

Los Pequeños Pepper

Publication of Los Pequeños de Cristo

July 2011

Politics and the Devil

One of Jesus' temptations in the desert was political power.

Page 4



Will the Real Spousal Sacrament Please Stand Up

Page 9

Bureaucratized Charity

It's high time to change this!

Page 11



Cover: Icon of St. Swithun, Feast July 15

St Swithun's Day, if thou dost rain,
For forty days, it will remain:
St Swithun's Day, if thou be fair,
For forty days 'twill rain nae mair.

- **English traditional**

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Volume 13, Number 7

Politics and the Devil

By Archbishop Charles J. Chaput

Page 4

Join the Pepsi Boycott

Human Embryonic Cells Used in Development of Food Products

By Steven Ertelt

Page 7

Will the Real Spousal Sacrament Please Stand Up

By Marie P. Loehr

Page 9

Bureaucratized Charity

"We must really make an effort to change this."

By Jon Merrill

Page 11

Liberalism Is a Sin

By Stephanie Block

Page 12

Pope's Conversation with Astronauts is a Signal Event in History

By Father Dominic Vincent Nkoyoyo

Page 14

July Calendar

Page 15

Newsletter of Los Pequeños de Cristo
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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.

Politics and the Devil

By Archbishop Charles J. Chaput

A healthy democracy depends on people of conviction working hard to advance their ideas in the public square—respectfully and peacefully, but vigorously and without apologies. We cannot simultaneously serve the poor and accept the legal killing of unborn children.

I have chosen to address the theme of “politics and the devil,” not because I plan to suggest that anyone in our national political life has made a pact with Lucifer—although, given the current environment, you never know; it’s not the sort of thing you’d put in a press release—but because it is the title of an essay by the late University of Chicago philosopher Leszek Kolakowski. Kolakowski was a former Marxist, a very gifted scholar, and a skeptic about many things—but not about the reality of evil or the nature of the devil. One of the disturbing things for Kolakowski’s secular colleagues was that he talked about Satan not as a metaphor or legend or the figment of neurotic imaginations, but as a living actor in history. That deserves some discussion, but let’s start at the beginning.

Politics often works like a virus. The simpler a political slogan is, the faster people absorb it, the faster they transmit it, and the less likely they are to really *think* about it—which means they don’t develop an immunity to its content.

For example, a theme we’ve heard from many of our cultural leaders over the past few years—at least when they’re not battling over the economy or health care—goes like this: America needs to return science to its “rightful place” in public life. And of course, who can argue with that? Science does an enormous amount of good. Obviously, science should have its rightful place alongside every other important human endeavor. But one thing that this theme often means, in *practice*, is that we need to spend a lot more money on research. Especially the controversial kind. And while we’re at it, we should stop asking so many annoying ethical questions, so that science can get on with its vital work.

I want to focus on those words “rightful place,” an interesting phrase. A “rightful” place suggests that there is also a wrongful place, a bad alternative. And words like right and wrong, good and bad, are loaded with moral judgment. A “good” law embodies what somebody thinks is right. A “bad” public policy embodies what somebody thinks is wrong, or at least inadequate.

All law in some sense teaches and forms us, while also regulating our behavior. The same applies to our public policies, including the ones that govern our scientific research. There is no such thing as morally neutral legislation or morally neutral public policy. Every law is the public expression of what somebody thinks we “ought” to do. The question that matters is this: *Which* moral convictions of *which* somebodies are going to shape our country’s political and cultural future—including the way we do our science?

The answer is pretty obvious: if you and I as citizens don’t do the shaping, then somebody else will. That is the nature of a democracy. A healthy democracy depends on people of conviction working hard to advance their ideas in the public square—respectfully and peacefully, but vigorously and without apologies. Politics *always* involves the exercise of power in the pursuit of somebody’s idea of the common good. And politics *always and naturally* involves the imposition of somebody’s values on the public at large. So if a citizen fails to bring his moral beliefs into our country’s political conversation, if he fails to work for them publicly and energetically, then the only thing he ensures is the defeat of his own beliefs.

