

MANCIPIA

February/March 2009

THE REPORT OF THE CRUSADE OF SAINT BENEDICT CENTER



IN THIS ISSUE:

- Is President Obama what the Catholic Church needs in America? Page 2.
- Do you have trouble with mental prayer? See the article on page 3 for some ideas.
- See page 4 for an update on our Third Order's latest activities and projects.
- Which makes more sense, dating or courtship? Comments are on page 10.

TO FRIENDS OF THE CRUSADE:

OUR LADY OF AMERICA AND THE OBAMA NATION



Br. André Marie, M.I.C.M., Prior

Brian Kelly has written on our website about Our Lady of America and her apparitions to a holy religious in Ohio, Sister Mary Ephrem (Mildred Neuzil). These apparitions are approved by the Church, as the recent canonical study of the case by Archbishop Burke testifies. While there are many supposed apparitions which claim

our attention, we put no credence in those lacking the Church's approbation. Since this apparition is approved, and since it has a message for the Church in America, we consider it worthy of attention, *especially now*.

Why now? To begin an answer, I present a thumbnail sketch of our present situation in the land of the free and the home of the brave. Our economy is a disaster, with some economists predicting a "super-crash" worse than the Great Depression. Our military is overextended in several unjust wars of aggression, policing the world for interests other than those of the American people. Recently, to the vote on Proposition 8, furious mobs of homosexual activists have begun to perpetrate

hate crimes against law-abiding citizens, those who wish to protect marriage from the unnatural agenda of the "gay" lobby. As these and other situations continue to spin out of control, the American people have elected to the highest office of the land a Marxist ideologue who is more beloved by the baby-slaughtering industry than even Hilary Clinton. Therefore, unless present efforts to have his presidency challenged on constitutional grounds succeed (and that doesn't appear likely), we

The American people have elected to the highest office of the land a Marxist ideologue who is more beloved by the baby-slaughtering industry than even Hilary Clinton.

will have in the White House a socialist who wishes to protect, by means of the Freedom of Choice Act, a woman's "right" to commit infanticide. This will be the most militantly pro-abortion regime we have ever had. The American bishops are speaking out against the proposed legislation, and considering strong sanctions against pro-FOCA legislators, but their activities in the political arena have left some of them vulnerable to attack from pro-abortion watch-dog groups. This could presage a constitutional showdown at the OK Corral.

On the cover: Brother André addresses over 70 people at the recent Catholic America Tour talk in Riverdale, New Jersey.

A more focused picture comes into view when you add to this the effects of an ubiquitous entertainment industry that hawks sex and violence; tax-financed indoctrination into feminism, homosexuality, and anti-Christian progressivism (a.k.a., "public education"); and the grim reality of our demographic winter, whereby we are making ourselves extinct.

Could all this mess produce a persecution of the Church? By this I mean a major, government-authorized one. It certainly could. In "Conscience and the Nanny State," I quoted Richard Weaver to this effect: "An ancient axiom of politics teaches that a spoiled people invite despotic control. Their failure to maintain internal discipline is followed by some rationalized organization in the service of a single powerful will. In this particular, at least, history, with all her volumes vast, has but one page" (*Ideas Have Consequences*, pg. 91). Already, hate-crime laws are being used against professing Christians who defend the natural law in the public arena. Those who push this radical agenda are among Obama's closest allies. As things degenerate a few degrees, what is to prevent wholesale,

continued on page 8



CONVENT CORNER



Sr. Marie Thérèse, M.I.C.M.,
Prioress

I CAN'T MEDITATE

This is an excerpt from a treasure of a book for religious sisters by Father John E. Moffatt, S.J., entitled: *Listen, Sister*. I modified it slightly so that you will more easily be able to apply it to yourself. Father proves again and again in his book that having a sense of humor is a great help to progress in the spiritual life. After reading this article,

you could, for starters, apply your newly-discovered talent to the mysteries of the Rosary, particularly when you meditate for fifteen minutes to fulfill Our Lady's request for the Five First Saturdays. And now, Father Moffatt:

Listen, my friend. You can't meditate? You never did learn how? Every time you try you make a miserable mess of it? It's just no use? You simply cannot succeed? You have used all the books with their preludes and points and various devices? You have followed directions with meticulous exactness? But the net result is zero? It's not for you? You just cannot meditate?

Listen, my friend. Don't be ludicrous. You *can* meditate. Everyone can. Good and bad, saint and sinner, learned and ignorant, all can meditate — all *do* meditate.

The businessman in his office lost in a brown study over the papers on his desk — what is he doing? He is meditating. Meditating on that business deal that is under negotiation. The small boy in the classroom dreaming his dreams as he stares with vacant gaze at the book before him — what is he doing? He, too, is meditating — meditating on the delightful freedom of the vacation time with its sunlit fields in which to roam, its games, its fishing rod, its swimming hole. The sweet girl graduate, as the day of Commencement approaches — how is she engaged through well-nigh all her waking hours? In eager meditation on the coming thrilling event in her young life.

You are not unlike the rest. You, too, can meditate. You can't help but do so. Listen. After you read that paper at the business meeting, or after you performed on the piano for your family, or sang with your exquisite voice at that little family entertainment, and your mother came to your room and told you, with all her motherly sweetness, how "utterly wonderful it was — the most beautiful thing she had ever heard — how

continued on page 9

Richmond Blueberry Fiddle Festival 2009

Looking forward to the warmth and green of summer?

Make plans to step back into the past with a one-of-a-kind, old-fashioned family festival: the **Seventh Annual Blueberry Fiddle Festival**, organized by Richmond's Immaculate Heart of Mary School.

Music includes performances by New Hampshire's Spirit Fiddle (www.spiritfiddle.com) and the Fiddling Thomsons (www.captainfiddle.com) as well as other talent from all over New England. Enjoy the music while you savor a slice of homemade blueberry pie and cool off with ice cream from a local dairy.

