



S S P X



The Angelus

“Instaurare omnia in Christo”

Fortitude

Heroism in Literature

Building Strength

True Fathers as We Need Them

Letter from the Publisher

Dear readers,

“O God, who dost manifest Thy almighty power chiefly in showing mercy and pity...” The collect of the 10th Sunday after Pentecost so reveals the essential quality of divine fortitude. By excellence—and more than in other aspects of creation—God shows His Fortitude by endowing His creature with freedom and telling them them: “Increase and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it” (Gen. 1:27). Adam and Eve and all their children could be faithful to the Lord, but they could also revolt against Him. God, because of “His almighty power,” allows Himself to expose His work, and His honor, to the danger of their freedom.

After men had initially refused to obey God and had stood up against His strength, God took a second risk. He decided to send His Son. Humanly speaking, how much fortitude must it have taken for Christ to step into this world, into all the falsehood, the brutal cruelty, and the disgraceful narrowness of our existence? Christ was not blindsided by naive daydreams, nor biased by the pride of modern man, nor tempted by the tactics of politicians. On the contrary, He came into the world, not to repay guile with guile or blow with blow. He came in the vulnerability of selfless and unprotected perfection.

Let us compare His fortitude with our weaknesses. Jesus faced all the situations of His life courageously. He accepted a simple and unspectacular duty of state, along the violence and crookedness that men inflicted upon Him. We, however, shield ourselves by all manner of means. Christ accepted what the progression of events brought upon Him, for this was the will of the Father. We do not accept the world as it is, but tend choose what pleases us and to refuse what displeases. We know how to conform in the face of contradiction, how to go around difficulties, how to catch our advantages, and how to find the easy way.

May the contributions in this issue of *The Angelus* enlighten us on the virtue of Fortitude and instill in us the noble wish to follow His example. He was strong and became man, not to please Himself, not to accomplish something simply spectacular, not to find temporary fulfillment in a noble cause, but for our redemption and for our sake. He manifested his selfless, humble, and patient fortitude, that we might gain the courage to be real Christians.

Fr. Jürgen Wegner
Publisher

September - October 2016
Volume XXXIX, Number 5

Publisher
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Subscription Rates

	1 year	2 years	3 years
U.S.	\$45.00	\$85.00	\$120.00
Foreign Countries (inc. Canada and Mexico)	\$65.00	\$125.00	\$180.00

All payments must be in U.S. funds only.

Online subscriptions: \$20.00/year. To subscribe visit:
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The Angelus

“Instaurare omnia in Christo”

The Angelus (ISSN 10735003) is published bi-monthly
under the patronage of St. Pius X and Mary,
Queen of Angels. Publication office is located at
PO Box 217, St. Marys, KS 66536.
PH (816) 753-3150; FAX (816) 753-3557.

Periodicals Postage Rates paid at Kansas City, MO.
Manuscripts and letters to the editor are welcome
and will be used at the discretion of the editors.
The authors of the articles presented here are solely
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Postmaster sends address changes to the address above.

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PRIESTLY SOCIETY OF SAINT PIUS X FOR THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA

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Esto vir!

Fortitude at the school of Archbishop Lefebvre

by Bishop Tissier de Mallerai, SSPX

After giving a definition of fortitude and showing in what discipline consists, I shall touch on the role of education, according to Archbishop Lefebvre, in the acquisition of these virtues; I shall then consider the defects that go against and the virtues connected to fortitude and discipline. This will give us some practical directives, after the model of an exemplary man.

Definitions of Fortitude

Discipline is self-control, the interior order of the soul and of the body, which is the source of the exterior order of things and men. It is the fruit both of the gift of wisdom (ordering is proper to the wise) and of the gift of fortitude (“I am master of myself as of the universe,” are the words

which dramatist Corneille puts in the mouth of the Emperor Augustus). Fortitude, or courage, is one of the four cardinal virtues; it is assisted by the gift of fortitude, one of the seven gifts of the Holy Ghost; their object is to dominate fear in order to accomplish the difficult good, be it in the temporal order, like a major work, a military victory, or in the spiritual order, like sanctity and eternal salvation.

Role of education and school in the acquisition of these virtues

These virtues and gifts of the Holy Ghost must be put into practice from early childhood, at home or at school, if they are to be acquired in a stable way.



The Maréchal Foch, supreme commander of the Allied Forces during World War I, sees in a young man's relentless work the source of his self-control and self-assurance, especially in the military art that is his and that he himself acquired in middle school in Metz.

