



MICHAEL



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It is the surest way to totally belong to Jesus**



MICHAEL

A journal of Catholic patriots for the kingship of Christ and Mary in the souls of families and nations

For social justice through economic democracy in accordance with the teachings of the Catholic Church through the vigilant actions of heads of families and not through political parties

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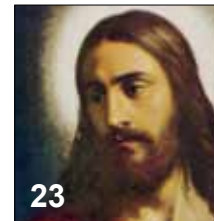
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Editorial

Social Credit is applied Christianity

The photograph below shows Most Rev. Mathieu Madega Lebouakehan, Bishop of Mouila in Gabon (and Apostolic Administrator of the Diocese of Port-Gentil) giving Pope Francis a copy in Spanish of our book *The Social Credit proposals explained in 10 lessons* (in Spanish, *Cursillo*, or short course on the Social Doctrine of the church and its application in economics), on October 9, 2013, at the end of the General Audience held every Wednesday in Saint Peter’s Square at the Vatican.

This book is the basis for our study sessions held twice a year in Rougemont on Social Credit and the social doctrine of the Church, sessions in which more than fifty African bishops have already participated. Bishop Madega attended this session in Rougemont for the first time in August, 2012, and then said a few months later, at the Synod of Bishops in Rome on the new evangelization: “Social Credit is a financial system free of debt at the service of the human being. This structure inspired by the Holy Spirit will help the Church and all mankind.”

Bishop Madega attended another session in Rougemont in August, 2013, presenting himself some lessons. (See page 9.) He has even undertaken

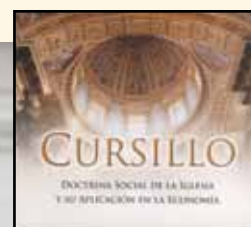
to have this book of 10 lessons translated into Italian, to facilitate its distribution among ecclesiastical circles inside the Vatican.

Scottish engineer Clifford Hugh Douglas, the founder of the Social Credit principles, said that Social Credit could be summarized in two words: applied Christianity. One can read at the end of Lesson 1 of this book these words of Geoffrey Dobbs:

“The social credit (without capital letters) means... the faith or confidence which binds any society together — the mutual trust or belief in each other without which fear is substituted for trust as the ‘cement’ of society... Though no society can exist without some social credit, it is at its maximum where the Christian religion is practiced, and at its minimum where it is denied and derided.

So promoting Christian principles is not wandering from social credit; on the contrary, it is actually part of it, it is its core message! That’s what each issue of MICHAEL explains, including this one. Happy reading!

Alain Pilote, editor



Pope Francis denounces the idolatry of money

We must guard ourselves against the temptation to idolize money, for this may weaken our faith and accustom us to the deception of meaningless and hurtful desires that lead people to destruction and perdition. Pope Francis warned against this danger at Mass on Friday morning, September 20, 2013, in the Chapel of the Domus Sanctae Marthae.

The Holy Father commented on the Readings of the day, saying: "Jesus told us clearly and definitively, that we cannot serve two masters, you cannot serve both God and money. It just doesn't work. There is something about the attitude of love towards money that takes us away from God". Quoting the First Letter of St Paul to Timothy (6:2-12, "The love of money is the root of all evils"), the Pope said: "Those who want to be rich fall into temptation and deception, and the many foolish and harmful desires that plunge men into ruin and perdition". Taken by "this desire, some have wandered away from the faith and have brought many torments upon themselves". "Money is so powerful, that it makes us deviate from the faith", it even "robs us of our faith, weakens it and makes us lose it".



"But money also sickens our thoughts, it even sickens our faith and makes it chose another path. These idle words, useless discussions... It goes even further... It gives rise to envy, strife, slander, evil suspicions, the conflicts of men with corrupt minds and destitute of the truth, who consider religion as a source of income.

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"I'm a Catholic, I go to Mass, because that gives me a certain status. I am well considered... but underneath I take care of my own interests, right? I cultivate money. Here a word is used by Saint Paul, which we find very, very frequently in the newspapers: 'Men of corrupt mind. Money corrupts! There is no way out. If you choose the road of money, in the end you will be corrupt. Money is this seductive that it slowly leads you to slip towards perdition. That is why Jesus is so categorical: You can not serve God and money. You can not: either one or the other! And this is not communism, eh! This is pure Gospel! These are the words of Jesus!"

"So what happens with money?" the Pope asked. "Money offers a degree of prosperity: you are alright, you feel a little important and then comes the vanity. We have read in Psalm 48: this vanity comes to you. Vanity that is useless, but makes you feel like an important person". Vanity, pride, wealth: this is how men in the Psalm are described: Those who "trust in their strength, and boast of their great wealth".

And so what is the truth? The truth, the Pope explained, is that "no one can redeem himself, or pay to God the appropriate price. The redemption of a life would be too expensive. No one can save themselves with money", however strong the temptation may be to chase "the wealth of feeling sufficient, the vanity of feeling important and, in the end, pride and arrogance".

"But, Father, I read the Ten Commandments and they do not speak ill of money. Against which Commandment do we sin when we do something for money?"

"Against the first! (Exodus 20:3: 'You shall have no other gods before me.') It is the sin of idolatry. Here's why: because money becomes the idol you worship! And that is why Jesus tells us: 'You can not serve the idol money and the Living God: either one or the other.'

"The early Fathers of the Church – I am speaking of the third century, more or less 200 or 300 AD – used a strong word: 'money is the devil's dung.' And it is so, because it makes us idolaters, and sickens our mind with pride and makes us maniacs of idle issues and distances us from the faith, it corrupts.

"St. Paul tells us to avoid these things, but to strive for justice, godliness, faith, love. And patience and meakness, against vanity and pride. This is 'the road of God, not that of the idolatrous power that money can give. Humility is 'the road to serve God. May the Lord – the Holy Father concluded – help us all to not fall into the trap of idolatry of money."

Pope Francis

"No to an unjust economic system, without ethics, where money commands"



Two days after his Sept. 20 homily, in which he denounced the idolatry of money, Pope Francis took on the same theme in a speech to 20,000 workers in Cagliari, capital of Sardinia – Italy's second largest island (after Sicily).

A special link binds Cagliari to Pope Francis who, until last year, was Archbishop of Buenos Aires in Argentina. The patron saint of Cagliari is Our Lady of Bonaria (in English, Good Air). The founders that established Buenos Aires wished to name it the city of Holy Spirit, but the sailors, who had brought the founders there, were Sardinians and wanted it to be named the city of the Madonna of Bonaria. In the end, a compromise was reached, and the city was "City of the Holy Trinity and Port of Saint Mary of Buon Aria", but it was so long that only the last words survived: Buon Aria, Buenos Aires.

Putting aside his prepared text, Pope Francis made one of his strongest attacks on the global economic system, saying it could no longer be based on a "god called money". Here are large excerpts from his speech:

Where there is no work, dignity is lacking! And this isn't only a problem of Sardinia – but it's strong here! (Editor's note: Cagliari has a youth unemployment rate of about 51 percent) – it's not only a problem of Italy and of some countries of Europe, it's the consequence of a worldwide choice, of an economic system that leads to this tragedy; an economic system that has an idol at the center, which is called money. **God did not want the center of the world to be an idol, but man, man and woman, who lead the world forward with their work.**

However now, in this system without ethics, there is an idol at the center and the world has become idolatrous of this god-money. Pennies command! Money commands! All these things command that serve it, this idol.

And what happens? To defend this idol they all crowd at the center and the last fall, the elderly fall because in this world there isn't a place for them! Some speak about this habit of "hidden euthanasia," of not taking care of them, of not taking them into account... "Yes, we let them lose..." And young people fall who don't find work and their dignity.



Our Lady of Bonaria

But think of it, a world where young people – two generations of young people – don't have work. Such a world has no future. Why? Because they don't have dignity! It's difficult to have dignity without working. This is your suffering here. This is the prayer you cried out from over there: "Work," "Work," "Work." It's a necessary prayer. Work means dignity; work means bringing the bread home; work means to love!

To defend this idolatrous economic system, the "throw away culture" is installed: grandparents are discarded and young people are discarded. And we must say "no" to this "throw away culture." We must say: "We want a just system! A system that makes everyone go forward." We must say: "We don't want this globalized economic system, which does us so much harm!" Man and woman should be at the center, as God wishes, not money!

(...) But let us be cunning, because the Lord tells us that the idols are more cunning than we are. The Lord invites us to have the cunning of the serpent, with the gentleness of the dove. We have this cunning and we call things by their name. At this moment, in our economic system, in our proposed globalized system of life, there is an idol at the center and this isn't right! Let us struggle all together so that at the center, at least in our life, are man and woman, the family, all of us, so that hope can go forward. Don't let yourselves be robbed of hope!

Pope Francis

The importance of the money question

by Louis Even

The following article was first published in French in the August 1939 issue of the "Cahiers du Credit Social" (Social Credit booklets).

At the source of all problems

Why does our magazine persist in the question of money? It is because money is the cause of all economic problems, and almost all political problems in society today.

We do not say that correcting the financial problem is the only issue that we need to be concerned with, or even that it is the most important. But we do say that, it is the most pressing. All other problems stem from this problem of money. The chaos that reigns in today's monetary system is what affects all the rest.

Money is essential in our modern world. Though money is not the true wealth of a nation, it is the means by which the wealth of each nation is distributed. Without money, you will die of hunger in front of stores filled with useful goods.

In today's social economy, instead of it being the nation's capacity to provide, that dictates how we are going to live, it is the amount of money that we each have in our pockets. Because money is so rare today, we choose instead to do away with the goods. This, obviously, is not how things should be, but this is what is most profitable to those who have control of the money supply system.

Money is man-made

If the amount of money in circulation depended upon the weather, or on some other cause outside of man's control, then we would just have to learn to accept it. But perhaps it is actually this very state of mind that maintains the permanence of such a false system. We have become so accustomed to hearing idioms such as, "Times are hard, we need to tighten our belts", that we think nothing of giving ourselves over to being *skinned alive* economically.

God did not create money. Money was not made by the angels, nor is it a natural phenomenon. Money is an invention of man, pure and simple.

Money today is not created by people inspired by the common good. The fact that billions of dollars are created in order to finance wars in all countries of the world, and that this money disappears without any explanation just when production is at its peak, is proof enough that the motivation behind this creation of money is neither social nor even human.

There are some who argue that the quantity of money in circulation is decided according to the amount of gold available.

This does not hold water. During the last World War, men were most certainly not concerned with the development of gold mines. Money was being freely created for slaughter, and in addition, during the ten years of the Great Depression, even though gold was stored in the vaults at Fort Knox, the United States counted 13 million unemployed because of lack of money. In Canada, never had there been so much gold produced as during the time of the Great Depression, yet, at the same time, never was there such a shortage of money.

The money supply is deficient when those who create it, as well as cancel it, destroy more than they create.

Money abounds when, these same men create more money than they cancel.

What is money?

Money is any instrument which is generally accepted as an exchange for products. The nature of this instrument does not matter, as long as it is universally accepted throughout the country, as money.

Let us say that I buy a chair for one hundred dollars. I can either pay for it with ten 10-dollar bills, or I can pay for it with one 100-dollar bill, or include in my payment metal coins. The metal coins, as well as the rectangular pieces of paper, are both currency (money). It is not the material with which the currency is made that gives it some value. The exact same amount of material is used in making both a ten-dollar bill and a hundred-dollar bill.

If I have a checking account, I can draw checks from my account for the full amount of money in that

account. So, I can also pay for the chair by means of a check. One hundred dollars from my account would then be placed in the account of the merchant.

A lesson on bank accounts

But aren't all bank accounts made up of our savings of paper or metal currency? No, far from it!

There is actually ten times more scriptural money (the money recorded in bank accounts) than there is metal or paper money in the entire country.

A bank account is not built on savings alone. The largest portion of the money in a bank account is created by the banker, and does not come from the savings of the depositor.

Let's say that you have saved up twenty-dollars and you bring it to the bank. The banker puts your twenty-dollars in his drawer, he then looks up your account and enters \$20.00 to your credit. Your bank account has now increased by twenty-dollars.

Now, a borrower comes into the bank. He needs a loan of \$20,000. He has not brought any money with him to the bank. Instead, he needs to borrow money. What does the banker do? After having him sign an agreement, the banker then enters \$20,000 into an account, to the credit of the borrower. The bank account of the borrower has now increased by \$20,000. This is the same procedure used for the commercial borrowers.

Where did the banker get the \$20,000? He did not take it from his drawer, he did not take it from anyone else's bank account, and he did not take it from his own pocket, but a bank account has increased by \$20,000 nevertheless. And what is more, there is now a \$20,000 increase in the total of all the bank accounts in the entire country. The amount in the borrower's checking account has increased by \$20,000. Where did this money come from? **It comes from the banker's pen.**

Bank accounts increase in two ways:

- The small way, by the savings of the depositor – a simple transaction/deposit of money (as with the \$20).
- The big way, by a loan – new money created which had not existed before as with the \$20,000.

"When all the trees have been cut down, when all the animals have been hunted, when all the waters are polluted, when all the air is unsafe to breathe, only then will you discover you cannot eat money." (Cree Proverb.)



So, this is a new creation of money then? Yes, without a doubt, since the \$20,000 dollars is money. It is money by the mere fact that the borrower is able to make checks from this account to purchase or pay for anything, in the same way that he uses paper currency or coins.

Public loans

Public loans are made in the same way. Let us now accompany the Finance Minister to the bank for a loan of one million dollars.

The Finance Minister, or Secretary of the Treasury, as he is called in the United States, must first give the bank a "bond", or a "debenture", which is a promise to reimburse: *"I promise to reimburse to the bank the sum of one million dollars, plus interest, in the next twenty years."*

What, then, does the banker do? Does he give the Finance Minister one million dollars in currency? No, not at all! The banker does the same thing that we saw earlier; he enters the amount of one million dollars into the Finance Minister's account as credit to the government. In addition, the Finance Minister can now sign checks for up to one million dollars to pay for, or buy anything.

From where did the banker take the one million dollars? He did not take it from his drawer, and even less, from his own pocket, and he did not take it from anyone else's bank account.

One bank account increased, without diminishing anything from any other account. Who else, besides the banker, can do this? Who else, besides him, can lend money without decreasing his own bank account?

For it to be possible to lend money without taking it from anywhere else, it would be necessary to manufacture or create some, and this is exactly what the banker does.

But, is this a good thing, or is this a bad thing?

The capacity to create money by the mere stroke

► of a pen (or by entering digits into a computer), is a great modern invention. Considering that the production of useful goods is made easy by today's modern technology, it is a wonderful thing that the production of money is also made easy. This modern accountancy should make it possible to have as much money as necessary in circulation in order to buy and sell all the production.


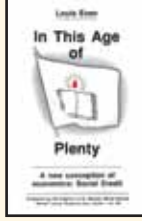
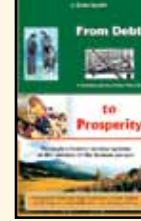
And yet, this is not the case. The money in circulation does not reflect the production. Either there is not enough money to buy the products that exist in abundance, or, money abounds while the store shelves remain empty. Why? It is because of the whimsical power of him who holds the pen, and because of the conditions he imposes along with the creation of this money. Any creation of money creates, at the same time, a debt either a private debt or a public debt. In order to reimburse these debts, money must be removed from society.

Money is essentially, doomed to *scarcity*, since it is created with a condition that a greater quantity of it be destroyed (taken out of circulation) than be created. If there still remains some money left in society, it is simply because there has been an increase of debt.

When the national debt increases, the total amount of interest increases. When the annual interest increases, taxes increase. When the taxes increase, the money in circulation decreases, even as prices go up. When the money in circulation decreases, we "tighten our belts"... When this happens, and then unemployment sets in...we know the rest...

This seems easy enough to understand once we've stripped away all the confusing apparatus surrounding and disguising it. But when people are kept in ignorance of the facts, the blame is oftentimes attributed to the government of the day. Instead of

Three books on Social Credit

To study the cause of the present financial crisis, we offer these books on Social Credit at a special price (shipping included):

Social Credit in 10 lessons:	\$12.00
In this Age of Plenty:	\$25.00
From Debt to Prosperity:	\$10.00

uniting ourselves against the common enemy, we end up waging political battles against each other.

A disortion

It is a complete distortion that money, which has been created by man, has now become the Master of man. Money was instituted in order to serve man; today, it is made to control man. Money now comes into being in the profiteer's ledger books by the creation of debts mathematically impossible to repay. Robbing society of its credit is at the very core of this operation which thus indebts society: individuals, corporations, governments.

For money to begin in such a way, how are we ever to expect it to play a beneficial role in society? From the moment of its creation it begins to take command, and continues to command...it comes into being for the sole purpose of profiting a few exploiters; and goes on benefiting these exploiters. Money comes into being controlling the governments; placing the governments at its feet.

And the human being, the child, comes into the world a slave to the debt. At his birth he takes on the burden of his share in his country's debt, a burden that he will carry throughout his entire life. Large families especially suffer from such a regime: the more children born, the more slaves to the system. And the system assumes the responsibility of ensuring that this debt will keep on growing. Money then becomes the master; and man becomes the slave. This is truly a distortion of reality!

A distortion – money is scarce in a world abundant with production! A distortion – money disappears just when production is at its peak! A distortion – money is regulated for the mere profit of the banker, instead of being regulated according to the urgent needs of society! A distortion – money comes into being owned by only a privileged few, but it is done by converting into money all of society's assets! As long as nothing is being done to correct this problem, it is useless to even begin trying to establish order in social relations.

For this reason the MICHAEL Magazine persists in making known this problem, in order to bring about the cure. The application of the Social Credit monetary proposals, or Economic Democracy, from the Scottish engineer, Clifford Hugh Douglas, would put money in its proper place, as a servant, and an instrument to distribute to man, the abundance that was made for man. Whether this abundance comes directly from God or was the result of man's work or applied science, each man, all men, each and every human being, must have their share of it.

Louis Even

“Wake up mankind, refuse usury, and you will have a future”

Reflections of Bishop Mathieu Madega Lebouakehan of Gabon

Most Rev. Bishop Mathieu Madega Lebouakehan, Bishop of Mouila and Apostolic Administrator of the Diocese of Port-Gentil, in Gabon, came for the second time to Rougemont to participate in our study session on economic democracy (also known as Social Credit). Enthusiastic as ever, this time he even became the professor for a few lessons, and demonstrated that he mastered the subject very well. Here is what he said on August 30, 2013, at the end of the study session. (Please note that the next study sessions in Rougemont on economic democracy will take place May 7-17, 2014, and August 20-28, 2014.)



