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The requests of Our Lady of Fatima



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MICHAEL

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

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

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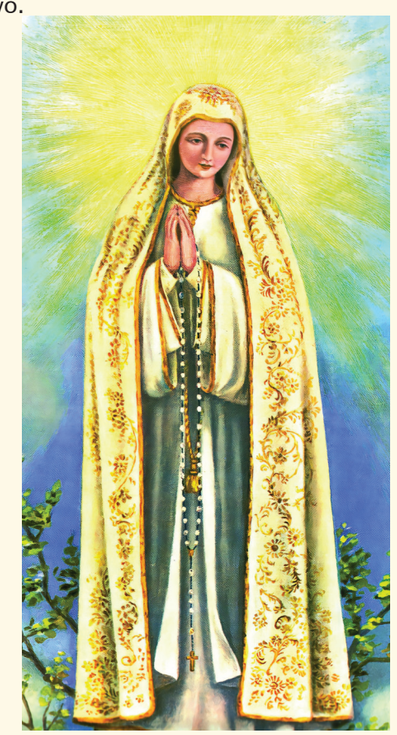
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Letter from the Editor

To consecrate Russia – and each one of us – to Mary

As we write these lines, the war continues in Ukraine with the news media reporting atrocities which make us shudder. To this must be added the real risk that the conflict will expand to other countries and turn into World War III, a war which will be more terrible than the previous two.

Diplomacy and human means have not ended the conflict, which is why the Catholic Bishops of Ukraine asked Pope Francis to consecrate Russia and Ukraine to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, as requested by the Virgin Mary during Her apparitions at Fatima in 1917. (Remember that In 1917, Ukraine was part of Russia.) The Holy Father responded positively to the request and offered an Act of Consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary on March 25, 2022 in union with all the bishops of the entire world as the Virgin Mother had asked (*see page 11*).



The Act of Consecration is an event of great importance for the Church and for the world, giving us the opportunity to return to the messages Mary gave to the three young children at Fatima, summed up in these words: convert, pray (especially the Rosary), and do penance (*see page 4*). Fatima is described as the most important of the Marian apparitions in the history of humanity. Mary is a good mother who cares about the salvation of all Her children and continues to appear in the world and recommends, in each of Her apparitions – like in Akita, Japan (*see page 8*), the recitation of the Rosary, the most powerful weapon for these times.

One should remember that Our Lady's requests at Fatima to obtain peace and the conversion of Russia are not limited to an act of the Holy Father and the bishops but require the collaboration of all the faithful.

Among the requests made by Our Lady, four are addressed to each person: the daily recitation of the Rosary, to cease offending Our Lord, Communions of reparation on the First Saturday of the month, and penance offered for the conversion of sinners.

So, even as we rejoice at the consecration made by Pope Francis, we should not fold our arms and sigh because the work is done. We also have a personal part to play in God's plan for saving souls and bringing peace. It is not only necessary that Russia is consecrated to the Immaculate Heart of Mary but also that each of us consecrate ourselves to the same Immaculate Heart. We are asked to put into practice the devotion of Communion in reparation on the First Saturdays of the month. Of course, to receive Holy Communion worthily one must have purity of soul, and not be in a state of mortal sin (*see page 22*).

We have saints who have modeled a life of consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. One of the most notable is Maximilian Kolbe, a Polish martyr priest (*see page 25*).

As the popes have repeatedly stated, there can be no peace without justice. In fact, it is remarkable that the financial principles of Economic Democracy, or Social Credit (not the surveillance system of the CCP), were devised by Scottish engineer, Clifford Hugh Douglas in 1917, the same year as the apparitions of the Virgin Mary at Fatima (*see page 14*).

Poverty in the midst of plenty is a scandal that must cease (see page 16). Douglas' financial proposals would guarantee daily bread to all through the allocation of a Social Dividend, based on the inheritance of natural resources and progress, financed not by taxes but by new money created without interest by a nation's central credit authority (*see page 20*).

The Act of Consecration brings hope. Let us fulfill our part by honouring Mary's requests at Fatima. In the end, as She promised, Her Immaculate Heart will triumph ! ❖

Alain Pilote
Editor

The requests of Our Lady of Fatima

by Alain Pilote

The recent consecration of Russia and Ukraine on March 25 to the Immaculate Heart of Mary by Pope Francis, in union with all the bishops of the whole world, at the express request of the Catholic bishops of Ukraine, "as asked, they say, by the Blessed Virgin at Fatima" brings to the fore the apparitions at Fatima in 1917, which are more topical than ever and, we are told, essential for the salvation of humanity.

From May 13 to October 13, 1917, the Blessed Virgin Mary appeared six times to three young shepherds: Jacinta Marto, then aged 7, her brother Francisco, aged 9, and their 10-year-old cousin, Lucia Dos Santos. As predicted by Our Lady, the first two children passed away at a very young age: Jacinta in 1920 when she was 9, and Francisco in 1919 at the age of 11. As for Lucia, the Blessed Virgin told her that she would have to stay on earth a "little longer" to make Her message known. She became a nun and died at the age of 97 on January 13, 2005. Jacinta and Francisco were both declared saints by Pope Francis on May 13, 2017, one hundred years to the day after the first apparition of Our Lady. Lucia's beatification process is underway.

Mary's message at Fatima is quite simply that of the Gospel: conversion, prayer and penance. During his first pilgrimage to Fatima, on May 13, 1982, Saint John Paul II declared: **"If the Church has accepted the message of Fatima, it is above all because that message contains a truth and a call whose basic content is the truth and the call of the Gospel itself. 'Repent and believe in the Gospel' (Mk 1:15): these are the first words that the Messiah addressed to humanity."** And these are also Mary's words at Fatima.

In his homily for the beatification of Jacinta and Francisco Marto at Fatima on May 13, 2000, Saint John Paul II said: **"In Her motherly concern, the Blessed Virgin came here to Fátima to ask men and women 'to stop offending God, Our Lord, who is already very offended'. It is a mother's sorrow that compels Her to speak; the destiny of Her children is at stake. For this reason She asks the little shepherds: 'Pray, pray much and make sacrifices for sinners; many souls go to hell because they have no one to pray and make sacrifices for them'."**

The consecration of Russia

Among the requests made by Our Lady at Fatima, several are addressed to all the faithful, but one in particular was addressed to the Pope and to all the bishops of the world: the consecration of Russia to her Immaculate Heart.

During the July 13th Apparition, the three young shepherds saw a vision of Hell, a sea of fire in which



were found the demons and the damned. Following this, Our Lady told the three children:

"You have seen Hell where the souls of poor sinners go. To save them, God wants to establish in the world the devotion to My Immaculate Heart. If you do as I say, many souls will be saved, and we will have peace. But if you do not stop offending God, under the reign of Pius XI, another war will begin, worse still. When you will see a night illuminated by an unknown light, know that this is the great sign that God is giving you to show that He will punish the world for its crimes by means of war, famine and by persecutions against the Church and the Holy Father.

"To prevent this war, I will come to ask for the Consecration of Russia to My Immaculate Heart and the Communion of Reparation on the First Saturdays. If My demands are followed, Russia will be converted, and peace will come. If not, Russia will spread her errors throughout the world, bringing about wars and persecutions against the Church. The good will be martyred. The Holy Father will have much to suffer. Many nations will be destroyed.

"In the end, My Immaculate Heart will triumph. The Holy Father will consecrate Russia to Me, which

The three seers of Fatima: Lucia Dos Santos, Francisco and Jacinta Marto. On June 13, 1917, Lucia had asked the Blessed Virgin to take all three of them to Paradise. "Yes," Mary replied. "As for Jacinta and Francisco, I will take them shortly. But you will remain here a little while longer..." Lucia will join them in Paradise more than 85 years later, on February 13, 2005, at the age of 97.



will be converted, and an era of peace will be given to the world."

After the 1917 apparitions, Lucia became a nun, and continued to receive celestial apparitions. On June 13, 1929, Our Lady reappeared to Sister Lucy in Tuy, Spain, accompanied by the Holy Trinity. Here is how Sister Lucia relates this event in her memoirs:

"Our Lady told me: **'The time has come when God asks the Holy Father to make, in union with all of the world's Bishops, the Consecration of Russia to My Immaculate Heart. He promises to save it through this means. They are so numerous, the sins which God condemns to be sins committed against Me, that I have come to ask for reparation. Sacrifice yourself for this intention and pray!'**

"Later on, by means of an intimate communication, Our Lord told me, complaining: '**They did not want to listen to My demand...! Like the King of France, they will repent of it but it will be too late. Russia will already have spread her errors throughout the world, causing wars and persecutions against the Church. The Holy Father will have much to suffer!'"**

A few years later, in a letter dated May 18, 1936, Lucia gave the reasons for this Consecration: **"I asked Him why He did not force Russia to convert without the Pope having to make this Consecration. Jesus said to me: 'Because I want My whole Church to recognize this Consecration as being the Triumph of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. I want the devotion to Her Immaculate Heart to be spread as one with the devotion to My Sacred Heart.'"**

Regarding the King of France, Our Lord in 1689 had informed Saint Marguerite-Marie Alacoque, a nun at the convent of Paray-le-Monial, to transmit the following message to Louis XIV, King of France. He asked for a national consecration to the Heart of Jesus, a national temple erected by France to the Heart of Jesus, the conversion of the king and the whole court, and an inscription of the Heart of Jesus on France's flag, whereby God will make the king, that is France, victorious over all her enemies, and will give her an eternal reign of honor and glory.

Then, exactly 100 years to the day after the letter mentioning the demands of the Sacred Heart, on June 17, 1789, the French Revolution began. The States General proclaimed themselves a Constituent Assembly, and the king lost all power. A few weeks later, Louis XVI, fallen from the throne and now imprisoned, remembered Our Lord's request to Marguerite-Marie entrusted to his grandfather, Louis XIV. He decided to finally undertake the consecration of France to the Heart of Jesus that God had asked of his ancestors and which had not been accomplished. It was too late.

The consecrations of the past

Several popes in the past had attempted to fulfill Our Lady's request, but one or another element was always missing: either the specific name of Russia was not mentioned, or the consecration was not made in union with all the bishops of the world. For example, in his apostolic letter, *Sacro Vergente Anno* on July 7, 1952, Pope Pius XII consecrated the peoples of Russia to the Immaculate Heart of Mary but he did not order all Catholic bishops to join him in the act. (Note that Pius XII was consecrated bishop on May 13, 1917, the very day of Mary's first appearance at Fatima.) On October 31, 1942, Pius XII had consecrated the whole world to the Immaculate Heart of Mary but without a specific reference to Russia.

Even if incomplete, any consecration always has a positive effect. The consecration of the world by Pius XII on October 31, 1942, brought a spectacular reversal of the war. Sister Lucia confirmed that this ▶

happy turnaround was the fruit of the consecration. On February 28, 1943 she wrote to her confessor, Bishop Manuel Ferreira da Silva: "The Good Lord has already shown me his satisfaction with the act, although incomplete according to His desire, carried out by the Holy Father and by several bishops. He promises, in return, to end the war soon."

This is also what happened with the consecration made by Pope John Paul II on March 24, 1984. After having asked, in a letter sent to the bishops of the whole world to join him, the Pope, standing in Saint Peter's Square in Rome before the pilgrim statue brought from Fatima for the occasion, consecrated the whole world to Mary, with this prayer:



Consecration by John Paul II on March 24, 1984

"O Mother of individuals and peoples, You who know all their sufferings and their hopes, You who have a mother's awareness of all the struggles between good and evil, between light and darkness which afflict the modern world, accept the cry which we, moved by the Holy Spirit, address directly to Your Heart. Embrace, with the love of the Mother and Handmaid of the Lord, this human world of ours, which we entrust and consecrate to You, for we are full of concern for the earthly and eternal destiny of individuals and peoples.

"In a special way we entrust and consecrate to You those individuals and nations which particularly need to be thus entrusted and consecrated. We fly to Your patronage, O Holy Mother of God. Despise not our petitions while we are faced by adversity."

Although he did not specifically mention Russia, St. John Paul II nevertheless added these words to the consecration: **"Enlighten especially the peoples whose consecration and entrustment by us You are awaiting."** A few months later, John Paul II confided to Cardinal Paul Josef Cordes, who asked him why he had not specifically mentioned Russia during the consecration, that it was indeed his intention, but that at the last minute diplomats advised him not to do so.

Sister Lucy advised that God nevertheless accepted John Paul II's consecration, which was followed by several good fruits. For example, on May 13, 1984, an explosion at the Soviets' Severomorsk Naval Base, near Mourmansk on the Kola Peninsula in Russia, destroyed two-thirds of all the missiles stockpiled for the Soviets' Northern Fleet, the largest of four fleets. The blast also destroyed workshops needed to maintain the missiles as well as hundreds of scientists and technicians. This happened at a time when the USSR was considering a preemptive nuclear strike against NATO, following the Euro-missile crisis. A military historian, Alberto Leoni, asserted: "Without this missile base which controlled the North Sea, the USSR had no chance of achieving victory." Five years later, on November 9, 1989, the Berlin Wall fell, followed on December 25, 1991 by the dissolution of the Soviet Union. The communist flag was then lowered for the last time at the Kremlin in Moscow.