"Do not believe in natural gifts!—Believe in hard work!" he exclaimed to his student-officers. It is hard work that procures knowledge, the knowledge that constitutes the dignity of the professional and his ability. It is his knowledge, acquired through relentless practice, that gives him the self-assurance that enables him to make decisions without constantly having to ask for

advice!" And this self-assurance establishes the exercise of his ability to decide against all odds. It is what makes us trust him.

The pious Fr. Cappello, a famous Italian canon lawyer, whose confessional in San Ignacio was besieged by penitents, was also remarkable for the sureness of his knowledge and the broadness of his practical advice.

The knowledge acquired by Foch was what gave him his ability to react immediately in the dark days of the violent enemy attacks in the spring of 1918: he knew not to panic or lose his head but rather to move entire army corps rapidly to fill in the gaps and successfully >



Heroism in Literature

A Warrior, a Sister, and an Archbishop:
Some Literary Examples of Heroism

by Andrew J. Clarendon

¹ St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, IIa-IIae, Q. 123, Art. 4. All quotations from the *Summa* are taken from the complete English edition in five volumes, trans. the Fathers of the English Dominican Province (Allen, TX: Christian Classics, 1981).

The hero is universally admired, a figure present in differing cultures and throughout time. From semi-divine classical heroes such as Achilles and a host of characters from novels and films to the supreme example of Catholic martyrs of the past and present, the hero is a great archetype that deeply resonates within human nature. Traditionally and even etymologically, the hero is a protector, one who often possesses physical prowess; but even if the person lacks the strength of Hercules, all real heroes have a strength of will that is proved in some mighty struggle. Whether male or female, from whatever culture, a mark of the heroic is the possession of the virtue of fortitude. The perennial philosophical understanding of this virtue makes this clear: St. Thomas Aquinas, for example, teaches that fortitude is, in its strictest sense, “the virtue that binds the will firmly to the good of reason in [the] face . . . [of] the fear of dangers of death.”¹ The most complete heroes are therefore those who not only have a strength of will beyond the natural desire to preserve one’s life, but also have great hearts that cling to the good regardless of the circumstances. Myths, legends, and other stories of literature have long presented this idea in a connatural manner; the characters and events change, but continuously present, binding together



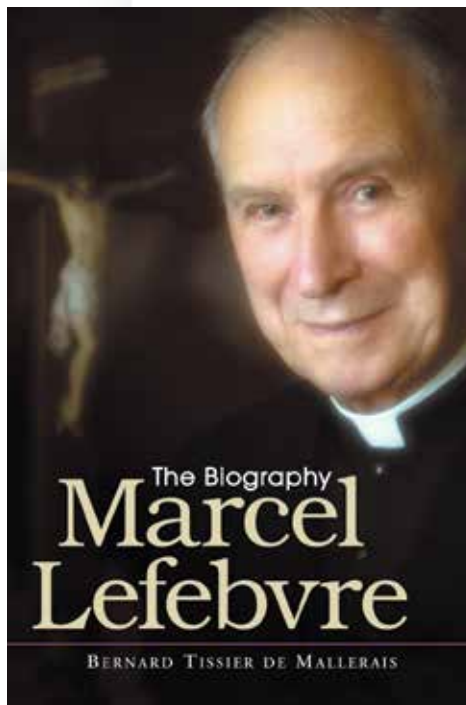
Scene from the murder of Saint Thomas Becket, Illuminated page from manuscript on the life of the saint written by John of Salisbury, French School.



¹⁰ Glenn, 266.

pains of deadly persecution.”¹⁰ Eliot therefore not only has the archbishop interact with the people and priests of Canterbury, but also includes a long section in which Thomas is tormented by four temptations before he faces his murderers. The first three temptations involve ways to avoid martyrdom: to make peace by going back to the good times he enjoyed before becoming archbishop, to join with the king, or to try to overthrow the king. When these fail, the enemy seeks to pollute the future saint’s intention by tempting him to seek martyrdom for his own glory, not for the love of Christ. Finally, Thomas overcomes the temptation and is ready to bravely face whatever Providence presents: >

Marcel Lefebvre: The Biography



This comprehensive work by Bishop Tissier de Mallerais is an insightful look at the life of one of the most influential bishops in the 20th Century and in the history of the Church. Here is a life that cannot be overlooked. The biography takes us through his early childhood in a deeply Catholic family in France, through his days in the French Seminary in Rome. From there it carries us to his missionary days in Africa, and his meteoric rise through the Church's ranks, including his role as Superior General of the Holy Ghost Fathers. Finally, much attention is given to the most profound and important chapter in his life: the founding and direction of the Society of St. Pius X. A true gem for anyone interested in this Athanasius of our time, and indispensable for anyone studying the history of the Catholic Church.