Games, crafts, a car show, and other activities provide fun for all ages.

The festival is held at **Cheshire Fairgrounds (Route 12, Swanzey, NH) on August 7 & 8: Friday 2-9pm, Saturday 9am-7pm. Admission is free; parking is a one-time \$5.**

How can you help? Come to the festival, be a sponsor, or volunteer your time. Call Sister Maria Philomena at the number below for details.

Visit www.blueberryfiddlefestival.com or call 603-239-6495 for more information.



PREFECT'S COLUMN

THE THIRD ORDER HAS BEEN HARD AT WORK!



Tertiary* Br. John Marie Vianney

It is a little difficult to realize that the Feast of the Purification marked the second year of my prefecture. Time flies! The Third Order has not been idle.

We have added a monthly quiz to our regular monthly business meeting on the First Saturday of the month. This lighter part of the meeting helps to foster Brother Francis'

philosophy that what we do intellectually as a school should not be all work, but fun as well.

We have renewed the apostolate of the Pilgrim Virgin Statue, which belongs to the Third Order. Right now, the statue is touring the Richmond, NH area. Families keep the statue for a week and say the rosary before it. The statue will be going across the country later in the year.

We began a formation program for tertiaries, which has the hallmark of assigning seasoned mentors to guide candidates through the matriculation process. The program was in the planning and pilot stages for more than a year.

We began a regular pro-life witness program. On the third Saturday of every month, Third Order members (and whoever else wishes to join them) go to the local Planned Parenthood Center in Keene to offer prayers of reparation for the evil work being performed inside its walls. Not only are birth control pills and devices dispensed at this center, but also the aborti-



Our Third Order Pilgrim Virgin statue, enshrined at a past conference.

* Third Orders, whose members are called "tertiaries," are associations of the faithful established by religious orders. Most M.I.C.M. tertiaries are lay folk.

ficient "morning after" pill. Mothers are given the tools at this facility to kill their pre-born babies.

We have rejuvenated the Circles of Study program by establishing a new website for the Saint Augustine Institute (<http://sai.catholicism.org>). The regular business of the Third Order is also published on the SAI website. The circles will be a natural gateway into the Third Order for those who see the value in cultivating a Catholic culture as a united group.

We would also like our Third Order members to make use of the Center's website, Catholicism.org. Daily news updates, columns, and articles appear on the home page. Inside the site there is a wealth of Catholic information for family use, personal use, and circle use. The Center has put countless hours of work into creating this site. Take advantage of it. It is easy to navigate once you get used to the headings and related topics. It also has a search engine where you can locate any of hundreds of articles published by SBC.

Our team of officers and directors work hard all year for the good of the order and the crusade to convert America. Our board of officers includes Tertiaries: Br. Michael Maria, Mem-

continued on page 14

FROM THE HOusetops MAGAZINE SPECIAL OFFER

For a limited time only, you can receive a set of twenty-five different *Housetops* magazines for the low price of \$50.00. (Offer includes shipping and handling.)

These well-written articles run the gamut from Church history and militant apologetics to hagiography and sound Catholic doctrine. Consider using the *Housetops* packet for a Christmas gift. In fact, for any occasion, such as a wedding or birth-

day, these timeless gems are an excellent way to get others active in spreading the Catholic Faith. So order now, while supplies last, to receive a set of classics that could easily become a family heirloom. This offer will last until April 31, 2009.

To order, call Bob Cohen at our toll-free number, (877) 773-1773, or fill out the reply form on page 15.



FOUNDERS' COLUMN

POETRY FOR SAINT JOSEPH'S FEAST DAY

BY FATHER FEENEY AND BROTHER FRANCIS

In honor of Saint Joseph, whose principle feast day is March 19, we give you two poems by our founders, each dedicated to the Patron of the Universal Church.

NAILS

By Father Feeney

Whenever the bright blue nails would drop
Down on the floor of his carpenter shop,
Saint Joseph, prince of carpenter men,
Would stoop to gather them up again;
For he feared for two little sandals sweet,
And very easy to pierce they were
As they pattered over the lumber there
And rode on two little sacred feet.

But alas, on a hill between earth and heaven
One day — two nails in a Cross were driven,
And fastened it firm to the sacred feet
Where once rode two little sandals sweet;
And Christ and His Mother looked off in death
Afar — to the valley of Nazareth,
Where the carpenter's shop was spread with dust
And the little blue nails, all packed in rust,
Slept in a box on the window-sill;
And Joseph lay sleeping under the hill.

APOSTROPHE TO SAINT JOSEPH

(whose name means "increase")

By Brother Francis

Blessed are you, O Man of Benediction
May the treasures you guard be ever multiplied.
God the Father to you, His Son entrusted,
God the Son, His Mother, the Holy Ghost, His Bride.
Joseph, the keeper of God's house for ever,
May your name be praised, may your fame abide.
You taught the eternal Word our utterance,
Our ways and manners, our human art.
You were in Jesus' mind on the mountain,
For He honored your way, and He blessed your part:
Blessed be Joseph, who is poor in spirit,
Blessed be Joseph, who is clean of heart.
You filled our earth with a fragrance new,
Unknown to our flowers and to our trees.
It is you consecrated virgins cherish
And Christian knights fight to please.
O Prince of valor, Father of chivalry,
May your shadow on Earth increase!



The Slaves of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, shortly after our founding in 1949. Father Feeney is in the second row from the top, slightly to the right of the center, with Brother Francis to the right of him. We celebrated the sixtieth anniversary of our founding January 17, 2009.



