

Los Pequeños Pepper

Publication of Los Pequeños de Cristo

August 2004



My Hair Is on Fire!

Then, for goodness sake, stop fooling around!

Page 4

The Fallacy of “Fempriest”

Why women can't be priests, Part II.

Page 7

Holy Communion and Americanism

*For those who politicize the Eucharist,
here's the corrective.*

Page 9



Cover: Assumption

Los Pequeños Pepper

Newsletter of Los Pequeños de Cristo

August 2004

Volume 6, Number 8

My Hair Is on Fire!

Urgency has right-of-way.

Page 4

Denouncing Pro-Abort Catholic Politicians

Catholic Media Coalition supports Denunciation suit.

Page 6

The Fallacy of the “Fempriest”

Women and the priesthood, Part II

Page 7

Holy Communion and Americanism

Neither left nor right, but Catholic...

Page 9

Profile of a Bishop

Look out, Spidy. There’s a new superhero in the megalopolis.

Page 11

Candlelight Vigil – Some Support, Some Disagree with Archbishop

Conflicting groups voice concern about Pius education

Page 12

Around the Archdiocese

This month: Feng Shui, Call to Action (of course), and sacred food.

Page 13

History Repeats Itself

Wimpy bishops are nothing new.

Page 14

August Calendar

Page 15

Newsletter of Los Pequeños de Cristo
Stephanie Block-editor, Carol Suhr-copy editor
Correspondence to *The Pequeños Pepper* may be addressed to:
325 Ellen St. NW
Los Lunas, NM 87031
or phone: 505 866 0977 or www.lospequenos.org
The Pequeños Pepper is published monthly

We are an Archdiocesan-wide Catholic lay organization committed to a charitable defense of the Catholic Faith by means of education, communication, and prayer. We are devoted to the Roman Catholic Magisterium, the Holy Father, and to the bishops and clergy in union with him. Our members believe what the Church believes and we promote what the Church teaches. To this end, we believe that no individual, whether cleric or lay person, has the right to alter the substance of the gospel message or moral truths which have been inerrantly and infallibly held by the Catholic Church since Her founding.

My Hair is on Fire!

By Stephanie Block

My hair is on fire! The phrase, popularized by former White House counter-terrorism adviser Richard Clarke, describes a state of terrible immediacy and urgency. It means, metaphorically speaking, that either one stops, drops, and rolls...or the rest of the story will be ash.

No one would argue that there aren't other important issues. Food, housing, health care and true love are always *vital*ly important – once the fire has been put out.

But until it is, those issues take the back seat. First things first.

My hair is on fire! The Church, *qua* Church, couldn't be clearer. In support of numerous Vatican documents that affirm, over and over, the sanctity of human life, the US bishops – yes, even the US bishops – have been unambiguous. Their 1998 *Living the Gospel of Life* (to take a recent example) states: “Respect for the dignity of the human person demands a commitment to human rights across a broad spectrum.... Yet abortion and euthanasia have become preeminent threats to human dignity because they directly attack life itself, the most fundamental human good and the condition for all others.” (n.5)

And yet, these same bishops at their June 2004 meeting ratified the *Catholics in Public Life* statement by a 183-6 vote, saying that the decision to deny communion to pro-abortion Catholic politicians rests with the individual bishop. What a peculiar declaration.

It was, admittedly, a compromise document. It rejected the interim position of a seven-member Task Force that bishops *not* deny Communion to pro-abortion politicians. Nor did it contradict those bishops who have already made it clear that being pro-abortion is an impediment to communion with the Church. But it made sanctions a matter of prudential judgment.

After all, one can douse a fire with water or one can smother it under a blanket. There's more than one legitimate response to a crisis.

But there's no arguing that the situation has generated serious misunderstanding. For instance, one New Mexico bishop seems to contradict the imperative of *Living the Gospel of Life*. He writes that while “the Church will continue to teach about the immorality of abortion...there are other issues of public policy that must also be



Ultrasound of a 12-week-old fetus

considered in the political process. The United States Bishops' statement, *Faithful Citizenship* calls Catholics to political responsibility. We speak to the issues but do not endorse particular candidates or parties." [Archbishop Michael J. Sheehan, Press Release: *Politicians, Voters and Withholding Communion*, May 21, 2004. The Archbishop is, by the way, Secretary of the United States Catholic Conference.] The spectrum of prudential responses to the abortion crisis will not be explored because its unique urgency has been denied.

The local newspaper was ecstatic. "Sheehan and an overwhelming majority of his fellow bishops...wisely stopped short of wading into divisive political waters as the November elections approach." And in conclusion, "Catholic leaders will do well to insist on a separation that allows for church teachings as well as free democratic choice on a full range of issues." [editorial, "Sheehan Votes against Impulse to Politicize," *Albuquerque Journal*, 6/28/04]

Of course, the freedom of Catholic bishops to make internal disciplinary choices about moral issues in line with Church teaching was not something this secular paper will ever support. Quite the contrary. The full weight of political party machinery has been brought against the US Catholic hierarchy, forcing it into a "nuanced" and frankly irrational stance. Church teaching and politics are expected to operate in parallel universes, without seeming to have reference to one another. Machiavelli would have been impressed.