Portugal is consecrated

Here is another proof that the consecration of a nation to Mary has always enjoyed a positive effect. After seeing the sign in the sky, on the night of January 26 to 27, 1938, Sister Lucia understood that the war foretold by Our Lady in Her July 13, 1917 message was near. On several occasions, she offered warnings to the bishop of the diocese of Leiria (where Fatima is located), Most Rev. Da Silva. On one of these occasions, on February 6, 1939, seven months before the War was officially declared, Lucia wrote to him warning of the imminence of the War. She added an important point: Portugal would be spared because its bishops had consecrated their nation to the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

On May 13, 1931, all the bishops of Portugal had consecrated the country to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, a consecration that they renewed on May 13, 1938. Sister Lucia's prophecy was fulfilled to the letter. No Portuguese soldier took part in the hostilities, and no foreign army ever occupied Portugal. While the whole of Europe was subjected to a horrendous war which lasted for five years, only Portugal remained at peace.

The consecration of March 25, 2022

We now come to the consecration made by Pope Francis on March 25, 2022. (*See page 13.*) Did it meet the requests made by Our Lady? If we consider what she asked, point by point, as cited by Lucia in 1917 and 1929, we can only answer yes. See for yourself:

☑ **It was indeed a solemn consecration;**

☑ **Russia was mentioned specifically;**

☑ **It was a consecration not only to Mary but to Her Immaculate Heart;**

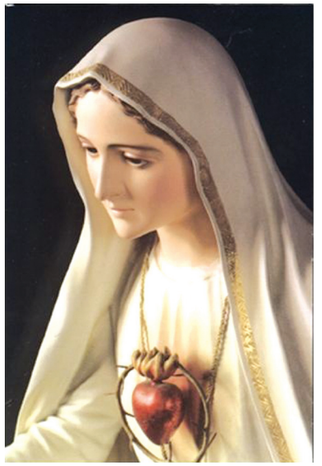
☑ **The consecration was made in union with all the bishops of the world;**

☑ **It was made by the Pope and all the bishops on the same day, and as far as possible, at the same hour.**

Our Lady of Fatima had asked all the faithful to participate in acts of reparation and by partaking in the Communion of Reparation on the First Saturdays of five consecutive months. Let us remember Our Lady's words on July 13, 1917: **"To prevent this war, I will come to ask for the consecration of Russia to My Immaculate Heart AND the Communion of Reparation of the first Saturdays. If My DEMANDS are followed, Russia will be converted and peace will come."**

The part to be fulfilled by the faithful

With the consecration of Russia to the Immaculate Heart of Mary on March 25, 2022, the Holy Father accomplished, if we can put it this way, his part of the "contract". It is now up to the lay faithful, to all the baptized, to fulfill their part which is the Communion of Reparation on the First Saturdays of five consecutive months.



World peace depends not only on the pope's response, but also on our own. As Pope Francis noted in his homily preceding the March 25 consecration, "If we want the world to change, our hearts must first change." It is somewhat for this reason that Pope Francis, in his act of consecration, did not include only Russia, but all human beings because all must consecrate themselves to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. This is the will of God.

The main purpose of the Fatima apparitions is for the salvation of sinners through the establishment in the world of devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. On June 13, 1917, Our Lady said to the three little seers: "**Jesus wants to establish in the world devotion to My Immaculate Heart. Whoever embraces this devotion, I promise salvation. These souls will be cherished by God as flowers placed by Me to adorn His throne.**" The request was repeated almost word for word on July 13, 1917: **"To save souls, God wishes to establish in the world devotion to My Immaculate Heart. If people do what I am going to tell you, many souls will be saved and there will be peace."**

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

Amongst the demands made by Our Lady at Fatima, four are meant for everyone: To pray the daily Rosary, stop offending Our Lord, do penance for the conversion of sinners, and make a Communion of Reparation on First Saturdays.

On December 10, 1925, the Mother of God appeared to Sr. Lucia and said to her: **"Look My daughter, at My Heart, surrounded with thorns with which ungrateful men pierce Me at every moment by their blasphemies and ingratitude. You at least try to console Me and announce in My name that I promise to assist at the moment of death, with all the graces necessary for salvation, all those who, on the first Saturday of five consecutive months shall confess, receive Holy Communion, recite five decades of the Rosary, and keep Me company for fifteen minutes while meditating on the fifteen mysteries of the Rosary, with the intention of making Reparation to Me."**

On the night of May 29 to 30, 1930, Jesus revealed to Sr. Lucia the reason for five Saturdays: "Daughter, the motive is simple: there are five kinds of offenses and blasphemies spoken against the Immaculate Heart of Mary. First: blasphemies against the Immaculate Conception; second: against her Virginity; third: against the Divine Maternity, refusing, at the same time, to receive her as the Mother of mankind; fourth: those who seek publicly to implant, in the hearts of children, indifference, disrespect, and even hate for this Immaculate Mother; fifth: those who revile her directly in her sacred images."

Mary told the three children: **"Pray much and do penance for sinners, for many souls go to hell because there is no one to do penance and to pray for them." She added: "Do you want to offer yourself to God to withstand all of the sufferings that He may will to send upon you, as an act of reparation for the sins by which He is offended, and as an act of supplication for the conversion of sinners?"**

Let us listen to and put into practice the requests of our Heavenly Mother to obtain peace in the world and peace in the heart of every human being. Let us rest assured that the promise which Mary made at Fatima will be fulfilled: "In the end, My Immaculate Heart will triumph." This is God's desire. ❖

Alain Pilote

HOPE and the BEGINNING of the TRIUMPH of MARY

by Anne Marie Jacques



The statue in the convent chapel

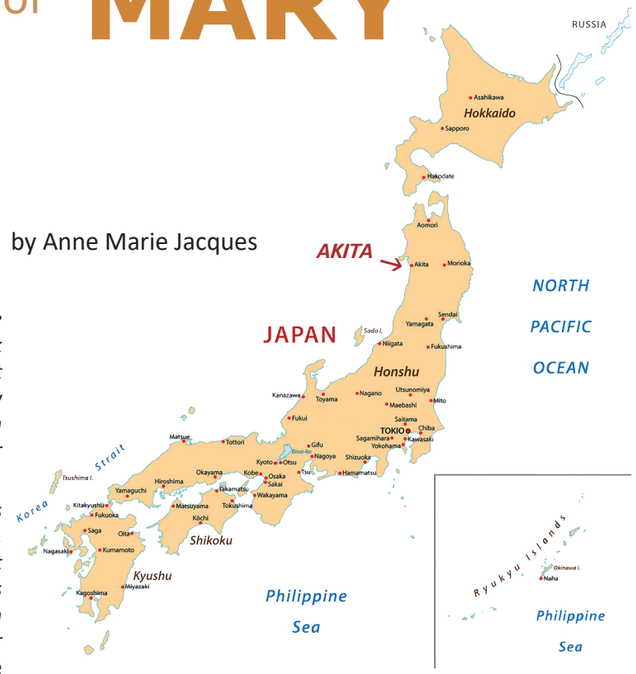
The Church recalls the Blessed Virgin Mary's role in the story of salvation and Her sublime collaboration in the work of her Divine Son. This is one reason we celebrate the Feast of the Solemnity of Mary the Holy Mother of God every January 1st, entrusting ourselves at the beginning of each year to the protection and intercession of Mary, the mother of us all.

Although Catholics comprise only .3 percent of Japan's population of 127,700,000 people, it was in 1973 in Akita, Japan that our Blessed Mother delivered three very important messages for all of humanity. She appeared to Sister Agnes Sasagawa in a small convent in an apparition that has been officially recognized by the Roman Catholic Church. In Her message to the religious sister, Our Lady warned "If people do not repent and better themselves, the Father will inflict a terrible punishment on all humanity." *She also warned that* "The demon will be especially implacable against the souls consecrated to God."

Today we see the predictions of Our Lady of Akita coming true before our eyes. Satan's attacks against Christ's Church here on earth are no longer subtle but are very direct. Just as Our Lady had warned "Cardinals [are] opposing cardinals, bishops [are openly] against other bishops."

All of this is very disturbing and therefore it is more important than ever that we call to mind Our Lady's promise: "Pray very much the prayers of the Rosary. Those who place their confidence in me will be saved." *As at Fatima, She promised that Her Immaculate Heart would triumph in the end.*

Participation on our part is required for the fulfillment of Our Lady's promises. We must return to God. At Akita, Our Blessed Mother asked for "Prayer, penance and courageous sacrifices [to] soften the Father's anger." *We must, therefore, beseech our Blessed Mother to help us obtain the courage and perseverance necessary so that we may triumph with her.*





The Convent of *The Institute of the Handmaids of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in the Holy Eucharist,* Akita, Japan

Our Lady of Akita, Japan (1973)

The Institute of the Handmaids of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in the Holy Eucharist (Seitai Hoshikai in Japanese) is a small convent of Catholic religious women leading dedicated lives of prayer. Established in 1970 by the late Bishop John Shojiro Ito of Niigata, Japan, their convent is located in Yuzawadai just outside of the city of Akita. In 1973, the sisters welcomed into their novitiate a convert from Buddhism, Sister Agnes Katsuko Sasagawa, who was 42 years old and incurably deaf. Sister Agnes was, however, favored with many mystical privileges and, unbeknownst to the sisters, their convent would soon become known throughout the entire world.

The first miraculous event occurred on June 12, 1973 only a month after Sister Agnes' entrance when a brilliant light shone from the tabernacle. This happened several times in the months that followed and was often accompanied by something resembling smoke which lingered around the altar.

Bishop John Shojiro Ito of Niigata, Japan was at the convent conducting a week of devotions when, during an illumination, Sister Agnes saw *"A multitude of beings similar to angels who surrounded the altar in adoration before the Host."* Sister Agnes thought it best to confide to the bishop the circumstances of this vision as well as all the events and apparitions that would follow. Both Bishop Ito, and Rev. Teiji Yasuda, the convent's spiritual director, were witnesses to many of these events.



Sr. Agnes Katsuko Sasagawa in the convent garden

Sister Agnes was also favored with many visitations from her guardian angel. When asked to describe her angel, she answered: *"[The angel has] a round face, an expression of sweetness . . . a person covered with a shining whiteness like snow."* Her guardian angel confided messages to the sister and often prayed, guided and advised her.

On the evening of June 28, 1973, Sister Agnes experienced an exceedingly painful cross-shaped wound on the palm of her left hand. The pain lasted a week. It eased during most of the week only to return on Thursday night into Friday and became almost unbearable. On July 5th, a small opening appeared in the center of her hand from which blood began to flow.

On July 6th, her guardian angel returned and told Sister Agnes, *"The wounds of Mary are much deeper and more sorrowful than yours. Let us go to pray together in the chapel."* Upon entering the chapel, the angel disappeared. Sister Agnes turned to the statue of Mary located on the right side of the altar.

The statue is a figure of Our Lady standing before a cross with her arms at her side and palms facing forward. It is approximately three feet tall and carved from the hardwood of the Judea tree. Beneath her feet is a globe. Sr. Agnes approached the statue and later said *"I suddenly felt that the wooden statue came to life and was about to speak to me. She* [Our Blessed Lady] *was bathed in a brilliant light. At the same moment, a voice of indescribable beauty struck my totally deaf ears."*

Our Lady told Sister Agnes: *"Your deafness will be healed."* (Her hearing was permanently restored on May 30, 1982.) She then recited with her the community prayers composed by Bishop Ito. At the words *"Jesus present in the Eucharist"* Mary instructed, *"From now on, you will add TRULY..."* Together with the angel who reappeared, they recited a consecration to the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus in this manner: *"He is TRULY present in the Holy Eucharist..."*. Before disappearing, Our Lady asked Sister Agnes to *"pray very much for the Pope, bishops and priests."*

When the sisters assembled in the chapel for the recitation of Lauds the next morning, they found blood on the right hand of the statue. There were two small lines crossed in the middle of the palm, and an opening from which blood flowed. The wound on the statue matched that on the hand of Sister Agnes except that, since the statue's hand was smaller, the wound was also smaller. The wound continued to bleed on Fridays in July, as did the wound on the hand of Sister Agnes. The blood ran the length of the statue's hand, which was open and pointing downward, although the droplets never fell from her hand.

One of the sisters wrote: *"It seemed to be truly cut into flesh. The edge of the cross had the aspect of human flesh, and one even saw the grain of the skin like a fingerprint. I said to myself at that moment that the wound was real."*

There was a second message given by Our Lady on Friday, August 3, 1973. At that occasion, the heavenly voice from the statue warned: *"Many men in this world afflict the Lord. I desire souls to con-*

> "Each day, recite the prayers of the Rosary. With the Rosary pray for the Pope, the bishops and the priests."

sole Him to soften the anger of the Heavenly Father. I wish, with My Son, for souls who will repair, by their suffering and their poverty, for the sinners and ingrates.

"In order that the world might know His anger, the Heavenly Father is preparing to inflict a great chastisement on all mankind. I have prevented the coming of calamities by offering Him the sufferings of [My] Son on the Cross, His Precious Blood, and the beloved souls who console Him by forming a cohort of victim souls.

"Prayer, penance and courageous sacrifices can soften the Father's anger. Know that you must be fastened to the Cross with three nails. These three nails are poverty, chastity and obedience. Of the three, obedience is the foundation." These were the vows professed by Agnes as a religious sister.