Mr. Brian Kelly

THE SEVEN SORROWS OF MARY

When Our Lady appeared to two Catholic girls in Rwanda from 1981-1984, she asked them to warn and exhort the faithful in her name to return to God, do penance, and recognize and confess their sins in order to avert a horrible chastisement to come. Mary also asked the girls to spread devotion to her holy rosary and to her chaplet of

the Seven Sorrows. Her message, which has the approval of the local ordinary, Frederic Rubwejanga, Bishop of Kibungo, went unheeded. The tragedy, which the girls saw in their visions, was horrific. Come April 1994, the country was awash in carnage. The Hutu militia unleashed an inhuman rage on the Tutsi people and moderate Hutus. Eight hundred thousand people died in the one hundred worse days of the slaughter, with the international community doing nothing to intervene. Rwanda is about seventy percent Christian, and over fifty percent Catholic. Most of the victims were Catholic, but so were many of the murderers. It is a horribly tragic episode, having, as a secondary cause, much more to do with ethnicity and the elitism of the ruling Tutsi class than religion. However, priests and nuns were often principal targets of the rampaging Hutus, many of them killed inside their churches, which were also desecrated.

One of the survivors of this genocide was Immaculée Llibagizi, whose book, *Left to Tell*, was reviewed on our website by Eleonore Villarrubia. Immaculée has become an ambassador for Our Lady, promoting pilgrimages to her shrine in Kibungo. The shrine is dedicated to Our Lady of Sorrows. She has also written a book on the apparitions.

What was true for Catholic Rwanda is true for Catholics throughout the whole world. If we do not do penance, as Our Lord told the Jews, “[we] shall all likewise perish.”

At the 2005 synod of bishops, Bishop Rubwejanga spoke about the massacres, about forgiveness, and about hope:

Also, it is a fact that certain persons were killed in our churches . . . [Our] challenges never lack, especially the one of reconciliation, but the vast majority of survivors of the national drama have understood, better than ever, the need for the sacrament of the Eucharist that gathers and seals our ties of broken brotherhood. Among the promising signs, there is the increase in the devotion to Our Lady of Kibungo, whose apparitions have been recognized by the local bishop for the past four years. The central message of these apparitions was conversion while there is still time.

[W]hile there is still time. These words should stir us to heed the warnings of our Blessed Mother. Let us appease her

sorrows by giving her our love and devotion. With her Immaculate Heart she wishes to hold us in the crossing of her arms and in the folds of her mantle, as she assured Blessed Juan Diego.

September 15 is the feast day of Our Lady of Sorrows, but on the Friday before Good Friday, April 3 this year, the Church honors Our Lady’s Seven Sorrows in particular:

- 1) The prophecy of Simeon: “Thy own soul a sword shall pierce.”
- 2) The flight into Egypt
- 3) The losing of the Child Jesus in the temple; Mary’s three days of anguish
- 4) Mary’s meeting Jesus as He carried His Cross to Calvary
- 5) The crucifixion and death of Jesus
- 6) The taking down of Jesus’ body from the Cross and Mary’s receiving it in her arms
- 7) The burial of Jesus

As we move the beads of our rosary through our fingers, let us meditate on these seven sorrows — not as a replacement for the regular fifteen mysteries, but as a special devotion from time to time, especially during the remainder of Lent.

BE ONE OF THE FEW. JOIN OUR BOOK OF THE MONTH CLUB

For \$30 a month we will automatically mail you a book from our rich stock of Catholic classics. Our selections feature timeless gems from the golden eras of Faith, as well as more recent productions by scholarly authors, including: G. K. Chesterton; Hilaire Belloc; Father Denis Fahey; Father Leonard Feeney; Sister Catherine, M.I.C.M.; Brother Francis Maluf, M.I.C.M.; and a host of other great writers. Along with each book, Club members also receive one back issue of *From the Husetops* magazine and an extra copy of the current *Mancipia* newsletter.

Fill out the reply form on page 15 or call our bookkeeper, Russell LaPlume at (877) 773-1773 (toll-free) to join or for more information.

Our Lady requested it when she came to Rwanda. Do you not think that, while the Mother of God suffered these things in

Here was a heart so good that it drew the Son of God to leap from eternity into time so that He could unite Himself with it incarnationally.

her mortal life, she was also offering up, in union with her Son, her interior pain for the salvation of the world? Who can fathom the pain of a heart without sin, immaculate, adorned with the jewels of every virtue in measureless degree? Here was a heart so good that it drew the Son of God to leap from eternity into time so that He could unite Himself with it incarnationally. She was His masterpiece, destined from

all eternity to be the Mother of God.

After reading Sister Marie Thérèse's article "I Can't Mediate," in which she provides such excellent advice from the work of Father John Moffat, perhaps Our Lady's sorrows can be made more present to us.

It was for our salvation that Mary received with sorrow



A Mexican image of the Mother of Sorrows

the prophecy of Simeon. She knew well that the Mother of the Messiah would suffer in union with her Son when she gave God her "fiat" at the Annunciation. Simeon's words only reinforced, more personally for her, what the prophets had foretold of "the Man of Sorrows."

It was for our salvation that Mary and Joseph took the divine Child and fled the wrath of Herod, so shortly after the Baby's birth. Already He was "a sign of contradiction" as Simeon had foretold. Already His Mother felt the first piercing of her Immaculate Heart.

It was for our salvation that Mary and Joseph willingly endured the sorrow of not knowing for three days what had happened to the Child entrusted to them. This was Joseph's greatest sorrow, that the chosen foster-father had failed in his paternal responsibility; understanding his pain, can you imagine the pain of the Mother? "Thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing."

It was for our salvation that Mary ran to meet her Son when she received the news of His apprehension. What sorrow she endured when she could not find a way to get to Him at the Praetorium! What sorrow she felt when she heard the rabble call out for His blood! How she longed to look into His eyes and give Him her support, her blessing even, her strength! She would meet Him on the way to His execution. If she ran ahead of the Cross, she could catch Him as He passed by carrying it. Their eyes meet at last. "O Woman," His gaze seems to say to her, "you know, as no other, that I must be about My Father's business." "My Son," she seems to say to Him, "do whatever He tells Thee."