We also need to remember that most people—not everyone, of course, but most of us—root our moral convictions in our *religious* beliefs. What we believe about God shapes what we think about the nature of men and women, the structure of good human relationships, and our idea of a just society. This has very practical consequences, including the political kind. We act on what we really believe. If we *don’t* act on our beliefs, then we don’t really believe them.

As a result, the idea that the “separation of Church and state” should force us to exclude our religious beliefs from guiding our political behavior makes no sense at all, even superficially. If we don’t remain true in our public actions to what we claim to believe in our personal lives, then we only deceive ourselves. Because God certainly



Leszek Kolakowski

isn't fooled. He sees who and what we are. God sees that our duplicity is really a kind of cowardice, and our lack of courage does a lot more damage than simply wounding our own integrity. It also saps the courage of other good people who really *do* try to publicly witness what they believe. And that compounds a sin of dishonesty with a sin of injustice.

Dwelling on the issue of science for just another moment, let me present some thoughts from two very different sources. Here's the first source:

Science, by itself, cannot establish the ends to which it is put. Science can discover vaccines and cures for diseases, but it can also create infectious agents; it can uncover the physics of semiconductors, but also the physics of the hydrogen bomb. Science *[as] science* is indifferent to whether data are gathered under rules that scrupulously protect the interest of human research subjects . . . [or by] bending the rules or ignoring them altogether. A number of the Nazi doctors who injected concentration camp victims with infectious agents or tortured prisoners by freezing or burning them to death were in fact legitimate scientists who gathered real data that could potentially be put to good use.

The same source goes on to worry that, today, many of the bioethicists who claim to counsel and guide the moral course of American science "have become nothing more than sophisticated (and sophistic) justifiers of whatever it is the scientific community wants. . . . In any discussion of cloning, stem-cell research, gene-line engineering and the like, it is usually the professional bioethicist who can be relied on to take the most permissive position of anyone in the room."

Now, from my second source:

What is our contemporary idiocy? What is the enemy within the [human] city? If I had to give it a name, I think

I would call it 'technological secularism.' The idiot today is the technological secularist who knows everything . . . about the organization of all the instruments and techniques of power that are available in the contemporary world—and who, at the same time, understands *nothing* about the nature of man or about the nature of true civilization.

The words from my first source appeared in 2002 from the author and scholar Francis Fukuyama. If you know his work, you know that Fukuyama clearly supports the benefits of science and technology. He is not—to my knowledge—a religious believer, and based on his writings, he seems to have little use for Christianity. But he's also not a fool. He sees exactly where our advances in biotechnology could lead us if we don't find an ethical way of guiding them.

The words from my second source were written exactly 50 years ago, in 1961. They come from John Courtney Murray, the great Jesuit priest and Christian scholar. Murray was a thoughtful man, and he chose his language very carefully. He used the word "idiot" in the original Greek sense of the term, which is quite different from its meaning in modern slang.

For the Greeks, the "idiot" was not a mentally deficient man. Rather, he was a man who did not possess a proper public philosophy, or as Murray says, "a man who is not master of the knowledge and skills that underlie the life of a civilized city. The idiot, to the Greek, was just one stage removed from the barbarian. He is the man who is ignorant of the meaning of the word 'civility'."

As I said, these two sources are very different. One was a believer. The other is not.

Father Murray died more than four decades ago, long before today's stem-cell and cloning debates. But both men would agree that science and technology are not ends in themselves. They're enormously valuable tools. But they're tools that can undermine human dignity—and even destroy what it means to be "human"—just as easily as they can serve human progress. Everything depends on who uses them, and how. Fools with tools are still fools; and the more powerful the tools, the more dangerous the fools. Or to put it another way, neither science nor technology *requires* a moral conscience to produce results. The evidence for that fact is the record of the last century.

Now I've talked about these things so far for a simple reason. The moral and political struggle we face today in defending human dignity is becoming more complex. I believe that abortion is the foundational human rights issue of our lifetime. We can't simultaneously serve the poor and accept the legal killing of unborn children. We can't build a just society, and at the same time, legally sanctify the destruction of generations of unborn human life. The rights of the poor and the rights of the unborn child flow from *exactly the same human dignity* guaranteed by the God who created us.