Although the wound on the hand of Sister Agnes disappeared on July 27th, the wound on the hand of the statue remained until September 29th, at which time the statue emitted a brilliant light. The whole community witnessed the light coming from the statue, and at that same moment the entire body of the statue became covered with a moisture resembling perspiration. Sister Agnes' guardian angel told her, *"Mary is even sadder than when she shed blood. Dry the perspiration."* The sisters used cotton balls to collect the moisture as the dazzling light that had surrounded the statue gradually disappeared.

Shortly after, on October 13th, the anniversary of the Miracle of the Sun at Fatima, Sister Agnes again heard the beautiful voice speaking from the statue: *"The work of the devil will infiltrate even into the Church in such a way that one will see cardinals opposing cardinals, bishops against other bishops. The priests who venerate me will be scorned and opposed by their confreres. Churches and altars will be sacked. The Church will be full of those who accept compromises, and the devil will press many priests and consecrated souls to leave the service of the Lord. The demon will be especially implacable against souls consecrated to God. The thought of the loss of so many souls is the cause of my sadness. If sins increase in number and gravity, there will no longer be any pardon for them."*

Our Blessed Mother continued, *"As I told you, if*



The tears collected on the inside edge of the eyes, flowing down the cheeks, collecting at the edge of the garment near her throat.

people do not repent and better themselves, the Father will inflict a terrible punishment on all humanity. It will be a punishment greater than the Flood, such as one will never have been seen before. Fire will fall from the sky and will wipe out a great part of humanity, the good as well as the bad, sparing neither priests nor faithful. The survivors will find themselves so desolate that they will envy the dead. The only arms which will remain for you will be the Rosary and the Sign left by my Son. Each day, recite the prayers of the Rosary. With the Rosary pray for the pope, the bishops and the priests.

"The demon will be especially implacable against the souls consecrated to God. The thought of the loss of so many souls is the cause of my sadness. If sins increase in number and gravity, there will no longer be pardon for them. Pray very much the prayers of the Rosary. I alone am able to still save you from the calamities which approach. Those who place their confidence in me will be saved."

There were other phenomena. In May 1974, the face, hands and feet of the statue became distinguished by a dark, reddish-brown tint, though the garment and hair retained the look of the original wood. (When the sculptor came to see the statue eight years later, he could not hide his surprise that only the visible parts of Our Lady's body had changed color, and that the face itself had changed expression.)

On January 4, 1975, to the amazement of the entire community, Father Yasuda, Bishop Ito and a number of people who had joined the nuns for a New Year's retreat, witnessed the statue of the Virgin begin to weep. This happened three different times throughout the day. Later, in his book, *The Tears and Message of Mary,* Father Yasuda said: *"*[The statue] *had completely dried out during the years since it was made, and little cracks had begun to appear. It is already miraculous that water would flow from such material, but it is still more prodigious that a liquid slightly salty, of the nature of true human tears, should have flowed precisely from the eyes."*

Eventually, Bishop Ito arranged for Professor Sagisaka, M.D. a non-Christian specialist in the Department of Forensic Medicine at the University of Akita's School of Medicine, undertook a rigorous examination of the three fluids. He intentionally did not reveal the source of the fluids, and patiently awaited the results: *"The matter adhering on the gauze is human blood. The sweat and the tears absorbed in the two pieces of cotton are of human origin."* The blood was found to belong to type B, and the sweat and tears to type AB. In the 10 years following, scientific studies excluded any explanation other than the supernatural.

On December 8, 1979, the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, the tears were filmed and televised throughout Japan. This video production is now shown by the nuns at the convent, and has also been shown during news broadcasts throughout the entire world.

According to the records kept by the sisters, the number who witnessed the tears in person went unrecorded on five occasions. However, all the other times they were witnessed by 10 to 65 people. Some of the witnesses included prominent Buddhists, including the mayor of the city of Akita.

Bishop Ito was advised by the Apostolic Nuncio to seek the assistance of the Archbishop of Tokyo to create a commission of canonical inquiry. Unfortunately, the Inquisitor, who was president of the group, was not Catholic and, without any of the members ever even visiting the convent to conduct a personal inquiry, they rendered an unfavorable verdict.



Sr. Sasagawa with the statue of Our Lady

Unwilling to accept a negative verdict on the events he himself had witnessed, Bishop Ito asked for advice from The Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith and from The Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith in Rome. He was advised to form another commission to examine the events from the very beginning, and this commission rendered a favorable verdict regarding the supernatural aspects of the occurrences.

On the Feast of Our Lady of Sorrows, on September 15, 1981, the statue cried tears for the last time. Two weeks later, Sister Agnes' guardian angel presented a large Bible surrounded with a brilliant light. The open Bible revealed the verse from Genesis 3:15: *"And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed; he shall bruise you on the head, and you shall bruise him on the heel."* The angel explained that the passage had a relationship with the tears of Mary and then continued, *"Sin came into the world by a woman, and it is also by a woman that salvation came to the world."*

The sculptor of the statue, Saburo Wakasa, a non-Catholic, was asked his reaction to the occurrences relating to the statue. He answered: *"The statue of Mary was my first work connected with Christianity. Of my various statues it is only with the statue of Mary at Yuzawadai that mysterious events occurred. I sculptured the whole statue of Mary, globe, and the Cross from the same piece of wood, so there are no joints… The wood from which I carved the statue of Mary was very dry and rather hard."* When asked whether he regarded the reported shedding of tears from the statue of Mary as a miracle, he replied, *"It is a mystery."* The statue was recorded to have shed tears a total of 101 times.

A canonical law regarding the judgment of a Marian apparition was issued in 1978. According to a Vatican official, *"The authority to hand down a conclusion regarding the authenticity of any Marian apparition is given canonically to the Ordinary* (the bishop) *of the local diocese where the apparition took place."*

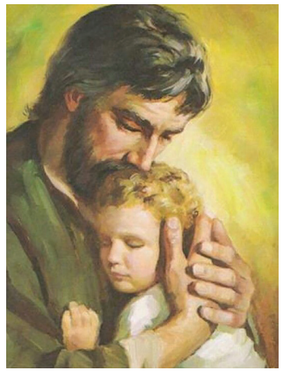
In his pastoral letter dated April 22, 1984, Bishop John Ito, the Ordinary of the Diocese of Niigata, wrote that having been given directives in this regard, *"I authorize throughout the entire diocese, of which I am charged, the veneration of the Holy Mother of Akita."* The Bishop noted that the events are only a matter of private revelation, and are not points of doctrine. The Bishop also said in his pastoral letter that he had known Sister Agnes Sasagawa for 10 years. *"She is a woman sound in spirit, frank and without problems; she has always impressed me as a balanced person. Consequently, the messages she says that she has received did not appear to me to be in any way the result of imagination or hallucination."*

Four years later, on June 20, 1988, during Bishop Ito's visit to Rome, *The Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith* approved the contents of the pastoral letter. Bishop Ito's official recognition of the occurrences and the messages of Our Lady were reported in the October 1988 edition of the magazine, 30 Days. ✞

Adapted from *http://www.catholictradition.org/Mary/akita.htm*

A Soldier's Faith

This is the story of one soldier's devotion to the* Prayer to St. Joseph *and to the Blessed Mother's* Miraculous Medal. *Following is a testimony to their miraculous benefits.



I am a retired military veteran of 33 years and served in both Vietnam and Iraq. My devotion to St. Joseph through his powerful prayer is a legacy handed down from my grandfather and father who were veterans who served in WWI and WWII. Both men carried this prayer on their person all through the war, recited it faithfully each day, and both returned from the war unharmed. I have passed out thousands of copies of the Prayer to St. Joseph, along with the Blessed Virgin Mary's Miraculous Medal, to young soldiers leaving for Iraq and Afghanistan.

My desire is to share my testimony of the miraculous power of the *Prayer to St. Joseph* and the protection of the *Miraculous Medal*.

I was stationed for training in Fort Drum in northern New York state. There were more than 500 men and women soldiers in my battalion alone. Eighty per cent were Catholic, yet I was the only one who attended Mass on Sundays. I decided that the first thing to do was ensure that each soldier received a copy of the *Prayer to St. Joseph* and a *Miraculous Medal*. I was the Squad Leader and did what I could to encourage everyone in my battalion to attend Mass. I also asked all my family back home to pray.

Within two weeks, two guys joined me for Sunday Mass. Within 2 1/2 months, with my family's sincere prayers, 33 more soldiers were going to Mass. When we deployed to Iraq more and moresoldiers joined us each Sunday.

In 2002, at the age of 57, our platoon was deployed again to Iraq. I handed out the same *Prayer to St. Joseph* and a *Miraculous Medal of the Blessed Mother* to all the soldiers going with me — from the Company Commander to the lowest rank. Only one person refused to accept these religious items. One young soldier told me that he was Muslim, not Catholic. I told him that St. Joseph and Our Blessed Mother were for everyone and that the first promise of protection of the prayer says "Whosoever carries it…", it does not say "Muslims not allowed." So he decided to carry it, and still does 10 years later.

This was the reaction of many other soldiers who told me they would keep this prayer on their person for the rest of their lives. Anyone whom I personally knew to have carried this prayer into battle made it back home.

Another important episode was relayed by my older sister. One day an elderly woman was explaining that her grandson was in Iraq and in a very bad situation. The grandmother said that she was praying very hard for him and asked my sister to also pray. My sister asked her to explain her grandson's situation. She answered that he had written that his company was taking heavy casualty losses; his platoon was losing 2 to 3 soldiers each week.

My sister quickly advised her to send her grandson the *Prayer to St. Joseph*. She contacted me to obtain enough copies for his entire platoon and mailed them the next day. The grandmother reported that he wrote back three months later saying that everyone in his platoon was now carrying the *Prayer to St. Joseph*. Not only that: since they had all started carrying it, they had stopped losing soldiers! They had finished the year in Iraq without another loss. Such is the power of this prayer! ✞

— Staff Sergeant Patrick Chasse

O St. Joseph
whose protection is so great, so strong, so prompt before the Throne of God, I place in you all my interests and desires.

O St. Joseph
do assist me by your powerful intercession and obtain for me from your Divine Son all spiritual blessings through Jesus Christ, Our Lord; so that having engaged here below your Heavenly power I may offer my thanksgiving and homage to the most loving of Fathers.

O St. Joseph,
I never weary contemplating you and Jesus asleep in your arms. I dare not approach while He reposes near your heart. Press him in my name and kiss His fine Head for me, and ask Him to return the Kiss when I draw my dying breath. St. Joseph, Patron of departing souls, pray for me. Amen.

The promises attached to this prayer for those who hear/pray/carry it on their person are:

The special protection from sudden death, or by drowning, burning or poisoning. And they shall not fall into the hands of the enemy, or be overpowered in battle (including the battles of life).

Imprimatur: Most Rev. George W. Ahr, Bishop of Trenton

To order these prayer cards, or Our Lady's *Miraculous Medals*, please call: (413) 397-3730, or visit: *www.heartsoftheholyfamily.org*

Consecration of Russia to the Immaculate Heart of Mary



The Pope's Act of Consecration to the Immaculate Heart was made before a statue of the Virgin of Fatima. The statue resides in the sanctuary of San Vittorino in Tivoli, east of Rome, and was brought to the Vatican for the special occasion.

The genesis of this consecration

In a letter to Pope Francis, published on their website on Ash Wednesday, March 2, 2022, Ukraine's Latin Rite Catholic bishops wrote :

"Holy Father! In these hours of immeasurable pain and terrible ordeal for our people, we, bishops of the Episcopal Conference of Ukraine, are the spokespersons of the unceasing and sincere prayer, sustained by our priests and consecrated persons, which comes to us from all the Christian people so that your Holiness consecrates our homeland and Russia to the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

"Responding to this prayer, we humbly ask your Holiness to publicly perform the act of consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary of Ukraine and Russia, as requested by the Blessed Virgin at Fatima.

"May the Mother of God, Queen of Peace, accept our prayer: *Regina pacis, ora pro nobis* !"

On March 15, the Vatican announced that Pope Francis responded affirmatively to this request and would consecrate Russia and Ukraine to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, during a penitential ceremony at St. Peter's Basilica in Rome on March 25, 2022, and that his representative, Polish Cardinal Konrad Krajewski, Papal Almoner, will pronounce this same prayer of consecration this March 25 at the shrine of Fatima in Portugal.

Letter of the Pope to the Bishops

On March 21, Pope Francis sent the following letter to each of the Catholic bishops in the world, inviting them to consecrate, in union with him, Russia and Ukraine, as well as the Church and all humanity, to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, thus responding to the requests of Our Lady of Fatima, as expressed on July 13, 1917.

"Dear Brother, nearly a month has passed since the outbreak of the war in Ukraine that is daily inflicting immense suffering upon its sorely tried people and threatening world peace. At this dark hour, the Church is urgently called to intercede before the Prince of Peace and to demonstrate her closeness to those directly affected by the conflict. I am grateful to the many people who have responded with great generosity to my appeals for prayer, fasting and charity.

"Now, also in response to numerous requests by the People of God, I wish in a special way to entrust the nations at war to the Blessed Virgin Mary. As I announced yesterday at the conclusion of the Angelus prayer, on March 25, the Solemnity of the Annunciation, I intend to carry out a solemn Act of Consecration of humanity, and Russia and Ukraine in particular, to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Since it is fitting that we should invoke peace with hearts renewed by God's forgiveness, the Act of Consecration will take place in the context of a Celebration of Penance to be held in Saint Peter's Basilica at 5:00 p.m., Rome time. The Act itself will take place about 6:30 p.m.