On this photograph, Bishop Mathieu explains Lesson 5)taken from the book “Social Credit explained in 10 lessons”), which deals with the lack of purchasing power and how automation replaces human labor.

A widespread opinion blames the lack of money for poverty, lack of purchasing power, the economic crisis, and so on. To this lack of money, one may also add corruption, mismanagement, and other ailments of the same order.

This lack of money forces so-called “solvent” individuals or nations to borrow loans from banks, which creates in most cases unpayable debts. Large developed nations are also the victims of this system. How much money do all nations owe? The numbers make us feel dizzy. And for a significant amount of individuals the situation is no less worrying.

Let us stop and think for a moment. Physically where is this money owed by nations or people? No-where! Can the total amount of cash in circulation in the world and present in bank vaults be enough to pay back all the debts in the world and allow people to live decently?

From what we have learned here, the answer is NO! So where will this money demanded by the bankers from nations and individuals come from? Go figure! National governments cannot answer this question, so they will put on a theatrical performance to mislead their respective populations. However, when decision-makers and political authorities have to become magicians and offer illusory solutions in matters of life and death for the population, they are really blindfolded to reality.

Why is it that Governments of wealthy countries that claim to be the champions of democracy and in a position to teach lessons to other nations, are also crushed under the burden of debts that are mathematically impossible to pay back? Yet, these wealthy nations possess faculties of economics, great schools of management, centers of strategic research, etc. If they really know what they are doing, they therefore knowingly support the present debt-money system and are its accomplices. Dear friends, since we already know this is unjust, let us break the chains of this system of slavery through debts and interest.

We have seen (in Lesson 2) that monkeys in the jungle can seem to be more intelligent than we humans — even though they have no universities and know nothing about our various political and economic systems, do not deal

with money or bank loans, and never experience inflation nor deflation — since when they are hungry, they simply go and get bananas in the trees, without using any paper money.

Dear monkeys, please come and teach human beings who are destroying the environment and their fellow citizens that the truth is simple, that God-given wisdom and common sense, the order wished by God in nature, is more profitable than all the false man-made theories that justify the present debt-money system.

To abandon freedom and create our own jail (as we humans do by accepting the chains of the present debt-money system) is the logical conclusion of a mental perversion or muddled brain. This perversion cannot be simply human, it is diabolical. It is more than a structure of sin, it is even the perversion of a structure of sin or, in other words, a double perversion. Wake up, mankind, refuse usury, and you will have a brighter future!

Bishop Mathieu Madega Lebouakehan

“The time has come for us to stand up and denounce the banking system”

Most Rev. Cyr Nestor Yapaupa, coadjutor Bishop of the diocese of Alindao, Central African Republic, whom we had the special honor of receiving for our week of study and the Congress, has traced an extraordinary plan of action for his diocese to make Louis Even's writings on Social Credit known. Here we quote his appreciation for this week of study led by Alain Pilote in August, 2013, and based on his book *Social Credit explained in 10 lessons*:

by Bishop Cyr-Nestor Yapaupa

We have learned here a lot of things: the creation and birth of money, the workings of banks, the economy and debts; the memory we are bringing home with us is the Social Credit system we have learned. We have found that the banking system put into place by the bankers is a heavy burden for the nations. This system is crushing us. This system is suffocating us.

One talks a lot nowadays of crimes against humanity; however, one never speaks about the present banking system. This banking system must also be considered as a crime against humanity. That is to say, those who put this system in place are assassins, criminals. Because of them, today, there is poverty in the world. Because of them, today, many people are dying. Because of their system, there are wars in the world.

So, shall we always remain idle and watch them continue their evil schemes? NO! I think the time has come for us to stand up and begin, first of all, to denounce this banking system. Our role, for us, as bishops and with you priests and laymen, our role as Christians, as prophets, is to denounce evil. And if we see something evil and say nothing, it means that we are the accomplices of this evil. In the Gospel that we read at Mass a few days ago, John the Baptist denounced what is evil (Herod who had no right to take the wife of his brother.) John the Baptist denounced the evil of his time. Like John the Baptist, it is our role and duty to denounce evil, the evil of a banking system that is in the process of destroying our world.



And when we denounce it, we must not stop there. After denouncing it, we must act. We must propose something. And what we should propose to others is Social Credit. We are all invited to propose to our people, to our brothers and sisters, Social Credit as an essential means of fighting, of eradicating the evil, of eradicating poverty in the world.

Social Credit is on the move. We must continue to make it known. Social Credit will allow the blossoming of the human person. Because of this, we cannot give up. Yesterday, there were mothers who told us: “With prayer, we will succeed.” Yes! With prayer we will succeed. With the Rosary, we will

succeed, but we also must propose things because the bankers are not going to let themselves be pushed around!

We must therefore work hard, make Social Credit known, deepen our knowledge of Social Credit, to have a solid base and stand fast before these assassins. If we do not have a solid base, they will sweep you away after. Therefore, there is prayer but there is also work, which we have already begun. As the proverb says, God helps only those who help themselves. If we pass

our time praying but do not work, we will not get results. We have to do both, prayer and action; that makes a sense of balance.

This work will lead us to financial liberation if we get down to it, if each one does his and her part where he lives, in his circle. (Editor's note: Bishop Yapaupa, for example, organized a study session on Social Credit with all the priests of his diocese at the end of November, 2013, and is working to have all the schools and seminaries of the Central African Republic talk about Social Credit, thus finding a way to reach all the students and workers.) If each one begins to work at it seriously, I think we will succeed, and our victory will be great. This victory, if we ever manage to get it over the financial assassins, the peoples and nations of the whole world will be relieved. So, I invite you to pray and work; both go together.

Since my arrival here in Rougemont, I have been truly impressed by the lives of the Pilgrims of Saint Michael; it really touched me. There is not only the social side, but also the spiritual side. For that I say thank you, thank you for all that you are doing in a country where we see that spirituality is disappearing, but where there are still groups of people who give themselves to God. Congratulations!

We came here, we saw, we lived, we heard. If tomorrow we leave for home and we cross our arms, tomorrow they will ask us: “What did you do? Did you do something for the advancement of the Social Credit cause, or have you taken three steps back?”

I want to invite you all to go forward, to take the time to work well. It is only once we no longer hear of the banking assassins and the whole world speak the language of Social Credit, that we will truly say we have won.”

Bishop Cyr-Nestor Yapaupa

Thank-you to St. Kateri Tekakwitha for a favor obtained

My husband and I would like to publish in MICHAEL the story of the great favor we obtained through the intercession of St. Kateri Tekakwitha.

Our son, a very good boy who had always accompanied us to the church, began to smoke when he entered university, and then started smoking marijuana.

We did everything we could to convince him to stop, without result. On the contrary, he was getting more and more addicted to this drug.

Not knowing what to do, we beseeched God to help us. It is at that time that we received your MICHAEL magazine with the picture of St. Kateri on the cover page. I read her life and I learned that Pope John Paul II and set her as patron saint for the youth. We therefore started to pray to St. Kateri for our son.

Sainte Kateri heard our prayer: my son came to me three months later to tell me that he had stopped smoking, not only marijuana, but any kind of cigarette. Since then, we have introduced your MICHAEL magazine to several people; we even subscribed our niece in Ontario. Thank you, Saint Kateri!

Grateful parents

Rougemont monthly meetings

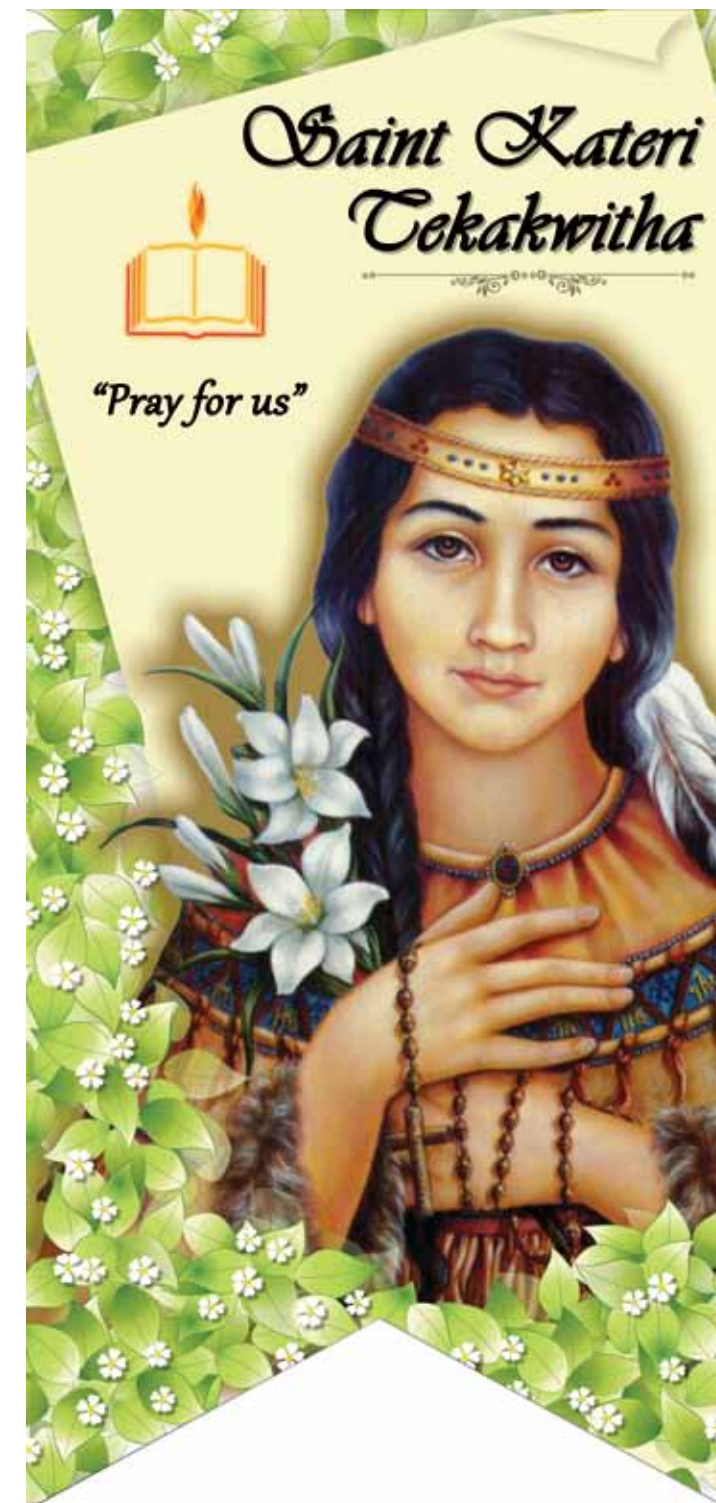
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Why consecrate oneself to Mary?

Because it is the surest way to totally belong to Jesus

Montfort's True Devotion to the Blessed Virgin

On Good Friday, when Jesus was crucified, His Mother, the Virgin Mary and St. John, the beloved disciple, stood at the foot of the Cross. Moments before dying, Jesus said to his mother: "Woman, behold your son." Then he said to the disciple: "Behold your Mother." (John 19:27.) Since that time, all Christians are children of Mary, who desires nothing but to lead us all to her Son Jesus. The last chapter of the Constitution *Lumen Gentium* on the Church, from the Second Vatican Council, is devoted to Mary's special role of intercession.

To consecrate oneself to Mary is to choose, after the example of many saints of the Church, to belong to her in a special way to follow Jesus with her and through her. We need only to think of the recent examples of Pope John Paul II and our current Pope Francis. This approach is certainly not essential to salvation, since Christ crucified is our only Redeemer. However, this approach, which is recommended by the Church, is "an easy way to obtain from God the grace to become a saint," as stated by St. Louis Marie Grignon de Montfort, in his *Treatise on True Devotion to the Blessed Virgin*.

It is God's will that all Christians consecrate themselves to Mary. In her apparitions at Fatima in Portugal in 1917, the Virgin Mary said to the three young seers, "You have seen hell where the souls of poor sinners go. To save them, God wishes to establish in the world devotion to my Immaculate Heart." (See page 17.)

The word "consecrate" means "to sanctify oneself with." So to consecrate oneself to Jesus through Mary, is to sanctify oneself with Mary. In a conference, Most Rev. Jean Ntagwarara, Bishop of Bubanza, Burundi, explained the meaning of the consecration to Mary:



As Jesus wanted to go through Mary to come to us, we must go through Mary to come to Jesus (Saint Louis Marie de Montfort)

"What does consecration mean? To be consecrated is to be set apart for God, and God alone. It means to give oneself freely for his glory.

"Jesus is the first consecrated person: he consecrated himself to his Father by coming into the world: "Behold, I come to do your will." (Hebrews 10:9.) His consecration is animated by divine love, perfect love. And because it is perfect, it is the only act definitively approved by God.

"All other acts of consecration refer to Jesus: 'I am the Way, the Truth and the Life. No one comes to the Father except through me.' (John 14:6.) "And I consecrate myself for them, so that they also may be consecrated in truth." (John 17:19.) The baptized Christian is consecrated to God the Father, through Jesus Christ, in the Holy Spirit.

"The baptismal consecration is the foundation of all our other consecrations: The Profession of Faith, the consecration in an association of lay faithful, the prayer of consecration according to Saint Louis Marie de Montfort, etc., all this is not an addition but simply a deepening, a development, an explanation of the baptismal consecration.

"You can consecrate yourself through someone on two conditions: first, that it is a consecration to

God, and secondly, that the intermediary is already consecrated to God totally and permanently. This person is a model and an aid.

"Consecration to Mary can have no other purpose than being united with Jesus. We can therefore consecrate ourselves to God through Mary, since Mary is consecrated to God: "Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word."

(Luke 1:38.) To consecrate oneself to God through Mary is also to recognize the mission that Mary received at Calvary, when Jesus said to his mother: 'Woman, behold your son'. Then he said to the disciple, 'Behold your mother.' (Jn 19:26-27.)

"To consecrate oneself to God through Mary is also to imitate Jesus who came and gave himself to Mary in the Incarnation. Jesus is the first one who consecrated himself to Mary. What can we do better than imitate Jesus!"

St. Louis Marie de Montfort

The text that best explains why we should consecrate ourselves to Mary is the *Treatise on True Devotion to the Blessed Virgin*, written in 1712 by St. Louis Marie Grignon de Montfort (1673-1716), a great Marian apostle of Brittany, France, declared a saint by Pope Pius XII in 1947. According to Montfort, it is in the interest of every Christian to completely surrender to the love of the Mother of God, who constantly intercedes with Jesus and the Father on behalf of all men, and as She is immaculate, conceived without sin, God can only accept the requests that come from Mary. The heart of the consecration to Mary according to Louis -Marie de Montfort's formula is summarized in these words:

"This day, with the whole court of heaven as witness, I choose you, Mary, as my Mother and Queen. I surrender and consecrate myself to you, body and soul, with all that I possess, both spiritual and material, even including the spiritual value of all my actions, past, present, and to come. I give you the full right to dispose of me and all that belongs to me, without any reservations, in whatever way you please, for the greater glory of God in time and throughout eternity."

John Paul II and the spirituality of St. Louis Marie Grignon de Montfort

During the general audience of October 13, 2000, John Paul II explained how his spiritual director advised him to meditate on the *Treatise on True Devotion to Mary*, when he was a clandestine seminarian, working at the same time at the Solvay factory in Krakow. "I read and reread several times, with a great spiritual interest, this ascetic precious little book, of which the blue cover was stained with soda."

According to his Apostolic Letter *Rosarium Virginis Mariae* on the Rosary, his episcopal and papal motto, *Totus Tuus*, was inspired by St. Louis Marie Grignon de Montfort. It is taken from a passage from a prayer found in the *Treatise on True Devotion to*



Statue of sSint Louis-Marie Grignon de Montfort in St. Peter's Basilica at the Vatican. The saint crushes the devil who tries to destroy his book "Treatise on True Devotion to Mary".

Mary: "Totus Tuus ego sum omnia mea tua sunt. Accipio Te in mea omnia." (I'm all yours, and everything I have is yours. Be my guide in all.)

In his book *Crossing the Threshold of Hope* (1994), Pope John Paul II explained the choice of this motto: «Thanks to Saint Louis of Montfort, I came to understand that true devotion to the Mother of God is actually Christocentric, indeed, it is very profoundly rooted in the Mystery of the Blessed Trinity, and the mysteries of the Incarnation and Redemption.

Here are large excerpts from this wonderful book, *Treatise on True Devotion to the Blessed Virgin*, which, we hope, will encourage many to consecrate themselves to Mary.

Alain Pilote ►

► Treatise of true devotion to Mary

As all perfection consists in our being conformed, united and consecrated to Jesus it naturally follows that the most perfect of all devotions is that which conforms, unites, and consecrates us most completely to Jesus. Now of all God's creatures Mary is the most conformed to Jesus. It therefore follows that, of all devotions, devotion to her makes for the most effective consecration and conformity to him. The more one is consecrated to Mary, the more one is consecrated to Jesus. That is why perfect consecration to Jesus is but a perfect and complete consecration of oneself to the Blessed Virgin, which is the devotion I teach; or in other words, it is the perfect renewal of the vows and promises of holy baptism. This devotion consists in giving oneself entirely to Mary in order to belong entirely to Jesus through her.

It follows then that by this devotion we give to Jesus all we can possibly give him, and in the most perfect manner, that is, through Mary's hands... It follows then that anyone who in this way consecrates and sacrifices himself voluntarily to Jesus through Mary may no longer dispose of the value of any of his good actions. All his sufferings, all his thoughts, words, and deeds belong to Mary. She can then dispose of them in accordance with the will of her Son and for his greater glory. This dependence, however, is without detriment to the duties of a person's present and future state of life.

It follows that we consecrate ourselves at one and the same time to Mary and to Jesus. We give ourselves to Mary because Jesus chose her as the perfect means to unite himself to us and unite us to him. We give ourselves to Jesus because he is our last end. Since he is our Redeemer and our God we are indebted to him for all that we are.

Our good Master stooped to enclose himself in the womb of the Blessed Virgin, a captive but loving slave, and to make himself subject to her for thirty years. **As I said earlier, the human mind is bewildered when**

it reflects seriously upon this conduct of Incarnate Wisdom. He did not choose to give himself in a direct manner to the human race though he could easily have done so. He chose to come through the Virgin Mary. Thus he did not come into the world independently of others in the flower of his manhood, but he came as a frail little child dependent on the care and attention of his Mother. Consumed with the desire to give glory to God, his Father, and save the human race, he saw no better or shorter way to do so than by submitting completely to Mary. He did this not just for the first eight, ten or fifteen years of his life like other children, but for thirty years.