Of course, working to end abortion doesn't absolve us from our obligations to the poor. It doesn't excuse us

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from our duties to the disabled, the elderly and immigrants. In fact, it *demand*s from us a much stronger commitment to materially support women who find themselves in a difficult pregnancy.

All of these obligations are vital. God will hold us accountable if we ignore them. But *none* of these other duties can obscure the fact that no human rights are secure if the right to life is not. Unfortunately, abortion is no longer the only major bioethical threat to that right in our culture. In fact, the right to life has never, at any time in the past, faced the range of challenges it faces right now, and *will* face in the coming decades. Physician-assisted suicide, cloning, brain-computer interface (BCI) research, genetic screening of unwanted fetuses, genetic engineering of preferred physical and intellectual traits, cross-species experimentation, and developments in neuroscience—these things *already* raise serious questions about the definition of “human nature” and the protection of human dignity in the years ahead.

In Europe and the United States, our knowledge classes like to tell us that we live in an age of declining religious belief. But that isn’t quite true. A culture that rejects God always invents another, lesser godling to take His place. As a result, in the words of the great Jewish bioethicist Leon Kass, we live in an age of “salvific science.” In the place of the God who became man, “we have man become as god.” And in place “of a God who—it is said—sent his son who would, through his own suffering, take away the sins of the world, we have a scientific savior who would take away the sin of suffering altogether.”

The irony is this: the search for human perfection implied in modern science—or at least, the kind of science accountable to no moral authority outside of itself—leads all too easily to a hatred of imperfection in the real human persons who embody it with their disabilities. The simplest way to deal with imperfections is to eliminate the imperfect. In our daily lives, Kass warns, “the eugenic mentality is taking root, and we are subtly learning with the help of science to believe that there really *are* certain lives unworthy of being born. . . . [T]he most pernicious result of our technological progress . . . [is] the erosion, perhaps the final erosion, of the idea of man as noble, dignified, precious or godlike, and its replacement with a view of man [as] mere raw material for manipulation and homogenization.”

Dr. Kass made those remarks at the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, itself a monument to the murderous and genuinely *satanic* misuse of science and politics in the last century. But he wasn’t speaking about genocide in the past, in some faraway, alien dictatorship. He was talking about the temptations we face today in our own democratic societies, the temptations to create “a more perfect human”—and, in the process, to pervert science and attack our own humanity.

This brings us back to politics and the devil, and also, to the very important question: *How does one live as a Catholic in the world as it now is?*

The great French scholar Jacques Maritain once wrote that “the devil hangs like a vampire on the side of history. History moves forward nonetheless, and [it] moves forward with the vampire.” The devil is condemned to work within time. He works in the present to capture our hearts and steal our future. But he also attacks our memory, the narrative of our own identity. And he does it for a very good reason. The way we remember history conditions how we think and choose today, in our daily lives. That’s why one of the first things we need to do, if we want to “live as Catholics,” is to remember what being “Catholic” really means—and we need to learn that lesson in our identity not from the world; not from the tepid and self-satisfied; and not from the enemies of the Church, even when they claim to be Catholic; but from the mind and memory of the Church herself, who speaks through her pastors.

Jacques Maritain and Leszek Kolakowski came from very different backgrounds. Maritain was deeply Catholic. Kolakowski was in no sense an orthodox religious thinker. But they would have agreed that good and evil, God and the devil, are very real—and that history is the stage where that struggle is played out, both in our personal choices and in our public actions; where human souls choose their sides and create their futures. In Kolakowski’s own words, “we are not passive observers or victims of this contest, but participants as well, and therefore our destiny is decided on the field on which we run.”

Politics is the exercise of power; and power—as Jesus himself saw when Satan tempted him in the desert—can very easily pervert itself by doing evil in the name of pursuing good ends. But this fact is never an excuse for cowardice or paralysis. Christ never absolved us from defending the weak, or resisting evil in the world, or from solidarity with people who suffer. Our fidelity as Christians is finally to God, but it implies a faithfulness to the needs



of God’s creation. That means we’re involved—intimately—in the life of the world, and that we need to act on what we believe: always with humility, always with charity, and always with prudence—but also *always with courage*. We need to fight for what we believe. As Kolakowski wrote, “Our destiny is decided on the field on which we run.”