New Mexico isn't unique. The 183-6 vote in favor of the *Catholics in Public Life* statement demonstrates that a majority of bishops face the same political pressures. Where only 6 bishops feel they can address the mortal sinfulness of a pro-abortion position, 183 are hobbled by fear that any consistent disciplinary action of theirs will be construed as endorsement of candidates or parties.

Where 6 bishops feel they may object to politicians using the Church for its "social capital" – where they can and do oppose politicians calling themselves Catholic who believe little of Catholic doctrine or who make the reception of Communion into a photo opportunity – 183 bishops have compromised.

Where 6 bishops feel they can serve justice, 183 believe they must serve expediency.

But the problem remains: *My hair is on fire!* ☛

The full weight of political party machinery has been brought against the US Catholic hierarchy, forcing it into a "nuanced" and frankly irrational stance. Church teaching and politics are expected to operate in parallel universes, without seeming to have reference to one another.

Denouncing Pro-Abort Catholic Politicians

Catholic Media Coalition supports Denunciation suit.

PRESS RELEASE, JULY 2004 The Catholic Media Coalition issued a statement today commending the action taken by Marc Balestrieri, J.C.L., a Canon lawyer and assistant judge of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles tribunal. Mr. Balestrieri filed a canon law suit against Senator John F. Kerry charging him with heresy. The complaint, known in church parlance as a “denunciation,” was filed with the Ecclesiastical Court of the Archdiocese of Boston. It does not seek monetary damages and is similar to a criminal complaint in civil law. Interested members of the public are invited to sign on as third- party participants.



Marc Balestrieri, J.C.L.

The Criminal Complaint alleges that United States Senator John F. Kerry, as a baptized Catholic, has committed a court-martial offense under Canon Law by professing the ‘right-to-murder’ heresy, commonly known as the “right-to-choose” doctrine. Mr. Balestrieri charges John F. Kerry with the “public ecclesiastical crime of heresy...abjection of the Sacred Species...and grave harm to public morals and contempt for the faith” as evidenced by his unequivocal public support of abortion and other issues, such as support for same-sex marriage, which are at odds with the Church. Despite his actions, which are in direct contradiction to the constant teaching of the Roman Catholic Church, Mr. Kerry, the presumed Democratic presidential candidate, continues to receive the Sacred Host at Sunday Masses.

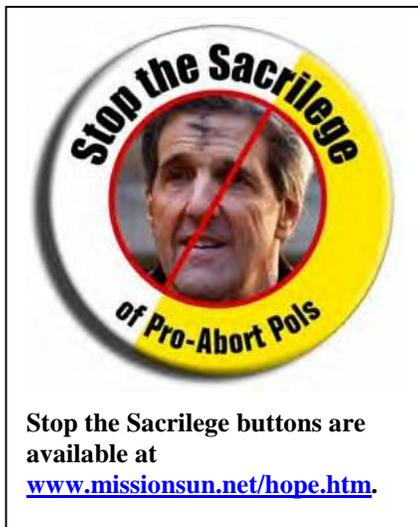
Appearing on the Eternal Word Television Network’s evening show, The World Over, July 2, 2004, Mr. Balestrieri said he consulted a number of legal scholars, including a Cardinal, about the correctness of the charges and advisability of the suit. The Cardinal concurred with Mr. Balestrieri’s assessment. The suit alleges Mr. Kerry’s actions have caused grave harm to public morals and reflect contempt for the Faith. The full text of the complaint may be read at De Fide, www.defide.com.

The suit further alleges that Mr. Kerry’s personal advocacy by actions and words, his acceptance of the support of the notorious “right-to-choose” NARAL and Planned Parenthood agencies, and the insertion of abortion into his presidential campaign platform have been deleterious to the public welfare and citizenry of America.

The heresy suit against Mr. Kerry seeks first of all his conversion and return to the Faith. Recanting his support for abortion and a public pronouncement of faith is absolutely necessary, as well as additional penalties and public reparation of harm. Until such time as these actions are taken, Mr. Kerry should be expressly forbidden to receive Holy Communion.

The Catholic Media Coalition urges the general public to join the class-action law suit as third- party participants. Joining the suit costs nothing and any one may join. Forms are available on De Fide’s web site. The Catholic Media Coalition believes by joining the class-action suit Catholics will be creating a public opinion that is consistent with our identity as Catholics: that we defend the right to life of every human being, born and unborn, from conception to natural death. ☛

Los Pequeños de Cristo supports the Balestrieri Denunciation, and has signed the Catholic Media Coalition’s July 7, 2004 statement.



Stop the Sacrilege buttons are available at www.missionsun.net/hope.htm.

The Fallacy of the “Fempriest”

Women and the priesthood, Part II

--Marie P. Loehr

*...unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his blood,
you shall not have life in you. – John 6:54-56ff*

In his book *In the Redeeming Christ*, F.X. Durrwell, C.S.S.R., makes a very pertinent distinction between Christ – “the principle of life,” masculine in essence, and Church – the “environment and means of life,” feminine in essence. The “principle of life”— this is the role the priest assumes in his person. His primary, essential function is to consecrate bread and wine – in, with, and through Christ – to be Christ entirely. That act, in its essence and its results, is the precise and specific act of generation proper to God himself, alone.

No woman can fulfill that function or perform that act.

True, there is a sense in which we are all zygotes in the womb of God. There is a sense in which Adam is the womb wherein Eve is conceived. There is a sense in which the Church is brought to birth in the womb and labors of Christ.