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Building Strength

by Fr. Michael McMahon, SSPX

Angelus Press: Fr McMahon, having been in charge of a boys boarding school for over a decade, you seem to be the right person to speak of the virtue of fortitude, would you agree?

Fr. McMahon: After 20 years of priesthood, the majority of which being spent teaching high school boys, the great virtue of fortitude has been absolutely necessary. Every parent, priest and educator knows well the need to be strong when forming children, especially when helping boys become Catholic gentlemen. Just getting out of bed sometimes to face the trials of the day—and 90 teenage boys—can require heroic fortitude!

Angelus Press: Would you distinguish between fortitude, courage, and discipline?

Fr. McMahon: That is an excellent question as it permits us to be Thomistic and define

and distinguish. Fortitude enables a person to withstand difficulties, even great ones that might prevent him from attaining his goal. The infused virtue of fortitude, the cardinal virtue, is a supernatural habit which allows a man to overcome all obstacles and difficulties to attain his true and ultimate goal, Heaven. Being a fundamental virtue, it is meant to support and help the other virtues to attain their ends and overcome that which might hinder or deter them. While not the greatest of the virtues it is critical and necessary...both for teacher and student. Saint Thomas says that there are two principal acts of fortitude: to attack (*aggredi*) and to endure (*sustinere*).

Courage is the common appellation of fortitude. It means the strength of character and firmness in the face of danger or difficulties. To



True Fathers as We Need Them

by Fr. Hervé de la Tour, SSPX

The need at the present hour is to form men of character who will be the real spiritual leaders of their families. Unfortunately, liberalism has infected our minds to such a degree that even among traditional Catholics true men become rare. It will be our purpose in this article to give you some helpful advice on one of the most serious problems in the modern world—the absence of true fathers—by having recourse to the robust doctrine of St. Thomas Aquinas as contained in the *Summa Theologica*. By providing the substance of the luminous principles of the Angelic Doctor in simple language, we hope that all can profit from his wisdom.

We will find most of the elements we need in St. Thomas' study of the virtue of fortitude, which is often rendered as "courage" in modern English.

One possible Latin word for fortitude is "*virtus*" (which also means virtue). The root of this word is "*vir*," which means "man." And so you see that manhood is linked with courage. In order to have true fathers we need to have true men; and true men are strong men. But what exactly is strength?

St. Thomas explains that fortitude is a moral virtue concerned with danger. Man comes across many threatening evils during his existence, and so he must face them in a reasonable manner by controlling his fear. Courage enables man to handle difficulties and obstacles. There will be two acts flowing from this virtue: attack and defense. Fortitude will therefore be divided into magnanimity, which can be rendered into modern English by the words "greatness of soul" (*magna anima*) and perseverance. Magnanimity



Feast of the Holy Cross

by Fr. Christopher Danel

The month of September brings not only the autumnal ember days, but several feasts of great historical significance, and at the very center of the month there is the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, so important to both East and West.

There have historically been two feasts of the Holy Cross. The Finding of the Holy Cross was celebrated on May 3 in more recent times, while the Exaltation of the Holy Cross was celebrated on September 14. The two are closely connected, of course, not only by their object, but even by their date. In fact, the actual event of the Finding of the Holy Cross is unanimously accepted as having occurred on September 14, hence the date of the feast which would later be called the Exaltation of the Holy Cross. The feast in May has a later Gallican origin. In 1741, Pope Benedict

XIV's commission for the reform of the Roman Breviary suggested suppressing the May feast in favor of the more ancient Feast of the Exaltation in September. The suggestion was tabled for a couple of centuries until the calendar revision of 1960, which was incorporated into the 1962 Missal. As a result, the Exaltation of the Holy Cross has special importance on the universal calendar, while the May feast of the Finding is nevertheless provided in the Missal's appendices and may be celebrated as the rubrics allow.

The Finding of the Holy Cross

While the date of the Finding of the Holy Cross is settled as September 14, the year is less certain. The Alexandrian Chronicle ascribes >



Relic of the Holy Cross, Museum of Notre Dame Cathedral, Paris

Jerusalem on these days from all provinces in the spirit of faith and on account of the feast day. Though fewer in number, there are still more than forty or fifty bishops in Jerusalem during these days, and with them come many of their clergy. What can I add? Everyone considers that he has fallen into great sin if he is not present on days of such solemnity, unless there be conflicting obligations, such as would keep a man from fulfilling a good intention. During the Feast of the Dedication, the decoration of all the churches is similar to that at Easter and at Epiphany” (trans. G. Gingras).