And so, her Heart would continue to be pierced through again and again, as she sacrificed herself with Him while He was being nailed to the Cross; as He hung on it in agony for three hours; and as He commended His soul to His Father in death. She could still feel the piercing of the lance in her Heart, that Jesus was not able to feel in His own, even as she laid Him in the sepulcher, and, perhaps even more agonizingly, as she walked away. But for the beloved John, Joseph of Arimathea, Nicodemus, and the holy women, how sorrowful and inglorious a funeral was this!

The Queen of Heaven did not need to look back when she heard the men roll the great stone in front of the tomb. Jesus, her Son, was the Resurrection and the Life.

Email Brian Kelly at bdk@catholicism.org.

TO FRIENDS OF THE CRUSADE: OUR LADY OF AMERICA AND THE OBAMA NATION

continued from page 2

state-sponsored attacks on the Church's liberty?

The harassment Joe the Plumber received for simply exposing the candidate's socialism could very well auger something much worse now that the candidate has taken office.

Another consideration is relevant here: one that introduces the doctrine of God's Providence into our considerations. Several American apostles (e.g., Orestes Brownson, Blessed Francis Xavier Seelos) have said that the Church in America will flourish only when it has suffered persecution. We are prosperous and have all the sins of a prosperous people, including spiritual sloth and indifference to supernatural truth. A little suffering, a little hunger, a little taste of the whip, could be just the thing we need to take God's rights and our salvation a bit more seriously.

Now, at last, we come to the prophesies of Our Lady of America. Here is a several-paragraph excerpt describing one apparition. The emphasis is mine.

On the evening of the feast of the Most Holy Rosary, October 7, 1957, Our Lady again appeared. Her hands were clasped in an attitude of prayer. Her look was serious, though her countenance retained its usual deep serenity. Hanging from her right hand was a blue rosary of a glass-like quality. *I was conscious of the fact that what she was about to say to me was not only very grave but of the utmost importance.* Our Lady reiterated in a similar manner her first warnings:

"My beloved daughter, what I am about to tell you concerns in a particular way my children in America. *Unless they do penance by mortification and self-denial and thus reform their lives, God will visit them with punishments hitherto unknown to them.*

"My child, there will be peace, as has been promised, but not until my children are purified and cleansed from defilement, and, clothed thus with the white garment of grace, are made ready to receive this peace, so long promised and so long held back because of the sins of men.

"My dear children, either you will do as I desire and reform your lives, *or God Himself will need to cleanse you in the fires of untold punishment.* You must be prepared to receive His great gift of peace. *If you will not prepare yourselves, God will Himself be forced to do so in His justice and mercy.*

"*Making the rosary a family prayer is very pleasing to me.* I ask that all families strive to do so. But be careful to say it with great devotion, meditating on each mystery and striving to imitate in your daily lives the virtues depicted therein. Live the mysteries of the rosary as I lived them, and it will become a chain binding you to me forever. They who are found in the circle of my rosary will never be lost. I myself will lead them

at death to the throne of my Son, to be eternally united to Him.

"Write these words upon your hearts, my dear children, because of the compassion I have for you in my Immaculate Heart. *Oh, if you knew the punishments I am holding back from you by my pleading and intercession on your behalf!*

"Will you do as I wish at last, my children?"

The cynic may say that every apparition — true and false — speaks of chastisements of some sort, and often in a general way. True, but this apparition is approved by the Church, and is for the Church in America.

Whatever it says pertains not to the Church in general, but to the Church in our Republic. Because of this, we should pay particular attention to its warnings, which speak of "punishments hitherto unknown to" us if we fail to "reform [our] lives." And we — we American Catholics — have failed to reform our lives from the time this message was given

fifty-one years ago. The president, whose term we begin with dread, received 54% of the Catholic vote. More than half of the Catholics of our Republic made themselves accomplices to an Orwellian anti-Christian program.

Some will object that, if so many Catholics are complicit in this attack upon Christian social order, a real persecution of the Church would not seem likely. In response, I would offer the speculation that those who are complicit will suffer from the economic hardships and other calamities visited upon us, but that, in addition, an active persecution will befall all those bishops, priests, and faithful who stand up for Christ the King — however few they may be. I make no pretense of having figured all this out, in the fashion of a slick televangelist, who has the Book of Daniel's end-times chronology neatly schematized. What I do know is the content of the above sober warnings of Our Lady, from an approved apparition. Her words can't even be mistranslated; the revelations were made in English.

But there is hope here, for Our Lady of America also tells us that this suffering will be "purifying," and that it will prepare us to "receive [God's] great gift of peace." Thus, the condition for America's conversion, according to a great nineteenth-century Catholic philosopher and a beatified missionary from the same era, will be realized in what Our Lady has prophesied.

Maybe President Barack Obama is what the Church in this country really needs.

Email Brother André Marie at bam@catholicism.org.

"My child, there will be peace, as has been promised, but not until my children are purified and cleansed from defilement..."

CONVENT CORNER

I CAN'T MEDITATE

continued from page 3

proud she was of her child,” tell me, did you meditate? Did you meditate? You certainly did. You know you did. You couldn't help it. (For you gentlemen, imagine getting well-earned praise from your boss.)

All the rest of the evening you meditated on the lovely compliment that you had been given. You fell asleep relishing its sweetness. When you half-awakened in the night you spontaneously took up the thread and reveled in a few precious moments of blissful meditation. It was the first thought with which you greeted the dawn, and all day long, and every day for a week or more, your meditation went on unwearingly, without effort, intertwining itself into the warp and weft of your daily duties, coloring all with its golden glow of most supreme delight.