Woman does have vital indispensable functions and acts, proper to her own essence, an essence revealed in the biology of the womb. But the germinating womb is conceivable only because there is a generative seedbed that precedes and fructifies it. Germinative flowering is contained and brought to fruition by and within that seminal seedbed of God’s generative initiative and Trinitarian communion, as well as in Adam and his procreative communion. Even in the basic biology of our sex chromosomes, this order is evident. Fr. Manfred Hauke notes in his definitive work, *Women in the Priesthood?* that the male sex chromosome contains both the male Y and the female X. The female sex chromosome carries only a double XX. The masculine that is open and inclusive, the sign of humanity’s two-in-one flesh, is the active, initiating seed. The feminine is wholly exclusive, a “garden enclosed” as the Canticle describes the Bride, awaiting the Bridegroom’s entrance and fructifying embrace.

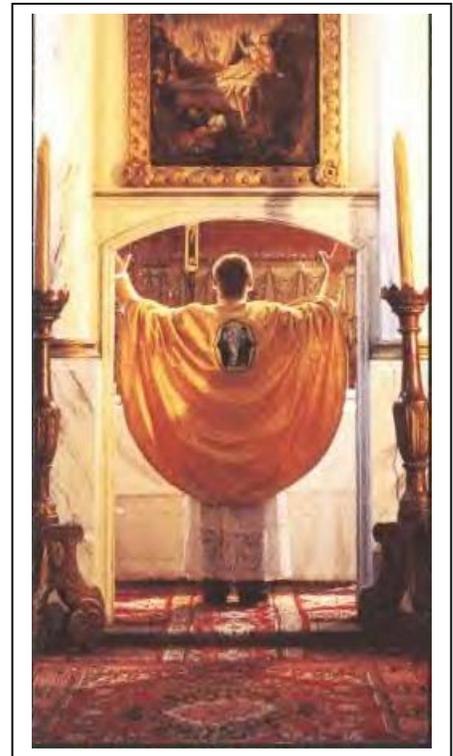
There are those, both strict traditionalist or modern feminist, who will cry biology, UGH! Should its imagery taint any examination of such sacred spiritual mysteries as priesthood, Eucharist, and the nature of God?! NO is their answer: by their words and actions. This is being too delicate and prudish, however, not so much properly virginal as spiritually frigid. It is God himself who demands our surrender to both human incarnation and his Son’s Incarnation.

“This is My Body” reverberates throughout Creation and revelation history.

The act of Creation in its totality, and God’s pleasure in it, is our first intimation of “This is My Body.” Adam looks on Eve, and cries: “This is my body”— bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh. God speaks from burning bush and blazing Sinai, “This is my body” – the Chosen People, Israel. Mary magnifies the Lord into human being with her “this is my body:” surrendering her flesh to that Life with her “fiat mihi...” Christ lives “This is my body” in history and eternity.

God deliberately makes Creation and Incarnation his ecstatic (in its truest sense of kenosis, detachment, stepping outside oneself) joy.

In the beginning there was no conflict between matter and spirit, biology



RESOURCE BIBLIOGRAPHY: Resource Compendium on Women and Priesthood

Vatican Sources

- ◆ *Declaration on the Question of the Admission of Women to the Ministerial Priesthood.* Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. Publications Office, USCC. Washington, D.C.: 1977.
- ◆ *Ordinatio Sacerdotalis, On Reserving Priestly Ordination to Men Alone.* Apostolic Letter of John Paul II. St. Paul Books and Media, 1994.
- ◆ John Paul II, *The Theology of the Body: Human Love in the Divine Plan.* St. Paul Books and Media, 1997.

Publications

- ◆ *The Church and Women: A Compendium,* ed. Helmut Moll. Ignatius Press: 1988.
- ◆ *The Order of the Priesthood,* OSV Source Book. Our Sunday Visitor, Inc: 1978.
- ◆ Manfred Hauke, *God or Goddess? Feminist Theology: What Is It? Where Does It Lead?* Ignatius Press: 1995.
- ◆ ----- *Women in the Priesthood? A Systematic Analysis in the Light of the Order of Creation and Redemption.* Ignatius Press: 1988.
- ◆ Helen Hull Hitchcock, *The Politics of Prayer: Feminist Language and the Worship of God.* Ignatius Press: 1992.
- ◆ Thomas Hopko, *Women and the Priesthood.* St. Vladimir Seminary Press: 1999.
- ◆ Alvin F. Kimel, Jr. *Speaking the Christian God: The Holy Trinity and the Challenge of Feminism.* Wm. B. Eerdmans: 1992.
- ◆ E.L. Mascall, *Women Priests?* The Church Literature Association: 1972.
- ◆ William Oddie, *What Will Happen to God? Feminism and the Reconstruction of Christian Belief.* Ignatius Press: 1988.
- ◆ Paul M. Quay, S.J. *The Meaning of Christian Sexuality.* Ignatius Press: 1985.