"This Act of Consecration is meant to be a gesture of the universal Church, which in this dramatic moment lifts up to God, through His Mother and ours, the cry of pain of all those who suffer, and implore an end to the violence and to entrust the future of our human family to the Queen of Peace. I ask you to join in this Act by inviting the priests, religious and faithful to assemble in their churches and places of prayer on 25 March, so that God's Holy People may raise a heartfelt and choral plea to Mary our Mother. I am sending you the text of the prayer of consecration, so that all of us can recite it throughout that day, in fraternal union.

"I thank you for the attention you will give to this request and for your ready cooperation. With great affection, I bless you and the faithful entrusted to your pastoral care. May Jesus protect you and the Holy Virgin watch over you. I ask you, please, also to pray for me. Fraternally, from Saint John Lateran, March 21, 2022"

POPE FRANCIS

On Friday, March 25, the Feast of the Annunciation, at the end of a penitential ceremony at St. Peter's Basilica, the Pope pronounced the act of consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Earlier, he delivered a homily explaining the meaning of the ceremony. Here are some excerpts:

"If we want the world to change, then first our hearts must change. For this to happen, let us allow Our Lady to take us by the hand. Let us gaze upon Her Immaculate Heart in which God dwelt, our tainted nature's solitary boast. Mary is full of grace, and thus free from sin. In Her, there is no trace of evil and hence, with Her, God was able to begin a new story of salvation and peace. There, in Her, history took a turn. God changed history by knocking at the door of Mary's heart.

"Today, renewed by forgiveness, may we too knock at the door of Her Immaculate Heart. In union with the Bishops and faithful of the world, I desire in a solemn way to bring all that we are presently experiencing to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. I wish to renew to Her the consecration of the Church and the whole of humanity, and to consecrate to Her in a particular way the Ukrainian people and the Russian people who, with filial affection, venerate Her as a Mother. This is no magic formula but a spiritual act. It is an act of complete trust on the part of children who, amid the tribulation of this cruel and senseless war that threatens our world, turn to their Mother.

Act of Consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary

Here is the Act of Consecration made by Pope Francis on March 25, 2022:

"O Mary, Mother of God and our Mother, in this time of trial we turn to you. As our Mother, you love us and know us: no concern of our hearts is hidden from you. Mother of mercy, how often we have experienced your watchful care and your peaceful presence! You never cease to guide us to Jesus, the Prince of Peace.

"Yet we have strayed from that path of peace. We have forgotten the lesson learned from the tragedies of the last century, the sacrifice of the millions who fell in two world wars. We have disregarded the commitments we made as a community of nations. We have betrayed peoples' dreams of peace and the hopes of the young. We grew sick with greed, we thought only of our own nations and their interests; we grew indifferent and caught up in our selfish needs and concerns. We chose to ignore God, to be satisfied with our illusions, to grow arrogant and aggressive, to suppress innocent lives and to stockpile weapons. We stopped being our neighbor's keepers and stewards of our common home. We have ravaged the garden of the earth with war, and by our sins, we have broken the heart of our heavenly Father, who desires us to be brothers and sisters. We grew indifferent to everyone and everything except ourselves. Now with shame we cry out: Forgive us, Lord!

"Holy Mother, amid the misery of our sinfulness, amid our struggles and weaknesses, amid the mystery of iniquity that is evil and war, you remind us that God never abandons us, but continues to look upon us with love, ever ready to forgive us and raise us up to new life. He has given you to us and made your Immaculate Heart a refuge for the Church and for all humanity. By God's gracious will, you are ever with us; even in the most troubled moments of our history, you are there to guide us with tender love.

"We now turn to you and knock at the door of your heart. We are your beloved children. In every age you make yourself known to us, calling us to conversion. At this dark hour, help us and grant us your comfort. Say to us once more: 'Am I not here, I who am your Mother?' You are able to untie the knots of our hearts and of our times. In you we place our trust. We are confident that, especially in moments of trial, you will not be deaf to our supplication and will come to our aid.

"That is what you did at Cana in Galilee, when you interceded with Jesus and he worked the first of his signs. To preserve the joy of the wedding feast, you said to him: 'They have no wine' (Jn 2:3). Now, O Mother, repeat those words and that prayer, for in our own day we have run out of the wine of hope, joy has fled, fraternity has faded. We have forgotten our humanity and squandered the gift of peace. We opened our hearts to violence and destructiveness. How greatly we need your maternal help!

"Therefore, O Mother, hear our prayer.



"Star of the Sea, do not let us be shipwrecked in the tempest of war.

"Ark of the New Covenant, inspire projects and paths of reconciliation.

"Queen of Heaven, restore God's peace to the world.

"Eliminate hatred and the thirst for revenge, and teach us forgiveness.

"Free us from war, protect our world from the menace of nuclear weapons.

"Queen of the Rosary, make us realize our need to pray and to love.

"Queen of the Human Family, show people the path of fraternity.

"Queen of Peace, obtain peace for our world.

"O Mother, may your sorrowful plea stir our hardened hearts. May the tears you shed for us make this valley parched by our hatred blossom anew. Amid the thunder of weapons, may your prayer turn our thoughts to peace. May your maternal touch soothe those who suffer and flee from the rain of bombs. May your motherly embrace comfort those forced to leave their homes and their native land. May your Sorrowful Heart move us to compassion and inspire us to open our doors and to care for our brothers and sisters who are injured and cast aside.



"Holy Mother of God, as you stood beneath the cross, Jesus, seeing the disciple at your side, said: 'Behold your son' (Jn 19:26). In this way he entrusted each of us to you. To the disciple, and to each of us, he said: 'Behold, your Mother' (v. 27). Mother Mary, we now desire to welcome you into our lives and our history. At this hour, a weary and distraught humanity stands with you beneath the cross, needing to entrust itself to you and, through you, to consecrate itself to Christ. The people of Ukraine and Russia, who venerate you with great love, now turn to you, even as your heart beats with compassion for them and for all those peoples decimated by war, hunger, injustice and poverty.

"Therefore, Mother of God and our Mother, to your Immaculate Heart we solemnly entrust and consecrate ourselves, the Church and all humanity, especially Russia and Ukraine. Accept this act that we carry out with confidence and love. Grant that war may end and peace spread throughout the world. The 'Fiat' that arose from your heart opened the doors of history to the Prince of Peace. We trust that, through your heart, peace will dawn once more. To you we consecrate the future of the whole human family, the needs and expectations of every people, the anxieties and hopes of the world.

"Through your intercession, may God's mercy be poured out on the earth and the gentle rhythm of peace return to mark our days. Our Lady of the 'Fiat', on whom the Holy Spirit descended, restore among us the harmony that comes from God. May you, our 'living fountain of hope', water the dryness of our hearts. In your womb Jesus took flesh; help us to foster the growth of communion. You once trod the streets of our world; lead us now on the paths of peace. Amen." ❖

Pope Francis

Economic Democracy was conceived in 1917: the same year as the Apparitions at Fatima

Every year on September 29th we remember C. H. Douglas, the founder of the school of thought known as Economic Democracy. Douglas passed away in 1952 on this feast day of Saint Michael the Archangel.

Douglas, an engineer and economist, who developed the financial system named Economic Democracy died at his home in Fearnan, Scotland at the age of 73.

Who was Douglas and how is it that he addressed the issues of money and credit?

Born in Scotland in 1879, he graduated from Cambridge University with an honours degree in mathematics, and made engineering his profession.



Clifford Hugh Douglas

For a period of time, Douglas worked for the Westinghouse Company in the United States. Later he was sent to India, then a British colony, as Chief Engineer for the English branch of the company. He would later work in South America as Assistant Chief Engineer for the Buenos Aires & Pacific Railway.

Upon returning to England, he became Chief Engineer for the construction of the Post Office's electrical tube railway in London. During World War I, he was Assistant Superintendent of the Royal Aircraft Factory in Farnborough, England.

After the war, Douglas ran a small yacht-building yard in which he was helped by Mrs. Douglas, who was also an engineer.

Throughout his career, Douglas tackled and solved problems of a physical nature. However, he observed that even when there was a solution to a physical problem, many projects were halted because of purely financial considerations. That realization brought his engineer's mind to the study of financial questions.

In an address to members of the Canadian Club in Ottawa in 1923, Douglas explained how he was led to explore why and how a financial system could act like a very sick patient or an accomplished criminal.

While in India around 1908, the government asked him to survey the hydro-electric potential of a large territory. He found a great potential for water power, reported his findings, and asked what must be done next. Good, they said. But nothing was done, as there was no money!

Douglas found that conclusion unacceptable. This was at a time when manufacturers in Great Britain were finding it hard to obtain orders, and machinery was affordable. It was also a time when India needed electrical power. But the reasoning that the country had no money to develop its potential was a perfect example that something that was physically possible and desirable was paralyzed by limitations that were only financial.

Around that time, Douglas dined frequently with J.C.E. Branson, India's Controller General. Branson often discussed something he called "credit". Treasury officials in both India and Britain persisted in melting down and recoining rupees according to the "quantity theory of money". Yet, insisted Branson, silver and gold had nothing to do with the situation; it was almost entirely dependent upon credit. Douglas subsequently remarked that had he been given a short lecture on Mesopotamia, it would have been, at that time, just as intelligible. Nevertheless, Branson's ideas were pigeonholed in his mind.

Shortly before the First World War, Douglas was hired by the British government to build a railway in London for the Post Office from Paddington to White Chapel. There were no physical difficulties in realizing the project. All went well until he suddenly got the order to suspend work and pay off the men. Always for the same reason: insufficient money.

During the war, he was sent to the Farnborough Royal Aircraft Works to sort out an accounting muddle. It was not long before he determined that each week the cost prices of the goods produced were greater than the income distributed to workers in the form of wages and salaries. Prices were not in accordance with purchasing power! If this were the case in all industries, as he soon found out, how could the sum of wages pay for the prices of production?

Douglas also identified that once war was declared, there no longer existed a lack of money. He concluded there was nothing sacred about money. Money could appear all of a sudden, and all that was physically possible could indeed be made financially possible at all times, as was the case during the hostilities.

Douglas decided to articulate the defects of the financial system and formulate principles to fix it. Hence, the monetary reforms known as Social Credit [a term now co-opted by the CCP], or Economic Democracy, was developed.

An efficient weapon against communism

It is not my purpose to explain here the system that Douglas devised. In recalling his memory, I would like to show how Providence used him to give the world an efficient weapon to fight against communism and socialism in the temporal realm.

Communism is the most terrible plague mankind has ever experienced. It shows no respect for any value. For it, God does not exist. For it, the soul does not count. For it, man is nothing but a tool to be exploited and done away with. Communism rejects the right to property. It abolishes every freedom, tramples the right to life, as well as all rights and moral values while it pursues its ends.

It was in 1917 that, through a revolution, communism seized power in Russia: not to confine itself there, but with the intention of taking over the whole world by any means, whether legitimate or not, hypocritical or violent.

Against this conspiracy, God, in His goodness, and despite the sins of today's world, deigned to give us, from the start, a sovereign remedy. It is in that same year, 1917, that Our Lady brought her message to the three children of Fatima, ordering them to pass it on to the world: **Stop offending God; pray many rosaries; do penance while observing the duty of one's station in life; consecrate oneself and the world to the sorrowful and Immaculate Heart of Mary and receive Holy Communion in reparation on the First Saturdays. If her message was answered, Mary promised that Russia would be converted. If not, the errors that dominated Russia would spread throughout the world.**

This is the transcendent message which, had it been put into practice, would have saved the world from the vast expansion of communism in the past century, especially since the Second World War.

But in the temporal realm, Heaven deigned likewise to put into our hands, through Douglas, new knowledge that would be used to answer the economic and social arguments of the communists when they denounce existing evils in order to serve us their poison.

It was in 1917 that Douglas completed the observations and studies needed to finalize the system he described in his first book, titled *Economic Democracy.*

Douglas did not aim his study expressly against communism; he simply sought to correct what was wrong and tyrannical in the present financial system. But the implementation of the principles of Economic Democracy in economics and finance would replace an error by a truth and slavery by freedom. It so happens that truth is the means by which error is destroyed, and freedom the means to escape tyranny. Communism is a lie and a tyranny, and Economic Democracy strikes it head on.

The very guarantee of a Dividend to each individual, not bound to employment nor to any other condition, would render the forced recruitment of the communist economy impossible.

Besides, communism uses the struggle between classes and the denouncing of capitalism to win over the working classes. But Economic Democracy considers that everyone is a capitalist: all people are co-owners for life of the natural resources God placed on the earth, the true capital without which neither dollars nor manpower could produce anything. We are each co-heirs of the discoveries, inventions and technological improvements that were developed and passed on from generation to generation.

All would be entitled to the Dividend of a capitalist, on top of what they could earn by taking part in the exploitation of this huge common capital. What kind of class war, what kind of communist propaganda could survive a society where everyone is a capitalist, where everyone can access their generous share of the fruits of production?

