, leading, and strengthening us each step of the way.

## The Culture of Death’s “Losing Ever Since”

We must also consider that the pro-life movement has passion. It is full of enthusiastic young people. On the other

hand, the pro-abortion movement has lost much of its fire; most of its militant members are liberal politicians, Hollywood celebrities and aging die-hard feminists left over from the sixties.

We always had the high moral ground, and by God’s grace, we still hold it. The pro-abortion movement had hoped to make abortion an instrument of women’s so-called liberation. Instead, we have exposed its lies by showing abortion to be a form of cruel slavery. Not only is the unborn’s fundamental right to life denied, but its body parts are put up for sale in the marketplace. Everyone knows that procured abortion is not a simple surgical procedure, but a sinful decision that is morally indefensible.

The January 14, 2013, cover of TIME said it best: “40 years ago, abortion rights activists won an epic victory with *Roe v. Wade*. They’ve been losing ever since.”

## What It Will Take to Win

Thus, we are winning battles on many fronts, but we must win the war. If we are going to win, it depends on how we march forward in this tale of two marches.

There are three things to consider:

First, we must march straight toward our goal. We cannot water down our message to accommodate politically correct times. Our message must be clear. The only way for America to return to order is a return to God, the Ten Commandments, and Christian morality. We fight not only for life, but for the higher law that defends life, and for the God Who created both life and law. There can be no compromise with the Culture of Death.



The future of America depends on which of these marches prevails—the Women’s March (left) is a display of rage against traditional morality, while the March for Life (right) seeks to protect the precious gift of life.



*Above:* Over 24,000 pro-lifers unable to attend the March for Life added their names to the America Needs Fatima banner, to march in solidarity with those in attendance. *Right:* A TFP volunteer distributes the TFP statement, *A Tale of Two Marches*.

Legally, peacefully, and prayerfully, we demand its unconditional surrender.

We must never forget that the temptation to water down our message is based on the false assumption that doing so will attract more followers to our cause. However, no one respects those who have no character and betray their principles to gain popularity.

The principal attraction of the pro-life movement is its absolute rejection of the Culture of Death and its non-negotiable commitment to stop the slaughter of America's innocent.

Compromise must not be part of our vocabulary.

### **Be Passionate About Our Cause**

Secondly, we must continue to be passionate about our noble cause. In this struggle between two marches, victory does not necessarily go to the side with higher numbers. Instead, victory depends upon the passion and enthusiasm of those who fight in the ranks. It belongs to those who never give up, and know how to hope against all hope.

This hope attracts people to our cause. It is why so many young people swell our ranks. Our enthusiastic hope exasperates the other side.

Those who object that we are so few do not understand history. The course of history is never decided by majorities but impassioned minorities that influence the majority and win their cause. As impassioned pro-lifers, we have already impacted the debate far beyond the power of our numbers. By staying the course, we are setting up the groundwork for victory.

Thus, we must continue to march with passion and hope. We must never be discouraged by defeat. We must never allow betrayals to shake our de-

termination. We must never be overconfident in victory nor despondent when electoral promises go unfulfilled. We fight for God and His law and must trust in Him alone for the final victory.

### **Our Action Before Society and God**

Finally, we must be convinced that our actions are important in the eyes of society and God. We must never underestimate the repercussion of our actions. Even when it seems that everyone ignores us, we can be assured that our efforts are not in vain. Innumerable are the babies saved by the prayerful counsel outside death mills. When saner times return, and order is restored, future generations will look back on our witness with awe and gratitude.

Every step of our march must be imbued by the conviction that it echoes in history.

We must be further convinced that God looks upon our actions with favor and grace.

Even when it seems that everyone is transgressing God's law and sin and iniquity abound, we must confide that our actions are precious in His sight. The actions of faithful souls often secure God's

interventions and inspire great conversions. If it is true that Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed by fire because of their sinfulness, it is also true that this only happened because Lot looked in vain for ten just men whose faithfulness would ward off the deserved punishment. Our fidelity in these times of general apostasy can represent the "ten just men" God is looking for to spare America from total ruin.

Thus, when we march this year, we have every reason to hope and confide. In this tale of two marches, our love for God must exceed their rejection. Our obedience to His Ten Commandments must be stronger than their surrender to sin. Our confidence in God's merciful intervention must be greater than their rage and despair.

How we march will decide the victory.

The American TFP calls upon all Americans to march for a return to order. As practicing Catholics, we are confident that God and His Blessed Mother will come to the aid of those who rally to their cause. We confide in the triumph of Our Lady's Immaculate Heart, promised a hundred years ago at Fatima. ■

*January 19, 2018*

*The American Society for the Defense of Tradition, Family and Property (TFP)*

**To see more images from the 2018 March for Life, go to [www.ANF.org/2018MFL](http://www.ANF.org/2018MFL)**



# THE *Virgin* WARRIOR

**T**he beauty of an ideal is reflected in the soul of the one who fights for it.

Consider Saint Joan of Arc, the French maiden called by God to save her country from the enemy. Few images in history are as inspiring as hers.

But why does she inspire so much?

It is the splendor of a virginal body and soul who sets out to do the will of God. She answers the call and God draws extraordinary strength from a frail maiden of great purity and with it defeats stronger men.

She is a knight, not a “knightess.” She is a fragile, fine and delicate maiden as behooves her femininity. However, she is a warrior, and a great one!

How does one explain this? The explanation is in the balance of the qualities she possesses. She has the fortitude of a man, the delicacy of a woman, the force of a virgin who knows how to defend herself and she possesses the necessary integrity of soul.

But above all, she is a soul to whom God spoke through voices; a soul who heard those voices and was faithful to the will of God and in consequence, she shines....

She transmits a light that attracted not only the soldiers who followed her into battle but continues to attract millions of souls throughout the centuries after she is long gone.

She was faithful even unto death. As she was condemned by perverse men to burn as a witch, she cried out as the flames began to burn, “The voices did not lie!”

With her last cry of fidelity to her mission, her body was consumed by the flames while her soul flew up to Heaven where she remains a powerful inspiration for our vacillating century. ■

Text inspired by comments of Prof. Plinio Corrêa de Oliveira.