The Cross' Capture and Return

Three centuries later, the Holy Cross endured capture from Jerusalem and a miraculous return. Around AD 614 Chosroes II of Persia sacked Jerusalem, massacred many thousands of Christians, and carried off with him the True

Cross, which remained captive in Persia for fourteen years. Finally the Byzantine Emperor Heraclius was able to secure its return with supernatural means; by applying himself to prayer and fasting he obtained the assistance of God, who inspired him to raise an army to rout the Persians, which he did. On bringing the Cross back to Jerusalem in great pomp and splendor, Heraclius carried the Cross on his own shoulders toward Calvary. However, the Emperor clad in golden and jewel-adorned vestments found that he was unable to advance beyond the gate at Calvary no matter how hard he tried, to the astonishment of all the people. The Bishop of Jerusalem, Zacharias, admonished him rather to lay aside his royal garments and gird himself in poverty and humility. Heraclius thus put on course garments and walking barefoot found that he was easily able to progress up Calvary to restore the Holy Cross to the place of the Crucifixion. This occurred providentially on September 14, the day of the Holy Cross' feast. >



Decline in Fortitude and Direction

Extracts from Alexander Solzhenitsyn's Commencement Address at Harvard, 1978

Leaders without Courage

If I were today addressing an audience in my country, in my examination of the overall pattern of the world's rifts I would have concentrated on the calamities of the East. But since my forced exile in the West has now lasted four years and since my audience is a Western one, I think it may be of greater interest to concentrate on certain aspects of the contemporary West, such as I see them.

A decline in courage may be the most striking feature that an outside observer notices in the West today. The Western world has lost its civic courage, both as a whole and separately, in each country, in each government, in each political party, and, of course, in the United Nations. Such a decline in courage is particularly noticeable

among the ruling and intellectual elites, causing an impression of a loss of courage by the entire society. There are many courageous individuals, but they have no determining influence on public life.

Political and intellectual functionaries exhibit this depression, passivity, and perplexity in their actions and in their statements, and even more so in their self-serving rationales as to how realistic, reasonable, and intellectually and even morally justified it is to base state policies on weakness and cowardice. And the decline in courage, at times attaining what could be termed a lack of manhood, is ironically emphasized by occasional outbursts and inflexibility on the part of those same functionaries when dealing with weak governments and with countries that lack support, or with doomed currents which >

“Our Dear Rector”

by Fr. Dominique Bourmaud, SSPX

It was in 1853 that the French Seminary in Rome opened, both to elevate the intellectual and spiritual level of the clergy and to promote the ultramontane movement of attachment to Rome. It was Pope Pius IX who approved it in 1859, and entrusted it perpetually to the Congregation of the Holy Ghost. The Roman orientation and Papal favor were crowned in 1902 by its erection as of Pontifical Right.

Fr. Henri Le Floch (1862-1950) was its Rector from 1904 until 1927. Born in 1862, of the diocese of Quimper, he was formed by the Holy Ghost Fathers from 1878, and ordained a priest in 1886. He was at first a Seminary professor, then Director of the college of Beauvais in 1895, then Superior of the Scholasticate of Chevilly in 1900 and Rector of the French Seminary in Rome in September 1904. He was known to have no political involvement,

but was strongly opposed to the offensive laicism taking place in France at the time.

During his 23 years as Rector, he built up the Seminary, previously demoralized by lack of leadership, increasing the enrolment from 100 seminarians to 209. He enlarged the buildings, appointed new staff, and embraced the anti-modernist stance of St. Pius X. A friend of other anti-modernist figures, over time he acquired a position of considerable importance in Rome as the Consultor of several Roman congregations, including the Holy Office, which gave him considerable influence over the choice of the French bishops.

Archbishop Lefebvre met him for the first time in October 1923 as he entered the Roman seminary. The Father Superior gathered the seminarians together to give them their first spiritual talk of



An Apostolic Missionary

by Fr. J. M. Mestre, SSPX

This year marks the 300th anniversary of the death of St. Louis de Montfort, one of those saints that God sends every now and then to his Church to awaken the faithful from the clumsiness and laziness into which their Christian lives have sunk and whose sanctity presents, for the same reason, an appearance of extravagance or madness. In fact, many of his fellow citizens and even fellow students judged him as extravagant or mad, as we ourselves feel inclined to judge him once we decide to read the story of his life.