Archbishop Charles J. Chaput, O.F.M. Cap., Archbishop of Denver

I have two final thoughts. First, nothing we do to defend the human person, no matter how small, is ever unfruitful or forgotten. Our actions touch other lives and move other hearts in ways we can never fully understand in this world.

Don’t *ever* underestimate the beauty and power of the witness you give in your pro-life work. One thing we learn from Scripture is that God doesn’t have much use for the vain or the prideful. But He loves the *anawim*—the ordinary, simple, everyday people who keep God’s Word, who stay faithful to his commandments, and who sustain the life of the world by leavening it with their own goodness. That’s the work we are called to do. Don’t ever forget it. If you speak up for the unborn child in this life, someone will speak up for you in the next, when we meet God face to face.

Second, a friend once shared with me the unofficial motto of the Texas Rangers: “*No man in the wrong can stand up against a fella that’s in the right, and keeps a-comin.*” The message is true. Virtue *does* matter. Courage and humility, justice and perseverance, *do* have power. Good *does* win, and the

sanctity of human life *will* endure. It will endure because if “God so loved the world that He gave his only Son” (Jn 3:16), then the odds look pretty good, and it’s worth fighting for what is right. ✠

Charles J. Chaput, O.F.M. Cap., is the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Denver and the author of [Render Unto Caesar: Serving the Nation by Living our Catholic Beliefs in Political Life](#). This essay is adapted from the keynote address Archbishop Chaput delivered as part of the University of Notre Dame student-organized Right to Life lecture series.

Join the Pepsi Boycott

Human Embryonic Cells Used in Development of Food Products

By Steven Ertelt

Dozens of pro-life groups are calling on pro-life Americans to boycott PepsiCo because it has contracted with a company that uses fetal cells from babies victimized by abortions to test and produce artificial flavor enhancers.

LifeNews.com reported on the controversy in March when information came to light showing biotech company Senomyx was found to be testing their food additives using fetal cells from abortions. Senomyx ignored a letter from the pro-life group Children of God for Life, which complained about its practices.

“The company’s key flavor programs focus on the discovery and development of savory, sweet and salt flavor ingredients that are intended to allow for the reduction of MSG, sugar and salt in food and beverage products,” the Senomyx web site says. “Using isolated human taste receptors, we created proprietary taste receptor-based assay systems that provide a biochemical or electronic readout when a flavor ingredient interacts with the receptor.”

Debi Vinnedge, of the pro-life group, explained, “What they don’t tell the public is that they are using HEK 293 – human embryonic kidney cells taken from an electively aborted baby to produce those receptors. They could have easily chosen animal, insect, or other morally obtained human



Cells. Now, Vinnedge says today that PepsiCo is funding the research and development by paying royalties to Senomyx to use the human embryonic kidney cells to produce flavor enhancers for Pepsi beverages.

“There are many options PepsiCo could be using instead of aborted fetal cells, including animal, insect, or other morally obtained human cells,” she told LifeNews. “The revelation—a potential public relations nightmare—motivated Campbell Soup to sever all relations with Senomyx. However, PepsiCo continues their business relationship despite the abortion connection. Their response earlier this year drew public ire when they wrote that “our collaboration with Senomyx is strictly limited to creating lower-calorie, great-tasting beverages for consumers.”

“When pressed further, PepsiCo attempted to pacify angry consumers with a form letter response in which they insinuated they had been accused of conducting aborted fetal tissue research,” she added. “Their duplicity again drew public outrage.”

Brad Mattes of the Life Issues Institute is another pro-life leader calling for a boycott.

“While aborted fetal cells aren’t actually in the product itself, the close relationship is enough to repulse most consumers. To our knowledge, this is the first time a food product has been publicly associated with abortion,” he said.

Senomyx boasts they have over 800,000 unique flavors for foods, Vinnedge says, but cells expressing certain proteins produce a chemical signal when the flavors are introduced, which determines if they have achieved the proper flavor. The aborted fetal cells are not in the product itself.

Pro-life organizations are asking the public to boycott all Pepsi drink products and encourage consumers to contact Pepsi management requesting that they sever all ties with Senomyx. Consumers are also encouraged to contact Campbell Soup and thank them for responding to pro-life concerns.