He gave more glory to God, his Father, during all those years of submission and dependence than he would have given by spending them working miracles, preaching far and wide, and converting all mankind. Otherwise he would have done all these things. What immeasurable glory then do we give to God when, following the example of Jesus, we submit to Mary! With such a convincing and well-known example before us, can we be so foolish as to believe that there is a better and shorter way of giving God glory than by submitting ourselves to Mary, as Jesus did?

The Blessed Virgin, mother of gentleness and mercy, never allows herself to be surpassed in love and generosity. When she sees someone giving himself entirely to her in order to honour and serve her, and depriving himself of what he prizes most in order to adorn her, she gives herself completely in a wondrous manner to him. She engulfs him in the ocean of her graces, adorns him with her merits, supports him with her power, enlightens him with her light, and fills him with her love. She shares her virtues with him - her humility, faith, purity, etc. She makes up for his failings and becomes his representative with Jesus. Just as one who is consecrated belongs entirely to Mary, so Mary belongs entirely to him. We can truthfully say of this perfect servant and child of Mary what St. John in his gospel says of himself, "He took her for his own." (cf. John 19:27.)

The Mother of God requires our cooperation

Modern times are dominated by Satan and will be more so in the future. The conflict with Hell cannot be engaged by men, even the most clever. The Immaculata alone has from God the promise of victory over Satan.

However, assumed into heaven, the Mother of God now requires our cooperation. She seeks souls who will consecrate themselves entirely to her, who will become in her hands effective instruments for the defeat of Satan and the spreading of God's kingdom upon earth."

Saint Maximilian Kolbe



Jacinta Marto, one of the three children who received messages from the Virgin Mary at Fatima, Portugal, in 1917, died at the age of 9 on February 20, 1920, and was declared blessed by John Paul II in Fatima on May 13, 2000. Not long before her death, she said the following to her cousin Lucia, who was also present during the apparitions of Mary:

"Soon I shall go to Heaven. You are to stay here to reveal that the Lord wants to establish throughout the world the devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. When you start to reveal this, don't hesitate. Tell everyone that Our Lord grants us all graces through the Immaculate Heart of Mary; that all must make their petitions to Her; that the Sacred Heart of Jesus desires that the Immaculate Heart of Mary be venerated at the same time. Tell them that they should all ask for peace from the Immaculate Heart of Mary, as God has placed it in Her hands. Oh, if I could only put in the heart of everyone in the world the fire that is burning in me and makes me love so much the Heart of Mary!"



How much stronger and more powerful are we in approaching our Lord when we are armed with the merits and prayers of the worthy Mother of God, who, as St. Augustine says, has conquered the Almighty by her love!

Since by this devotion we give to our Lord, through the hands of his holy Mother, all our good works, she purifies them, making them beautiful and acceptable to her Son.

This devotion is a smooth, short, perfect and sure way of attaining union with our Lord, in which Christian perfection consists... This devotion is a perfect way to reach our Lord and be united to him, for Mary is the most perfect and the most holy of all creatures, and Jesus, who came to us in a perfect manner, chose no other road for his great and wonderful journey.

When the Hail Mary is well said, that is, with attention, devotion and humility, it is, according to the saints, the enemy of Satan, putting him to flight; it is the hammer that crushes him, a source of holiness for souls, a joy to the angels and a sweet melody for the devout. It is the Canticle of the New Testament, a delight for Mary and glory for the most Blessed Trinity. The Hail Mary is dew falling from heaven to make the soul fruitful. It is a pure kiss of love we give to Mary. It is a crimson rose, a precious pearl that we offer to her. It is a cup of ambrosia, a divine nectar that we offer her. These are comparisons made by the saints.

I earnestly beg of you, then, by the love I bear you in Jesus and Mary, not to be content with saying the

Little Crown of the Blessed Virgin, but say the Rosary too, and if time permits, all its fifteen decades, every day. Then when death draws near, you will bless the day and hour when you took to heart what I told you, for having sown the blessings of Jesus and Mary, you will reap the eternal blessings in heaven.

When Mary has taken root in a soul she produces in it wonders of grace which only she can produce; for she alone is the fruitful virgin who never had and never will have her equal in purity and fruitfulness.

Together with the Holy Spirit, Mary produced the greatest thing that ever was or ever will be: a God-man. She will consequently produce the marvels which will be seen in the latter times. The formation and the education of the great saints who will come at the end of the world are reserved to her, for only this singular and wondrous virgin can produce in union with the Holy Spirit singular and wondrous things.

When the Holy Spirit, her spouse, finds Mary in a soul, he hastens there and enters fully into it. He gives himself generously to that soul according to the place it has given to his spouse. One of the main reasons why the Holy Spirit does not work striking wonders in souls is that he fails to find in them a sufficiently close union with his faithful and inseparable spouse. I say "inseparable spouse", for from the moment the substantial love of the Father and the Son espoused Mary to form Jesus, the head of the elect, and Jesus in the elect, he has never disowned her, for she has always been faithful and fruitful.

The message of Our Lady of Fatima



us think of the great struggle between good and evil, showing how, when man puts God aside, he cannot achieve happiness, but ends up destroying himself.

“How many victims there have been throughout the last century of the second millennium! We remember the horrors of the First and Second World Wars and the other wars in so many parts of the world, the concentration and extermination camps, the gulags, ethnic cleansings and persecutions, terrorism, kidnappings, drugs, the attacks on unborn life and the family.

“The message of Fatima is a call to conversion, alerting humanity to have nothing to do with the ‘dragon’ whose ‘tail swept down a third of the stars of heaven, and cast them to the earth’ (Rv 12: 4, which means that one third of the angels in Heaven followed Lucifer in his rebellion and fall). Man’s final goal is heaven, his true home, where the heavenly Father awaits everyone with his merciful love...



The three children of Fatima who saw the Virgin: Lucia Dos Santos, Francisco and Jacinta Marto.

“In her motherly concern, the Blessed Virgin came here to Fatima to ask men and women ‘to stop offending God, Our Lord, who is already very offended’. It is a mother’s sorrow that compels her to speak; the destiny of her children is at stake. For this reason she asks the little shepherds: ‘Pray, pray much and make sacrifices for sinners; many souls go to hell because they have no one to pray and make sacrifices for them’.

“Jacinta had been so deeply moved by the vision of hell during the apparition of 13 July that no

mortification or penance seemed too great to save sinners... Dear boys and girls, Our Lady needs you all to console Jesus, who is sad because of the bad things done to him; he needs your prayers and your sacrifices for sinners. Ask your parents and teachers to enrol you in the «school» of Our Lady, so that she can teach you to be like the little shepherds, who tried to do whatever she asked them. I tell you that «one makes more progress in a short time of submission and dependence on Mary than during entire years of personal initiatives, relying on oneself alone» (St Louis de Montfort, *The True Devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary*, n. 155). This was how the little shepherds became saints so quickly... Devoting themselves with total generosity to the direction of such a good Teacher, Jacinta and Francisco soon reached the heights of perfection.”

What is the message of Fatima? Prayer, penance and conversion. In 1917, the Virgin Mary gave a secret to the three shepherds; Sister Lucia unveiled the first two parts in her memoirs in 1941, and the third part of the secret was unveiled at Fatima on May 13, 2000, on the occasion of the beatification ceremony. Here is what Sister Lucia wrote about the first two parts:

“The secret is made up of three distinct parts, two of which I am now going to reveal. The first part is the vision of hell. Our Lady showed us a great sea of fire which seemed to be under the earth. Plunged in this fire were demons and souls in human form, like transparent burning embers, all blackened or burnished bronze, floating about in the conflagration, now raised into the air by the flames that issued from within themselves together with great clouds of smoke, now falling back on every side like sparks in a huge fire, without weight or equilibrium, and amid shrieks and groans of pain and despair, which horrified us and made us tremble with fear. The demons could be distinguished by their terrifying and repulsive likeness to frightful and unknown animals, all black and transparent. This vision lasted but an instant. How can we ever be grateful enough to our kind heavenly Mother, who had already prepared us by promising, in the first Apparition, to take us to heaven. Otherwise, I think we would have died of fear and terror.

“We then looked up at Our Lady, who said to us so kindly and so sadly: ‘You have seen hell where the

souls of poor sinners go. To save them, God wishes to establish in the world devotion to my Immaculate Heart. If what I say to you is done, many souls will be saved and there will be peace. The war is going to end: but if people do not cease offending God, a worse one will break out during the Pontificate of Pius XI. When



you see a night illumined by an unknown light, know that this is the great sign given you by God that he is about to punish the world for its crimes, by means of war, famine, and persecutions of the Church and of the Holy Father. To prevent this, I shall come to ask for the consecration of Russia to my Immaculate Heart, and the Communion of reparation on the First Saturdays. If my requests are heeded, Russia will be converted, and there will be peace; if not, she will spread her errors throughout the world, causing wars and persecutions of the Church. The good will be martyred; the Holy Father will have much to suffer; various nations will be annihilated. In the end, my Immaculate Heart will triumph. The Holy Father will consecrate Russia to me, and she shall be

converted, and a period of peace will be granted to the world’.”

Upon the request made by Pope Francis to the cardinal patriarch of Lisbon, José da Cruz Policarpo, his pontificate was consecrated to the protection of Our Lady of Fatima, during a Mass held at the famous Portuguese shrine on May 13, 2013, in the presence of 300,000 people. Here are excerpts from the prayer:

“We consecrate to you, Lady, Mother of the Church, the ministry of the new Pope. Fill his heart with the tenderness of God, which you felt like no one else, so that he will be able to embrace all the men and women of this time with the love of your Son Jesus Christ... Give him the gift of discernment, to be able to identify the paths for the renewal of the Church. Give him the courage not to hesitate in following the paths suggested by the Holy Spirit. Shelter him in the harsh hours of suffering, to overcome in charity the trials that the renewal of the Church will bring. Be always by his side, saying with him those words you know well: ‘I am the Handmaid of the Lord, let it be done unto me according to Thy word.’”

No to Pauline Marois' secular charter!

No need to ban religious symbols for civil servants

No to closed secularism that forbids any religion

by Alain Pilote

On September 10, 2013, Pauline Marois, Premier of the Province of Quebec and leader of the Parti Quebecois, accompanied by Bernard Drainville, the minister responsible for Democratic Institutions, unveiled her proposal of a "charter of Quebec values", which aims at banning "overt" religious symbols for civil servants, in order to "safeguard the neutrality of the State."

This charter states that judges, police officers, prosecutors, public daycare workers, teachers, or hospital workers — while they are on the job — can not wear overtly religious objects (Muslim head scarves, Jewish skullcaps, Christian crosses or medals, etc.) "Conspicuous" symbols would not be allowed, but very small symbols (like rings or earrings) would be. As a member of parliament noted, "Who will determine if a symbol is conspicuous or not, is too big or overtly religious or not? Will there be religious police officers to check around the necks of civil servants what is allowed and what isn't? Will they have to carry a tape to measure the sizes of crosses, medals, etc.?"

On November 7, 2013, this proposed charter of values was tabled at the National Assembly (Quebec Parliament) as Bill 60, and was titled the "Charter affirming the values of state secularism and religious neutrality and of equality between women and men, and providing a framework for accommodation requests." The September proposal remained practically unchanged, and even more strict. The text of the bill specifies that "in the exercise of their functions, personnel members of public bodies must not wear objects such as headgear, clothing, jewelry or other adornments which, by their conspicuous nature, overtly indicate a religious affiliation."

Immediately after its unveiling in September, this charter has triggered a flood of reactions throughout the province, including the vast majority of the State employees who do not see the necessity for such a ban. Even three former Quebec premiers and leaders of the Parti Quebecois said that Mrs. Marois was going too far, and should not ban religious signs. However, this has not made her back down.

A real blow against this bill came on October 17 when the Quebec Human Rights Commission, led by Jacques Fremont, a constitutional expert appointed by the PQ last spring, issued a 27-page report explaining that the proposed charter was a violation of the Quebec's Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms

(voted by the Quebec National Assembly in 1975), a violation of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms (voted by the House of Commons in 1982), and of course, a violation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (voted by the United Nations in 1948). Fremont added that this "charter of values" proposed by the PQ would not stand up to a legal challenge. "The courts would rip it to shreds," he said.



Despite all the opposition to this charter, Quebec Premier Pauline Marois does not want to back down

The report explains that "the proposed prohibition stems not only from a misconception regarding freedom of religion as protected by the Charter and by the principles of international human rights law, but it also misinterprets the neutrality requirement that must be observed by the state." For the Commission, this "religious neutrality requirement applies primarily to government institutions, but not to public sector employees."

"Freedom of religion is protected by Quebec's Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms: Section 3 guarantees fundamental freedoms, including freedom of conscience and religion, and Section 10 prohibits discrimination based on religion.

"The state's institutions must be neutral, not the individuals. Public service employees, as well as people using government services, have the right to freedom of religion and conscience.

"Wearing a symbol of one's religion does not mean a person is trying to impose his or her religion to others or is proselytizing. Wearing a religious symbol does not prevent an employee from doing his or her work in a neutral and impartial manner.

The state cannot use religious neutrality to justify banning a public service employee from wearing a "conspicuous" religious symbol in the workplace. On the contrary, the state's neutrality ensures people the right to practice their religion. Thus, asking a woman to take off her hijab when working in the public sector contravenes the Charter, as does asking a civil servant to remove his kippa or his turban."

The Parti Quebecois is in a minority position in the Quebec Parliament, and all the opposition parties have already said they will vote against this bill as it is now presented. So, since this bill would be rejected by the courts, and has no chance of becoming law under its present form, why does Pauline Marois persists with it? It is simply a crass political game to get votes at the next general election by making Quebecers believe that the PQ actually "stands up" for them to defend "Quebec's identity and values."

Excerpts from the debates in the Quebec Parliament on November 7, 2013, when Bill 60 was introduced, clearly shows this political game, with the following exchange between Jean Marc Fournier, parliamentary leader of the Liberal opposition, and Premier Marois.

Jean Marc Fournier: "This discriminatory dress code has been called by the Quebec Commission of Rights the most radical attack on the Charter of Rights and Freedoms... In the name of religious neutrality, the PQ has decided to pass from a society where the citizens are free to practice their faith in a State that promotes or favors no particular religion, to a society in which the citizens are discriminated because of their faith, in a State that wants to abolish all religious phenomenon.

"According to the PQ, the neutrality of the State is so much in peril that individual rights and freedoms must be abolished. Yet, the Quebec Commission of Rights wrote: "The Commission... does not report a single situation in which the wearing of religious symbols by a public sector worker would have threatened the principle of religious neutrality."

Pauline Marois replied: "I think you and I must not be living on the same planet... What we are advocating is the neutrality of the State... This does not infringe on the rights of anyone because freedom of speech and freedom of religious expression will be respected by all Quebecers, by the government, and by our institutions."

We are being told by the Quebec government that a charter of values is necessary to protect the State from the influence of religion. When will we see a charter of values to protect the State from the power of High Finance?



Examples of religious symbols not allowed in Quebec's proposed Bill 60

How can Pauline Marois seriously claim to "respect freedom of religious expression" while pushing legislation that would see public-sector employees fired for refusing to remove religious symbols? On "planet PQ", anything is possible...

Several commentators have noticed that this debate on Quebec's secular charter has become a trial where all religions are accused of being harmful to society. (Open-line programs, letters to newspapers and comments on social networks are there to prove it.) Political pundits accuse the PQ of encouraging and surfing on a wave of "fear of the stranger", of an alleged "Muslim peril" for Quebec.

This is totally dishonest for the PQ to promote this fear, for it is a mistake and a danger to demonize Islam, and to lump all the Muslims together. All Muslims are not members of Al Qaida! The vast majority of Muslims are peaceful and do not want to resort to violence; it is only a handful of radicals who have hijacked the whole of Islam and are using it for their own political purpose, by interpreting the Koran in a fundamentalist way, since some of its verses, taken out of context and wrongly interpreted, might indeed seem to justify the use of violence against Christians and Jews.

On this issue of Islamic fundamentalism, Pope Francis wrote in his new Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium* (The Joy of the Gospel): "Faced with disconcerting episodes of violent fundamentalism, our respect for true followers of Islam should lead us to avoid hateful generalisations, for authentic Islam and the proper reading of the Koran are opposed to every form of violence." (n. 253.)

A few lines further, talking about religious freedom in Western societies, Pope Francis added: **"The respect due to the agnostic or non-believing minority should not be arbitrarily imposed in a way that silences the convictions of the believing majority or ignores the wealth of religious traditions. In the long run, this would feed resentment rather than tolerance and peace."** (n. 255.)

Other penetrating observers noticed that it is not only the Islamic faith that is targeted by this charter of the PQ government, but all religions in general are being attacked, including the Roman Catholic Church. When one hears Minister Drainville say, about day care centers: "We have decided to protect children who are more easily influenced and more vulnerable... We do

▶ not want children to be exposed to any religious influence," it really shows, among the PQ government, contempt for any religious belief.



Quebec's flag is made up of the Christian cross and the French fleur de lys: under the pretext of the neutrality of the State, will the cross be removed?

In an interview with the Canadian Press published on September 13, 2013, Most Rev. Pierre Andre Fournier, Archbishop of Rimouski and President of the Assembly of Quebec Roman Catholic Bishops, stated:

"The Bishops of Quebec worry about this debate on the charter of values drifting. There is a grave danger: anti-religious militantism threatens much more Quebec's identity than an opening to religions... The issue of the Muslim veil creates a diversion from the fundamental issue, which is the real meaning of neutrality of the State. It is like a magician: the attention of the people is drawn to one direction, whereas the real thing, the trick, is taking place elsewhere."

A pluralist Quebec

One year before the presentation of this secular charter, the Roman Catholic Bishops of the Province of Quebec had already defined the problem at stake — a frontal attack against religion — in their pastoral message called *Catholics in a pluralist Quebec*, published in November, 2012:

"Among those who describe themselves as 'without religion' there are surely some who share the secularist view that religion simply has no relevance, and who do not concern themselves with it. Among them we will also find people who explicitly describe themselves as atheists ('there is no God') and others who are agnostics ('it is impossible to prove either the existence or the non-existence of God'). These are currents of thought that have and have always had serious proponents, with whom believers can and must enter into respectful discussion.

"However, it is not those currents of thought

(which we might call 'classic') that tend to make headlines nowadays in Québec or elsewhere around the world, but rather a militant anti-religious position that strongly opposes religion and its place in the public square. Among the arguments cited in support of that militant ideology, one often finds the following:

- Religion is a purely private matter. The public sphere ought therefore to be free of every trace of religion.