And how long were the points of that meditation? There were no “points” and no “preludes,” either; just one single “point,” quite undeveloped, not more than a dozen words long. Yet those few words were plenty and more than sufficient, for hours and days of delightful, effortless meditation. With what relish you savored, over and over again, each single phrase Mother had spoken: “utterly wonderful” ... “most beautiful she had ever heard” — and Mother had heard so many wonderful things in her life; how proud she was of you — no doubt she would tell her friends all about it. With that delight you recalled even the look on her face, harkened again and again to the tone of her voice and its every inflection as she gave you that “point” of your meditation! Yes, and was that not a fruitful meditation? Were you not “walking on air” for days on end with the joy of it all? And did it not spur you on to outdo yourself in the future as opportunity offered?

Yet — yet you say that you cannot meditate! Listen, my friend. Are you willing to admit that, while a simple compliment a dozen words long is sufficient to hold you under its spell in hours of ecstatic joy, you find nothing to hold your attention, nothing to touch your heart, to arouse your affections and resolutions, in all the precious, blessed things your Lord has said to you: “I have loved you with an everlasting love”... “As the Father has loved me, so do I love you”... “I call you not servants now, but friends”... “I go to prepare a place for you so

that where I am you also may be”... . “My delight is to be with the children of men”... “come to me and I will refresh you” — and dozens more?

Is it possible that, though the thought of a trifling act of kindness on the part of a creature holds you enraptured in its embrace and carries you off on the wings of undisturbed contemplation, you find no response in your mind or heart at the thought of the infinite deeds of kindness the Master has done for you as His way of saying, “I love you”? Christ, for love of you, a Babe on the straw in a cattle shed! Christ publicly whipped in your stead! Christ dying in agony that you might live! Christ, for you, a prisoner under lock and key in His narrow tabernacle cell! Christ nourishing your soul with His Flesh and Blood! Yet you cannot meditate?

Listen, my friend. Go to your room and blush for shame — and meditate.

Email Sister Marie Thérèse at convent@catholicism.org.

Are you willing to admit that you find nothing to hold your attention, to touch your heart, to arouse your affections, in all the precious things your Lord has said to you?



IHM School students meditating during the noon decade of the Rosary. This picture is six years old.

SPECIAL FEATURE

THE FORBIDDEN TREE BY RUSSELL LAPLUME

I find it peculiar, as I grow older and try to prepare for the heavenly country, to reminisce more and more about my youth. I can certainly apply the words of the author, “they were the best of times; they were the worst of times,” to that of my passage from youth to adolescence. And now, after having embraced the traditional Faith, which I had regrettably abandoned in my young adulthood, I can look back to see just how that abandonment came about.

I was born in 1950 to loving parents of French Canadian descent in Lawrence, Massachusetts, a large mill town filled with every ethnic variety known to man. My parents bore thirteen children, I being number eleven in the clan, and nurtured us all with great earnest in the Catholic Faith. I was sent to the same Catholic school that my siblings had attended before me, which really was a disadvantage, because, by this time, the nuns had learned all they needed to know, in expectation of what I had to offer, from observing the habits of my older brothers. And I did not disappoint them. I was impish and, several times, the nuns had to restrain me by tying me to my desk. Those knots — I don’t know how they looped them — would have defied the efforts of any sailor to loosen.

I can still remember the interior of that school, Sacred Heart by name, with its cavernous classrooms, shoe-stomping stairs, and basement lavatories which, being always poorly lit, were dungeon-like and a great inducement to stay put in the classroom regardless of your needs. And the nuns — oh, how I loved the nuns! They also were from Canada, the Sisters of St. Joseph I believe, and farm girls to the core. It was not uncommon to see them (and Sr. Paul Rita comes readily to mind quite personally) roll up their sleeves and deliver a nasty haymaker to the miscreant: another great inducement to stay out of mischief (or at least not get caught).

I really cannot understand when former Catholics, being asked why they left the Church, almost always bring up some episode with a certain sister, blaming her for their departure. They forget the sisters’ patient tolerance of our unruliness, the endless hours they spent in teaching numbskulls the three “R’s” (and they were reading, ‘riting, and religion, I’ll have you know), and the sharing of their intimate faith to mostly distracted students. It was under their tutorship that dirty little boys became civilized altar boys, and giggly little girls learned the rudiments of becoming young ladies. And I’ll never forget the oak tree that stood

exactly in the middle of our recess yard. In retrospect it reminds me of the forbidden tree in Paradise, for it was the great dividing line between girls and boys, always patrolled by clapper-wielding sisters ready to stretch the ear of any student whose shadow even crossed that line. And that brings me to the gist of this story.

Our classrooms, from grades one through eight, were arranged so that the boys and girls sat separated. There were three rows each for the boys and the girls, with a double space between the two. To walk down that double aisle without permission from the sister was tantamount to invading a cloister. Lavatory times were also regulated so that the girls went first, then the boys after. I can remember many times when the boys looked squeamish because the girls were

running later than usual. “Ladies first” did not make much of an impression to us young boys. The cafeteria was separated also — we all took our lunch at the same time — but after we finished, we boys had to walk through the girls’ recess side to get to our side. Upon leaving the cafeteria, we encountered a line of nuns creating a corridor for safe passage to the boys’ side. At first I thought it was some sort of quality control, because the nuns would stop certain boys and wipe the remainder of



Sister Catherine Francis Soulier, one of the Sisters of Saint Joseph.

their lunch off their chins or uniforms. Much later I realized its true purpose: that of keeping the boys and girls separated. All of these means were employed when we were young and innocent. The “why” is obvious, is it not? It was to impress upon us the biological fact that boys and girls are truly different, and always shall be, in body and temperament. And

I think there is a more insidious side, where we think that we are good Catholics because we attend Mass once a week, say the family Rosary, oppose abortion, and, therefore, all is covered in our spiritual life.

it was to remind us later that contact with the opposite sex should always be guarded and, unless married, should always be chaperoned.