Biographical Information

St. Louis Mary Grignion (1673-1716) was born in the village of Montfort-la-Cane, the eldest of a family that would have 18 children. His life was

spent under the reign of Louis XIV, the Sun King, and under the mentality of the times, in transition between the “Great Century” on the downhill and the beginning of the “Age of Enlightenment.” From a doctrinal viewpoint, Protestantism enjoyed a strong influence in certain regions. Jansenism continued infecting the thought of many Christians, priests and bishops, and Gallicanism was at its height. Our saint would have much to suffer from people contaminated by these doctrines; but, thank God, he was preserved from these deleterious influences by the protection of the Blessed Virgin.

At the age of 12, Louis Mary began studying humanities at the Jesuit College in the nearby city of Rennes. He was a highly gifted student, who quickly went to the head of his class which was not fewer than 400. He finished his study of



Saint Louis-Marie Grignion de Montfort (January 31, 1673-April 28, 1716) is considered as one of the early writers in the field of Mariology. His most notable works regarding Marian devotions are contained in *The Secret of Mary* and the *True Devotion to Mary*.



Bearing Trials

by a Benedictine monk

A true example of fortitude from the 20th century was a coal miner of thirty years who contracted black lung and was then transferred by his employer from the depths of the mine to the high mountainous altitudes. Due to his injured lungs, he was forced to resign or face death. One year from retirement the company thus avoided paying this family man his just pension. His only wealth was his confidence in God. He explained to his children that birds on a cold winter day look for food while singing and we must imitate them by accepting whatever God gives with joy and confidence. His life example showed an incredible strength of body capable of heavy labor, but now incapacitated, an even greater strength of soul that was able to receive the unjust blows of this life and remain peaceful and joyful.

Often, fortitude is only applied to violent physical strength. The world seems to admire the anger and violence a man is capable of imposing upon his neighbor. Charles Darwin, Margaret Sanger and Hitler might explain this violence as “survival of the Fittest.” Violence, however, is one of man’s greatest weaknesses, which he must dominate by his own choice or they will dominate him. His passions push him to do, think and say things that he really does not want. He becomes a slave to alcohol, drugs, impurity, anger, hatred, human respect, vanity, ambition, the Internet, video games, *etc.* He loses the freedom of a child of God because he has preferred the darkness of error to the light of truth due to a lack of fortitude.

According to a 12th century example, John of Ford (a Cistercian monk), compares fortitude >



Notre-Dame du Puy-en- Velay

by Dr. Marie-France Hilgar

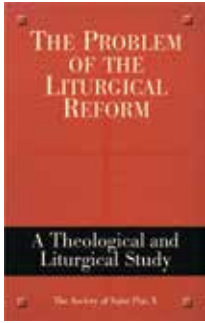
The Cathedral has a very long history. At the time of Roman Gaul, a woman suffering from a fever was inspired to visit one of the rocks around the village. She laid down, exhausted, and when she woke up, saw the Virgin Mary seated on a dolmen stone. The Virgin told the woman she wished to have a church there. Saint-George, the bishop of Velay, came to see for himself. Although it was July, the ground was covered with snow. A stag traced the ground plan of a huge church with his hooves. The message was clear but not easy to put into place. Money was short, all the bishop could do was make out the plan with a hedge. The next day the hedge was covered with flowers. Centuries passed and another miraculous healing took place. The Virgin repeated her request. The bishop of Velay went to see the Pope for permission to build a church and transfer his

see to le Puy. The Holy Father not only agreed but sent two of his best architects to take care of the project. The first church was built between 415 and 430. The dolmen on which the Virgin appeared was made part of the church, which was built on the ruins of a Roman Temple. The architect used some of its masonry for the nave of the church, and Gallo-Roman tombstones were used to build the aisles. The original church measured 40 by 80 feet. It had a single nave. Aisles were added in the sixth century. The cathedral soon needed to be expanded as it became more important in the Catholic world. It was a departure point for pilgrimages to Santiago de Compostella. Here too was preached the First Crusade. The cathedral needed to be able to accommodate the many faithful. Before the year 1,000, a third bay was added to the existing



Le Puy Cathedral (Cathédrale Notre-Dame du Puy) is a Roman Catholic cathedral, and a national monument of France, in Le Puy-en-Velay, Auvergne. It has been a centre of pilgrimage in its own right since before the time of Charlemagne, as well as forming part of the pilgrimage route to Santiago de Compostela. Since 1998 it has been a UNESCO World Heritage Site, as part of the “Routes of Santiago de Compostela in France.”