See also St. Maximilian Kolbe on the Holy Spirit and the Immaculate Conception; St. Teresa Benedicta [Edith Stein] on the Spirit as the template for woman; St. Jerome on the maternal work of the Spirit, as cited in F.X. Durrwell's *The Resurrection*; Scott Hahn's discussion of the role of the Spirit in *First Comes Love*; and of course, John Paul II's indispensable *The Theology of the Body*. See also the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, the final word on all doctrine and a fount of meditation and wisdom.

and spirituality. Every part of the body was made to magnify the Lord. If one holds hand to candle flame, leaf to sun, light and camera to the human embryo floating in the womb, one understands that light reveals material creation. Despite the separation and density that are the result of sin, Creation is still translucent around the edges: to the material senses as well as to spiritual intuition.

Light, which reveals material creation, is a metaphor for the uncreated Light, the Glory of God. Originally, all being must have been a prism to glory in, as well as to glorify, the Light of the World. Reality and symbol were a true mesh. Spirit-filled being, and being revealed the fullness of spirit within it.

Man shattered that crystal and unity in his refusal to submit to incarnation.

Spurred on by that Arch-Gnostic, Lucifer – whose personal fall extinguished the “light” his name originally signified – Eve was not content to rest in the communion and community of “this is my body” and its two-in-one-flesh commitment, communion, creativity. She refused the biological determinism of “male and female he created them.” This is the crux of human tragedy from Eden to the present.

Eve refuses to submit to the body and its limitations. She itches for the purely spiritual nature of angels and its liberation from biological constraint, “to be as gods.” Adam, for the sake of equality or comfort, submits to her rule, rather than exerting his proper leadership in tenderness and tough love. In similar fashion, the wannabe “fempriest” attempts to escape her specific flesh, her nature and function. Ironically, in attempting this, she invokes the name of the very Christ who makes a continual point of entering specific flesh, in the name of the very God who rubs our noses in BODY as the source of our salvation. Christ “did not consider being equal to God a thing to be clung to, but emptied himself...taking on the likeness of a slave...” – Paul, Philippians 2:5-8.

Christ submits to the biological determinism that the “fempriest” scorns in her futile pursuit of psycho-sexual transmutation and its gnostic notions of an androgynous Christ. This is an ancient error the modern feminist and her supporters make. It IS the Original Sin. For whatever the snake and apple imply, they surely have to do with ignoring “image and likeness to God” in order to be “as gods.”

It is precisely this generative power and liberation the “fempriest” seeks in a kind of pious penis-envy. This is the original temptation that led to man's Fall in the first place. It is a replay of the Original Sin, a return to exile and ignorance, of the nature of both God and man. Ordination of women to the ministerial priesthood would not be *veritas* or *caritas*, much less a recognition of “distinction in persons, oneness in being, equality in majesty” as the Tridentine Preface describes both God in himself and man in God. It is rather a denial of that reality, a fall into the ancient gnosis that led to exile, ignorance, and death. We should beware and be warned that **this** is the fallacy of the “fempriest.” ❧

Holy Communion and Americanism

By David Baltz

JULY 4, 2004 With election-year controversy raging over Catholic pro-abortion politicians receiving Holy Communion, it would seem that the American bishops are facing a difficult situation. The timing of this controversy is curious, to say the least! Having neglected their duty for thirty years, if they act now to halt the scandal, they will appear to be working in a partisan manner to assist the re-election of George Bush. If they do not act, they will raise the ire of a laity and newly ordained clergy that is becoming more conservative with each passing year. Accommodation is impossible and as we watch the contortions and gymnastic United States Conference of Catholic Bishops double-speak while the fire is being stoked by the media *and* the Bush campaign, we are faced with the conclusion that had they been Catholics first, they would not be in the present predicament.

It has been the adoption of “Americanism” that has caused the situation, and it will only worsen if the USCCB continues to slowly shift its support from Democrats to Republicans. The answer is a much more difficult one.

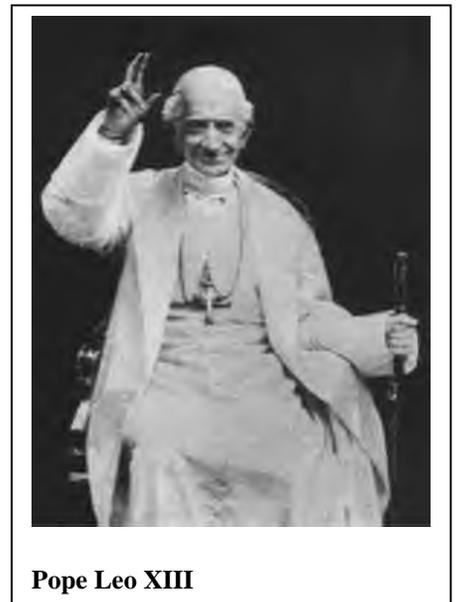
In an Apostolic Letter sent to Bishop Gibbons of Baltimore from Pope Leo XIII in 1899, ‘Americanism’ was formally pronounced a heresy. In the letter, Pope Leo set out a problem that had existed within the Church since its first bishop, Jesuit Fr. John Carroll, was named to head the Baltimore diocese in 1789: that the Catholic Church in America had almost immediately become the ‘American Church,’ and with that subtle twist of emphasis, emerged a policy of ‘independence from Rome.’ The argument by the American bishops was that Catholics in democratic and pluralist America are subject to the accusations of being an ‘alien culture’ with the intent of taking over America for Rome. To counter this claim, they argued, Catholics must avoid any indication that we are under the thumb of Rome and must accommodate and attempt to integrate into American society.