That figurative oak tree should have stamped forever in my mind the need to separate the sexes and observe that no transgressions should ever occur. As devout as my parents were, for some reason they let us children roam the streets at will. There was minimal diligence in who we played with, or where we were, as long as we were back home before the streetlight in front of our house went on (in later years we figured out how to rig the light to not come

on by removing the plate covering the electrical wires, making the connections just loose enough so that with a sharp rap to the pole, the lights would come off and on at will). It all seemed so innocent as children to have someone of the opposite sex as a playmate, but everybody grows up and that familiarity breeds problems. Sooner or later the game of tag takes on a whole new meaning. This pest of allowing children of both sexes to play or socialize together unchaperoned has grown over the past two generations into a moral crisis, even in Catholic families who should know better.

I will always remember the film, “The Quiet Man,” with John Wayne and Maureen O’Hara. The film concluded with two courting adults riding in the back of a horse-drawn cart that was being driven by their chaperone. You see, even at their advanced age, courting meant being chaperoned. Courting without supervision is properly called dating and, for the safety of our children, should not be tolerated. Not employing this discipline in my own family resulted in several out-of-wedlock childbirths; but thank God we had given them enough of the Faith to repent of their sins and become good, Catholic parents. The sins of the father are visited on the children sometimes, for this blight of the age had happened to me.

In Pius XI’s encyclical, *The Christian Education of Youth*, he states that those who would not oppose the separation of the sexes, especially in sports, were guilty of denying origi-

nal sin. The heresy of Americanism is mostly viewed in its spiritual sense; that is, the indifference in regards to other religions. But I think there is a more insidious side to this heresy – that of the discipline side – where we think that we are good Catholics because we attend Mass once a week, maybe say the family Rosary, and oppose abortion, and, therefore, all is covered in our spiritual life. We must remember the social side of Americanism – the side that constantly assaults our children with social activities that co-mingle the sexes. It is a battle for parents – a mighty battle – to keep their children undefiled in this world. We must monitor their activities constantly without letting them lose heart. Satan is seeking an opening to devour them, and if we keep in mind Our Lady’s words at Fatima that more souls go to hell because of the sins of the flesh than for any other reason, our untiring effort in keeping them pure will be rewarded. We need to keep the apple tree of Paradise in our minds and an oak tree in our children’s playing fields.

Email Russell LaPlume at rlp@catholicism.org.



A skit performed at the Saint Patrick’s Day program at the Center.



Br. Louis Marie presenting a merit badge to one of our Boy Scouts.

LOCAL NEWS:



Mr. Rick McCann

FROM MORMON TO CATHOLIC

I'm sure most conversion stories start off cheerful and upbeat. However, the conversion which you are going to read about is not such a story. This is an account where Catholicism and an everyday not-so-mild-mannered citizen stand toe to toe for a good old-fashioned brawl. Hopefully, you can take comfort in knowing

the fact that she did indeed become a Catholic — not unlike a lobster or a steak dinner, grand and glorious only after the chef had his way. Much like God the Father, I suppose, tenderizing or boiling our stubborn will out of us, until He can season it with His supernatural grace.

Christie's story begins in the valley of Utah surrounded by mountains thirteen thousand feet high. Her father, Dick Hepworth, was married to her mother, Mary Patricia. It's fair to say that living in Utah pretty much made her Mormon by association. She went to Sunday school and went through all the motions, but had no serious convictions in her beliefs. Her parents believed in God enough to ask for His help in raising their daughter, Christina Marie. She was a normal child, interested in the things that most children are, such as the insatiable curiosity of what it would be like to stick your hand in a lawn mower, while it was running, of course. Thanks to quick thinking on the parents' behalf, a blood transfusion, and many hours of surgery, you can barely see the scars. A year later, after falling out of a camper during their annual family vacation, she had to be airlifted to a hospital to save her life.

Not too many years passed when Christie's parents divorced. Fast forward through years of dance, gymnastics, cheerleading, boyfriends, slumber parties, and other activities common for teenage girls, and she finds herself a graduate from school, but not sure what to do with her life, so she flies to Europe to get a taste of the European experience. Christie stayed there for the next two years and survived by dressing in a clown suit and selling balloon animals on the street. When people found out she was Mormon they would mock her religion and ask her how many wives the men were allowed these days. Ironically, she came back more grounded in her Mormonism than when she left, and this is where her conversion story begins.

Working at a five-star, fine dining establishment (Denny's) she had the misfortune to meet an

extremely handsome mountain man from Maine. In a short matter of time these two found themselves outside the walls of work enjoying each other's company. The man from Maine, who had captured her attention, unbeknownst to her, was on the hunt for a bride. I believe it was during the first date that I told her what I was all about. I explained, not holding back at all, that my wife was to be Catholic, have lots of children, and resign herself to God's will. At that moment she knew that she was not the one I was looking for. I'm not sure why there was another date after that — it could have been my muscular physique, my radiant blue eyes, or perhaps it was my fake Boston accent.

Whatever the case, two dates soon became four, and four turned into eight. It was not too long before we fell in love.



Rick and Christie McCann with their young and growing family.

Working at a five-star, fine dining establishment (Denny's), she had the misfortune to meet an extremely handsome mountain man from Maine.

It was a well-reserved courtship however, because she knew ultimately how I stood religiously — and I wasn't even practicing at the time. When it came right to it we both tried not to love each other. She had no interest in being Catholic, and I was tired of not being a good, practicing Catholic. Due to my own weakness I could not stay away from Christie. She was strong-willed, and firm in personality, and I was sure that if I could con-

vert her she would make an awesome Catholic. The more I try to recall the moment of her conversion, the more I have come to realize that it just didn't happen overnight. We had all-night conversations about the Faith, complimented with coffee, cigarettes, and raw emotion. I am sure these talks helped, although I don't think they were enough. No, I think my wife's conversion was ultimately due to three major influences.