- Religion is a backward and outmoded phenomenon. The progress of science and civilization ought to result in its disappearance since religion consists of nothing but superstitions, beliefs and taboos that hinder people from reaching their full potential and real autonomy.

- Religion is a tool to create, impose, maintain and justify patriarchal and discriminatory power structures. Its influence must therefore be limited as much as possible in order to protect rights and freedoms.

- Religions are by definition sources of divisions and hatred. Despite their words of peace and brotherhood, they always lead to violence and war.

What is "laicity"?

"The debates that have been taking place for several years now have demonstrated that there are several interpretations of the words "non-confessional" and "laicity" (laïcité)¹. Not everyone is speaking of the same thing when they use these words; and by all appearances, not everyone has the same notion of how the notion of laicity should be implemented.

An institution is described as non-confessional, and is characterized by laicity, if it is independent of any religious belief. It neither favours nor discriminates against any church or religious group in particular. For their part, churches and religious groups have no power within such an institution.

¹ Translator's note: There is a subtlety in the French expressions *laïque* and *laïcité* that can be challenging to capture in English; *laïcité* is widely used, as in this document, in a descriptive, nonpejorative way to designate the non-confessionality of institutions that operate without reference (either positive or negative) to religious identity and belief. *Laïcité* is sometimes translated as "secularism," with an unfortunate negative connotation, or simply by the word "laicity" — a word which exists in English, originally meaning "the principles of the laity; the rule or influence of the laity; the fact of being lay" (*Oxford English Dictionary*, 2nd edition), but which is no longer in widespread use. "Laicity" has the shortcoming that its adjectival form would presumably be "lay", which could be confusing: a "lay institution" is not exactly what is meant by an institution *laïque*. In this translation I have opted to translate *laïcité* as "laicity" and *laïque* as "non-confessional." The latter has been widely used in Québec, for instance to describe the new regime of school boards that followed the deconfessionalization of the public school system.

"The use of the word laicity to designate something that is 'not concerned with or devoted to the service of religion' may seem novel for many Catholics who are more familiar with a traditional meaning of the word 'lay', namely 'belonging to the 'people as contradistinguished from the clergy'. This traditional meaning refers to the 'laity,' that is, the baptized in general who are not members of the clergy, and not to the laicity which is now being debated in Quebec.

"Laicity is a notion that is applied to institutions, and not to society as a whole. Indeed, society is made up of people with every kind of conviction, belief, spirituality and religious adherence, and religious organizations too are part of society. Thus it is characterized by 'pluralism' rather than 'laicity'.

"Moreover, one must not confuse laicity with opposition to religion, a mistake that is sometimes made in the heat of debate. In a truly non-confessional context, there can no more be an official atheism than there can be an official religion.

Religion in the public square

"From its very beginnings, Christianity has been a movement that made itself visible in the public square. As is well known, Jesus drew crowds; he went about the villages and towns of Galilee, Judea and the surrounding regions, and people came to him from all over. At the time of his last visit to Jerusalem, he was welcomed by a joyful throng, and crucified in a public place the following Friday. A few weeks later, filled with the Holy Spirit, the apostle Peter proclaimed the resurrection of Christ to a crowd of pilgrims that had come to Jerusalem for the feast of Pentecost, and to that same crowd the proclamation of the Good News rang out in every language.


"In subsequent centuries, public spaces have hosted Christian symbols and monuments, as well as expressions of faith like processions and traditional stations of the cross. The Church sees herself as a community open to the world, not a shadowy and secret cult, even though there have been — and, alas, continue to be — persecutions and tyrannies that condemn the faithful, for a time, to a clandestine existence or to exile.

"New gestures, symbols and practices unfamiliar to Quebec society are now joining the existing manifestations and symbols of the Christian faith. This presents a welcome challenge: to create an open and hospitable public sphere, where the values and beliefs of everyone can be expressed in mutual respect.

"Though this is a challenge, it is also an opportunity — an opportunity to grow as a community, and to blaze a trail that other societies, led by the example of Quebecers, can follow.

"Earlier generations of Catholic Quebecers could not have imagined living in an unmistakably pluralist society. This means that we have to learn new ways

The crucifix has hung in Quebec's National Assembly since 1936 under the Duplessis government. In a statement, the Quebec Bishops Assembly denied having asked for the crucifix's removal: "It was placed there by the elected members and the decision to keep or remove it is the duty of the elected members in respect of the opinion of the population... The crucifix is not a museum object or just a reminder of the past or a piece of heritage. It must be treated with all the respect due to a symbol fundamental to the Catholic faith. Members must ensure that it is."



of being Catholic Christians in a society that no longer necessarily sees itself in us.

"To be Catholic, in a pluralist society and in a world of communication and networking, is to be called to come face-to-face with difference: differences in faith, differences in religious practice (or no such practices at all), differences of conviction and opinion. Our attitude must be one of welcome, openness, respect and kind listening." (*End of the excerpts from the document of the Quebec Bishops.*)

"These people revile what they do not understand." (Jude 1:10); one could say the same thing about the Quebecers who are ashamed of their past and think that the Roman Catholic faith is responsible for all the evils, whereas it is precisely Christianity that has built our present civilization.

Quebec's motto is *Je me souviens* (I remember); but Quebecers remember what precisely nowadays? Do they remember their ancestors who came from France to found a Christian country in the New World by planting the Cross? Do they remember the founders of this new country were martyrs and saints?

In this debate on the secular charter proposed by Pauline Marois, a false understanding of the separation of Church and State is at the root of the problem: in this case, it is the State that invades the religious domain and infringes on religious rights by banning religious symbols. Far from making living together easier, this charter divides people more than ever. NO to closed secularism that wants to eliminate from the public square all religious expression, but YES to open secularism that respects religious freedom and the heritage of faith of 400 years left by our ancestors.

Alain Pilote



How the separation of Church and State should be understood



On May 27, 2013, Most Rev. Christian Lepine, Archbishop of Montreal, gave a presentation at the conference “Bridging the Secular Divide: Religion and Canadian Public Discourse”, held at McGill University. The following text, *The Secular Government and Religion Duality*, recapitulates this presentation, and is also reproduced on the website of the archdiocese (www.diocesemontreal.org):

Discussions about secular government and religion are important because they concern democracy and human dignity. **There are two pitfalls that must always be avoided in society: theocracy and state religion.** Our society itself is not secular, but pluralist. The government, however, is secular. The question is whether it consists of an open secularism or a closed one.

What is the difference between a theocracy and a state religion? In a theocracy, a religion takes over the political role. (*Editor’s note: one country that fits that description is Saudi Arabia, where only the Muslim faith has the right to exist officially, and where the law of the State is the law of Islam, sharia. The Roman Catholic Church does not ask for such an absolute power: she only asks for the freedom to express herself and propose her message, and the very fact she is separated from the State allows her to denounce unjust laws or situations that might be caused by the State.*) The other pitfall to avoid is the opposite, a state religion, which is a religion or a system of values that is exploited by politics.

Our democracy is designed to be pluralist. Our society is composed of various religious and philosophical communities, and is home to a wide range of schools of thought. A society that is not ruled by a religion or in which there is no dominating state religion, and where religious freedom, the freedom to believe or to not believe, is respected, is likely to progress.

Religious freedom includes the freedom to not believe in God, for atheism is itself a form of faith—in that which is material, or in humankind—which is expressed through various trends. Every human being wants to find the meaning of life, and doing so requires freedom of conscience, whether it be religious, agnostic, or atheist. Religious freedom applies to all sets of beliefs and values, and an absence of religious freedom could be interpreted as a form of atheism that is imposed by the state religion, not only to the detriment of religious people, but also to people of other beliefs.

Secularism that is closed to religion gives rise to a state religion, for once its policy is enforced; it becomes permanently positioned in opposition to religion’s public dimension. Closed secularism attempts to inculcate in people the belief that this life is the only life

and that human beings should not hope for anything other than present life, no matter how great their thirst for the absolute may be. An individual could hold this belief, and an association could try to propagate it, but if the state embraces such a belief, we find ourselves back at the beginning.

We wanted a society where no religion was imposed on us, and we ended up with a government that imposes its philosophy, its system of values, and its discourse on religions. In doing so, the government claims to represent all aspects of life and contributes to the loss of a sense of God and to the destruction of the transcendent, reducing religion to a theoretical cultural phenomenon.

Not only is religious freedom at risk here, but so is humanity, which is stripped of its true greatness of having been created in God’s image, and which is left powerless before a state that assumes it has the power to decide what is good and bad without referring to a set of moral values that transcend it. Secularism that is closed to religion can exist as a concept, but if it takes over politics, or if politics makes use of it, it becomes a state religion whose beliefs are imposed.

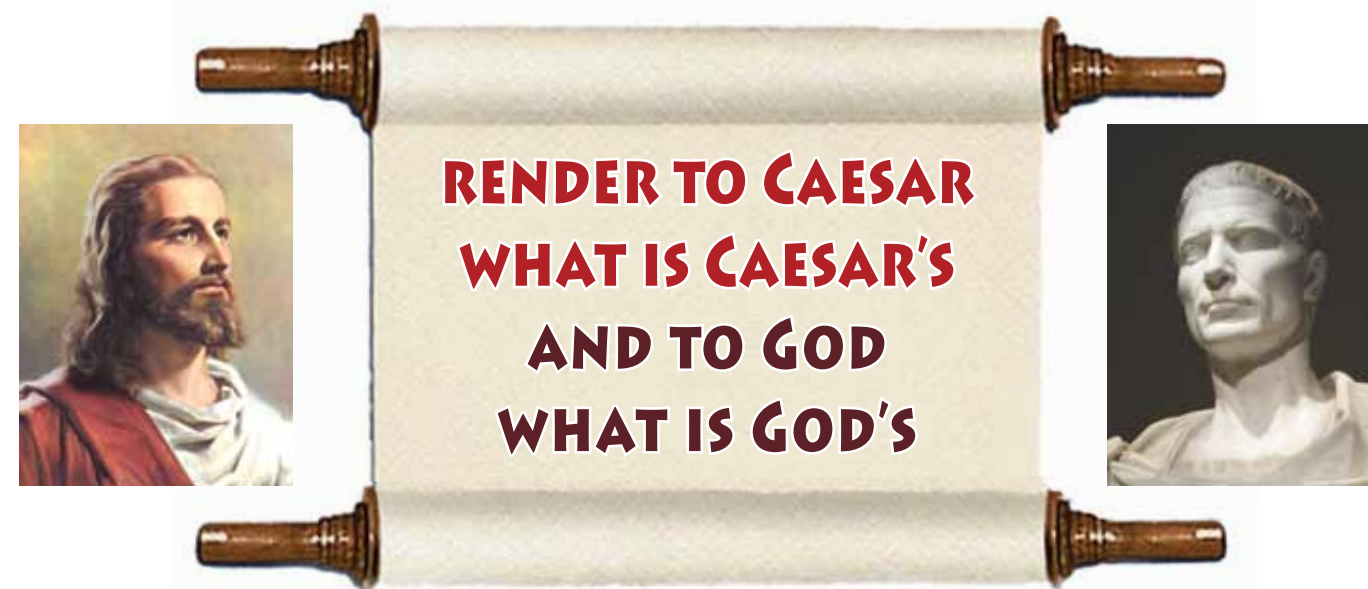
Secularism that is open to religion, and respects the religions as it respects the different forms of atheism and agnosticism, gives back to the people their own freedom, responsibility, and conscience, and sets the stage for them to continue their search.

Religious and non-religious acts, public or private, cannot be imposed on people, nor forbidden from them. Everyone has a right to religious freedom, whether it is practiced individually or jointly with others.

The secular government here is a government that is open to religious freedom, and this religious freedom is manifested with a respect for a free connection with God and all its implications. Here, the government and religion duality becomes a strength; it keeps humanity at the heart of things, in all its dignity, allowing people to refer to their conscience in determining their involvement in family, work, and society, while remaining open to God and to the transcendence of moral values.

Secular does not have to mean without God or against God. It refers to a commitment to a world that is autonomous and that is free to be inspired by God and propelled by the fundamental universal values outlined in God’s commandments, which reflect humanity’s vocation. Atheists and agnostics also benefit from such a freedom because a life constantly evolves. In a pluralist democracy, we can only gain from secularism, for in keeping paired an open secular government and religious freedom, we protect ourselves from being imprisoned by absolutisms and from having a closed future.

Archbishop Christian Lepine



by Louis Even

The Pharisees, anxious to trap Jesus in His talk, sent their followers to Him, along with the Herodians who were supporters of Rome, to pose this question: “Is it lawful to pay tribute to Caesar, or not?” (Matthew 22:17.)

In those days, “tribute” was something different from the income tax paid by our free citizens today. Tribute implied subjugation: it was a contribution exacted of the vanquished by the conqueror, as Rome had conquered Palestine by force.

Our Lord answered by first exposing the trap prepared by the Pharisees: “**Hypocrites, why do you thus put Me to the test?**” He then asked them to show Him the coin of tribute, on which was engraved the image of Caesar. Then he said to them: “**Render, therefore, to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s.**”

A curtailed quote

Usually, those who quote this line of the Gospel do it to stress the duty to pay taxes. And they do so with much eloquence. Most of the time, they quote the first part of the text only — that which concerns Caesar. The latter part, concerning God, is usually passed over in silence, because these speakers are too much preoccupied with the importance of Caesar today.

Even when people quote the first part, they seldom draw attention to the limitative nature of the words “what is Caesar’s”. We say “limitative”, because Caesar does not own everything. But apparently, if one listened to the “tax preachers”, one should give to Caesar all that he demands. Caesar usually has a good appetite, caring little whether there are things that are due to those he robs by taxes.

You understand that Caesar means the government, or more precisely, the governments, since there are as many Caesars as there are levels in the political structure of a nation. In Canada, there are municipal Caesars, provincial Caesars, and a federal Caesar. And before long, to top it all off, perhaps we will also be afflicted with a supranational Caesar with universal jurisdiction.

The result of this hierarchy of Caesars, stretching higher and higher, has been the extracting of larger and larger “tributes”. The ears of these Caesars have become more and more distant from the voices of the people, while their sticky fingers reach down into every strata of society, taking every bit of our incomes and squeezing all they can from every economic transaction.

But does something belong to Caesar simply because he demands it?

Limits to Caesar’s power

In a speech delivered in the House of Commons on July 6, 1960, during the debate on the Canadian Bill of Rights, Noel Dorion, the MP for Bellechasse (a few months after he became a minister in the Conservative cabinet), quoted the reply of Jesus to the Herodians. However, Mr. Dorion did not use it in favour of taxes. On the contrary, the topic debated in Ottawa that day was human rights and not the rights of Caesar. Mr. Dorion rightly remarked:

“It is Christ who really set forth the first charter of human rights, summing it up in these succinct words which, after two thousand years, are still timely: Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s.”

Mr. Dorion did not elaborate further on this statement. But considering the subject of the debate, he certainly meant that man, the human person, belongs to God, and not to Caesar; that Caesar does not have

▶ the right to encroach upon what belongs to God; that Caesar must respect the dignity, freedom, and the rights of each and every citizen. This includes the right to life and to those conditions which will permit the full development of their personality. The rights of Caesar are limited by the prior rights of the human person.

In a paper written in Melbourne in 1956, and later reproduced in booklet form, Eric Butler, an Australian journalist, quoted Lord Acton:

“When Christ said, ‘Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar’s and unto God the things that are God’s’, He gave to the State a legitimacy it had never before enjoyed and set bounds to it that had never yet been acknowledged. And He not only delivered the precept but He also forged the instrument to execute it. To limit the power of the State ceased to be the hope of patient, intellectual philosophers, and became the perpetual charge of a universal Church.”

What Lord Acton meant was that the Church of Christ has the duty to make sure that Caesar does not go beyond his rights. This function of the Church had been exercised and acknowledged during Christian centuries; it prevented several Caesars — little and big ones — from ruling like absolute dictators over the people. But, added Eric Butler:

“Unfortunately however, the perversion of Christianity has reached the stage when even large numbers of the Christian clergy, instead of striving tirelessly to limit the powers of the State, are helping to urge that society be reformed by the power of the State. They are, in fact, appealing from God to Caesar. Every increase in the power of the State, or of monopolistic groups, irrespective of the plausible arguments used to try and justify the increase, must inevitably take from the individual his right to personalize his life by the exercise of his free-will.” (*Social Credit and Christian Philosophy*, p. 13.)

Eric Butler was a Protestant, and he was talking here about the clergy of his Church. We leave others to decide if this remark also applies to the Catholic clergy, and if it does, to what extent.

The human person before Caesar

Acton, Butler, and Noel Dorion therefore see in the words of Our Lord a limitation to the power of Caesar, instead of a justification for any kind of tax. This is because they quote it in full: “Render, therefore, to Caesar what is Caesar’s, and to God what is God’s.”

To Caesar what is Caesar’s — no more than that; and everything does not belong to Caesar.

It is precisely to protect the citizens from the all-powerful State, to make Caesar the guardian of the rights of individuals — at least in principle — that, on

August 4, 1960, the Canadian Parliament unanimously voted in the Bill of Rights, however incomplete it was.

In presenting this bill, on July 1, 1960, Prime Minister Diefenbaker himself stressed its purpose: “To keep and safeguard the freedom of the individual from the governments, even the all-powerful ones. Why? Because the individual, the human person, is sovereign before Caesar. Diefenbaker knew it, and he said:

“The sacred right of the individual consecrates him sovereign in his relationship with the State.”

Pope Pius XI wrote in his encyclical letter, *Divini Redemptoris*:

“The human person ought to be put in the first rank of earthly realities.”

In the first rank, therefore before any other institution, before any Caesar.

Pope Pius XII wrote in his letter to the chairman of France’s social works on July 14, 1946:

“It is the human person that God put at the top of the visible universe, making him, in economics and politics as well, the measure of all things.”

It is not Caesar who is at the top; it is the human person. The human person therefore does not belong to Caesar; it is rather Caesar that must belong to the human person, who must serve him by exercising his function of guardian of human rights.

Maurice Allard, the MP for Sherbrooke, QC, also said during this debate on the Bill of Rights:

“The individual must not become a tool or a victim of the State; it is the State which, while making laws, must favour the numerous freedoms of man.”

Caesar has therefore no right to rob people through taxation; he does not have the right to allow the human person to be deprived of the necessities of life.

R.S. MacLellan, the MP for Inverness-Richmond, Nova Scotia, was no less categorical:

“The individual comes before the State... The only purpose of Government is to guarantee individual freedoms.”