The Americanist independence is still quite alive today and exemplified by the numerous recent instructions from Rome (regarding English translations, liturgical abuses, ordaining women and homosexuals, et al), which remain unimplemented while various USCCB committees begin multi-year ‘studies’ to determine ‘how best to implement’ the edicts. A priest well versed in the widespread heresy once commented to me, “It explains why no American-born priest or religious has ever been canonized.”

It also explains the ‘politicization’ of the hierarchy. For years, the American Church lent its *imprimatur* to the Democrat Party as the ‘party of the poor.’ Immigrant Catholics who joined up gained considerable political power. When socialists and the radical activists began to take over the party in the ‘60’s, the Democrat laity began to get uneasy. By the ‘70s, many had entered the mainstream and had had a taste of affluence. The ‘party of the rich’ didn’t seem quite so threatening, and so, in 1980, millions switched party lines to elect the first social conservative in decades—ex-Democrat, Ronald Reagan. The tide had turned. The swing-voter ‘Reagan Democrats’, as they came to be called, had rejected the influence of their by-and-large liberal priests and bishops and struck out on an independent path of their own.

Unfortunately, along with the Catholics entering the mainstream of American society and finding their freedom came a price: they had lost their Faith.

Wrote Washington DC priest Father Rory Conley in 1993, “There’s not a dime’s worth of difference between Catholics and their fellow Americans now in



Pope Leo XIII

***...heroic bishops
like Bruskewitz,
Meyers, Chaput
and, more recently,
Olmsted began to
defend Rome and
the Magisterium.
The show of
orthodoxy was, and
is, refreshing and a
hopeful sign.***

moral outlook or religious practice. We fornicate at the same rate. We divorce at the same rate. We abort our children at the same rate. We are materially rich and so, in true chauvinistic fashion, we claim favored-nation status before the Lord.”

In other words, Americanism has been a huge success! American Catholics are no longer looked upon as pawns of Rome. Instead, we are looked upon as pawns up for grabs!

With the election of Ronald Reagan in 1980 and his re-election in 1984, a struggle began within American politics to see who could control this new and unpredictable voting block. The bishops, who had hauled water for the Democrats for decades, had lost a great deal of their political influence with these voters and the scandal-plagued American hierarchy was finding it harder and harder to get judges and politicians to help cover their tracks if they couldn't provide the votes needed on election day.

On the Republican side, George H. W. Bush—who had inherited Reagan's spoils but was by no means the social conservative that Reagan was—and others searched for ways to latch on to those elusive swing votes.

The most promising tactic was the 'pro-life' angle. Democrats like the Kennedys had remained electable within the Democrat Party by morphing their position on abortion to the “personally opposed, but...” stance. Reagan, on the other hand, had campaigned and forcefully defended the pro-life stance. What the pollsters had discovered was that the swing vote had been influenced by Reagan's pro-life position. The real balancing act was hanging on to those pro-life votes, while simultaneously courting the votes of wealthy Republicans who didn't want their tax dollars to pay welfare for the burgeoning underclass and saw abortion as an economic necessity. The Republican convention of 1996 saw a vicious battle over the abortion plank, only to have presidential nominee Bob Dole declare he would not be bound by the platform or its pro-life plank. Dole, of course, lost those swing voters and lost the election.

The bishops, meanwhile, had regained some credibility from Bill Clinton's election but with more and more middle-class Catholics registering as Republicans, the writing was on the wall and in 2000, the house of cards fell in. George W. Bush's election was the last straw and for the Democrats, it was payback time. Almost from the first few months of Bush's term, the sex-abuse scandals began to emerge—but along with them, heroic bishops like Bruskewitz, Meyers, Chaput and, more recently, Olmsted began to defend Rome and the Magisterium. The show of orthodoxy was, and is, refreshing and a hopeful sign.

However, things are not always as they seem. As questions on the morality of pre-emptive war, prisoner torture, compromises on fetal tissue research, and lack of pro-life Supreme Court justices, cloud George Bush's chances of re-election, these same bishops will be forced into decision: Will they simply become partisan propagandists like their Americanist predecessors were for two hundred years, or will they cast off the chains of Americanism and become Ambassadors for Christ that their vocation has called them to—calling back those wayward Catholics who have become overly-integrated into our pluralistic society? Twenty years from now, if Catholics in America are no longer indistinguishable from their Protestant and agnostic counterparts, we will have our answer.

Pope John Paul II has noted that we are entering a new age of martyrdom. Pray that we are able to live out our Catholic Faith in the public square—as Catholics first, Americans second—without ridicule, harassment or discrimination. If the worst comes, welcome it! Would you rather be remembered as a liberal or conservative, or as a Republican or Democrat...or, as a Catholic? ☛

Profile of a Bishop

New bishop of Phoenix packs a powerful punch!

TEMPE, ARIZONA Bishop Thomas J. Olmsted has taken strong steps during his first six months as bishop of the Diocese of Phoenix. During this time, the city became the fifth largest in the US. Olmsted said he was in the newspaper twice a year in Wichita...well, it's almost once a week in his new appointment.

The media has tried to spin his position on Catholic abortion-supporting politicians, but he responded clearly that they are not to receive Communion.

He put homosexual-activist priests on notice, sending them personal letters that they took to the media. He then published the letters and wrote two articles on his position that were based on John Paul II's *Theology of the Body*.