If Economic Democracy has not yet prevailed in our economy it is because those who are in command, the dictators of finance, do not want to lose their power of domination. It is because a whole series of lackeys and footmen, politicians, elites, people with cushy jobs, with titles, Mammons of all kinds, hang on to what they have more than others who are less privileged. And they grovel to keep their advantage rather than stand up and demand the correction of a system that is hardly less odious than communism.

Fatima and Economic Democracy

But, welcomed or not, the light of Economic Democracy goes on shining. And the MICHAEL journal continues to form patriots and apostles to spread the truth. They are too aware of its possibilities to minimize its value.

In no way does this prevent the Social Crediters of our Movement from ranking Mary's message at Fatima first. Although they are of a different nature, Fatima and Economic Democracy go well together. Both answer a need for our times. With Fatima, it is Heaven which speaks to us directly; it is Mary who tells us what she wants of us; it is Mary telling us what she will obtain if we are faithful to her requests. This does not free man from the duty to resort to the knowledge and truths that are available to his mind. Economic Democracy is one of these great lights, one of those key ideas which, once acknowledged and put into application, can greatly contribute to the sound progress of civilization.

Anyone who studies Economic Democracy with an open mind and is open to the truth, feels more at ease with it than with the contradictions, distortions, falsehoods, and more, of the teachings which now prevail in our universities regarding finance and the distribution of goods that answer human needs. ✣

Louis Even

It is Urgent to end the Scandal of Poverty

Correcting the Financial System is Society's most Urgent Reform

***by* Alain Pilote**

No one can remain indifferent to the problems of poverty and hunger in the world today. Every day, an estimated 40,000 children die from hunger and disease simply because there is a lack of money. Over 1.7 billion people sort through garbage heaps in order to survive. Over 100 million children have been abandoned to live on the streets because parents can no longer support them.

The examples abound, but we need not go far to see poverty. The problem exists in developed countries and even in our own backyards. For example, in a large city such as Montreal, Canada, one out of three children go to school without having eaten breakfast.



Pope Francis

The Church is not indifferent to problems that jeopardize the salvation of souls, such as world hunger and indebtedness. Since Pope Leo XIII, and his 1891 encyclical, *Rerum Novarum,* the Church has given us a set of principles known as the Social Doctrine of the Church. Among its many objectives, the Social Doctrine calls for reforms of the financial and economic systems so that they serve the human person. Happiness in every nation would result from the application of these principles.

Successive pontiffs have drawn our attention to similar concerns. Pope Francis condemned the idolatry of money and the rule of the money-god. In a speech at the third World Meeting of Popular Movements, held at the Vatican on November 5, 2016, he said:

"There is a basic terrorism that is born of the global control of money on earth, and threatens the entire humanity… Almost a hundred years ago, Pope Pius XI foresaw the rise of a global economic dictatorship that he called the "international imperialism of money" (*Quadragesimo Anno*, May 15, 1931, n. 109). That was in 1931! We are in this audience hall named after Paul VI, and it was Paul VI who, some 50 years ago, denounced the "new and abusive form of economic domination on the social, cultural and even political level" (*Octogesima Adveniens*, May 14, 1971, n. 44). The entire social doctrine of the Church and the magisterium of my predecessors rejects the idolatry of money that reigns rather than serves, which tyrannizes and terrorizes humanity."

Pope Francis ended his speech at the UN with comments taken from his 2013 apostolic exhortation, *Evangelii Gaudium* (paragraph 202): **"As long as the problems of the poor are not radically resolved by rejecting the absolute autonomy of markets and financial speculation and by attacking the structural causes of inequality, no solution will be found for the world's problems or, for that matter, to any problems. Inequality is the root of social ills."**

In June 2013, Pope Francis wrote to the president of the G8 Summit, British Prime Minister David Cameron: **"Every economic and political theory or action must set about providing each inhabitant of the planet with the minimum wherewithal to live in dignity and freedom, with the possibility of supporting a family, educating children, praising God and developing one's own human potential. This is the main thing; in the absence of such a vision, all economic activity is meaningless."**

Other pontiffs wrote similarly concerning the present economic order. For example, in his first encyclical, *Redemptor Hominis* (March 4, 1979), Pope St. John Paul II pointed to: **"the indispensable transformations of the structures of economic life", to "poverty amidst plenty that brings into question the financial and monetary mechanisms" and to the fact that "man cannot become the slave of economic systems."**

On the occasion of the 6th UN Conference on Trade and Development, on September 26, 1985, John Paul II said:

"Again, I want to tackle a very delicate and painful issue. I mean the torment of the representatives of several countries, who no longer know how to face the fearful problem of indebtedness. A structural reform of the world financial system is, without doubt, one of the initiatives that seem the most urgent and



Every day, over 40,000 children die of hunger or diseases because of a lack of money.

necessary."

The Church has given us the moral foundation and principles upon which all financial and economic systems must be evaluated. According to the Second Vatican Council, the laity is called to renew the temporal order, bringing it in line with God's plan. We are called to develop concrete solutions to establish an economic system that is faithful to the Gospel teachings and to the principles of the Social Doctrine of the Church.

Economic Democracy

For this reason, Louis Even undertook to spread the doctrine of Economic Democracy, or Social Credit: a set of principles that were first articulated by Scottish engineer, Clifford Hugh Douglas, in 1918. "Social Credit" means social money, issued by society, versus "bank credit", the money issued by the private banking system. When Louis Even first encountered Social Credit in 1935, he at once understood how its principles embodied Church teachings on social justice. Undoubtedly, the intentions of the pontiffs addressing economic and financial matters would be met in Social Credit.

No to Communism

The Social Doctrine of the Church, confined to the realm of principles, stands above existing economic systems. An economic system can only be 'good' to the extent that it applies the principles of justice taught by the Church. This is why Pope St. John Paul II wrote in his encyclical, *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* (December 30, 1987):

"The tension between East and West is an opposition... between two concepts of the development of individuals and peoples, both concepts being imperfect and in need of radical correction... This is one of the reasons why the Church's social doctrine adopts a critical attitude towards both liberal capitalism and marxist collectivism."

It is understandable why the Church condemns communism and marxist collectivism with their goals of destroying private property, the family and religion. Pope Pius XI called this political ideology anti-Christian and "intrinsically evil". But what is the basis for the Church's condemnation of capitalism? Is capitalism not better than communism?

Yes to Capitalism, After it is Rectified

The Church does not condemn capitalism, per se. On the contrary, the Church wishes that private property and free enterprise were universally instituted so that everyone might become the true owners of capital and be true "capitalists". Pope St. John XXIII, in the encyclical, *Mater et Magistra* (May 15, 1961, nn. 114-115), said:

"The dignity of the human person necessarily requires the right of using external goods in order to live according to the right norm of nature. And to this right corresponds a most serious obligation which requires that, so far as possible, there be given to all an opportunity of possessing private property... Therefore, it is necessary to modify economic and social life so that the way is made easier for widespread private possession of such things as durable goods, homes, gardens, tools requisite for artisan enterprises and family-type farms, investments in enterprises of medium or large size."

Capitalism has Been Vitiated by the Financial System

The Church finds no fault with private property or with free enterprise. Rather, the fault rests in the present financial system. This system dominates the human person rather than serving, and, in fact, subverts capitalism. Pope Pius XI wrote in *Quadragesimo Anno*: "Capitalism itself is not to be condemned. And surely it is not vicious of its very nature, but it has been vitiated."

What the Church condemns is the financial system, not capitalism. Paul VI explained the problem is "the calamitous system that accompanies capitalism". In his encyclical, *Populorum Progressio* (March 26, 1967, n. 26), he wrote:

"This unchecked liberalism leads to dictatorship rightly denounced by Pope Pius XI as producing 'the international imperialism of money'. One cannot condemn such abuses too strongly because — let us again recall solemnly — the economy should be at the service of man. But if it is true that a type of capitalism has been the source of excessive suffering, ▶

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injustices and fratricidal conflicts whose effects still persist, it would be wrong to attribute to industrialization itself evils that belong to the calamitous system that accompanied it. On the contrary, one must recognize in all justice the irreplaceable contribution made by the organization and the growth of industry to the task of development."

The Flaw in the System: Money is Created by Banks as a Debt

The financial system has been diverted from its goal and does not fulfill its true purpose. Money is rightly a tool of service. But, bankers, by appropriating control over its creation, have contorted money into an instrument of domination. In *Quadragesimo Anno*, Pope Pius XI stated:



Pope Pius XI

"This power becomes particularly irresistible when exercised by those who, because they hold and control money, are able also to govern credit and determine its allotment, for that reason supplying, so to speak, the lifeblood to the entire economic body, and grasping, as it were, in their hands the very soul of production, so that no one dare breathe against their will."

Since banks only issue money as an interest-bearing loan, we see that all money is created as a debt. No nation can repay its debt under the current system. Further, each loan that is repaid to the bank ceases to exist. The money that formed the loan is withdrawn from circulation.

The fundamental flaw in the system is that when banks create new money in the form of loans, borrowers are expected to pay back more money than the bank created. Banks create the principal amount but not the interest. As it is impossible to pay back money that does not exist, the only solution is to borrow even more money in order to pay the interest on the principal. Thus, unpayable debts accumulate.

Creating money as debt is the mechanism used to impose control, not only upon individuals but on the entire world.

"Among the actions and attitudes opposed to the will of God, the good of neighbour and the 'structures' created by them, two are very typical: on the one hand, the all-consuming desire for profit, and on the other, the thirst for power, with the intention of imposing one's will upon others" (Pope St. John Paul II, *Sollicitudo rei socialis*, n. 37).

If there was only $1 in circulation in the country, it had to have been loaned by a bank. Let us suppose the bank lent $1 at a 6% rate of interest. At the end of one year, $1 must be paid back to the bank, plus 6% interest, or 6 cents. The fact is that only $1 existed in the country, not $1.06. It is impossible to pay back both the principal and the interest as the interest, 6 cents, does not exist; it was never created.

For money to remain in circulation, debts and bankruptcies will and must accumulate. Creating a nation's money as a debt is an absurdity. Worse still, governments persist in borrowing money from private banks; money that a government could create itself, interest-free. This practice forces responsibility for an astronomical debt's interest charges onto an unwitting public. There should be no debt, whatsoever! The first duty of a sovereign government is to create and issue money according to the needs of the citizenry. The greatest betrayal in all of history is the surrender of this primary function to banks, which are private corporations.

Banks do not give money its value. Value originates in a nation's productive potential. The banker produces nothing whatsoever. All he does is create figures, or numbers, that allow a nation to make use of its own productive capacity; its own wealth. Through a Central Credit Authority, the government could just as easily create figures and numbers without resorting to private banks and reaping unpayable debts.

As money is basically a social tool, the Social Credit philosophy holds that money must be issued by society for the common good, and not by private bankers for profit. In *Quadragesimo Anno*, Pope Pius XI stated:

"There are certain categories of goods for which one can maintain with reason that they must be reserved to the collectivity when they come to confer such an economic power that it cannot, without danger to the common good, be left to the care of private individuals."

The Goal of Economics: The Satisfaction of Human Needs

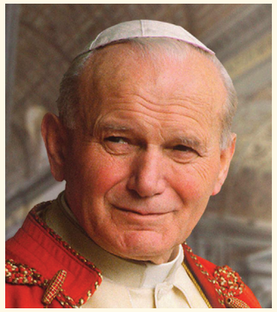
The aim of both the economic and financial systems is the service of man, according to Church teaching. The economy of a nation is required to ensure the satisfaction of human needs. Pope Pius XI, in *Quadragesimo Anno,* further clarified the objectives of an economic system:

"For then only will the economic and social organism be soundly established and attain its end when it secures for all and each those goods which the wealth and resources of nature, technical achievement, and the social organization of economic affairs can give.

"These goods must be sufficient to supply all needs and an honest livelihood, and to uplift men to that higher level of prosperity and culture which, provided it be used with prudence, is not only no hindrance but is of singular help to virtue."

Earthly Goods are Intended for All

Pope Pius stated that "each and everyone" is entitled to material goods. This statement underlines the Church's social doctrine that states that earthly goods are intended for all.



Saint John Paul II

"God intended the earth and all that it contains for the use of every human being and people. Thus, as all men follow justice and unite in charity, created goods should abound for them on a reasonable basis... The right to have a share of earthly goods sufficient for oneself and one's family belongs to everyone" (Second Vatican Council, Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, *Gaudium et Spes*, n. 69).

The Church faults capitalism because it does not ensure that all human beings have access to a minimum of material goods to allow for a decent standard of living. As well, even in the most advanced countries, there are many who do not sate their hunger. The 'universal destination of goods' is not attained. There is an abundance of products, but sadly, the system of distribution fails.

"God gave the earth to the whole human race for the sustenance of all of its members, without excluding or favouring anyone. This is the foundation of the universal destination of the earth's goods... It is a strict duty of justice and truth not to allow fundamental human needs to remain unsatisfied, and not to allow those burdened by such needs to perish" (St. John Paul II, *Centesimus annus*, nn. 31 & 34).

The Social Credit Dividend

The Social Credit Dividend, an income given to each of the country's citizens, would ensure that goods are distributed universally. Each person would be made a true capitalist whose basic needs would be met without either plundering the rich or through taxation. The Dividend is justified on a twofold basis: God gave us abundant natural resources and because we are each beneficiaries of developments in technology shared from one generation to the next.