Pro-life groups joining Children of God for Life in the boycott to date are: American Life League, Life Issues Institute, Concerned Women for America, Colorado Right to Life, American Right to Life, Sound Choice Pharmaceutical Institute, ALL Arizona, Central Nebraskans for Life, Pro-Life Waco, Houston Coalition for Life, Mother and Unborn Baby Fox Valley, Woman-kind, Billboards for Life, Movement for a Better America, Defenders of the Unborn, Focus Pregnancy Help Center, Idaho Chooses Life, EMC Frontline Pregnancy Centers of NY, Four Seasons for Life, CREDO, Life Choices, STOPP Dallas, CA Right To Life, Human Life Alliance, International Right to Life Federation, Operation Rescue and Pro-Life Nation. LifeNews.com has joined the boycott call as well. ❧



ACTION: Contact these companies...

Jamie Caulfield, Sr. VP

PepsiCo, Inc.

700 Anderson Hill Road

Purchase, NY 10577

(914) 253-2000

Email form: <http://cr.pepsi.com/usen/pepsiusen.cfm?time=5189878>



To thank Campbell Soup Company:

Edmund M. Carpenter, Chair, Corporate Development

Campbell Soup

1 Campbell Place

Camden, NJ 08103-1701

1-800-257-8443

Email form: <http://campbellsoupcompany.com/Feedback.aspx>

<http://www.lifenews.com/2011/05/25/pro-life-groups-boycott-pepsi-for-using-aborted-fetal-cell-lines/>

Listing of all Pepsi products: http://www.pepsico.com/Brands/Pepsi_Cola-Brands.html

Will the Real Spousal Sacrament Please Stand Up

By Marie P. Loehr

. . . This is my Body, given up for you . . . this is my Blood, poured out for you . . .
- *Consecration of the Mass*

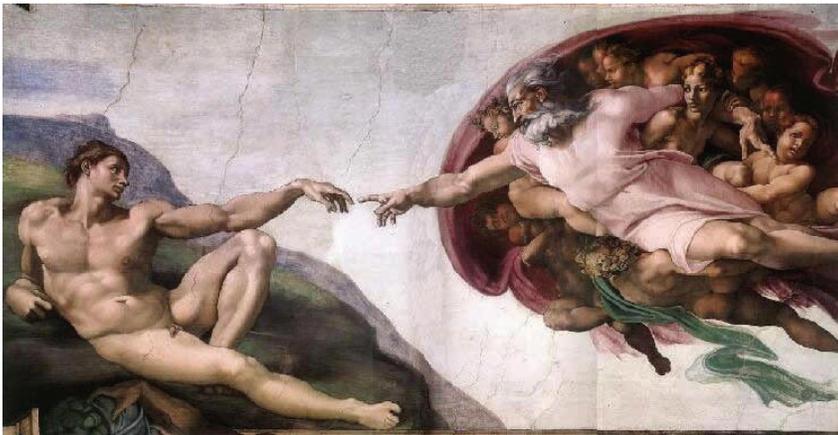
John Paul II had several purposes in developing his definitive explication of the sacramentality of the human body and its nuptial sexuality in the *Theology of the Body*.

He wanted to strip sex and sexuality, the body itself, of all the smut and smarm and slime that have accreted around it since the Fall, due to sin's sniggering prudery and Gnostic contempt for material Creation in general, and the human body in particular.

He wanted to re-emphasize that God created man in his own "image and likeness." This image and likeness is not only in the human soul with its intellect and will, all its spiritual capacities: such as the capacity to know, love, and serve God on earth, and to be happy with him in heaven. This image and likeness is also in the sacramental reality of the human body itself, which enriches the foundation insight of Thomas Aquinas. That defines man's likeness to God in his spiritual nature. The human body participates in human image and likeness to God by its spousal nature and that nature's participation in God's life-giving BEing with its covenant, communion, and creativity.

Further, John Paul wanted to show that spousal sacrament is rooted in the nature of God himself, an expression of the hierarchy and mutuality of the Trinity in its essence. The human body/spirit mesh is an experience of God's own self-giving and its sacrificial fruition.