One pastor has been suspended for concelebrating the Eucharist with a Protestant minister.

Olmsted has scolded the governor for vetoing the "Women's Right to Know" bill and refused to attend her annual "prayer" breakfast. Liberal legislators, used to a diocese soft on abortion in exchange for support of social programs, are discovering that the bishop has exceptionally strong pro-life positions.

He rallied 1,000 pro-lifers in front of Planned Parenthood on Good Friday.

He endorsed and cosponsored a "support of marriage" rally at the State Capitol.

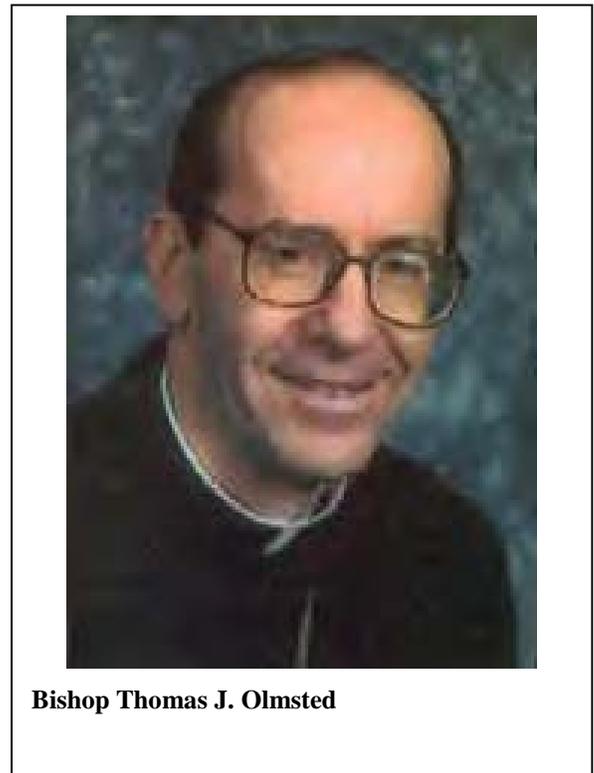
He has withdrawn the selection of St. John's University for the first Catholic university in the state because it would not sign *Ex Corde Ecclesiae*.

Phoenix now has a weekly Tridentine Mass and priests and altar servers are being trained to do both the *Novus Ordo* and the Tridentine liturgies.

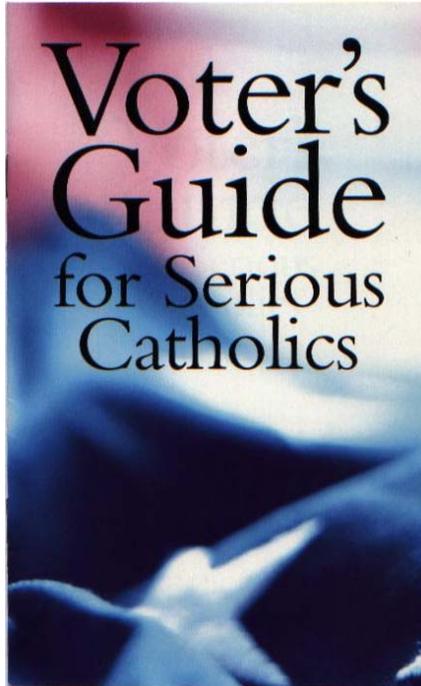
Priests are required to have two eight-hour formation teachings a year, of the bishop's selection. He fired the heads of the heretical Kino Institute and will be bringing in orthodox teaching for the diaconate and ministry training programs.

The diocese hasn't seen anything like this in 20 years. Olmsted brought in Mary Beth Bonacci to help find a new head of the Office of Family Life. He wants it centered on John Paul II's *The Theology of the Body* and *The Church in America*, required reading for all priests in the diocese now.

He has encouraged the Knights of Columbus to sponsor Catholic Family Conferences in conjunction with St. Joseph Communications. In fact, all the changes are hard to keep up with, they're happening so fast. This may be ordinary time, but it feels like Eastertide! The Diocese of Phoenix has been truly blessed. ☩



Bishop Thomas J. Olmsted



Los Pequeños still has some copies of Catholic Answer's excellent *Voter's Guide for Serious Catholics*. Call (505) 293-8006

Candlelight Vigil – Some Support, Some Disagree with Archbishop

Voices for St. Pius is a group of parents that has organized in opposition to Archbishop Michael Sheehan's reform efforts at Pius High School, and in particular against the decision to not rehire Michael Fitzgerald as a theology teacher at the school. In June, *Voices for St. Pius* held a Candlelight Vigil at Redlands Park, in front of the Archbishop's home.

According to their website report at www.voicesforstpius.org, over a hundred people (though LPC counted only 63) "shared a candle-lighting ceremony and brief prayer for Mr. Fitzgerald and his wife, for the school, and for Archbishop Sheehan. We then walked the short distance to St. Pius, where we assembled in a circle of unity to share further group prayers and expressions of concern for Mr. Fitzgerald and for St. Pius. On our return walk, we stopped in front of Archbishop Sheehan's residence to leave each rose as part of a huge bouquet, which was delivered to the archbishop's doorstep."