"Through his work man enters into two inheritances: the inheritance of what is given to the whole of humanity in the resources of nature, and the inheritance of what others have already developed on the basis of those resources, primarily by developing technology, that is to say, by producing a whole collection of increasingly perfect instruments for work" (St. John Paul II, *Laborem exercens*, September 15, 1981, n. 12).

The Social Credit Dividend is the logical solution to the fact that human labor is being replaced by machinery. Not implementing Social Credit results in the creation of useless jobs. To justify these jobs, artificial needs are created by persuasive advertising in order that the public buy products that are not genuinely needed. Hence, the term "consumerism" was coined.

Another problem we have noted is the process of planned obsolescence. Goods are manufactured to last only a short time so that more can be made, more sold, and more money gained. This results in wasted natural resources and harm caused to the environment.

Pope Paul VI wrote in 1967 in P*opulorum Progressio*, **"More than any other, the individual who is animated by true charity labors skillfully to discover the causes of misery, to find the means to combat it, and to overcome it resolutely."**

Louis Even discovered the source of people's misery: the creation and control of money by private banks. He also found the means by which to combat this fraud: the education of the public. That is why he founded the Movement, MICHAEL. Let all those who thirst for justice study and spread the teachings of the Movement to others. ❖

Alain Pilote

Mrs. Mireille Beauchamp (née Lajoie) of Sarnia, Ontario passed away on March 1, 2022 at the age of 91. When I first heard the news of her death, a smile came over my face and I felt joy in my heart. What a beautiful crown must have awaited this woman who had remained an active loyal Pilgrim of Saint Michael for close to 50 years. She was a truly humble woman who was not afraid to make sacrifices to work for the salvation of souls.



When I went to see her in Sarnia, Ontario where she lived, I learned that she was also an active apostle, organizing leaflet assaults, doing the door-to-door Rosary Crusade every Saturday, and helping with a weekly Rosary meeting where people would meet in different homes to pray a fifteen-decade Rosary and discuss issues from MICHAEL. And she always wore her white beret everywhere she went. She was certainly a pillar of our Work in her area.

Her son, Greg Beauchamp, became a full-time Pilgrim of Saint Michael for over 6 years, doing extensive apostolate work in several parts of Canada. His mother was an inspiration to him. We give our farewell to a giant of an apostle. We pray to God that He find us more sincere apostles like Mireille. May she rest in peace. ❖

Melvin Sickler

The Problems of Funding a Universal Basic Income by Taxation

The following was presented by the Louis Even Institute for Social Justice at the 18th Annual North American Basic Income Guarantee (NABIG) Congress, held June 15-16, 2019 at the Silberman School of Social Work (SSSW) at Hunter College in New York City.

The circumstances described herein do not capture all the issues which impact the funding of a Universal Basic Income by taxation in 2022. Since March 2020, governments around the world have stomped on citizens' civil liberties and freedoms, strangled small and medium sized businesses, and printed money without restraint, thereby enormously increasing both national debts and inflation. The topic is relevant though as legislation was introduced in December 2021 in Canada, which if passed, would establish the first national framework for an unconditional Guaranteed Livable Basic Income for all persons over 17 across the country.

The reader is invited to consider the following presentation with a nostalgic nod to a recent time in history before the globalists launched the Great Reset.

Relying on bank credit, indirectly through taxation or directly via borrowing, to fund a Universal Basic Income (UBI) scheme is not tenable. A fundamental reform of the financial system is the only viable means to ensure a future in which sustainable purchasing power is in the hands of the Canadian consumer. There is no need to take from Peter to give to Paul. Not one penny of anyone's income would need to be redistributed. There is enough for everyone to have an income, a UBI, under a corrected financial system as advocated by Douglas Social Credit.

In the current framework, society cannot afford financing a UBI. Issuing each Canadian adult $1,000 per month would cost $322 billion annually. All federal spending in 2017/18 was almost that amount at $304.7 billion.

Even with savings gained by collapsing some of the patchwork of social welfare programs, the increased costs in taxes to implement a UBI stagger the imagination.

The relatively generous redistribution of tax income in place today has not solved our social problems, and we can reasonably conclude that more taxation is not the answer. We should not expect that a UBI, funded conventionally, would provide a solution; rather, it would magnify the inherent problems of taxation.

Taxes are already steep. We would be freer and happier if the tax lash, and its reach, was light rather than so heavy, but unfortunately it is not so. Satisfying the tax demands of all three levels of government for the average Canadian family takes 43.6% of its income. Tax Freedom Day for Canadians was June 10 this year!

There are other issues with taxation. Government spending does not necessarily favor community interests but often rather supports partisan interests. Future prosperity is compromised because of deficit spending, borrowing and the scourge of national debts. We simply cannot rely on corporate Canada and America to fund a UBI when the global economy and tax havens allow for easy corporate relocations. Further, it is not just the super rich who are paying taxes. Corporate taxes are downloaded into prices, and the ordinary consumer bears their cost; the burden is significant and growing for individuals and families. The Fraser Institute determined that the total tax bill for the average Canadian family has increased by 2,112% since 1961. Taxes have grown more rapidly than any single expenditure in a family's budget in the intervening 60 years. (Expenditures on shelter increased just 1480%, clothing 732%, and food by 625% during the same period.)

Personal income tax was introduced as a temporary measure in both Canada and the U.S., about 100 years ago, and was set at a level that affected very few citizens. We value transparency and accountability but the tax system is the opposite. In its original form, Canada's tax code was 11 pages long. A century later, it is more than 200 times that length and is complex beyond the capacity of the average taxpayer to decipher. Provincial and municipal tax codes add further to the burdensome and tangled web of tax obligations.

One of the problems with all this tax collection and government spending is that the individual forfeits the ability to support causes important to him or her and is forced to support causes that may be repugnant. It seems that no aspect of life is exempt from taxation or from tax increases. In June, business owners rallied at Calgary City Hall to protest hikes in property taxes of up to 45% from the previous year. Canada introduced a national carbon tax on April 1st despite staunch opposition from several of the provinces. The carbon tax will cost the average family an additional $258 this year. With annual increases for five years, the cost for the same family will skyrocket to $648 by 22/23.

The system diverts our attention from good old-fashioned living to sorting out how we can hold on to more of our income and some of our freedom. Not only does everyone pay taxes but many are commissioned as unpaid tax collectors, including manufacturers, employers, merchants and retailers, utility providers, restaurant and gas station owners. There is the tyrannical element, too, with the state threats of fines and incarceration for tax crimes. There are no options to sit on the sidelines; like it or not, we all must play the game.

It is a fact that governments will have a tough time funding a UBI by redistributing tax dollars as jobs in the economy shrink due to automation. We have to wonder not only who will be the tax base in the new economy but how will a much smaller workforce feel about their tax obligations? An Oxford University study estimated that 47% of jobs can be automated from a technological capability point of view and will be eliminated within 25 years. Another forecast is that by 2030, 80% of jobs that pay $20 or less per hour will disappear.

Given that taxing the fraction of the population who will still have jobs to support the remaining number is problematic, should we consider increasing tax revenue from corporate profits, honing in on the super-rich to fund a UBI? Will we drive both out of the country if we try? High marginal personal income tax rates are disincentives for earning more and incentives for skilled and highly paid workers to leave the country. The same is true for corporations. In a global economy, high corporate tax rates and high infrastructure costs result in corporate relocations. Although initially governments gain revenue with high marginal tax rates, eventually the jurisdiction will lose its tax base when head offices, capital equipment and jobs relocate.

Ontario, Canada has the second highest combined tax rate of the 61 jurisdictions in North America and has the highest cost for hydroelectricity. Given a choice, these conditions will neither attract nor keep businesses and manufacturers in our midst. As a result, the province, which was once the country's economic engine, has a failed manufacturing base.

Another consideration is whether redistributing tax dollars from Peter to pay Paul will increase Paul's influence on public policy and enhance his marginalized influence in society. Presently, lower income Canadians wield little political power and do not significantly influence the social landscape.

Can palliative measures funded by taxation achieve the goals of equality and justice? If we cannot afford a UBI, which is true in the current financial framework, would a more limited scheme correct the issues of poverty? Fifty years ago, in Canada, the Croll Report recommended a limited guaranteed annual income to address poverty. Despite generous tax transfers to low-income Canadians since then, income redistribution has not yet solved the problem. In 2011, Canada ranked 21st out of 27 OECD countries in terms of poverty levels, with 1 in 7 qualifying as poor.

It is not likely that a relatively more affordable limited basic income scheme will fix the problems of power and class division. In this scenario, it is foreseeable that governments would add and cobble together yet more tax-funded programs in an attempt to ameliorate issues of social inequality with an almost predictable lack of success.

The issues of deficit spending and the debt burden are an inevitable consequence of the state's incapacity to tax the population sufficiently to meet its spending habits. When governments engage in deficit spending, they create future taxes against revenue and diverting tremendous resources from meeting the current needs of the population because of servicing the national debt.

It is fair to conclude that financing a UBI should not be sourced from borrowing or taxation. This is so even if Canada was not facing a reduced tax base slashed by job losses due to automation and the global economy. The conclusion holds even if wasteful government spending was replaced by sober spending. If governments ceased pandering to special interest groups, and if the problems of deficit spending and staggering debt were solved, we would maintain the same conclusion. Even if redistributing wealth via a system of taxation resulted in equal access to power and influence for all, we would still reject taxation as the correct means of financing a UBI.

What we must do is solve the problem, which is insufficient purchasing power, at its root. We need more money, but that does not necessarily mean that we need more taxation in order to get it. We can be liberated from public debts, and freed from the problems of being taxed nearly to death, by having a sound financial system that distributes a Dividend, a form of UBI, to all its citizens.

Money is a social instrument and medium of exchange that should be managed by society in the public interest. Clifford Hugh Douglas argued that issuing a Dividend to each person sufficient to have a decent living was justified based on the legacy each of us inherits at birth. The Douglas Social Credit argument is that the earth, with its abundant natural resources, and the accrued know-how of technological advancements made since the discovery of the wheel, rightly belongs to each member of society. We have a tremendous legacy that forms the natural foundation of wealth. In a just financial system, money, Financial Credit as it were, would simply reflect this foundation, this Real Credit, as he called it.

Governments, as trustees of society, would exercise their authority to create money for the common good and distribute a Dividend, sufficient to afford basic needs, to each citizen. Society can and should reclaim its authority to issue and manage its own money supply without recourse to private banks which currently enjoy a monopoly on creating money. Why not have society provide credit to its population rather than relying on private banks to issue debt?

With financial reform, we could monetize Canada's natural wealth and productive capacity and issue a Dividend, a form of UBI, to each person without conditions. There is no reason why society could not directly fund infrastructure, issue loans to business and industry AND fund a Dividend distributed to each citizen. Indeed, there is every reason to pursue such a financial reform. ❖



THE PURITY OF SOUL NECESSARY FOR HOLY COMMUNION

By Fr. Stefano Manelli, O.F.M. Conv., S.T.D.

For Catholics, to receive the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ in Holy Communion while in the state of mortal sin (having committed a mortal or grave sin which has not been confessed and forgiven in Sacramental Confession) is a mortal sin of sacrilege.

What is there to say about the great purity of soul with which the saints received the Bread of Angels? We know that they had a great delicacy of conscience which was truly angelic. Aware of their own misery, they tried to present themselves to Jesus "holy and immaculate" (Eph. 1:4) repeating with the publican *"O God, be merciful to me a sinner"* (Luke 18:13), and took recourse with great care to the cleansing of Confession.

When St. Jerome was brought Holy Viaticum at the end of his life, the saint prostrated himself on the ground in adoration and was heard to repeat with profound humility the words of St. Elizabeth and those of St. Peter, *"How is this that my Lord should come to me? Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord"* (Luke 5:8). How many times was the angelic and seraphic St. Gemma tempted to not receive Holy Communion, holding herself to be nothing other than a vile dunghill!

Padre Pio of Pietrelcina repeated to his brethren with trepidation, *"God sees blights even in the angels. What must He see in me!"* For this reason he was very diligent in making his sacramental Confessions.

"Oh, if we could only understand Who is that God Whom we receive in Holy Communion, then what purity of heart we would bring to Him!" exclaimed St. Mary Magdalen of Pazzi.

For this reason, St. Hugh, St. Thomas Aquinas, St. Francis de Sales, St. Ignatius, St. Charles Borromeo, St. Francis Borgia, St. Louis Bertrand, St. Joseph Cupertino, St. Leonard of Port Maurice and many other saints went to Confession every day before celebrating Holy Mass.

St. Camillus de Lellis was a priest who never celebrated Holy Mass without first going to Confession, because he wanted to at least "dust off" his soul. Once, at sundown in a public square in Livorno, before taking leave of a priest of the same religious order, foreseeing that he would not have another priest to confess to on the following morning before his Mass, he paused, took off his hat, made the sign of the Cross and went to Confession right there in the square to his confrere.

St. Alphonsus, St. Joseph Cafasso, St. John Bosco, St. Pius X, and Padre Pio of Pietrelcina went to Confession often. Why did St. Pius X wish to lower the age for First Holy Communion to seven years of age if not to allow Jesus to enter into the innocent hearts of children, which are so similar to angels? And why was Padre Pio so delighted when they brought him children five years old who were prepared for First Holy Communion?