The statements from these politicians lead us to believe that it is not through ignorance of principles, but by not implementing them into legislation, that Caesar — either the federal, provincial, or municipal Caesars — all too often manipulates people, pushing and throwing them into poverty, whereas it is possible to do the opposite.

Caesar’s share

Still, one must render to Caesar what is Caesar’s. Render to him not all that he wants or can seize, but only what belongs to him.

So, what does belong to Caesar? We think it can be defined as follows: what is necessary to carry out his functions.

This definition seems to be implicitly accepted by Caesar himself, by the government, since the government says to those who complain about the burden of taxes: “The more services people demand, the more means the government needs to provide these services.”

This is true. But in order to carry out his proper functions, Caesar must not have recourse to means that prevent people and families from carrying out theirs.

Besides, in order to increase his importance, Caesar is always tempted to take over functions that normally belong to the families, to lower organisms, and not to the State. Moreover, the citizens would not need the help of Caesar so much if Caesar first removed the obstacle that only he can remove: the artificial obstacle created by a financial system that is not in keeping with the huge physical possibilities that could satisfy the basic material needs of every individual and family of our country.

Because Caesar does not correct this situation, Caesar goes beyond his proper role and accumulates new functions, using them as a pretext for levying new taxes — sometimes ruinous ones — on citizens and families. Caesar thus becomes the tool of a financial dictatorship that he should destroy, and the

oppressor of citizens and families that he should protect.

The life of the individual does not belong to Caesar, but to God. Life is something that belongs only to God, something that not even the individual can suppress or shorten deliberately. But when Caesar puts individuals in conditions that shorten their lives, then Caesar takes what does not belong to him; he takes what belongs to God.

The human person and the family are a creation of God and Caesar must not destroy nor take over this. He must, on the contrary, protect against whoever wants to undermine their integrity and rights.

To deprive a family of its home because it cannot pay the property taxes, is to act against the family and against God. Caesar does not have that right.

How many other infringements on the rights and belongings of individuals and families could be mentioned!

Before Caesar’s needs

But Caesar has indeed some functions to carry out that cannot be entrusted to individuals. There are some services and goods that can only be obtained from Caesar — for example, an army to defend our country in case of war, a police force to keep order against those who disturb it, the building of roads, bridges, public means of communication between various towns in our country. Caesar must have the means to provide the population with these services.

Certainly, but what does Caesar need to provide these services? It needs human and material resources. It needs manpower.

Caesar needs one part of the production capacity of our country. In a democratic system, it is up to the elected representatives of the people to determine what part of the country’s production capacity should be used for the needs of Caesar.

If one thinks in terms of realities, one must admit that there is no difficulty whatever in giving Caesar one part of the country’s production capacity, while leaving at the disposal of private needs a production capacity that can easily meet all the normal needs of the citizens.

Let us use the verb “to tax” in the sense of “mak- ▶



“Render, therefore, to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s.” (Mt 22:21.)

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ing rigorous demands on.” One can say then that private and public needs tax (make demands on) the production capacity of our country. When I demand a pair of shoes, I tax the capacity to produce shoes. When the provincial Caesar has a kilometre of road built, it taxes the capacity to build roads for the length of one kilometre. With today’s production capacity, the construction of roads does not seem to hinder the production of shoes.

It is only when one stops considering the situation in terms of realities, and instead expresses oneself in terms of money, that difficulties arise. Taxes then take on another appearance and “make rigorous demands” on wallets. If Caesar takes \$60 from my income as a contribution to his road, then he deprives me of the equivalent of a pair of shoes, so that he may build his road. Why is that, since our country’s production capacity can supply the road without depriving me of a pair of shoes?

Why? Because the money system falsifies the facts.

— “But Caesar must pay his employees, he must pay for the materials he uses,” some will say.

— Certainly. But, when all is said and done, what does Caesar do when he pays an engineer \$400, for example? He allows this engineer to buy \$400 worth of goods or services, to make demands on the production capacity of our country for the value of \$400. So, in order to meet the needs of the engineer, is it necessary to deprive me of the right to buy a pair of shoes? Cannot our country’s production capacity meet the needs of the engineer without reducing the production of shoes?

That is the whole point: as long as the productive capacity of our country has not been exhausted, there is absolutely no need to tax the private sector in order to finance the public sector.

The production capacity of our country is far from being exhausted, since today’s problem is precisely that of finding jobs for people and machinery.

If the means of payment constitute a problem, it is because they do not correspond to the means of production. The tickets (money) that allow us to draw on the production capacity of our country are insufficient for the available production capacity.

This shortage of tickets is an unjustifiable situation, especially when today’s money system is basically a system of figures, a bookkeeping system. If the monetary bookkeeping does not correspond to the production capacity, it is neither the fault of the producers nor of those who need this production.

It is the controllers of the money and financial credit who ration the tickets, in spite of an unused production capacity that is just waiting to be used.

**Something does not belong to Caesar simply because he demands it.
The rights of Caesar are limited by the prior rights of the human person.
The human person belongs to God.**

The citizens alone cannot correct this falsification of realities by the financial system. But Caesar can! Since Caesar is the government, since he is charged with taking care of the common good, he can — and must — order the controllers of the financial system to put their system in tune with reality.

As long as Caesar refuses to make this correction, he makes himself the servant, the tool of the financial dictatorship; he gives up his function of sovereign, and the taxes that he demands, because of this financial falsehood, are actually not owed to him. “Modern taxation is legalized robbery,” said Clifford Hugh Douglas. Caesar has no right to legalize robbery.

Nobody denies Caesar the right to tax the production capacity of our country for public needs — at least, as long as the part he takes leaves enough to meet the demand of private needs. There again, it is the job of the governments to see that this happens.

However, the production capacity of our country is not only partially used, the population cannot collectively pay for all that it produces. Private and public debts are the best proof of it.

Mammon – financial dictatorship

This debt that represents created goods, plus the sum of the privations caused by no production due to the lack of money, represent the sacrifices required by the financial dictatorship, or in other words, by Mammon.

Mammon is not a legitimate Caesar. We must render nothing to Mammon, because nothing belongs to him. Mammon is an intruder, an usurper, a thief, and a tyrant.

Mammon has become the supreme sovereign, above Caesar, above the most powerful Caesars in the world. Caesar has become the instrument of Mammon, a mere tax collector for Mammon.

If Caesar needs one part of the production capacity of our country to carry out his function, he also badly needs to be watched by the population; he must be reprimanded when, instead of being an institution at the service of the common good, he lets himself become the servant, the lackey of financial tyranny, Mammon.

Today’s great disorder spreads like a cancer, in spite of the fantastic progress in production which should have freed man from material worries. This lies in the fact that everything is being connected with money, as though money were a reality. The disorder lies in the fact that private individuals have been allowed to regulate the conditions of the issue of money, not as accountants of reality but for their own profits, to strengthen their despotic power over all economic life.

Money created with production

There is another occasion that is quoted less often (than the coin of the tribute), where Jesus had to deal with taxes. And this time, it was not about a tribute to the conqueror, but the *didrachma* — a tax established by the Jews themselves for the maintenance of the Temple (Matthew 17:24-26). Those who collected this tax came to Saint Peter and said: “Does your Master (Jesus) not pay the didrachma?” Jesus said to Peter: “Go to the sea and cast a hook, and take the first fish that comes up. And opening its mouth, you will find a stater; take that and give it to them for Me and for you.” Peter, a fisher by trade, handled it very well.

This time, money was created with production. The government cannot do miracles, but it can easily establish a monetary system in which money is based upon production, that is in keeping with production. In other words, it must put a figure on the production capacity of our country, and align the means of payment with that figure, to finance both the public and private sectors. It would be more in keeping with the common good than to leave the control of money and credit to the arbitrary will of the high priests of Mammon.

Pope Pius XI wrote that the controllers of money and credit have become the masters of our lives, and that no one dare breathe against their will.

We refuse this implacable dictatorship of Mammon. We condemn the decline of Caesar, who has become the lackey of Mammon. We do not acknowledge that this kind of Caesar, who has become the slave of Mammon, has the right to deprive individuals and families for the benefit of Mammon, nor the right to abide by Mammon’s false and greedy rules.

Mammon’s dictatorship is the enemy of God, of Caesar, of the human person created by God, and of the entire family established by God.

The Social Crediters work to free men from this dictatorship. At the same time, they work to free Caesar from his subjection to Mammon. The Social Crediters are therefore in the vanguard of those who want to give to the human person created in the image of God what is his, to render to the family established by God what belongs to it, and to render to God what is God’s.

Louis Even

Pope launches appeal to end global hunger

In a video message released on December 10, 2013, Pope Francis has appealed to people throughout the world to support a new campaign by *Caritas Internationalis* to wipe out global hunger: **“We are in front of a global scandal of around one billion people who still suffer from hunger today. We cannot look the other way and pretend this does not exist. The food available in the world is enough to feed everyone... I invite all of the institutions of the world, the Church, each of us, as one single human family, to give a voice to all of those who suffer silently from hunger, so that this voice becomes a roar which can shake the world.”**



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Our Lady of Guadalupe

“Empress of the Americas”

by Louis Even

It is the year 1521, Tenochtitlan (which is now Mexico City), the capital city of the Aztec empire, falls to Spanish forces. Ten years later 9 million inhabitants of this land, who had for centuries professed a polytheistic and human-sacrificing religion, were suddenly converted to Christianity. What was it that happened in those times that produced such an incredible and historically unprecedented conversion?

The Blessed Virgin Mary appeared to a poor and humble Indian at Tepeyac, a hill northwest of Mexico City. She identified herself as the Mother of the True God, Santa Maria of Guadalupe or Te-coa-tla-xope”, (pronounced phonetically “te-quat-la-shupe) which in the Aztec tongue means “the one who crushes the head of the serpent”. Undoubtedly she came to crush the serpent, as it is written in the Book of Genesis, 3:15 “...she shall crush thy head...”, by putting an end to these barbaric human sacrifices, and literally converting millions of natives to Christianity.

Background and setting of these events

The Aztecs ruled most of Central America. The two chief gods of the Aztec pantheon were Huitzilopochtli, the Hummingbird Wizard or “god of thirst”, called the Lover of Hearts and Drinker of Blood; and Tezcatlipoca, the Smoking Mirror Lord of the Dark, called “He Who is at the Shoulder as the Tempter”. The Aztecs believed that the gods required human blood in order to subsist and in order to appease these frightful deities, their priests sacrificed at least 50,000 men, women, and children annually by cutting out their beating hearts. Years of practice had given them a skill and speed that enabled them to perform this gruesome task on each victim in less than 15 seconds! The early Mexican historian, Ixtlilxochitl, estimated that one out of every five children in Mexico was sacrificed. (Note: In the United States today it is even more; one out of every four children is killed by abortion.)



A temple in Mexico that was used to worship the “sun-god”

The climax of these ritual killings came in 1487 for the dedication of the new, and richly decorated temple of Huitzilopochtli in the center of Tenochtitlan (now Mexico City), and enclosed by the richly decorated Coatepantli, the Serpent Wall. In a single ceremony that lasted for four days and four nights, with the constant beating of giant drums made of snake-skin, the Aztec ruler and demon worshiper, Tlaacael, presided over the sacrifice of more than 80,000 men. (For more information on the Aztec worship, please see *Our Lady of Guadalupe and the Conquest of Darkness*, by Dr. Warren Carroll.)

Montezuma, or Moctezuma, as some called him, was ruler of the Aztec Nation, chief priest and head of their army. His sister, Princess Papantzin, had a dream that deeply troubled the King. In her dream she saw a luminous being with a black cross on his forehead who led her to a shore with large ships. These ships would soon come to their own shores and conquer the Aztecs, bringing with them the Faith in the One True God. Ten years later, on Good Friday, April 22, 1519, the Spanish Conquistadors arrived on the Gulf shore of Mexico led by Hernando Cortez. They named the landing place Veracruz or “The True Cross”. Their Chaplain, Father Bartolome de Olmedo, celebrated the first Mass there on Easter Sunday.

Within two years, with a small army of a few hundred soldiers, under the twofold protection of the Cross of Our Lord and the Blessed Virgin Mary, whose image Cortez had carried over with him on his voyage from Spain, and through a series of miraculous victories, the Aztecs were defeated and the practice of human sacrifice was finally brought to an end. Cortez’s first action as commander was to place the region under the Spanish crown and to demolish the temples of sacrifice, building in their place Catholic churches, such as the Church Santiago (or St. James) de Tlatelolco on the site of the Temple of the sun god in present-day Mexico City.

Unfortunately, some of the Conquistadors were not “saints”. Much like many of the Crusaders, they were in search of God, fortune, and personal glory, but oftentimes it was more the fortune and personal glory that became their goal. The Native Americans were treated very unjustly and suffered much abuse at the hands of their Spanish conquerors. With the hostility that was shown to these people by the new colonial government, they distrusted the Spanish. This caused them to be wary of converting to Christianity, impelling the newly appointed bishop-elect,



► Juan de Zumarraga of Mexico, to write to the king of Spain, "Unless there is a miracle, the continent shall be lost." Between December 9 and December 12, 1531, the miracle did happen, and it changed the future of the continent forever...

St. Juan Diego and the "Lady from Heaven"

St. Juan Diego was born in 1474 in Cuautlilán, which, today, is part of Mexico City. He was given the name "Cauuhtlatotzin" or "talking eagle" and was a gifted member of the Chichimeca people. He worked hard in the fields and in the manufacturing of mats. He owned a small house on a tiny piece of land and was happily married, but had no children. Between 1524 and 1525, he and his wife converted to Christianity and were given the names, Juan Diego and Maria Lucia in Baptism. They were both very devout and attended daily Mass despite a distance of 12 miles to the mission church. In May of 1529 Juan's wife became ill and died. He then went to live with his uncle Juan Bernardino, who was also a convert to Christianity, in Tolpetlac, which was still 4 miles from the church of St. James in Tlatelolco-Tenochtitlan.

Each morning he departed early in order to be on time for the Mass and to receive religious-instruction. He walked barefoot and on chilly mornings he would wear a *tilma*, or *ayate* which was a course cloth-like mantle woven from the fibres of the maguey cactus. Although Mexico is a hot country, the plateau of Mexico City is about 7000 feet above sea level and the nights and early morning hours can be very cool. It was on one of these mornings, December 9th, 1531, that Juan Diego was making his way to the early Mass. As he reached the base of the hill known as Tepeyac, he suddenly heard sweet music, like "birds singing in a chorus". This surprised him, so he stopped. The singing seemed to be coming from atop the hill from which he could see a white shining cloud surrounded by a rainbow. He was not at all afraid; rather he felt enraptured and his heart was filled with an unexplainable joy.



The Apparition

There before him stood a beautiful girl with a tan complexion, bathed in the golden beams of the sun. He approached her, and before she herself had revealed to him her identity, Juan Diego had no doubt that he was in the presence of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Queen of Heaven. She called to him by name in *Nahuatl*, his own native tongue: **"Juanito, Juan Dieguito!"** He was not frightened in the least; instead he felt overjoyed! He bowed before Her and she spoke to him with a sweet tenderness: **"Juanito, my son whom I love tenderly like a little and delicate child, where are you going?"**

He replied to her: **"My Noble Lady and Child, I have to reach the church in Tlatilolco, to pursue things divine, taught and given to us by our priests, delegates of Our Lord."**

Again, she spoke: **"Know and understand well, you, the most humble of My sons, that I am the ever-virgin Holy Mary, Mother of the True God, for whom we live, of the Creator of all things, Lord of heaven and earth. I wish that a temple be erected here quickly, so I may therein exhibit and give all My love, compassion, help, and protection, because I am your merciful mother, to you and to all the inhabitants on this land and all the rest who love Me, invoke and confide in Me, to listen there to their lamentations, and remedy all their miseries, afflictions and sorrows. And to accomplish what My**

clemency pretends, go to the palace of the Bishop of Mexico, and you will say to him that I manifest My great desire, that here on this plain, a temple be built to Me. You will accurately relate all you have seen and admired, and what you have heard. Be assured that I will be most grateful and will reward you, because I will make you happy and worthy of recompense for the effort and fatigue in what you will obtain for what I have entrusted. Behold, you have heard My mandate, My humble son; go and put forth all your effort."

To this Juan Diego said to her: **"My Lady, I am going to comply with Your mandate; now I must part from You, I, your humble servant."** He then descended the hill and made his way along the road which runs directly into Mexico City in order to comply to her request.

The visit to the Bishop

Upon entering the city, Juan Diego went directly to the Bishop's palace to meet with Bishop Juan de Zumarraga, a Franciscan of great piety who had a great love for the Virgin Mary. Juan related to him all that he had seen and heard. The Bishop was cordial but hesitant on this first visit and said that he would consider the requests of the Lady and politely invited Juan Diego to come visit again.



Statue of Pope John Paul II with overimposed image of the Virgin of Guadalupe, made entirely with keys donated by Mexicans. The plaque states that this was done to show that the Mexican people had given the Pope the "key to their hearts". John Paul II visited the Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe four times: in 1979, 1990, 1999 and 2002. On his third visit in 1999, John Paul II entrusted the cause of life to her loving protection, and placed under her motherly care the innocent lives of children, especially those who are in danger of not being born.

Dismayed, Juan returned to the hill and found Mary waiting for him. He said to her: **"Lady, I went where You sent me to comply with Your command. With difficulty I entered the prelate's study. I saw him and exposed Your message, just as You had instructed me. He received me benevolently and listened attentively, but when he replied, it appeared that he did not believe me. I perfectly understood by the manner in which he replied that he believes it to be an invention of mine – that You wish that a temple be built here to You, and that it is not Your order. Now I exceedingly beg, Lady, that You entrust the delivery of Your message to someone of importance, well known, respected, and esteemed, so that they may believe in him; because I am a nobody, I am a small rope, a tiny ladder, the tail end, a leaf, and You, my Lady, You send me to a place where I never visit nor repose. Please excuse my great unpleasantness, and let not fretfulness befall, my Lady and my All."**

The Blessed Virgin answered: **"Hark, My son the least, you must understand that I have many servants and messengers, to whom I must entrust the delivery of My message and carry My wish, but it is of precise detail that You yourself solicit and assist, and that through your mediation My wish be complied. I earnestly implore, My son the least, and with sternness I command, that you again go tomorrow and see the Bishop. You go in My name, and make known My wish in its entirety – that he has to start the erection of a temple which I ask of him. And again tell him that I, in person, the ever-virgin Holy Mary, Mother of God, sent you."**

Juan Diego replied: **"Lady, let me not cause You affliction. Gladly and willingly I will go to comply with Your mandate. Under no condition will I fail to do it, for the way is not even distressing. I will go to do Your wish, but perhaps I will not be heard with liking, or if I am heard, I might not be believed. Tomorrow afternoon, at sunset, I will come to bring You the result of Your message with the prelate's reply."** Juan Diego then left Her and returned to his home.