The Problem of the Liturgical Reform

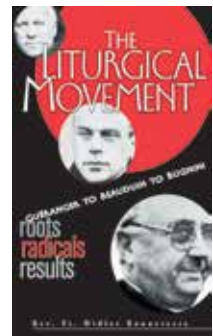
The book is in three parts: it shows, firstly, that the New Mass breaks the liturgical tradition of the Church; secondly, that this break proceeds from a new theology of basics such as sin and Redemption; thirdly, that this new theology is condemned by Catholic doctrine.

148 pp – Softcover – STK# 7071* – \$11.95

The Liturgical Movement

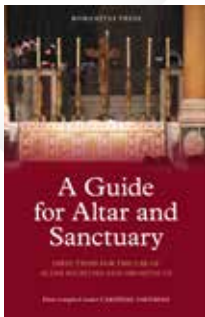
Fr. Didier Bonneterre

Historically, Dom Gueranger and Pope Saint Pius X are truly at the origin of the liturgical movement, that is, “the renewal of fervor for the liturgy among the clergy and the faithful.” But it is a false and pernicious claim that there has been a “homogenous development” in the movement begun by them resulting in the New Order of Mass! *The Liturgical Movement* is a fast-reading book on the history of the liturgical movement of the last century.



76 pp – Softcover – Illustrated – Index – STK# 8671 – \$14.95

A Guide for Altar and Sanctuary



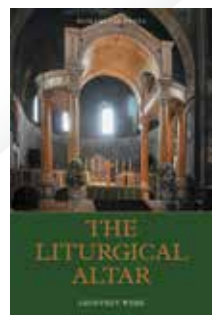
In a period when many Catholic churches are being restored to a traditional sense of function and beauty, the re-availability of this invaluable book could have perhaps not come at a more providential moment! It is packed with helpful information for altar societies, sacristans and others who have care of the sanctuary and altar, the sacred vessels, linens, and vestments used in the Roman Liturgy.

120 pp – Softcover – Illustrated – STK# 8490 – \$15.95

The Liturgical Altar

Geoffrey Webb

Covers the historical development, form, symbolism, and vesting of the altar. Demonstrates how to construct a proper altar that conforms to the Church’s prescriptions and ideals without exhausting the parish coffers. It will be of great interest to any Catholic, particularly church architects, liturgical artists, sacristans, those involved in liturgical functions, altar and rosary sodalities, florists, altar vesture manufactures, as well as religion teachers for all ages. 1947 edition. Illustrated.





Corruption, Courage, and Rage



by Dr. John Rao

John Henry Newman notes that Catholics suffer from “difficulties” rather than doubts. The “difficulty” that most troubles me as an historian is the Church’s treatment of the status of a saintly confessor of the Faith as being lower than that of a martyr. Tongues extracted, hands removed, food, warmth, sleep, and contact with their fellow men denied: all these have fallen to their lot, with years and decades of suffering in consequence. Quite frankly, I would infinitely prefer a swift bullet to the head or the fall of the blade of the guillotine. The trials of the confessors have demanded a degree of patient courage that to my pathetically weak body and soul seems absolutely unattainable. Were I to emerge alive from years of such suffering I am certain that I would be filled with nothing but rage. >

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The Missions: Teaching all Nations

October 7-9, 2016
Kansas City, Missouri

And He said to them: Go ye into the whole world, and preach the gospel to every creature. (Mk. 16:15)

Our Lord commanded the Apostles to spread the faith and teach all nations; yet, we live in a world where the errors of atheism, agnosticism, paganism, and religious indifference are spread at an alarming rate. It's a time when, for many, the missionary spirit does not exist.

This fall Angelus Press once again brings together some of the best Catholic thinkers, speakers, and writers to consider this year's topic: The Missions: Teaching all Nations. Come learn more about how the SSPX is working to spread the faith far and wide, and at the same time enjoy the company of other like-minded traditional Catholics. This conference is relevant for all Catholics, young and seasoned alike.

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Forming the Conscience

by SSPX Sisters

Sunday, 1:00 p.m.: the Martin family just got home from Mass. The children have been good for a long time, they are hungry, and Mom is rushing to get lunch on the table: the air is full of electricity. 7-year-old Henry is running around all over the place...and it ends badly: he runs into his mother, who spills the sauce on the new carpet.

“Look what you’ve done, the sauce on the carpet, can’t you see it’s serious?”

“It’s serious, Mom?”

“Yes, it’s serious; get out of the way so I can clean it up.”