Also present were a handful of folks from *Los Pequeños*, who held signs that read "Let the Archbishop make Pius a Catholic high school," and prayed the Rosary. They were joined by a recent graduate of Pius who turned up on his own initiative in support of the Archbishop, saying that he had made a good decision in Fitzgerald's case.

Four representatives from *Parents for a Roman Catholic Education* made a brief appearance to leaflet the cars of *Voices for St. Pius* protesters. The leaflet attempted to explain the challenge Fitzgerald had presented to Catholic education, stating: "Even though we too are sympathetic with Mr. Fitz given his years of service, he must not be allowed to continue teaching his views that are contrary to the Church." ❧

Around the Archdiocese

Looking for a Little More Thoughtfulness



The above banner was taken from the Archdiocese of Santa Fe's own website, the Youth and Young Adult Ministry page. It was brought to our attention by a young couple who wondered aloud what Feng Shui, chi, and a Chinese pictograph (incorporated into the graphics of the banner) have to do with the Catholic Faith?

In discussing the banner, they came up with a number of multicultural images that project a Catholic image, which they preferred. For the Far East, Our Lady of La Vang – the patroness of an archdiocesan church – sprang to mind. Certainly, reference to some of the Catholic spiritual treasures, which are quite unique, of the Southwest seemed appropriate, too.

Out of the mouths of babes...

Call to Action's Kathy Coffey to be a Presenter

The October 23, 2004 Fall Gathering for Catechetical Leaders and Catechists in the Archdiocese of Santa Fe will be featuring *Call to Action* speaker Kathy Coffey.

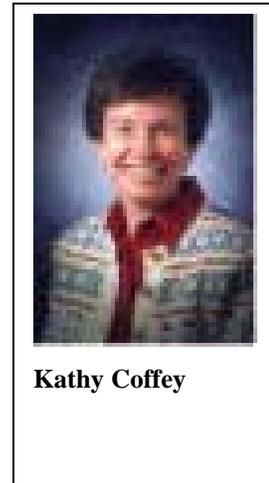
It's easy to see why she was invited – her talk at the National Catholic Catechetical Conference in April 2004 was benign, focusing on cute techniques to enliven catechetical presentations.

But this charming speaker is not only a staunch *Call to Action* ally, but an ally of the contraceptive crowd and the Sophia worshippers. Surely there are other perky educators with clever ideas to support – ones who really want to teach what the Church teaches.

Celebrating the Sacred in Food and Water

Now *there's* an ambiguous title for a conference. Elsewhere called "Celebrating the Sacredness in Food Production," this October 18, 2004 Conference to be held in Socorro is not discussing Eucharistic issues, but ecological concerns. [September & October *PMD Express* advertisements]

Conservation is a valuable study, but the impulse to hyper-spiritualize the work (above and beyond the spiritual dimension of any good work) tends to get a little...squirrely. Food may be blessed, but only the consecrated Flesh and Blood of Christ are properly called sacred, *per se*. Unless, of course, we're pantheists, which we're not. Right?



Kathy Coffey

History Repeats Itself

By Alice von Hildebrand

Put in a nutshell, the history of the Church is a series of human defeats followed by supernatural victories. When Christ chose His Apostles (He chose whom He pleased), He knew perfectly well that they were weak and imperfect men. He knew that one of them would betray Him, that another would deny Him three times, that all of them would flee in Gethsemane. Nevertheless, He built His Church upon Peter. The lesson is clear: God chooses weak and fragile vessels to work toward the accomplishment of a Divine Work to tell the faithful that when victory is achieved, it is His work; the workmen are useless servants.

This is the supernatural view of history: God's triumph over man's weakness. Always again, the history of the Church teaches us that tempted by human success and its false wisdom, many workers in the vineyard lose sight of the authentic message of Revelation and are poisoned by "worldly wisdom." One of its most obvious manifestations is to view the priesthood as a "job," and to crave promotion and honor. The true servants of God repeat constantly "nobis, Domine, non nobis, sed nomini tuo da gloriam" – Not to us, O Lord, not to us, but to your Name give glory. This is why, time and again, when a holy monk or a holy priest is offered to become a bishop, a cardinal or a Pope, he turns it down, or if he accepts like Gregory VII and Pius X, he does so as one accepts a cross.

I wonder how many bishops received this honor because they played the political game. And the Devil — who never sleeps — makes sure that there is a lively political game going on in the Vatican. Because they have lost sight of the dignity of their office, they forget that they should accept it in fear and trembling. This also applies to heads of religious orders. If they have cleverly played their hand to be promoted, they will inevitably bring some secular poison in their activities. Unconsciously many of their decisions will be tainted by worldly wisdom, and consequently will add some poison to the feed they give their sheep.

This is not a new phenomenon. Already, St. Augustine in the fifth century laments the fact that some bishops fall victims to this danger. He writes: "We hesitate to instruct, to admonish, and, as occasion demands, to correct, and even to reprehend them. This we do either because the effort wearies us, or we fear offending them, or we avoid antagonizing them lest they thwart or harm us in those temporal matters where our cupidity ever seeks to acquire or our faint hearts fear to lose" (City of God, 1,9).

St. John Chrysostom was aware of the same danger when he wondered whether bishops could be saved (quoted in Walter Lowrie, *Kierkegaard*, II, p. 531). When making their examination of conscience, bishops should meditate on these words: The greater the responsibility, the more severe the judgment. This has been clearly stated by St. Benedict in his holy rule. He reminds the abbot of the "dreadful day of judgment" (chapter 2) when God will ask him to give an account of his stewardship.