The Bishop asks for a sign

The next day was Sunday and after hearing Mass Juan Diego returned to the palace of the Bishop. Kneeling before him, he dissolved into tears and once again conveyed to him the Blessed Lady's message and the wish of the Immaculate, to erect Her temple where She willed it to be. Bishop Zumarraga asked Juan many questions, and even though he replied to each question patiently and precisely, describing to him in perfect detail all that he had seen, the Bishop still did not give credence to his story. Finally the Bishop said to him that if the Lady would give a "sign" that would prove to him that she was truly from Heaven, then he would believe and he would grant Her request.

Juan Diego then returned to the Blessed Virgin, and related to Her the Bishop's answer. Smiling, she said to him: ***"Well and good, My little dear. You will return here tomorrow so you can take to the Bishop the sign he has requested. With this he will believe you, and in this regard he will not doubt you, nor will he be suspicious of you. And know, My little dear, that I will reward your solicitude and effort and fatigue spent on My behalf. Lo! Go now. I will await you here tomorrow."***

The "sign"

The following day was December 12th. Juan Diego was unable to return to the Tepeyac hilltop because his uncle Juan Bernardino had become gravely ill. Juan summoned a doctor, but by nightfall his uncle requested that he go instead to Tlatilolco early the following morning to summon a priest to hear his confession. Before dawn, Juan Diego set out for Tlatilolco and as he approached the road which joins the slope to the Tepeyac hilltop, he decided to make a small detour. He was ashamed for not having kept his promise to return to the Lady and he wished to avoid having to meet with her again. But, as he came around to the other side of the hill, there She stood as though She were waiting for him. She said to him: ***"What's there, My son the least? Where are you going?"*** He bowed before Her, saying: ***"Lady, I am going to cause You grief. Know that a servant of Yours is very sick, my uncle. He has contracted the plague, and is near death. I am hurrying to Your house in Mexico to call one of Your priests, beloved by Our Lord, to hear his confession and absolve him, because, since we were born, we were taught to prepare for death. But if I go, I shall return here soon, so I may go to deliver Your message. Lady, forgive me, be patient with me for the time being. I will not deceive You. Tomorrow I will come in all haste."***

After hearing this the Most Holy Virgin answered: ***"Hear Me and understand well, My son the least, that nothing should frighten nor grieve you."***



Close-up of the face of the Virgin Mary on Juan Diego's tilma. The tilma should have deteriorated within 20 years but shows no sign of decay after over 470 years. It to this day defies all scientific explanations of its origin. In the eyes of Mary (only about 1/3rd inch in size), tiny human figures were discovered that no artist could have painted. Using digital technology, the images in the eyes were enlarged many times, revealing that each eye reflected the figure of the Indian Juan Diego opening his tilma in front of Bishop Zumarraga.

Let not your heart be disturbed. Do not fear that sickness, nor any other sickness or anguish. Am I not here, who am your Mother? Are you not under My protection? Am I not your health? Are you not happily within My fold? What else do you wish? Do not grieve nor be disturbed by anything. Do not be afflicted by the illness of your uncle, who will not die now from it. Be assured that he is now cured."

Juan Diego's uncle Juan Bernardino was in fact cured of his disease at that very moment. Our Lady told Juan Bernardino that she wished to be known under the title, *"Santa Maria Te-coa-tla-xope"*. In the Aztec language *"Coa"* meaning serpent, *"tla"* being the noun ending which can be interpreted as "the", while *"xopeuh"* means to crush or stamp out. He later told this word to the Spaniards, who heard it as *"de Guadalupe"*, a devotion to the Blessed Mother in Estremadura, Spain that the Spanish were very familiar with. (This is how the image was named Guadalupe, a title which it has kept for over four centuries.) But in reality it would seem that Our Lady must have called Herself *"Santa Maria who crushes the serpent."*

When Juan Diego was told that his uncle was cured, he was greatly consoled and begged the Lady from Heaven to excuse him so that he could now go directly to the Bishop in order to bring him Her "sign" that he too could now believe. The Lady from Heaven ordered him: ***"Climb, My son the least, to the top of the***

hill where you saw Me and I gave you orders. You will find different flowers. Cut them, gather them, assemble them, and then come and bring them before My presence."

Immediately, Juan Diego climbed the hill and to his amazement found many different varieties of exquisite Castilian roses blooming there. The hilltop was no place for any kind of flowers to grow. It had many crags, thistles, thorns, and mesquites. Occasionally weeds would grow, but... this was Decem-

ber, a time when roses or most any vegetation would ordinarily freeze! These roses were very fragrant and they were covered with dewdrops which resembled precious pearls. Immediately he began to cut them, placing them inside his tilma. Coming down the hill he presented them to the Lady from Heaven who took them, and with Her own hands rearranged them inside his tilma, saying: ***"My son the least, this diversity of roses is the proof and the sign which you will take to the Bishop. You will tell him in My name that he will see in them My wish, and that he will have to comply to it. You are My ambassador, most worthy of all confidence! Rigorously, I command you that only before the presence of the Bishop will you unfold your mantle and disclose what you are carrying. You will relate all and well; you will tell that I ordered you to climb to the hilltop, to go and cut flowers, and all that you saw and admired, so you can induce the prelate to give his support, with the aim that a temple be built and erected as I have asked."***

When Juan Diego took leave of Our Lady, he felt happy that with a gift such as this, he was sure of success. It was with great care that he held onto the precious flowers which he bore in his tilma, and enjoyed their beautiful fragrance as he hurried along the road eager to present the Bishop with the "sign."

The miraculous image

Juan Diego reached the Bishop's palace, and once again waited a long time before finally being admitted to see him. Upon entering he knelt before

Bishop Zumarraga and told him that he had brought with him the "sign" from the Lady – roses picked high on the hilltop of Tepeyac. He then unfolded his mantle and all the different varieties of roses scattered onto the floor. But even more amazing than the beautiful roses was the image that suddenly appeared on the tilma. It was that of the Ever-Virgin, Holy Mary, Mother of God. When the Bishop saw the image, he and all who were present fell to their knees. The Bishop, with sorrowful tears, prayed and begged forgiveness of the Blessed Virgin for not having believed and for his delay in attending to Her wishes and request. When he rose to his feet, he untied the cloth on which appeared the image of the Lady from Heaven from around Juan Diego's neck. He then took it and placed it in his own private chapel where he kept it until the new Church was erected on the grounds that had been designated by the Mother of God.

Juan Diego, after having given his business and property over to his uncle Juan Bernardino, moved into a small room attached to the chapel that housed the sacred image. He deeply loved Our Lord in the Holy Eucharist, and by special permission of the Bishop, he received Holy Communion three times

a week, which was a highly unusual occurrence for those times. He spent the rest of his life propagating the account of the Apparitions to his countrymen, and died on May 30, 1548, at the age of 74. Today this same image imprinted on the tilma continues to be venerated by the faithful and is viewed by an estimated 10 million pilgrims annually in the present Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Mexico City, Mexico.



The shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Mexico City, with the newest basilica on the left, built in 1976.





Little Nellie of Holy God (1903-1908)

“That is the sign for which I was waiting.” said Pius X



by Anne Marie Jacques

Ellen Organ, or Nellie, as her family called her, was born on August 24, 1903, the youngest of four children. At the time of her birth, her father, William Organ, was a military man in the British Army occupying Ireland. The family lived in the “married quarters” of a garrison in the maritime town of Waterford. Her mother, Mary (Aherne) Organ was a devout woman, light-hearted and generous. She taught her children to love God and prayed the Rosary daily with them, teaching them to kiss the Crucifix and the large “Our Father” beads reverently, a practice which Nellie never forgot.

When Nellie was only three years old, her mother died of tuberculosis. At the time of her death, the family was living on Spike Island in Cork Harbour, where her father had been transferred with his garrison. Poor Mr. Organ was left with four motherless orphans and no one to care for them. The parish priest offered to find places where they would be provided for and sent Thomas, barely nine years old, to the Christian Brothers and young David to the Sisters of Mercy. Mary and Nellie went to stay with the Good Shepherd Sisters at Sunday’s Well, Cork.

The Good Shepherd Sisters soon realized that Nellie was not well. Nellie and Mary were both treated for whooping cough at the Hospital of the Sisters of Mercy. When they returned after two months, Nellie still seemed very frail and walked unsteadily, even holding out her arms as though she were afraid to fall. The little girl who slept beside Nellie reported to the sisters that Nellie seemed in pain and that she always cried for nearly half the night. The sisters examined her and found that she was suffering from a curved spine and crooked back from having been dropped when only an infant. Consequently, she was moved to the infirmary where it was also discovered that she was victim to the dreaded disease, tuberculosis, which had proved fatal to her mother.

Miss Hall, a trained nurse and recent convert to the Catholic Faith, was Nellie’s caregiver. Three-year-old Nellie loved her dearly and one day told her, “God took my good mother from me, but he has given you to

me as my new mother.” Nurse Hall lovingly cared for little Nellie, often spending the whole night sitting by her side. When this would happen, Nellie would slip her tiny hand between the rails of her cot and affectionately hold her “mother’s” hand until she fell into a fitful sleep. Nurse Hall would also talk to Nellie about God, Jesus, His Mother and the saints. She would even carry Nellie in her arms to the chapel where they would go from station to station, while she explained to her the Passion. This always caused tears to well up in Nellie’s eyes and she would exclaim, *Poor Holy God! Poor Holy God!*

There was an altar in Nellie’s room, with a statue of the Infant of Prague. One day she asked her nurse about the statue and Miss Hall told her the story of the birth of Jesus, about his childhood and how He loved everyone. Nellie listened with enthusiasm; she was ecstatic that the Holy God had once been a little child like herself. After that she would often carry on little conversations with Him and, prompted by the nuns, began a novena asking Him to make her well. To everyone’s great surprise she did become well enough to be able to take walks in the garden while holding someone’s hand. Though this lasted for only a very short time, it gave her a great confidence in the Child Jesus and her conversations with Him became more familiar.

One day when Nurse Hall was ill, Nellie asked to have the Infant of Prague placed on a chair beside her bed. She then went on to explain to the Little Jesus that her Nurse was not well and told Him, *“Please make her better.”* She was not surprised at all when Miss Hall did make a quick recovery, it was what she had asked for and she never doubted that her *Little Child, Holy God* would do this for her.

Nellie’s understanding of Jesus in the Holy Eucharist was very unusual for a child of her age. She listened intently to the simple explanations given by Miss Hall on the Holy Sacrament in the tabernacle of the altar, and in a very relieved tone whispered happily to her nurse, *“Oh, I am so glad that Holy God is not squeezed in that little house!”* It seems that this had been her one concern! And when, for the first time, Miss Hall



carried Nellie to the chapel for Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, Nellie pointed to the monstrance and smiled saying, *“Mother, there He is, there is Holy God now.”* From that day on, by some interior warning, she somehow always knew when there was Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament in the chapel.

Nellie loved Jesus, her *Holy God*, very much and wished to receive Him in Holy Communion in the same way the sisters and nurses did. Being much too young, she was always told that this was not yet possible. Nellie was a very determined little girl and she decided instead to ask any one, who would be willing, *“to return to her quickly after Holy Mass and give her a kiss.”* She felt that, in this way, she could at least “give a kiss” to the Eucharistic Jesus still present in each one of them. There was one young nurse who found early morning Mass too tiring and, oftentimes, she would just not go. Nellie always seemed to know on which days this nurse had not been to Mass and she would scold her for not going to receive Holy God in Holy Communion, for her own desire to receive Our Lord in the Holy Eucharist was increasing with every new day.

By this time little Nellie, only four years old, was wasting away from the dreaded tuberculosis. She also suffered from a bone disease known as caries, which was causing her jawbone to crumble away, leaving a foul odor that was at times unbearable to anyone who came near to her. Her mouth had to be syringed frequently with disinfectants and, though this hurt a great deal, little Nellie never once resisted the treatments. She would just lie motionless on her little cot holding onto her crucifix. Her devotion to the Passion of Our Lord was so great and she understood so well the idea of uniting her suffering to that of Our Lord that when the pain would become too excruciating, she would look at her crucifix and whisper, *“Poor Holy God, Oh, poor Holy God!”* And every day her sufferings, her prayers and especially her rosaries, which edified all those who witnessed her praying them, were offered for all those dear to her: the sisters and nurses, her little companions, the Pope, the Bishop and the Church.

The day finally came when Fr. Bury, who had come to preach a retreat for the sisters before Christmas, became aware of Nellie’s great desire to receive Holy Communion. *“What is the Blessed Eucharist?”* he asked her, *“It is Holy God,”* she replied without hesita-

tion. Fr. Bury sent a message to the bishop requesting that a special permission be granted for this little one, whose longing to receive Jesus was even greater than her suffering. The bishop gave his consent and on December 6, 1907, at the age of four, Nellie made her First Holy Communion. The sisters dressed her all in white and carried her down to the chapel and placed in a chair before the Sanctuary. Nellie was silent and remained motionless with her head bowed in prayer. When it came time for Fr. Bury to bring her Holy Communion her eyes lit up. He later wrote of her, *“The child literally hungered for her God, and received Him in a transport of love.”* At that same moment the horrific odor that had exhaled from her diseased jaw up until then, left her and was never experienced again!

In spite of Nellie’s indescribable joy after her First Holy Communion, her tuberculosis continued to progress and her sufferings increased to where her tiny frame was exhausted. She no longer retained any food; she was not able to swallow even a spoonful of broth. But through all this she remained calm and resigned. Her only nourishment now seemed to be the Holy Eucharist. On the morning of February 2, it was clear that Nellie was coming to the end of her life’s journey. Many of the sisters came and knelt around her bed. Nellie was calm and her eyes seemed to be gazing on something that she was seeing at the foot of her bed. She tried to raise herself so as to draw nearer to what she saw. Her lips moved in prayer and her eyes filled with tears. Then raising her



Pope St. Pius X

eyes she smiled as with perfect satisfaction. Nellie’s soul flew home to her Holy God whom she had loved so faithfully.

In 1908, upon hearing about the life of Little Nellie Organ, Pope St. Pius X declared, **“There! That is the sign for which I was waiting.”** A few months later, in 1910, he issued the decree *Quam Singulari* which significantly lowered the age for receiving Holy Communion for children from the age of 12 to around age 7. The Pope also asked the local Bishop of Cork, His Excellency T.A. O’Callagan, O.P for a relic of Nellie and on June 4, 1912 Pope St. Pius X wrote to the Bishop:

“May God enrich with every blessing Father Prevost (the promoter of her cause for beatification) and all who recommend frequent Communion to young boys and girls, proposing Nellie as their model.”

Anne Marie Jacques

In October 2013, the U.S.A. went through a crisis when the debt ceiling, voted periodically by the Congress, reached its limit of \$16,394 billion. Here is this debt pictured in stacks of \$100 bills.

Of course, these sky-scrapers of paper money will never exist, since the debt is made up of money that does not exist, and inflates because of compound interest. Even if all the money in circulation was collected, one would not even pay back one percent of this debt.

**\$16,394 TRILLION
US DEBT CEILING
HOME OF THE BRAVI**

The U.S. Federal Reserve 100 Years of Deception

by Yves Jacques

December 23rd, 2013 marks the 100th Anniversary of the Federal Reserve Act; the forming of the greatest financial power and control authority ever in the hands of an oligarchy of a few international banking families. The deception is that most people believe that the Federal Reserve is part of the government and that it has reserves somewhere. The truth is that the United States Federal Reserve is **not federal and it has no reserves.**

Though the American people like to believe that we are a democratic nation, the Federal Reserve System itself is far from being democratic. The Federal Reserve Board is unelected and is not accountable to anyone. It controls and claims ownership of, what should be, the nation's money supply, at the service of the people for the common good. Instead, there are private owners of the central bank (the Federal Reserve), managing the economy of the nation and running the financial system to their benefit.

According to Article 1 of the Constitution, adopted in 1787, our Founding Fathers stated: **"Congress shall have the Power To Coin Money and Regulate the Value Thereof."**

It was the intent of the Founding Fathers that the power to create and control the money be in the hands of the Federal Congress, not in the hands of private bankers, who could charge enormous amounts of interest, and then actually control the country by controlling its currency. It was the European banker, Mayer Anselm Rothschild (1744 -1812), who once said: **"Permit me to issue and control the money of a nation, and I care not who makes its laws..."** Our founding fathers understood the tricks of the bankers. It was their belief that the national government must be the only creator of money for the good of the public.

"Creating" Money Out of Nothing

We should also clarify the term "create". When we use this term, we refer to the process used when bringing money into existence. Money is nothing but numbers, be it numbers in a ledger book, on checks, or dollar bills. Using this process most banks are legally allowed to lend out up to 50 times what they have on deposit, creating the money out of nothing

and then charging interest on it. Banks create the principal but do not create the interest to service these loans. The bankers create money out of nothing by simply writing numbers in their ledger books and then giving this money to the American people in the form of loans.

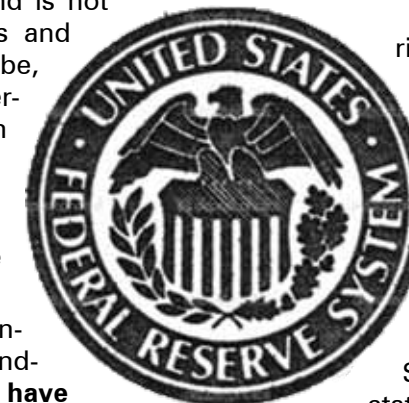
This allows us to write checks based on the numbers written in our accounts, but then requires payment with interest. The result of this is a shortage of money in circulation, leading to a continuous need for borrowing more money and causing the continual increase in the National Debt.

The Federal Government Debt

The United States has plunged itself terribly into debt since the Federal Reserve Act was passed in 1913. Before this, the federal debt was \$1 billion, or \$12.40 per citizen. State and local debts were practically non-existent.