Twenty minutes later, the mess is cleaned up and the family has sat down to eat...all except Henry who has disappeared. His mother finds him crying in his room.

“What’s the matter, Henry dear?”

“I committed a mortal sin!”

“You? A mortal sin? What did you do?”

“You know what I did, I spilled the sauce, and you said it was serious...”

The poor child is sobbing. With great affection, his mother takes the time to explain and correct her little boy’s conscience.

“When I said it was serious, I meant that it couldn’t be undone. But it really isn’t a very serious wrong, it’s not as if you had set fire to the whole carpet. And even if you had caused a catastrophe like that, it would only be a mortal sin for you if you had done it on purpose, and I can’t imagine you doing that. Even when you spilled the sauce on the carpet, which isn’t really that serious, you did not do it on purpose. You didn’t commit a sin at all, my little Henry, you were just clumsy.”





From the beginning of the 3rd century there is evidence in Western Christianity of the existence of what became the four minor orders (acolytes, exorcists, doorkeepers and lectors), as well as of cantors and fossores (tomb diggers). The evidence for lectors is probably the earliest. In the West, unlike the East, where imposition of hands was used, the rite of ordination was by the handing over to them of objects seen as instruments of the office.

Bishop Fellay confers the orders of Porter and Lector to two members of Our Lady of Guadalupe Monastery, Silver City.



by Fr. Peter Scott, SSPX

Can a priest require a child to perform apostolic or social work before receiving the sacrament of Confirmation?

The Church's requirements for the reception of Confirmation are clearly laid out in the 1917 Code of Canon Law and in the appendix to the Roman Ritual. These are that he be validly baptized, have at least the age of around seven years (Canon 788), that he be in the state of grace, and that if

he have the use of reason, that he be sufficiently instructed (Canon 786), according to his level of understanding, in the nature, dignity, and effects of this sacrament and the dispositions necessary to receive it worthily, and that, accordingly to the traditional custom, he be fasting.

The rights of the pastor in this domain correspond to his duties. He must establish the certitude of baptism by obtaining an original baptismal certificate, he must ensure that all candidates for Confirmation have the opportunity to make a good confession beforehand, and he

A Mother's Beautiful Response

Mrs. Courtney Baker of Florida has written a very beautiful letter, posted on social media, speaking about her 15 month old daughter who has Down Syndrome. While this may not seem to be a newsworthy item as touching as it may be, it takes on a different character when the mother of the child was writing to the medical doctor who encouraged her to abort her child and chastised him for his unwelcome and specious advice. Mrs. Baker's letter is a magnificent antidote to those who view the value of a human life on a purely utilitarian plane: what can this baby or person do for me. The value placed upon each and every human life is based upon who a person is as a child of God, not what that person can or cannot do in relation to his or her family or society at large.

Mrs. Baker reminded her doctor of this fact among other things. She wrote: *A friend recently told me of when her prenatal specialist would see her child during her sonograms, he would comment, 'He's perfect'. Once her son was born with Down syndrome, she visited that same doctor. He looked at her little boy and said, 'I told you. He's perfect'.*

Her story tore me apart. While I was so grateful for my friend's experience, it filled me with such sorrow because of what I should have had. I wish you would have been that doctor.

I came to you during the most difficult time in my life. I was terrified, anxious and in complete despair. I didn't know the truth yet about my baby, and that's what I desperately needed from you. But instead of support and encouragement, you suggested we terminate our child. I told you her name, and you asked us again if we understood how low our quality of life would be with a child with Down syndrome. You suggested we reconsider our decision to continue the pregnancy.

From that first visit, we dreaded our appointments. The most difficult time in my life was made nearly unbearable because you never told me the truth.

My child was perfect.

I'm not angry. I'm not bitter. I'm really just sad. I'm sad the tiny beating hearts you see

every day don't fill you with a perpetual awe. I'm sad the intricate details and the miracle of those sweet little fingers and toes, lungs and eyes and ears don't always give you pause. I'm sad you were so very wrong to say a baby with Down syndrome would decrease our quality of life. And I'm heartbroken you might have said that to a mommy even today. But I'm mostly sad you'll never have the privilege of knowing my daughter, Emersyn.



Because, you see, Emersyn has not only added to our quality of life, she's touched the hearts of thousands. She's given us a purpose and a joy that is impossible to express. She's given us bigger smiles, more laughter and sweeter kisses than we've ever known. She's opened our eyes to true beauty and pure love.