In other words, spousal sacrament is rooted in the Incarnation of the Second Person of the Trinity, through



whom all things were made, from the Father, in the unity of the Spirit. The Son of God became man, "and pitched his tent among us," says John the Evangelist. His body is the new Ark, Tabernacle tent, and Temple in our midst. His Incarnation and its sacrificial outpouring is the living example of who WE are, who we were made to BE, and how we are to live this spousal image and likeness in our own bodies and lives.

This is the ongoing revelation of Scripture, Old Testament and New. It is the ongoing reality of the Church as Bride and Mystical Body of Christ. Nonetheless, this discreetly explicit explication of such fullness of God's truth and love has put theologians and academics into convulsions. Their upset with both John Paul, and some of his more outspoken interpreters, reveals all too clearly sin's effect of darkening the mind, and in so doing, weakening the will.

Even among usually rational and faithful adherents to Christ and Rome, we find this residue of sin's prudery and Gnosticism. The scholars' panic over the *Theology of the Body* is an illustrative glimpse into their distance from Scripture in its truth and love and spousal revelation.

Such scholars are most indignant at any suggestion there could be some identity or likeness between the matrimonial embrace or conjugal union, and the Eucharist itself. Horrors! Victorian swoons!!

Apparently their misplaced piety motivates them to save Christ and divinity from itself. This is always a risky proposition. Witness Christ's reaction to Peter's similar attempt to dissuade Christ from his cross, after the revelation at Caesarea Philippi. "Get thee behind me, Satan," he retorts to Peter. Elsewhere he notes that God's ways are NOT men's ways, and those who see with carnal eyes will see only carnality. Only those who see with spiritual eyes will understand reality in its spiritual depth and meaning. We can apply his challenge here.

Matrimony is not the only, or the pre-eminent spousal sacrament, after all. Spousal sacrament is the image, likeness and icon of Trinitarian covenant, communion, and creativity, as we have said. Matrimony certainly fits this description. The husband and wife consecrate themselves to one another

with solemn vows. They live out the incarnate example of two-in-one flesh in joining their souls and minds, hearts and wills, lives and property or talents. More, they realize this concretely in their conjugal embrace, a literal two-in-one, a literal sheltering in one another, getting “under one another’s skin” in the same way we are to “put on Christ,” in love, in generosity, in tenderness and trust.

Finally, the fruits of this embrace, its union or communion, reveal “two-in-one flesh” in the being of the child. In each child their DNA combines to generate and germinate an entirely new, unique, individual person, a living testimony to their union, communion and participation in God’s being and work as provider of life, and providential nurture of it.

But so also Holy Orders raises up each priest to be *alter Christus*,” an other Christ. Christ is Bridegroom, by his own definition in the Gospels, and by Paul’s elucidation of this mystery in Ephesians 5. To be priest, in Christ’s most explicit image and likeness is to be bridegroom, spouse. As the bishop is wedded to his diocese, so the priest is espoused to his parish. This is implicit in the nature of priesthood. This is part of why we call him “father.”

Beyond that, he lives out the spousal covenant which Paul expresses in Ephesians 5. Christ gives his life for the life of the world and his bride, the Church. Like Christ, the priest lays down his life for his bride and parish. So the priest surrenders his life and freedom for his flock. Here too we see hierarchy and mutuality, order and procession, the spiritually generative initiative of the priest begetting new life in the souls and hearts of his parishioners, entrusting the germination of that life to the nurturing, nourishing activity of the Spirit in them, through his work.

And what is his main work?

His main work is to celebrate the Mass and dispense the sacraments. Celebrating Mass is primary. It is centered on the sacrament of the Eucharist.

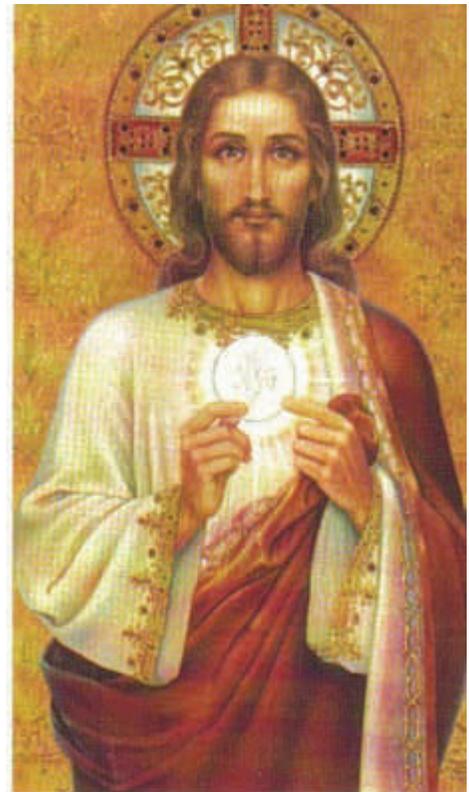
What is the Eucharist?