- By 1920, after only 6 years of Federal Reserve "shenanigans", the federal debt had jumped to \$24 billion, or \$228 per person.
- In 1960 the federal debt reached \$284 billion, or \$1,575 per citizen, and state and local debt was mushrooming.
- By 1981 the federal debt exceeded \$1 trillion, and was growing exponentially, as a result of the bankers having tripled the interest rates. State and local debts were more than the federal debt, and with business and personal debts, the total reached well over \$6 trillion. That is 3 times the value of all land and buildings in America!
- In October 2005, the federal debt alone reached the \$8 trillion mark (\$26,672 for each U.S. citizen).
- Before the financial crisis of 2008 the Public Debt in the United States was \$9,340,497,105,319.74.
- In the short span of five years this debt has almost doubled. As of October 24th, 2013 this debt has increased to \$17,070,000,000,000.00 trillion (\$53,819 for each U.S. citizen). And that is only the tip of the iceberg: the total debt (states, corporations, consumers) is currently more than \$150 trillion!

The people of America have become tenants and debt slaves to the bankers and their agents. Our children and the future generations will be paying this debt forever. We are now coming to the point where, eventually, the Government will own nothing. ►





The headquarters of the Federal Reserve in Washington, D.C. Representative Charles A. Lindbergh Sr., father of the famous aviator, said: "This (Federal Reserve) Act establishes the most gigantic trust on earth... The worst legislative crime of the ages is perpetrated by this banking and currency bill."

ing. The people will own nothing. But the bankers will own everything.

President Woodrow Wilson had this to say about the Federal Reserve: "A great industrial nation is controlled by its system of credit. Our system of credit is concentrated. The growth of the nation and all our activities are in the hands of a few men. We have come to be one of the worst ruled, one of the most completely controlled and dominated Governments in the world – no longer a Government of free opinion, no longer a Government by conviction and vote of the majority, but a Government by the opinion and duress of small groups of dominant men."

Just before he died, Wilson is reported to have stated to friends that he had been "deceived" and that "I have betrayed my country." He was referring to the Federal Reserve Act passed during his Presidency.

The financial institutions of the nation are enslaving us. No one dares to say anything. Economic professors in universities, politicians, the mainstream media... all seem to avoid the topic of money creation, treating it as "taboo". During the October 2013 dept ceiling debate, very little was mentioned in congress about the problem of debt money creation, by either of the political parties.

The truth is, that the Federal Reserve has deceived us with their moneymaking schemes, veiling them in secrecy. Bankers pull numbers from their computers, like a magician pulling a rabbit from his hat, creating money out of nothing and claiming it as their own. They then lend this money as credit to the nation and to individuals, and then charge interest. And it is this interest (money) that has never actually been created, thus, making it impossible to ever pay it back.

As it is explained in Lesson 3 of the book *Social Credit Explained in 10 Lessons*: "The public debt is made up of money that does not exist, that has never been created, but that governments nevertheless have committed themselves to paying back. An impossible contract, represented by the bankers as a 'sacrosanct contract', to be abided by, even though human beings die because of it."

In the Church's Catholic Social Teaching Pope Pius XI in 1931 wrote in his Encyclical letter *Quadragesimo Anno*, "This power becomes particularly irresistible when exercised by those who, because they hold and control money, are able also to govern credit and determine its allotment, for that reason supplying, so to speak, the lifeblood to the entire economic body, and grasping, as it were, in their hands the very soul of production, so that no one dare breathe against their will."

Pope Francis wrote, in his new Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium* (The Joy of the Gospel) signed on November 24, 2013, for the conclusion of the Year of Faith: "We have created new idols. The worship of the ancient golden calf (cf. Ex 32:1-35) has returned in a new and ruthless guise in the idolatry of money and

the dictatorship of an impersonal economy lacking a truly human purpose. The worldwide crisis affecting finance and the economy lays bare their imbalances and, above all, their lack of real concern for human beings; man is reduced to one of his needs alone: consumption."

And Pope Francis continues: "A new tyranny is thus born, invisible and often virtual, which unilaterally and relentlessly imposes its own laws and rules. Debt and the accumulation of interest also make it difficult for countries to realize the potential of their own economies and keep citizens from enjoying their real purchasing power." (n. 56)...

"Behind this attitude lurks a rejection of ethics and a rejection of God. Ethics has come to be viewed with a certain scornful derision. It is seen as counter-productive, too human, because it makes money and power relative. It is felt to be a threat, since it condemns the manipulation and debasement of the person. In effect, ethics leads to a God who calls for a committed response which is outside the categories of the marketplace. When these latter are absolutized, God can only be seen as uncontrollable, unmanageable, even dangerous, since he calls human beings to their full realization and to freedom from all forms of enslavement." (n. 57.)

For these bankers, money is their god; it is the "golden calf" that they worship. They are like agents of the, "...thief (who) comes only to steal and kill and destroy;" (John 10:10) But Jesus adds, "I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly." (John 10:10) "No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be

devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon (money)". (Matthew 6:24)

So who owns the Federal Reserve Central Banks? Eight big banking dynasties, most of them from Europe:

- Rothschild Bank of London
- Warburg Bank of Hamburg
- Rothschild Bank of Berlin
- Kuhn Loeb Bank of New York
- Israel Moses Self Banks of Italy
- Goldman, Sachs of New York
- Warburg Bank of Amsterdam
- Chase Manhattan Bank of New York
- Lazard Brothers Bank of Paris

Our intention of revealing these names is solely for the purpose of praying for their conversion. "...in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth." (Timothy 2:3,4)

Yves Jacques

According to an official government report, the Federal Reserve made 16.1 trillion dollars in secret loans to the big banks during the last financial crisis. The following is a list of loan recipients that was taken directly from page 131 of the report:

- Citigroup - \$2.513 trillion
- Morgan Stanley - \$2.041 trillion
- Merrill Lynch - \$1.949 trillion
- Bank of America - \$1.344 trillion
- Barclays PLC - \$868 billion
- Bear Sterns - \$853 billion
- Goldman Sachs - \$814 billion
- Royal Bank of Scotland - \$541 billion
- JP Morgan Chase - \$391 billion
- Deutsche Bank - \$354 billion
- UBS - \$287 billion
- Credit Suisse - \$262 billion
- Lehman Brothers - \$183 billion
- Bank of Scotland - \$181 billion
- BNP Paribas - \$175 billion
- Wells Fargo - \$159 billion
- Dexia - \$159 billion
- Wachovia - \$142 billion
- Dresdner Bank - \$135 billion
- Societe Generale - \$124 billion
- "All Other Borrowers" - \$2.639 trillion

Source: <http://theeconomiccollapseblog.com/archives/25-fast-facts-about-the-federal-reserve-please-share-with-everyone-you-know>



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Blessed Hildegard Burjan

Foundress of the Sisters of Social Charity

by Dom Antoine Marie osb

One evening, a little girl saw, from her bedroom window, some women dressed in white, walking back and forth in a garden while chanting psalms. She asked her mother what they were doing. "They're nuns. They're praying." The little girl went on, "What is a nun? And who are they praying to?" — "They're praying to their God." — "Where is God? Why are they praying instead of going to bed?" The mother, agnostic, did not know how to answer. "How good it must be to be able to pray to God..." sighed the little girl, who added, under her breath, "My God, I also want to pray!" Hildegard had just taken her first step on a long path in search of Truth.

Hildegard Lea Freund was born on January 30, 1883 in Goerlitz, Saxony (on the present-day German-Polish border), into a family of non-practicing Jews. In 1895, the Freund family moved to Berlin, where Hildegard went to high school. She displayed great intellectual gifts and a deep desire for moral integrity; she wanted to become an "ethical person," which for her meant a woman of conviction and principles. She was not concerned about those things that typically excite teenagers — clothes, pastimes, being in the popular group... Rather, she was interested in philosophy, art, and culture. Nevertheless, her gaze did not extend beyond the present life. After reading Schopenhauer, for whom belief in a transcendent absolute and seeking eternal happiness were nothing but a vain illusion, she would write a poem with the disillusioned refrain, "Joys and sorrows pass. The world passes — there is nothing!"

Already before the birth of Jesus Christ, the Book of Wisdom put on the lips of unbelievers these words: We were born by mere chance, and hereafter we shall be as though we had never been (Wis. 2:2). After her conversion, Hildegard confided, about someone who had committed suicide: "So why should one struggle with this world, if one does not believe in the hereafter? I am sure that I too would kill myself if I did not believe. I do not understand how people can live without believing in God." Pope Benedict XVI likewise observed, in the encyclical *Caritas in Veritate*, "Without God man neither knows which way to go, nor even understands who he is" (no. 78).



Hildegard in 1905: "My God, if You exist, let me find You!"

In 1899, the Freund family moved to Zurich, Switzerland. After graduating high school in 1903, Hildegard entered the university, a rare privilege for young women in her day. She studied German literature and philosophy, under two Protestant professors, Saitschik and Foerster, who taught a system called the "philosophy of life," which, counter to the prevailing rationalism, affirmed that man was capable of knowing God. Saitschik insisted that purity of heart and uprightness of soul were necessary for such knowledge. Hildegard, moved but not convinced, repeated over and over, in tears and supplication, the "prayer of the unbeliever": "My God, if You exist, let me find You!" But for the moment she received no response.

The deep meaning of life

In 1907, Hildegard returned to Berlin to study economics and social policy. There, she met Alexander Burjan, a Jewish Hungarian engineer who was agnostic and, like her, was seeking the deep meaning of life. They married within the year. In October 1908, an attack of renal colic forced the young woman to be hospitalized in the Saint Hedwig Catholic hospital in Berlin. Her health deteriorated to the point that she had to undergo several operations. During Holy Week of 1909, she was at the point of death, and the doctors had lost all hope of saving her. Against all expectations, on Easter Monday, her health markedly improved. After seven months of hospitalization, she was able to return home. However, she would suffer from the aftereffects of this kidney condition for the rest of her life.

During her long stay in the hospital, Hildegard had admired the devotion and charity of the Sisters of Mercy of Saint Borromeo (members of an Order founded by Saint Charles Borromeo, the archbishop of Milan, who died in 1584). She observed, "Only the Catholic Church can achieve this miracle of filling an entire community with such a spirit... Man, left to only his natural faculties, cannot do what these Sisters do. In seeing them, I experienced the power of grace." It was after this revelation of the "unshakable truth" of the Church through the holiness of her members that Hildegard converted. After a period of catechumenate, she received Baptism on August 11, 1909. This

decisive act was the culmination of a long spiritual journey. After having long thought that man could, by dint of intelligence and will, achieve moral progress on his own, she now wrote, "It is not by human wisdom alone that we can do good, but only in union with Christ. In Him we can do all things; without Him, we are completely helpless."

"Man does not develop through his own powers," wrote Pope Benedict XVI in *Caritas in Veritate*... "In the course of history, it was often maintained that the creation of institutions was sufficient to guarantee the fulfillment of humanity's right to development. Unfortunately, too much confidence was placed in those institutions, as if they were able to deliver the desired objective automatically. In reality, institutions by themselves are not enough, because integral human development is primarily a vocation... Moreover, such development requires a transcendent vision of the person, it needs God: without Him, development is either denied, or entrusted exclusively to man, who falls into the trap of thinking he can bring about his own salvation, and ends up promoting a dehumanized form of development. Only through an encounter with God are we able to see in the other something more than just another creature, to recognize the divine image in the other, thus truly coming to discover him or her and to mature in a love that becomes concern and care for the other" (no. 11).

The child must live!

Baptism was for Hildegard the beginning of a new life. Radiant, she confided her happiness to her closest family and friends. In August 1910, she had the joy of seeing her husband Alexander baptized. Shortly thereafter, Hildegard was pregnant and preparing for a difficult delivery. The doctors advised her to abort her child because of the grave risk she was running. But she vigorously refused: "That would be murder! If I die, I will then be a victim of my 'profession' of mother, but the child must live!" The delivery went well, and little Lisa was born. She would be the only child in the Burjan family, whose life would from that point on unfold in Vienna, where Alexander became the head of a telephone equipment company.

Hildegard was certain that her life, saved by providence, must be entirely consecrated to God and mankind. Her vocation would be to proclaim to the poor God's love for them through social action. Before long, she discovered the terrible reality of workers' conditions. The poor, newly arrived in Austria's capital, lived crammed into unsanitary tenements. Men, women, and children worked in factories twelve to fifteen hours a day for starvation wages. In this environment, women were often tempted to prostitute themselves and abandon their children. To remedy the situation, the Church would create associations of Catholic women to fight not only to protect the morals of women factory workers, but also to defend their rights

in the face of unscrupulous employers. Hildegard committed herself wholeheartedly to these efforts, armed with the deep understanding of social issues she had acquired at the university. In particular, she came to the defense of workers who worked at home and were paid at the employer's discretion, without any social security whatsoever.



Hildegard and her husband Alexander Burjan

In September 1912, Hildegard spoke at the annual gathering of Catholic women's leagues in Vienna: "Let us examine if we are not complicit in the misery of the people. We should buy only from conscientious shopkeepers, not pushing them to lower their prices, but demanding from time to time that the manufacturers account for the origin of their products. Too often, the well-off woman pressures storekeepers to sell at unrealistic prices, which is always at the expense of impoverished home workers." Almost alone at the outset in defending these workers "without a voice", she soon recruited volunteer collaborators from among the well-to-do.

Little slaves

That same year, Hildegard founded the "Association of Christian Women Home Workers," which offered its members better wages, social protection, legal assistance, and the possibility of an education. At the cost of great effort and frequent humiliations, she tried to win the support of those who were reluctant, even hostile. She thought that women had the right to a profession, including an intellectual one, to the extent that the work would not infringe upon their natural roles as wives and mothers. But this right must not be a pretext for exploiting their weakness. She also attended to the needs of children who were forced to earn a living — one-third of children in Vienna were in this situation. In violation of the law, children as young as six were working 14 hours a day, in factories or at home. These little slaves suffered an appalling mortality rate. Even those who survived into adulthood remained mentally impacted.



“God gave us reason to identify the distress of the times, the causes of this distress, the means for remedy. Not by accident He puts us together with the outer circumstances, not by chance He talks to our hearts, not incidentally He leads us to this work.” — Hildegard Burjan

► Distressed by this scandal, Hildegard denounced the exploitation of children in a pamphlet, drawing her inspiration from the teaching of Pope Leo XIII in the encyclical *Rerum Novarum* (1891). Charity towards the poor must not be limited to relieving isolated instances of suffering, without seeking to right the injustices that cause them. Each person must take responsibility, including in the political realm, to pull out the structures of sin at their roots, and establish social justice. During the First World War, Hildegard defended women who were replacing men in the factories who had been called up. Her goal: to apply the principle of “equal pay for equal work” on behalf of female workers. In November 1918, the defeat of the Central Powers (Germany and the Austro-Hungarian Empire) led to an insurrection in Vienna and the proclamation of the Austrian Republic. Nominated as a candidate in the parliamentary elections, Hildegard Burjan became the only woman representative of the Christian Socialist Party. In Parliament, she promoted social reforms, not as a revolutionary, but in fidelity to the social doctrine of the Church. She proposed laws to promote the rights of workers and to protect children. At her instigation, the parties agreed to pass a law offering social security to home help.

The conscience of the Parliament

Hildegard said, “A consuming interest in public affairs is part of the practice of Christianity.” Seventy years later, Blessed John Paul II would declare: **“The lay faithful are never to relinquish their participation in ‘public life’, that is, in the many different economic, social, legislative, administrative and cultural areas, which are intended to promote organically and institutionally the common good”** (Post-synodal exhortation *Christifideles Laici*, December 30, 1988, no. 42).

During the two years of her term of office, Hildegard won the respect of all the members of Parliament. Chancellor Ignaz Seipel would say that he had never met anyone more enthusiastic in his or her political activity or wiser in his or her intuitions. Cardinal Piffl, the Archbishop of Vienna, saw in her “the conscience of the Parliament.” Invited to run in the 1920 elections, and proposed for the post of Minister of Social Affairs, she declined both these offers, in part due to her

poor health, but mostly to devote herself to organizing Caritas Socialis (Social Charity), an initiative whose goal and name were inspired by Saint Paul’s exclamation (2 Cor. 5:14): *Caritas Christi urget nos* — For the love of Christ impels us.

Hildegard understood that, in order to achieve her goal and truly have an impact, those engaged in social action needed to be entirely motivated by the ideal presented in the Gospels. From this came her idea to found a community of women consecrated to God to promote social justice in the heart of working cities where Christianity had become foreign. Compelled by divine charity, these women would live according to the “Evangelical Counsels” (poverty, chastity, and obedience), wearing a simple and discrete religious habit, close to the workers. Hildegard formulated the foundational intuition of Caritas Socialis in these words: “Over the course of the centuries, the Catholic Church has nurtured the most varied flowers. In the face of each distress that has presented itself, she has sent forth men filled with the Holy Spirit to remedy it... Perhaps in its turn, our Caritas might, in the midst of modern paganism, appear as its own branch on the trunk of the Church.” The plan was approved by Cardinal Piffl and blessed by Pope Benedict XV.

On October 4, 1919, the first ten Sisters of the Apostolic Society of the Sisters of Caritas Socialis made their commitment before God during a Mass in Vienna. Lay associates would work alongside them. The ambition of the Caritas was to dedicate itself to new charitable initiatives — providing a roof for homeless women, saving poor young women in danger, taking in single mothers to keep them from the temptation to abort their children (a “Home for mother and child” was opened in Vienna in 1924), rescuing prostitutes from vice by rehabilitating them, caring for women suffering from venereal diseases, etc. This apostolate scandalized some Catholics, who saw in it an encouragement of, or at least an excuse for, immorality. In reality, as Hildegard wrote, “It is not a question of only relieving material destitution, but in fact of awakening a new life in Christ.” These so-called “lost” or endangered women were called to conversion and to lead a Christian life from then on. Caritas gave them the means to do so.

The leader of the Sisters

A married woman and the mother of a family, as foundress Hildegard Burjan acted as the superior of the Sisters, an anomaly that aroused criticism from some of the faithful. But Cardinal Piffl answered them: “Having Mrs. Burjan in my diocese is a grace for which I will be accountable before God. It is my holy conviction that she must remain the leader of the Sisters until her last breath.” Overburdened, and overwhelmed with work, the foundress used to say, “I will rest and sleep only when I am under ground.”