Immaculate Heart of Mary School needs your help!

Support traditional Catholic education! Immaculate Heart of Mary School needs your help to provide an affordable education that will enable our students to reach their full potential: mentally, physically, and spiritually.

Our dedicated sisters take no salary and, with only a few lay teachers, our expenses are kept to a minimum. Our total costs, however, aren't completely covered by tuition.

We are looking for *Patrons of IHM*: individuals, families, or businesses that would help with contributions (which could be given monthly or in a few larger installments).

Will you help us? All *Patrons* receive: 1) a framed, autographed picture of the students and faculty of Immaculate Heart of Mary School; 2) the school paper, *The Queen's Quarterly*; 3) a remembrance in certain special daily prayers; and 4) our eternal gratitude!

Fill out the reply form on page 15 or call Sister Maria Philomena at (603) 239-6495 to sign up or for more information.

The first would be my mother. She raised me to be a good Catholic, having instilled in me the fear of God. I knew that, with her, marrying a non-Catholic was not going to be an option. As Christie grew more interested, my mother began giving her catechism lessons over the phone; she sent her Catholic books, a Catholic bible, tapes, movies, pamphlets, letters, green scapulars, medals, holy water, all the things about the one true religion that could be sent in the mail. And she prayed.

The second source would be my wife herself. She could think logically in spite of the emotional side effects. In short, she had good will and she cooperated with God's grace. Christie put on her scapular on Sept. 11, 2001, after the Twin Tower attack. I called her from work that day and asked this favor of her, just in case there were worse attacks to come.

Thirdly, and I am sure it comes as no surprise, there was our most holy mother Mary, who, either through the scapular, through the Rosaries being said daily, or simply through an uncountable number of ways in which Mary dispensed her graces, the seed took root in Christie. I would like to publicly and in writing say to our Holy Queen: "Thank you."

In April 2002, we traveled to Maine to meet and see my family. My wife attended her second Mass that trip and that is when she was baptized and received her first Holy Communion. Three days afterwards, we received the sacrament of Matrimony. Later, when we returned to Utah, Christie's mother fell ill. She was in intensive care for three weeks. Hearing of Christie's conversion, she requested that we have one of those Catholic Masses said for her. That evening she fell into a coma. She was conditionally baptized and passed away wearing the brown scapular.

My wife and I are the recipients of God's abounding generosity. We are the proud parents of six strapping young lads: Tavin James, Sean Patrick, Tristan Matthew, Brendan Timothy, Joseph Shay, Killian Vincent and another one on the way. I am blessed and proud to say we all recite the rosary together daily as a family and, of course, we all wear Our Lady of Mount Carmel's brown scapular.

This is the brief story of my wife's conversion to the one true Faith.

I am blessed and proud to say we all recite the Rosary together daily as a family and, of course, we all wear Our Lady of Mount Carmel's brown scapular.

Email Rick McCann at [micman@marysimmaculatecleaning.com](mailto:mican@marysimmaculatecleaning.com).

THE THIRD ORDER HAS BEEN HARD AT WORK!

continued from page 4

bership Director; Br. Joseph Mary, Local Director; Br. John the Baptist, Financial Secretary; Br. Joseph Mary, Treasurer; Br. Louis Marie, Recorder; and Br. Lawrence Mary, Mentoring Director.

As prefect, my hope is to see every tertiary in a Circle of Studies, even if they have already received their diploma. Veteran graduates of SAI can greatly enhance the quality of circle meetings.

Join the Team! Be a Queen's Tributor

Just as a family has to budget its monthly income in order to pay the bills, so do the Slaves of the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

The advantages of giving monthly are many:

1. It is a commitment; although voluntary, it is still more likely to be met than not.
2. It helps the religious economize more prudently and, at the same time, more magnanimously.
3. It can be less stressful on most benefactors because giving less, more often, is easier than giving more once a year.
4. It helps young benefactors, those just beginning to practice their obligation to support the Church, to budget accordingly.

Queen's Tribute donors receive all our mailings. More importantly, every month the traditional Latin Mass is offered for all our benefactors.

Fill out the reply form on page 15 or call our bookkeeper, Russell LaPlume, at (877) 773-1773 [toll-free], to join or for more information.

Building Lots for Sale

Two wooded building lots on a quiet lane off Route 119 in Richmond. The lots are about 1.5 miles from the Center.

Contact Jim or Betty Buzzell at
(603) 239-7004

During this year I hope to speak directly with as many Third Order members as I can contact. It would be wonderful for those tertiaries who live anywhere near the monastery to make an annual visit to Saint Benedict Center here in Richmond.

What else can we do to please Our Lord? Remember, February was the month of the Holy Passion of Our Lord. Dedicate yourself to making a good Lent. March is the Month of Saint Joseph. We ought not to forget the greatest of all saints after the Blessed Mother. The foster-father of Our Lord is venerated by the Church with the cultus of *protodulia*, first among the saints. Our Lady is actually venerated on a plane all her own, with the worship of *hyperdulia*, beyond all angels and saints. The veneration given to God in Three Persons is that of adoration, or *latria*, which is divine worship. Br. André Marie, our prior, has a beautiful entry on his Theology Blog on Saint Joseph, the Holy Patriarch of Nazareth, the Patron and Protector of Holy Mother Church. To read this wonderful article go to <http://brotherandre.stblogs.com>. The Litany of St. Joseph is also on that web page.

Please remember, my brothers and sisters, as tertiaries we are part of an order. (Anyone interested in joining the Third Order should contact our Membership Director at thirdorder@catholicism.org.) It's a very special order. Being a member should result in firm commitment, obedience, and loyalty, in addition to single-mindedness, constancy, and perseverance in pursuit of the goals of our crusade. Being a member signifies one's willingness to work as part of a team toward the team's common goals. In unity there is strength.