The saints applied to perfection the directive of the Holy Spirit, *"Let everyone first examine himself, and then eat of that Bread and drink of that Chalice; because he who eats and drinks unworthily, eats and drinks unto his own condemnation"* (1Cor. 11:28-29).

To examine themselves, to repent, to accuse themselves in Confession and to ask pardon of God, and in this way every day profit from the Sacrament of Confession, was something natural for the saints. How fortunate they were to be capable of so much! The fruits ▶

of sanctification were constant and abundant because the purity of soul with which each saint welcomed into himself Jesus, *"the Wheat of the elect,"* (Zach. 9:17) *was like the good ground "... which brings forth fruit in patience"* (Luke 8:15).

St. Anthony Mary Claret illustrated this fact very well: *"When we go to Holy Communion, all of us receive the same Lord Jesus, but not all receive the same grace nor are the same effects produced in all. This comes from our greater or lesser disposition. To explain this fact, I will take an example from nature. Consider the process of grafting: the more similar the one plant is to the other, the better the graft will succeed. Likewise, the more resemblance there is between the one that goes to Communion and Jesus, so much the better will be the fruits of Holy Communion."* The Sacrament of Confession is in fact the excellent means whereby the similarity between the soul and Jesus is restored.

For this reason, St. Francis de Sales taught his spiritual children *"Go to Confession with humility and devotion... if it is possible, every time that you go to Holy Communion, even though you do not feel in your conscience any remorse of mortal sin."*

In this regard it is well to recall the teaching of the Church. Holy Communion must be received only while one is in the grace of God. Therefore, when one has committed a mortal sin, even if one has repented of it and has a great desire to receive Holy Communion, it is necessary and indispensable to confess first before receiving Holy Communion. Otherwise one commits the grave sin of sacrilege, for which Jesus said to St. Bridget, *"There does not exist on earth a punishment which is great enough to punish it sufficiently!"*

If you want great purity of soul in order to receive Jesus, no purity shines brighter than that which one obtains when he makes a good confession, where the cleansing Blood of Jesus renders the repentant soul divinely bright and beautiful.



St. Ambrose said that persons who commit this sacrilege "come into church with a few sins, and leave it burdened with many." St. Cyril wrote something stronger: *"Those who make a sacrilegious Communion receive Satan and Jesus Christ into their hearts – Satan, that they may let him rule, and Jesus Christ, that they may offer Him in sacrifice as a Victim to Satan."*

Thus the Catechism of the Council of Trent (De Euch., v.i.) declares: *"As of all the sacred mysteries, none can compare with the Eucharist, so likewise for no crime is there heavier punishment to be feared from God than for the unholy or irreligious use by the faithful of that which contains the very Author and Source of holiness."*

On the other hand, Confession made before Holy Communion to render a soul, already in the state of Sanctifying Grace, more pure and more beautiful is something precious even though not required. It is precious because it clothes the soul with a more beautiful "wedding garment" (cf Matt. 22:12) with which it may take its place at the table of the angels.

For this reason the most conscientious souls have always made frequent use (at least once each week) of the sacramental cleansing of absolution, even for venial sins. If you want great purity of soul in order to receive Jesus, no purity shines brighter than that which one obtains when he makes a good confession, where the cleansing Blood of Jesus renders the repentant soul divinely bright and beautiful. *"The soul that receives the Divine Blood becomes beautiful, as being clothed in a more precious garment, and it appears so beautiful aglow that ,if you could see it, you would be tempted to adore it,"* declared St. Magdalen de Pazzi. ✞

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Saint Maximilian Kolbe
Kight of the Immaculate

Among the saints who lived their consecration to the Virgin Mary in a remarkable way, one figure stands out in particular: Saint Maximilian Kolbe, a Polish Franciscan priest who died a martyr's death in 1941 and was canonized by Saint John Paul II in 1982. His entire life was an exemplary testimony to his absolute love and trust in the Immaculate Virgin. Here is a summary of his life as told in the Letter from Saint-Joseph de Clairval Abbey in France.[1]

One day in 1915, an elderly gentleman was raging about the Pope and the Church before Brother Maximilian Kolbe. The young Franciscan struck up a conversation with the man. "I know what I'm talking about, youngster! I am a doctor of philosophy," the unknown gentleman exclaimed. "So am I," answered the little Brother who was twenty-one years old but looked sixteen. Dumbfounded, the man changed his tone. Then, patiently, and with inexorable logic, the Brother took up one by one each of the man's arguments and turned them against him. A witness said, "Towards the end of the discussion, the miscreant remained silent. He seemed to be in deep thought." Who then was this bold apostle, whom Paul VI described as a "type of man on whom we can model our art of living, recognizing in him the privilege the Apostle Paul had of being able to say to the Christian people: Be ye followers of me, as I also am of Christ (1 Cor 11: 1)"?

The two crowns

Raymond Kolbe, the future Saint Maximilian (canonized by Pope John Paul II on October 10, 1982), was born on January 7, 1894, of modest Polish weavers. His father was very mild, a bit reserved. His mother, Mary, was energetic and laborious. Besides two children who died very young, the household counted three boys, Francis, Raymond and Joseph. Raymond was violent, independent, undertaking and stubborn. Naturally lively and impulsive, he often tried his mother's patience, so that one day she cried out: "My poor child, what will become of you?"



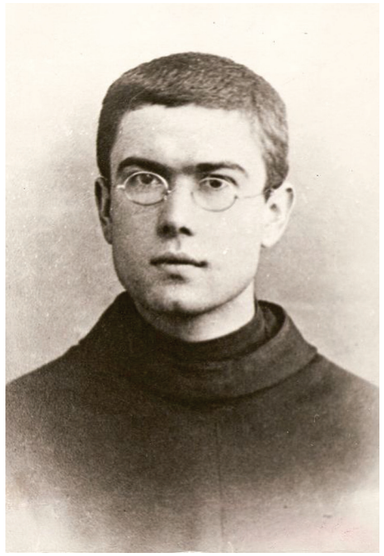
This reprimand brought on a true conversion in the little boy. He became calm and obedient. His mother noticed that he often disappeared behind the armoire where there was a little altar of Our Lady of Czestochowa. There, he prayed and wept. His mother asked him. "Raymond, tell me why you are crying like a girl?" He replied, **"When you said to me: `Raymond, what will become of you?' I was really troubled and I went to ask the Blessed Virgin what I would become. The Blessed Virgin appeared to me, holding two crowns, one white and the other red. She looked at me lovingly and asked me which one I chose; the white signified that I would always be pure and the red that I would die a martyr. I answered: I'll take both of them!"**



Ever after that meeting, the child's soul had an unwavering love for the Blessed Virgin. Reading the works of Saint Louis-Marie Grignion de Montfort taught him that 'God wishes to reveal and unveil Mary, the masterpiece of His handiwork, in these latter times when Mary must shine, more than ever, in mercy, in strength and in grace' (*Treatise on True Devotion to Mary*). The young Raymond gave his life ▶

1 https://www.clairval.com/index.php/en/letter/?id=54)

to the Blessed Virgin. Marian consecration is a gift of love which offers and ties the entire person to the Immaculata. Saint Maximilian would later write, "In the same way that the Immaculata belongs to Jesus, to God, so also each soul, through her and in her, will belong to Jesus, to God, and in a much better way than without her." In fact, "The Catholic Church has always asserted that imitation of the Virgin Mary not only does not turn one away from the effort of faithfully following Christ, but that it makes it more loving and less difficult" (Paul VI, Apostolic Exhortation *Signum magnum*, May 13, 1967, No. 8).



Drawn by Mary, Raymond Kolbe embraced the religious life. On September 4, 1910, he took the Franciscan habit and the name Brother Maximilian Mary. In the autumn of 1912, his superiors sent him to the Gregorian University in Rome. His studies did not turn him away from his ideal of sanctity: to bring the greatest possible glory to God.

"The glory of God consists in the salvation of souls. The salvation and the perfect sanctification of souls – naturally starting with our own soul – already redeemed at great price by the death of Jesus on the Cross, this is our noble ideal." But the road to salvation is found in accomplishing the will of God. The young Brother also wrote to his mother: "I don't wish either health or prosperity for you. Why? Because I would wish you better than that, something so good that God Himself couldn't wish something better for you: that in all things the will of this Most Good Father be done in you, Mom, that you know in all things how to accomplish the will of God! That is the very best that I can wish for you."

Under Lucifer's feet

It was at Rome that the Blessed Virgin inspired him to found the "Mission of the Immaculata." At the time, freemasonry was very prominent in the eternal city. Brother Maximilian explained, "When the freemasons started to go out of their way to be confrontational and raised their standard beneath the windows of the Vatican, this standard on which, on a black background, Lucifer crushed the Archangel Saint Michael under his feet, and when they started to distribute pamphlets attacking the Holy Father, the idea came to me to found an association whose goal would be to combat the freemasons and Lucifer's other fiends."

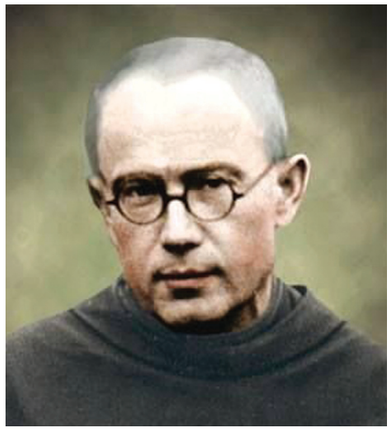
Freemasonry is a secret society with a thousand offshoots which endeavors to run the world according to principles excluding the authority of God and His Revelation. "Since the absolutely proper and special mission of the Catholic Church is to receive in their fullness and to keep in an incorruptible purity, the doctrines revealed by God, as well as the established authority to teach them, with the other helps given by Heaven in order to save mankind, it is against the Church that the freemasons deploy the most relentlessly and direct their most violent attacks" (Leo XIII, Encyclical *Humanum genus*, April 20, 1884).

But freemasonry also destroys lay society, because its principles contradict natural law and sap "the foundations of justice and honesty" (*ibid*). Quite often, the only rule that it sets forth for man is the satisfaction of his desires. On the other hand, its desire to make the State completely foreign to religion, and to administer public affairs as if God did not exist is "a boldness without equal" (*ibid*). Indeed, in the same way that each man has the obligation "to offer to God the most grateful worship, because it is to Him that we owe our life and the goods that go with it, so also a similar duty exists for peoples and societies" (*ibid*).

The Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, in a notice dated November 26, 1983, confirmed the teaching of Leo XIII: "The judgment of the Church on Masonic associations remains unchanged, because their principles have always been considered irreconcilable with the doctrine of the Church, and belonging to such organizations continues to be forbidden by the Church. The faithful who belong to Masonic organizations are in a state of serious sin and may not receive Holy Communion."

Today, freemasonry exalts the "culture of death" by favoring contraception, abortion and euthanasia. It contributes to the ruin of the family. For the freemason Pierre Simon, who wrote, in 1979, "my true being is no longer my body but my lodge (Masonic)," life is "no longer a gift of God, but a material to be managed It loses the absolute character that it had in Genesis." Thus, one can manipulate it however one wants. Likewise, "sexuality will be dissociated from procreation, and procreation from fatherhood. It is the entire concept of the family that is about to topple." Similar principles govern numerous organizations at the present time which, although not overtly tied to freemasonry, work in the same spirit. Pope John Paul II said, in Denver, on August 4, 1993: "The threats to life do not weaken with time. On the contrary, they are taking on enormous dimensions They are threats programmed in a scientific and systematic manner."

In the presence of these same forces of evil, already at work in his time, Saint Maximilian shows us a beautiful example of apostolic zeal. Following Saint Paul, he endeavored to overcome evil by good (Rom 12: 21). Strong in his Faith and solid theology, he turned to the Virgin Mary and her Divine Son. In order to come down and save us, the Word of God deigned to become man, and chose as His Mother a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary (Luke 1: 26-27). The Mother of the Saviour was provided by God with gifts commensurate with such a great responsibility. At the time of the Annunciation, the Angel Gabriel greeted her as full of grace (Luke 1: 28). Explaining this expression, Pope Pius IX in 1854 proclaimed the dogma of the Immaculate Conception: "The Blessed Virgin Mary was, from the first moment of her conception, by singular grace and favor of God Almighty, based on the merits of Jesus Christ, Saviour of mankind, kept whole from any stain of original sin." Never having known sin, the Immaculata possesses an immense power against evil and she thus became the "Mother of all Grace."



"Never be afraid of loving the Blessed Virgin too much. You can never love Her more than Jesus did." — St. Maximilian Kolbe

To save all souls

Powerful against evil, Our Lady is victorious over the demon. Also, Brother Maximilian founded the "Mission of the Immaculata" on this word of God to the serpent: She (the Blessed Virgin) shall crush thy head (Gen 3:15-Douay-Rheims [Vulgate] version). The saint linked this divine prophecy to the liturgical assertion: "Through thee alone, Mary, are all heresies conquered." The goal of this Mission was to obtain "the conversion of sinners, heretics, schismatics, etc., and particularly freemasons; and the sanctification of all men under the direction and through the mediation of the Immaculate Blessed Virgin Mary."