She dedicated a great deal of time to receiving and advising the Sisters. She showed them the respect due to women consecrated to God in the celibate life. Modesty, discretion in speech, but also charity and human warmth were the qualities she showed in this spiritual direction. To reprimand a Sister for a fault cost her dearly, but she spoke frankly when it was her duty. She did so in such a loving and constructive manner that Sisters left these meetings feeling won-over and at peace. **Such a consuming job did not prevent Hildegard from remaining a very loving spouse and available mother. A bit before her death, she told her husband: “I have been very happy with you. Thank you for all these beautiful years that we have spent together, for your understanding and your assistance in my work.”**

Prayer was a fundamental necessity for Hildegard. Without God, nothing useful can be done (cf. John 15:5). She prayed especially at night, for lack of time during the day, taking time out of her sleep. A diabetic, Hildegard had to give herself insulin injections every day for fifteen years. She patiently endured all the sufferings of this disease — pain in her kidneys and intestines, exhaustion, hunger caused by the strict diet she was prescribed, and above all, a burning thirst. Every day, she attended Mass and received Communion. According to the discipline in effect at the time, to receive Communion, one needed to fast from all food and drink, including water, since midnight. Every morning, she waited for her husband to eat his breakfast and leave for the office; then she would go to Mass and only drink when she returned home. She never asked for a dispensation from the Eucharistic fast. Speaking from experience, Hildegard wrote one of her nuns: “Believe me, for everyone life is a battle. Aware of it or not, each of us advances slowly on the rocky road to Calvary. Let us thank God for giving us the opportunity to climb it and, by his light, to enable us to see our faults.”

When all illusion ceases

On Pentecost 1933, she suffered a very painful renal inflammation. In spite of the reassuring medical prognoses, Hildegard calmly prepared herself for a death she felt near. Her doctor gave the following account of her last days: “I have seen countless patients

near death. But the final hours of Hildegard Burjan remain in my memory as a unique case. Fully aware of being close to her end, she was concerned about her loved ones and her initiatives. With respect to herself, she was without fear, and entirely surrendered; she joyfully considered death a deliverance from earthly existence, and showed an absolute confidence that she would enter into eternal life.”

For her part, Hildegard confided, “My death is a calm *Deo gratias!* Twenty-five years ago, God, at the time of this illness, drew me to Himself and chose me. He carried me in His arms like a child, and now He is delivering me from this illness to lead me to Himself. I often think about what could be a cause for fear for me, of the moment of appearing before God... Certainly I have done many bad things in my life, but I know I have never sought anything but His will. And this is why I see nothing I should fear.” She testified to her calm faith in these words: “Sometimes over the course of my life, the thought has come to me of what the hour of my death would be like, this moment at which all illusion ceases. I have wondered if then everything would dissolve, would appear to me as a dream... And now, I see that it is all true, that it is all Truth.” On June 11, 1933, the Feast of the Most Holy Trinity, she murmured, “How beautiful it will be to go to rest in God!” Then, kissing her Crucifix, she said, in a slow and clear voice: “Dear Savior, make all men lovable, so that You might love them. Enrich them with Yourself alone!” Shortly thereafter, she died.

At the time of Hildegard’s death, the Caritas Socialis numbered 150 members and 35 institutions in Austria and abroad. Raised in 1960 to a religious institute of pontifical right, today this “Community of Apostolic Life” comprises 900 sisters and lay collaborators who perform various apostolates, particularly on behalf of pregnant mothers in difficult circumstances (women’s shelters), and for elderly persons suffering from serious medical conditions (Alzheimer’s disease). Following a decree by Pope Benedict XVI, Hildegard Burjan was proclaimed blessed on January 29, 2012, in Vienna. In their commitment vows composed by Blessed Hildegard Burjan, the Caritas Sisters say to God: “I thank You with all my heart for having deemed me worthy to be an instrument of Your love.”

Let us ask Jesus Christ, sent into the world by His Father to light the fire of Love (cf. Lk. 12:49), to make us instruments of His redemptive Love as well.

Dom Antoine Marie osb

This article is reprinted with permission from the Abbey of Clairval, France, which publishes every month a spiritual newsletter on the life of a saint, in English, French, Italian, or Dutch. Their postal address: Dom Antoine Marie, Abbe, Abbaye Saint-Joseph de Clairval 21150 Flavigny sur Ozerain, France. Their website: <http://www.clairval.com>.

Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal

The story of the medal of the Immaculate Conception, or the *Miraculous Medal*, as it has come to be recognized today, is very beautiful. The Blessed Virgin Mary herself designed the medal in 1830, when she appeared to a young nun, Sr. Catherine Labouré, in the convent of the Sisters of Charity in Paris, France.

Catherine, or Zoë, as she was called by her family, was born in 1806, the daughter of Pierre and Madeleine Labouré, farmers in Fain-les-Moutier, France. Her mother gave birth to seventeen children; eleven of whom lived, Catherine being the second youngest. Little Zoë was very attached to her saintly mother and learned all her prayers and devotions from her. She would follow her mother everywhere throughout their home, learning to do the many chores and also how to manage the household. Because of this, after her mother's death, she became the housekeeper and efficient manager for her father's very large farm, even though she was only eight years old. At the

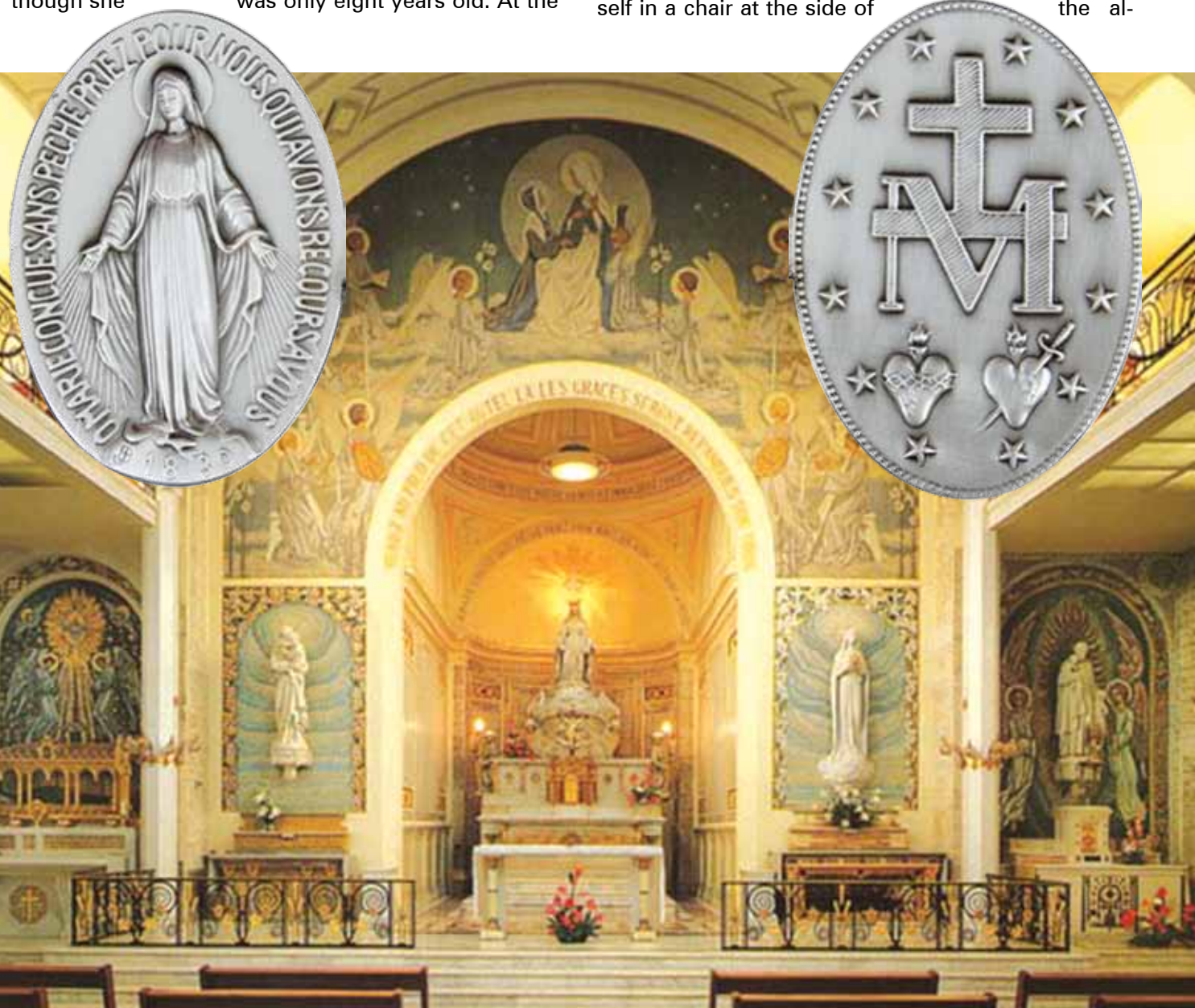
age of fourteen she felt a calling to the religious life. With her father's permission, she entered the order of the Sisters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul in Châtillon-sur-Seine and from there was transferred to the motherhouse on the *Rue du Bac* in Paris.

Catherine was the only one in her family not to have received an education, but Heaven will oftentimes choose these very people to do great works. From the very beginning of her religious life, Our Lord showered her with special favors, often appearing to her while she was praying before the Blessed Sacrament.

On the night of July 18, 1830, Catherine was awakened by a beautiful child in a shining garment, her guardian angel, who led her to the convent chapel. Announcing to her that the Blessed Mother was coming, he disappeared and suddenly Catherine heard the rustle of a silk skirt. Looking up, she beheld Our Lady coming towards her and then seating herself in a chair at the side of the altar.



Above: Catherine Labouré died in 1876, at the age of 70. Her body is still remarkably preserved, incorrupt, in the chapel of the Miraculous Medal on Rue du Bac in Paris, France. Left: the chapel of the Miraculous Medal, with the two sides of the medal. The text on the medal: "O Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to Thee."



tar. Catherine was so in awe of this vision, that she fell to her knees by the Virgin's side. In an instant, all fear and doubt left her. She placed her folded hands upon the Virgin's lap and together, for over two hours, they conversed. Our Lady told Catherine that she must be prepared to undertake a very difficult task.

On November 27th, the Virgin once again appeared to Catherine, this time, in the form of a picture. Catherine described the event as follows:

"I saw the Blessed Virgin standing on a globe, Her face was beautiful beyond words. Rays of dazzling light were streaming from gems on Her fingers, down to the globe. And I heard a voice say: 'Behold the symbol of graces which I will shower down on all who ask Me for them!' Then, an oval frame surrounded Our Lady on which I read the prayer, in letters of gold: 'O Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to Thee!' The oval frame turned and I could see, on the reverse side, enclosed in a frame of twelve stars, the letter M surmounted by a cross with a bar beneath. Below these symbols were the Hearts of Jesus and Mary, one surrounded by a crown of thorns, the other pierced by a sword. I heard a voice, which said to me: 'Have a medal struck according to this model. Those who wear it, when it is blessed, will receive great graces, especially if they wear it around their necks. There will be graces in abundance for all who wear it with confidence.'"

Catherine confided this message to her confessor, Fr. Aladel, who, in turn, presented the evidence to the Archbishop of Paris, Most Rev. Hyacinthe-Louis de Quelen. After an extensive and careful investigation,

the archbishop decided in favor of the apparitions and in 1832, he ordered that a medal be struck, designed in accordance with the instructions given to Catherine by Our Lady. The sisters of Catherine's order, the Sisters of Charity in Paris, were the primary promoters of this devotion, distributing the medals to everyone with whom they came in contact. The devotion spread very quickly and immediately the graces promised by the Blessed Virgin were "showered" upon those who wore her medal; blessings of healing, peace, prosperity and most especially, conversion. Very soon the people were referring to it as the "*Miraculous Medal*".

The Medal

This medal is not a "good luck charm". There is no superstition or "magic" attached to this devotion. It is simply an instrument, or a sacramental, which is a testimony to the power of faith and trusting prayer. This simple medal, small and of little value, is like the humble Catherine Labouré herself. Uneducated and hidden from the world, even from the sisters in her convent (who were unaware of her identity as the privileged one of God until after her death), she was chosen by God to bring about a great good for the world. "... God chose the foolish of the world to shame the wise, and God chose the weak of the world to shame the strong..." (1 Corinthians 1:27) The Church celebrates the feast day of Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal on November 27th. To wear this medal is a blessing and a great privilege, for it is a special gift from the Blessed Mother herself.

**Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal, pray for us!
St. Catherine Labouré, pray for us!**

Anne Marie Jacques

The Conversion of Alphonse Ratisbonne Through the Miraculous Medal

Perhaps one of the most renowned miracles credited to the Miraculous Medal was the conversion of Alphonse Ratisbonne. He was the son and heir of a wealthy, aristocratic family of Jewish bankers in Strasbourg, France. When he was a child, his older brother, Theodor, had converted to the Catholic faith and become a priest. Alphonse's family cut off all contact with Theodor, and Alphonse himself, resolved never to so much as speak to his brother again.

Many years later, while in Rome, Alphonse met an old classmate, Gustavo de Buisnières and they renewed their friendship. Gustavo had an older brother, the Baron Théodore de Buisnières, who had also converted to Catholicism and was a very close friend of Alphonse's brother, Theodor. Surprisingly, Alphonse and the Baron became good friends, but this still did not change Alphonse's hatred of the Church. He thought nothing of making sarcastic and blasphemous remarks against the Catholic faith to his new friend. Finally, the Baron, having endured more than he could stand of the irritating behavior on the part of Ratisbonne, challenged him with a proposition. Showing him a "Miraculous Medal" he dared him to wear it around his neck for one month, along with the promise to recite the "Memorare" prayer every morning and every evening.

Ratisbonne was stunned; he didn't know what to say. The Baron went on to say, "Alphonse, although I know this would seem only ridiculous to you, I attach great importance to this medal, please, submit to my request." And through some special grace from God, Alphonse, though almost in a daze, allowed the Baron's little daughter to place the medal around his neck, and laughing, he joked, "Now I am a Roman, apostolic Catholic!" Then, wasting no time, the Baron de Buisnières contacted his Catholic friends, asking them all to pray for the conversion of Alphonse Ratisbonne.

Not long after, the two men met on the street in front of the basilica of St. Andrea delle Fratte in Rome. The Baron was arranging for the funeral of a very close friend. He asked Ratisbonne to wait for him inside the church while he went to speak with the monks in the monastery. Upon his return, he found Ratisbonne kneeling before the altar of St. Michael, sobbing, his face bathed in tears, pleading to be taken to a priest for confession! This is what he related to his friend:



"I had been but a few moments in the church when I was suddenly seized with an unutterable agitation of mind. I raised my eyes; the building had disappeared from before me; one single side altar had, so to speak, gathered and concentrated all the light. And in the midst of that radiance I saw standing on the altar loft, clothed with splendor, full of majesty and of sweetness, the Virgin Mary, just as she is represented on the medal."

"An irresistible force drew me towards her; the Virgin made me a sign with her hand that I should kneel down; and then she seemed to say, That will do! She spoke not a word but I understood all."

At the time of this miraculous vision, Ratisbonne was twenty-seven years old, preparing to take his place as a partner in his uncle's bank and engaged to be married to his beautiful cousin. His fiancée was only sixteen at the time, so it had been deemed reasonable that they should postpone their wedding and for this reason Ratisbonne had decided to take a trip through Europe. That is what had brought him to be in Rome on that day.

Ratisbonne realized that to convert to the Catholic faith would mean that he would have to sacrifice all his earthly hopes and interests, but this thought did not dissuade him. He later wrote:

"...I felt ready for everything and [immediately] insistently demanded baptism. They wanted to delay it. 'But how!' I exclaimed, 'the Jews who heard the preaching of the Apostles were baptized immediately, and you want to delay it, even though I heard the Queen of the Apostles!'"

Eleven days later, Ratisbonne was baptized, made his First Holy Communion and was confirmed. After breaking off his engagement to his fiancée, he entered the religious life and was ordained a priest in 1847. It was his great desire to dedicate the rest of his life working and praying for the conversion of his fellow Jews and for Muslims, and with his brother Theodor, he founded an order of nuns – the Congregation of Our Lady of Zion – to pray for this very intention. He and his brother moved the sisters to the Holy Land and built two convents, a school and two orphanages. There he labored, with a few more companions (the Fathers of Zion) until his death in 1884.

Anne Marie Jacques

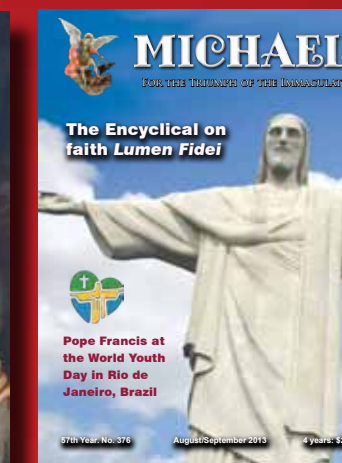
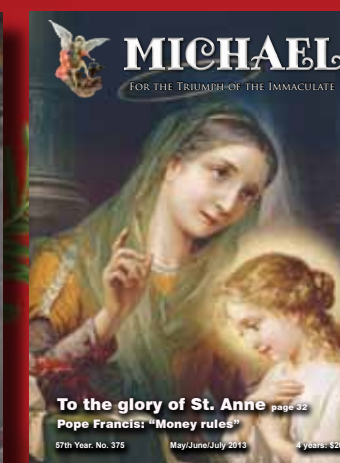
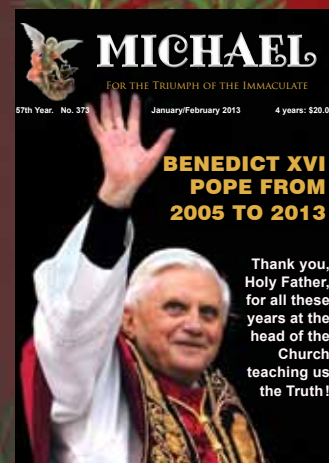
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Act of Consecration of the World to the Immaculate Heart of Mary

*Here is the prayer made by Pope Francis in
St. Peter's Square on Sunday, October 13,
before the statue of Our Lady of Fatima,
brought from Portugal for this special occasion:*

**Blessed Virgin Mary of Fatima, with renewed
gratitude for your motherly presence, we join in
the voice of all generations that call you blessed.**

**We celebrate in you the great works of God,
who never tires of lowering Himself in mercy
over humanity, afflicted by evil and wounded by sin,
to heal and to save it. Accept with the benevolence
of a Mother this act of consecration that we make
in faith today, before this your image, beloved to us.**

**We are certain that each of us is precious in your
eyes and that nothing of all that lives in our hearts
is unknown to you. We let ourselves be touched by
your most sweet regard and we welcome the
consoling caress of your smile.**

**Guard our life with your embrace: bless and
strengthen every desire for good; give new life
and nourishment to faith; sustain and enlighten
hope; awaken and animate charity; guide us all
on the path to holiness.**

**Teach us your own special love for the little
and the poor, for the excluded and the
suffering, for sinners and the wounded
of heart: gather all people under your
protection and give us all to your beloved
Son, our Lord Jesus. Amen.**