So my prayer is that no other mommy will have to go through what I did. My prayer is that you, too, will now see true beauty and pure love with every sonogram. And my prayer is when you see that next baby with Down syndrome lovingly tucked in her mother's womb, you will look at that mommy and see me then tell her the truth: "Your child is absolutely perfect."

In our day, when so many children who are diagnosed with Down Syndrome while in their mothers' wombs are routinely killed, it is important that we, as Mrs. Baker told her doctor, stand in awe at the beauty of each human life created by almighty God and give thanks to Him for that gift of life.

Fortitude vs. the Revolution

by Marcel de Corte, (*Itinéraires* magazine #242-243, 1980)

A New Christianity

The immense *mutation*, the immense degeneration that the word “mutation” almost always implies has taken over the most noble, the most solid institution that the world has ever known: the Catholic Church, through the new “social” reforms established by the law inspired by liberal individualism.

A “new Christianity” has incontestably infiltrated the Church, *in sinu ac gremio Ecclesiae*, to quote St. Pius X: the contemplation of the revealed truths contained in the dogmas and the practice of the theological virtues that lead the faithful towards their supernatural end, are literally sacrificed to earthly *praxis* alone, to efficacy alone, to exclusively human means of saving men. The process of secularizing the Church, of which the discarded cassock is a sign, a radical *aggiornamento*, and an “irreversible” adaptation to the “imprescriptible” demands of

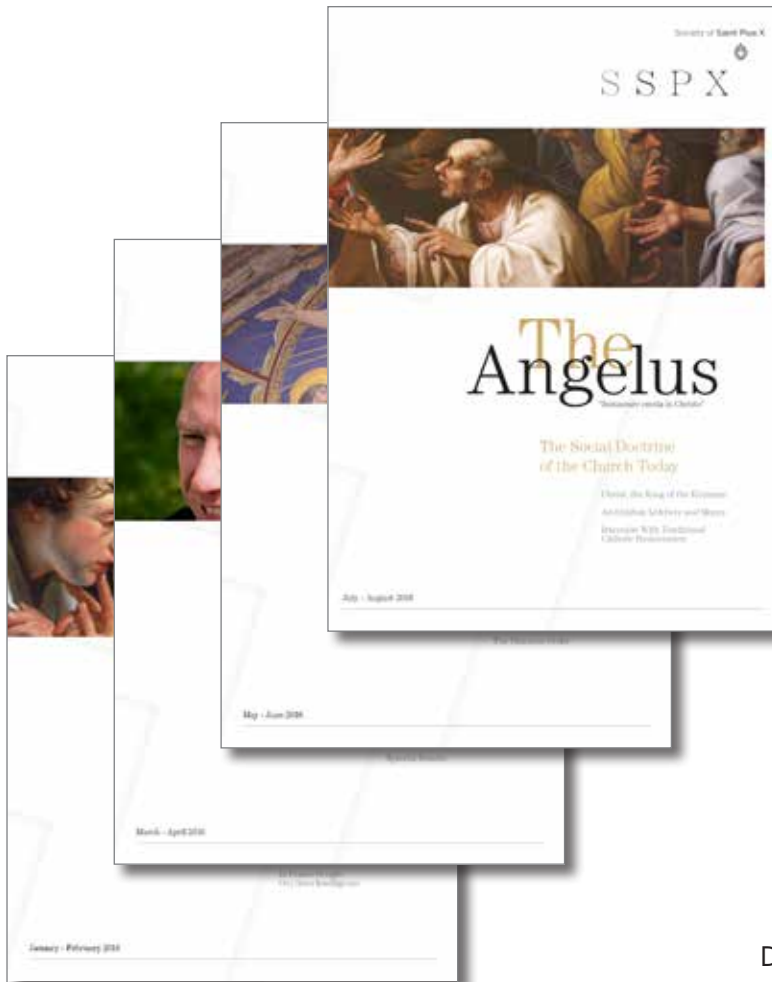
the modern world devoured by the liberal or collectivist democratic fever, are in full swing, and we do not yet see the outcome. The Church of the “new priests” is now centered on man, on the secularized human person that considers itself as an end in its desires, aspirations, ambitions and demands.

The supernatural order is completely overturned under our very eyes: theology tries to be anthropocentric, with no fear of contradicting itself; God’s transcendence submits to the multiform imperatives of immanence; catechism no longer obeys dogma, but rather the prescriptions of the independent conscience, the urges of the subconscious, the sexual instinct, the thousand and one extravagances of a delirious *dissociety*; the liturgy obeys all the whims of the game-leader and the entertainment business; authority turns into opportunism and bows down fearfully before the opinion created and

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