This wisdom is based on the Old Testament. God said to Ezechiel that He has made him a watchman (3:16) whose duty is to warn the wicked about their evil ways. If the watchman fails to do so, he is gravely guilty.

Sadly enough, in spite of these clear warnings, some bishops seem to ignore the danger to which they are exposed by failing to live up to their awesome mission.

The severe trials to which St. Gregory VII was exposed came not only from the shameful conduct of Henry IV of Germany, but also because of the cowardice of those who should have supported him. He writes: "If... there be some who, for the love of the Christian law dare to resist the wicked to their face, not only they are unsupported by their brethren, but they are accused of imprudence and indiscretion, and are treated as fools" (quoted in Dom Gueranger, *The Liturgical Year*, vol.9, p. 571).

History repeats itself.



Dr. Alice von Hildebrand

St. Thomas More witnessed the same deplorable scenario. "If a bishop is so overcome by heavy-hearted sleep that he neglects to do what the duty of his office requires for the salvation of his flock...and abandons the ship to the waves — If a bishop does this, I would certainly not hesitate to juxtapose and compare his sadness with the sadness that leads, as Paul says, to Hell" (quoted in *First Things*, April 2004 p. 69).

Only one British bishop lived up to his mission and he paid with his head.

Today, Holy Church is being battered by what is possibly the worst tempest in her history. Let us pray that God may give us holy bishops willing to give up their lives for their sheep. It is sad indeed when the humble sheep must remind the shepherd of the awesomeness of his mission. ✎

August Calendar

Friday, August 20, 2004:

LPC monthly meeting.

Call (505) 293-8006 for information.

All members welcome.

Pro-life Prayer Each Tuesday:

8:30 am – 9:30 a.m.

Join Fr. Pio O'Conner for prayer

Planned Parenthood Abortuary

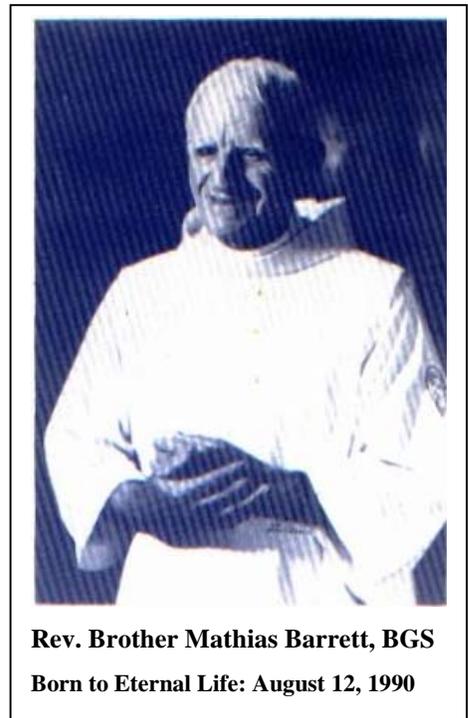
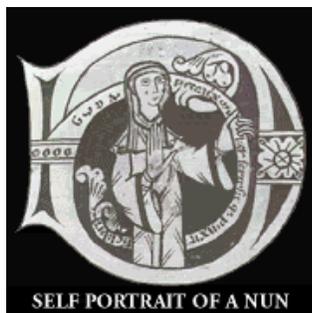
701 San Mateo Blvd.

For other times, call (505) 286-1655



A recent editorial in the Albuquerque Journal - West complained that LPC was a bunch of "rich Catholics." From their lips to God's ears!

Meanwhile, please consider a gift subscription of The Pepper for your children, friends and relatives - still only \$10 annually - less if necessary, more if possible.



Rev. Brother Mathias Barrett, BGS

Born to Eternal Life: August 12, 1990

**"PERSONALLY OPPOSED
BUT... " IS A COP-OUT**

This bumper sticker says it all! Call 1-800-767-7258 to order.

Catholic Pro-Abortion Politics

By Marie Therese Hall

My friends and I stood on the fringes of the festivities last Friday when Kerry and Edwards came to town. We had signs reiterating the fact that choosing life is a most basic tenet of Catholicism. We were not too surprised by the tremendous anger of Kerry supporters that confronted us. What was sadder, however, were the number of people who claimed one could be Catholic and pro-abortion. One woman gleefully told me that she receives Communion all the time!

The only bright spot was a man who, after telling me that the pope was against capital punishment, was willing to listen as I said that the principles regulating capital punishment and just war are open to a variety of legitimate applications. Abortion on the other hand is always intrinsically evil and morally wrong. I added that while many criminals are guilty of crimes, the pre-born are always innocent.

There are still a few months till November. Our country has a plethora of clergy and laity who have parroted the "seamless garment" notion *ad nauseum*, without understanding it. Many Catholics are confused and unable to prioritize the issues according to authentic Catholic teaching. We pray that the Holy Spirit will set our state on the right path. This will be an important election. As Catholics, we bear an extra burden of responsibility for the results of our vote. There will be no time allotted for "hand washing" at the final judgement. ✎

***Los Pequeños de Cristo
P.O. Box 16117
Albuquerque, NM 87191-6117***