Being part of an order, it is hoped, will insure the personal sanctification and devotion to Our Lady that were a part of your Consecration.¹ Even though we are active laymen and women, as Third Order members, we should strive to cultivate a taste for the contemplative spirit. This is the counsel of the saints for all the faithful. Prayer and meditation are necessary for all members of the Church Militant.

Our crusade also needs people motivated to be active evangelizers and docile enough to commit to a period of training and study. A nation cannot be converted on zeal alone, without knowledge. Ours is a special formation, and Brother Francis, although no longer actively teaching, is our exemplar. Listening to his recorded talks on tape or CD is the most excellent way to learn the language and the art of evangelization. You will not find a better teacher anywhere. Isn't it time for you to join this crusade?

Email Brother John Marie Vianney at toprefect@catholicism.org.

¹ Anyone can make his Consecration to Our Lord through Our Lady. You do not have to join the Third Order to do that, but making your Consecration is a prerequisite to becoming a tertiary in our order.



Join The Saint Augustine Institute

The Saint Augustine Institute (SAI) was established by Br. Francis as the primary method for creating and promoting the particular "school of thought" that will assist our Crusade. SAI is a program of study leading to a diploma. Its syllabus has nine prayers, twelve memory items, and twenty-four books to read. Each SAI student submits a brief book report on each of the twenty-four books before the diploma is awarded.

The course of instruction is basically the same as that which had been offered in the early days of the St. Benedict Center in Cambridge. The instructors are the popes, the councils, the saints, the Fathers and Doctors of the Church, and, most especially, Holy Scripture and Catholic Tradition. By learning from these unchangeable foundational sources, we

continue to keep our eyes fixed on the narrow path to salvation, no matter how distorted and distracting the world around us becomes, and no matter what is taught by self-proclaimed "experts" — wolves in sheep's clothing.

Visit sai.catholicism.org or send an email to Bob Carbone at toprefect@catholicism.org for more information or to join.



Detach and return in enclosed reply envelope or mail to Saint Benedict Center, PO Box 627, Richmond, NH 03470

Reply Form

(please check appropriate lines)

I wish to join:

IHM Patron \$ ___ per month

Queen's Tribute \$ ___ per month

Book of the Month Club \$30 per month ___

(Please see the ad on page 6 or call

(877) 773-1773 for more information.)

I wish to donate:

General donation \$ ___

I wish to purchase:

From *The Houstops* Special

Qty. of sets ___ @ \$50 per set

Questions? Call Russell at

(877) 773-1773

Please print:

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Phone () _____ Best time to call _____

() _____ Best time to call _____

E-mail _____

Check your payment choice:

Check enclosed \$ _____ Make checks payable to "Saint Benedict Center."

Charge my credit card one time \$ _____

Charge my credit card monthly for \$ _____

Visa MasterCard Discover AMEX

Card Number _____

Exp. Date _____ Signature _____

EXTRA ECCLESIAM NULLA SALUS

Ex Cathedra: “There is but one universal Church of the faithful, outside which no one at all is saved.” (Pope Innocent III, Fourth Lateran Council, 1215.)

Ex Cathedra: “We declare, say, define, and pronounce that it is absolutely necessary for the salvation of every human creature to be subject to the Roman Pontiff” (Pope Boniface VIII, the Bull *Unam Sanctam*, 1302.)

Ex Cathedra: “The most Holy Roman Church firmly believes, professes, and preaches that none of those existing outside the Catholic Church, not only pagans, but also Jews and heretics and schismatics, can have a share in life eternal; but that they will go into the eternal fire which was prepared for the devil and his angels, unless before death they are joined with Her; and that so important is the unity of this ecclesiastical body that only those remaining within this unity can profit by the sacraments of the Church unto salvation, and they alone can receive an eternal recompense for their fasts, their almsgivings, their other works of Christian piety and the duties of a Christian soldier. No one, let his almsgiving be as great as it may, no one, even if he pour out his blood for the Name of Christ, can be saved, unless he remain within the bosom and the unity of the Catholic Church.” (Pope Eugene IV, the Bull *Cantate Domino*, 1441.)

CALENDAR NOTES:

- The Novena to the Holy Ghost begins on May 22. Please contact us if you would like the prayers sent to you (our mailing information is to the right).
- Join us for the Blueberry Fiddle Festival. It will be held at the Cheshire Fairgrounds in Swanzey, NH, on August 7 and 8, 2009. See the ad on page 3 or visit www.blueberryfiddlefestival.com for details.

OUR CRUSADE:

The propagation and defense of Catholic dogma — especially *extra ecclesiam nulla salus* — and the conversion of America to the one, true Church.

For more information:

Our congregation website:
www.catholicism.org

Our bookstore website:
www.store.catholicism.org

And our conference website:
www.SbcConference.com

Slaves of the
Immaculate Heart of Mary
Saint Benedict Center
Post Office Box 627
Richmond, NH 03470

info@catholicism.org
(603) 239-6485

Help us map out the Arizona– California Catholic America Tour

The February-March Catholic America Tour (CAT) is now finished. Brothers Maximilian Maria and André Marie arrived safely at the priory on the afternoon of March 12 — after a very successful 15-talk tour. We thank all those whose generosity and zeal helped make this trip possible, and all those who came to the talks!

Plans are already in the works for a venture into the land of Padre Kino and Fray Junipero Serra: Arizona and California.

We are looking for local sponsors to make the Arizona–California CAT possible. Interested in sponsoring a talk in your area, or have a question? Please e-mail Russell LaPlume (rlp@catholicism.org) or call him at (603) 239-6485.



Visiting after the CAT presentation in Orlando, Florida.