In his zeal, Saint Maximilian desired the conversion of all sinners, because he would never say "to save souls," but "all souls." This desire corresponds to God's plan. For God so loved the world, as to give His only begotten Son; that whosoever believeth in Him, may not perish, but may have life everlasting (John 3: 16). Because He first loved us, and sent His Son to be a propitiation for our sins (1 John 4: 10). And He is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world (1 John 2: 2).

The members of the Mission would offer themselves completely to the Blessed Virgin Mary Immaculate, as instruments in her hand, and would wear the Miraculous Medal. They would daily recite the following prayer: "O Mary conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to Thee and for all those who have not recourse to Thee, most particularly for the freemasons and for all those who are commended to Thee."

Brother Maximilian's health was not strong. Despite that, he studied very courageously, passed his exams brilliantly and became a doctor of philosophy in 1915. He obtained, with the same success, a doctorate in theology four years later. Meanwhile, he was ordained to the priesthood on April 28, 1918. He envisaged using his education to instruct his neighbor and thus to contribute to the salvation of souls.

His desire was to "put all progress in the service of the glory of God," that is, to christianize modern culture. Vatican Council II declared, in our time, that the Church's objective in favoring the individual disciplines of higher level education is "that a progressively deeper understanding of them may be achieved, and by a careful attention to the current problems of these changing times and to the research being undertaken, the convergence of faith and reason in the one truth may be seen more clearly. Thus the Christian outlook should acquire, as it were, a public, stable and universal influence in the whole process of the promotion of higher culture. The graduates of these institutes should be outstanding in learning, ready to undertake the more responsible duties of society, and to be witnesses in the world to the true faith" (*Gravissimum educationis*, 10).

But the saint had to realize that good is not accomplished without the cross. Indeed, as Saint Thérèse of the Child Jesus reminds us, "Only suffering gives birth to souls." Towards the end of 1919, Saint Maximilian was sent to Zakopane, to a sanatorium where religious support was lacking. Even though he was ill, he undertook a difficult apostolate among his comrades with the help of the Miraculous Medal. One by one, he won over their hearts and minds, and did so well that they invited him to give conferences. The apostle of Mary was expecting just that. Many unbelievers converted.

The poison of indifference

Then Father Kolbe started a series of "chats on apologetics," on the existence of God and the divinity of Christ. The love that he showed for the truth came across in a letter written to his brother, Joseph: "In our time the greatest poison is indifference, which finds

its victims not only in the middle class but also among the religious, in different degrees." Pope Pius XII said, "All Christians should have, as much as possible, a deep and organic religious education. Indeed, it would be dangerous to develop knowledge in other areas of learning and to leave religious heritage unchanged, in the state that it was in early childhood. Since it is of necessity incomplete and superficial, it would be strangled, perhaps destroyed, by a godless culture and by the experiences of adult life, as shown by all of those whose faith has run aground on account of unrevealed doubts and unsolved problems. Since it is necessary that the foundation of Faith be rational, a sufficient study of apologetics becomes indispensable" (March 24, 1957).



Fr. Kolbe working in his office in Niepokalanow

In 1927, Father Maximilian founded the Franciscan Marian community of Niepokalanow, Poland (literally, the community of the Immaculata). Everything there was consecrated to Mary. There were many who asked to be admitted to the novitiate, to the point where the convent numbered up to a thousand religious. Father Kolbe said, "At Niepokalanow, we lived with only one idea, if it can be expressed that way, which was willingly chosen and loved: The Immaculata!" The press, whose influence continued to grow, appeared to him as an area ripe for apostolate. With the idea of evangelizing, he launched the magazine "The Knight of the Immaculata," which soon became the most important publication in Poland. In 1939 more than a million copies were distributed.

Far from being the only objective of Father Maximilian, Poland was only a starting point. Hardly three years after founding Niepokalanow he met some Japanese students on a train. They struck up a conversation and Father offered them some Miraculous Medals. In exchange, the students gave him some small wooden elephants that they used as fetishes. After that, the saint continued to think of how pitiful these souls were without God. So one fine day he presented himself to his provincial and asked him permission to go to Japan to found a Japanese Niepokalanow. The Father Provincial asked him, "Have you got the money?" He answered, "No."—"Do you know Japanese?"—"No."—"Well, do you at least have some friends there to support you?"—"Not yet, but I will find some with the grace of God."



Fr. Kolbe with the four Brothers leaving for Japan

Having obtained authorization, Father Kolbe left in 1930 with four Brothers for Japan. Thanks to their labor, boldness, prayers and confidence in the Immaculata, they created "Mugenzai no Sono," which translates as "the garden of the Immaculata." Two years after the foundation in Japan, Father Maximilian left to start a foundation in India. Having great difficulties, he prayed to Saint Thérèse of Lisieux. Had he not made a pact with her when he was in Rome to pray every day for her canonization, but that in return she would be the patroness of his works? Saint Thérèse honored her part of the contract. All of the obstacles magically disappeared. But, brought low by fever, the apostle of Mary Immaculate had to return to Poland in 1936.

Love or sin

In September 1939, war broke out. Saint Maximilian carried on his apostolate with more zeal than ever. "If good consists in the love of God and in all that springs from that love, evil, in its essence, is a negation of love," we read in his last article. Such is the true conflict. In the depths of every soul, there are these two adversaries: good and evil, love and sin. Saint Augustine expressed this conflict in these terms: "Two loves built two cities: love of self and disregard for God made the earthly city; love of God and disregard for self made the heavenly city" (*City of God*, XIV, 28).

On February 17, 1941, Gestapo agents seized Father Kolbe and four other Brothers and first took them to the Pawiak prison in Warsaw. While there, Father was violently beaten for being a religious and a priest. He wrote to his children remaining at Niepokalanow: "The Immaculata, most loving Mother, has always surrounded us with tenderness and will watch over us always. Let us be led by her, more and more perfectly where she wishes and according to her pleasure, so that, fulfilling our duties to the end, we may, through love, save all souls." Several days later, Father Kolbe was transferred to the camp at Auschwitz.



Soon hospitalized following severe beatings, he spent his nights hearing confessions, despite it being forbidden and the threat of reprisals. He knew how to turn evil itself into good, and one day said to a sick person: "Hate is not a creative force. Only love is creative. These sufferings will not make us bend, but they should help us to be even stronger. They are necessary, with other sacrifices, so that those who come after us may be happy." He shared among his companions the experience of the Paschal Mystery, in which suffering lived in Faith is transformed into joy. "The paradox of the Christian condition singularly clarifies that of the human condition: neither tribulations nor suffering are eliminated from the world, but they take on a new sense in the certainty of participation in the Redemption carried out by Our Lord and the sharing of His glory" (Paul VI, Apostolic Exhortation On Christian Joy, May 9, 1975).

Working with both hands

At the end of July, 1941, a prisoner in block 14, the same as Father Maximilian, escaped. The chief of the camp had warned that, for each escapee, ten men would be condemned to die of hunger and thirst. One of the unfortunate ones picked out for death, Franciszek Gajowniczek cried: "Oh! my poor wife and children that I will never see again!" Then, from among the crowd of comrades from which they had been separated, Father Maximilian cleared a path and came out of the ranks. **"I would like to die in the place of one of these condemned men," and he pointed out the man who had been crying out. "Who are you?" the chief asked. Father answered, "A Catholic priest." For it was as a Catholic priest that he wished to give his life. The officer, dumbfounded, was silent for a moment and then accepted the heroic proposition.**



John Paul II visiting the cell where Fr. Kolbe died

On death row, the jailers realized that something new was going on. In place of the usual cries of distress, they heard songs. The presence of Father Maximilian had changed the atmosphere of the frightful cell. Despair had given way to prayer full of hope, of acceptance and of love, towards Heaven, towards the Mother of Mercy. On the eve of the Assumption, only Father Maximilian was still totally conscious. At the moment when the guards came in to finish him off, he was in prayer. Seeing the syringe, he himself offered his emaciated arm for the fatal injection.

During his lifetime, Saint Maximilian Kolbe loved to repeat: **"On this earth we can only work with one hand, because with the other we must really hold on so that we don't fall ourselves. But in Heaven, it will be different! No danger of slipping, of falling! Then we shall work even more, with both hands!"** We ask him to intercede with the Immaculate Virgin and Saint Joseph for you and all of those who are dear to you, living and deceased. ❖

Dom Antoine Marie OSB

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Franciszek Gajowniczek (1901-1995) with John Paul II for the canonication of Fr. Kolbe in 1982

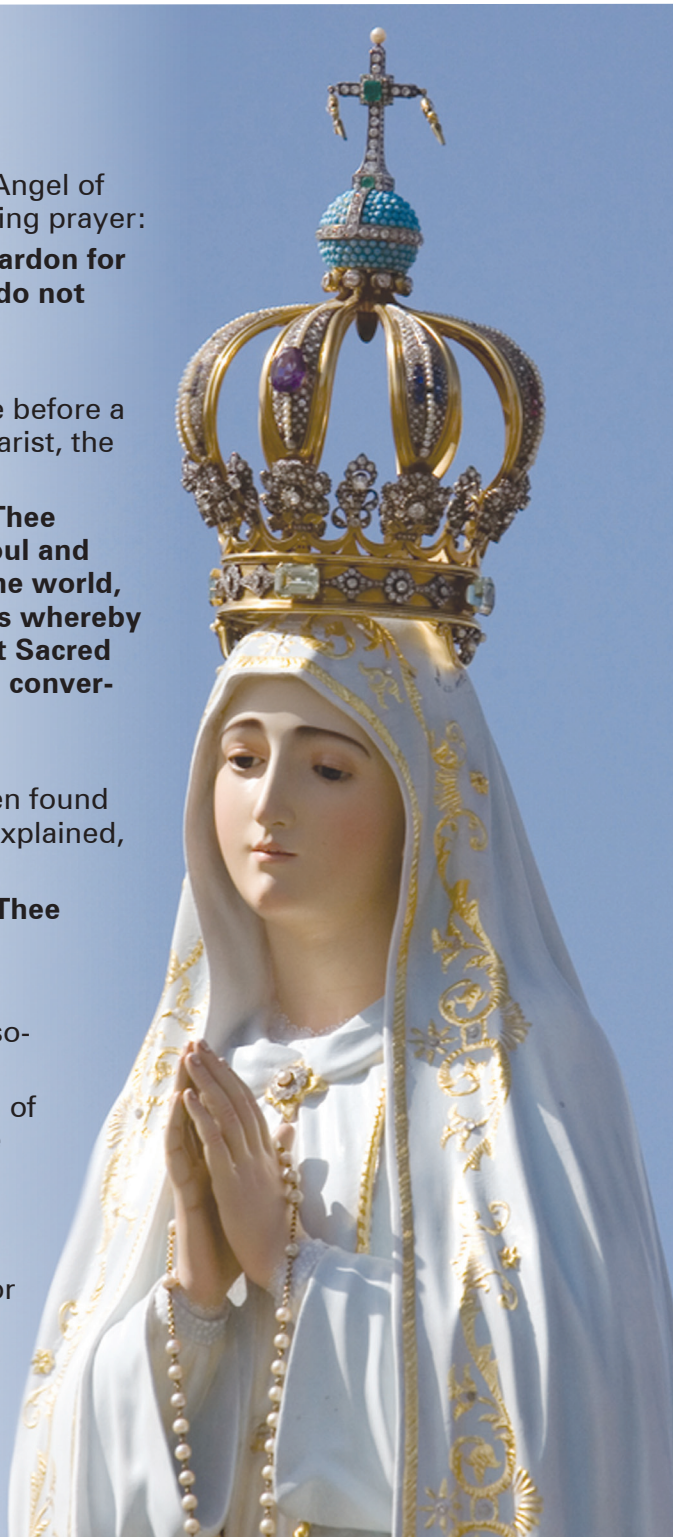
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The Fatima Prayers



THE PARDON PRAYER

The angel who appeared to the children called himself the Angel of Peace and the Angel of Portugal. He taught them the following prayer:

"My God, I believe, I adore, I hope and I love Thee! I ask pardon for those who do not believe, do not adore, do not hope and do not love Thee."

THE ANGEL'S PRAYER

On one occasion, the three children saw the angel prostrate before a host and chalice that hung in the air. Worshipping the Eucharist, the angel prayed,

"Most Holy Trinity – Father, Son and Holy Spirit – I adore Thee profoundly. I offer Thee the most precious Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity of Jesus Christ, present in all the tabernacles of the world, in reparation for the outrages, sacrileges, and indifferences whereby He is offended. And through the infinite merits of His Most Sacred Heart and the Immaculate Heart of Mary, I beg of Thee the conversion of poor sinners."

THE EUCHARISTIC PRAYER

During the first apparition of Our Lady of Fatima, the children found themselves "moved by an interior impulse," as Lucia later explained, to say the following prayer together:

"Most Holy Trinity, I adore Thee! My God, my God, I love Thee in the Most Blessed Sacrament."

THE SACRIFICE PRAYER

The Blessed Mother taught the children to offer all their personal sacrifices to God by praying,

Oh my Jesus, I offer this for love of Thee, for the conversion of sinners, and in reparation for the sins committed against the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

THE ROSARY DECADE PRAYER

The Blessed Mother stressed the critical importance of praying the Rosary daily for the conversion of sinners and for peace in the world. She asked that the following prayer be recited at the end of each Rosary decade:

"Oh My Jesus, forgive us our sins, save us from the fires of Hell, lead all souls to Heaven, especially those in most need of Thy mercy."