It is the Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity of Christ made really present to us under the appearance of bread and wine. It is the re-remembering, re-presentation of both the sacramental meal that is the Last Supper and the sacrificial death that is the Crucifixion with all its attendant sufferings. These two meanings of the Mass can never be separated. They are integral to one another.

Although we rarely note this in our technologically cocooned era, in every ordinary daily meal we receive the benefit of food that has been made available through the death of animals, vegetables and fruits. All meals involve sacrifice. All meals also involve communion. How? We eat the food, so it may be assimilated by our bodies and become one with us in order to provide the nourishment we need to remain alive. Every meal involves a level of covenant—on the part of those who provide the food and those who pay for it; communion—for those who eat, with the food that is eaten; and creativity—the renewal of life in us and the transfiguration of the food into that new life, at a higher level than its own.

So there is not one spousal sacrament, Matrimony alone. There are not even two spousal sacraments, Matrimony and Orders, resonating within one another, generating and germinating new life of both body and spirit.

There are THREE spousal sacraments. The Eucharist is itself not only a spousal sacrament. It is the root and source of the other two. ☞



Bureaucratized Charity

“We must really make an effort to change this.”

By Jon Merrill

Over at the *Musings of a Pertinacious Papist* blog, Dr. Blosser writes that the current line-up of consultants for the Pontifical Council for the New Evangelization seems to be “a politically correct and indiscriminating across-the-board representation of incommensurable factions”...and maybe a “hijacking” of the “new evangelization.”

Is it inevitable, in a modern-day Church sadly riven by “factions” and in the throes of what Blessed John Paul II called a “silent apostasy,” that any top-down, institutional, “bureaucratic” approach to a major mission of the Church – in this case *the* major mission of the Church – will be compromised and rendered ineffectual by the bureaucratically-felt need to include *all* parties in that mission...even those who dissent from or in practice “finesse” authentic Church teaching?

In days such as ours, is it not more realistic to conclude, with Pope Benedict, that the effective way forward lies, *not* in institutions such as new “pontifical councils,” but in initiatives that come from faithful Catholics working *outside* of that self-defeatingly all-inclusive and “undiscriminating” bureaucracy? As the pope recently said:

We must really make an effort to change this [“this” being an unrealistic reliance on what he termed “professional Catholics”]. In Italy — where there are far fewer enterprises run by the Church as an institution — I observe that initiatives arise, not because they are set up by the Church as institution, but because the people themselves believe. *Spontaneous new beginnings arise not from institutions, but out of an authentic faith.*

Is this not also the case, particularly in these treacherous times, with respect to that other great mission of the Church, a corollary of and support to both Old and New Evangelizations, that is, organized charitable action?

And yet what one sees, in the current Curial efforts to reshuffle the managerial personnel and “revise the statutes” of *Caritas Internationalis*, is that same unrealistic expectation that our salvation will come through existing, if re-tweaked, bureaucratic *institutions*, and through those same, if re-shuffled “professional Catholics” in whom Pope Benedict observed that “the spring of faith flows only faintly.”

Yes, the re-tweaking could open up the doors of that centralized bureaucracy to include – at least at the top – some professional Catholics of the “more orthodox” variety. But the unavoidable exigencies of bureaucratic political correctness will require the same “across-the-board representation of incommensurable factions” at *Caritas* that will characterize the Pontifical Council for the New Evangelization. There will certainly be no “purge” of those in the de-facto-dissenter camp. In fact, since *Caritas Internationalis* and its member agencies appear wedded to a continuing reliance on secular-government funding for their very existence, and since those secularist governments have a much easier time “doing business” with secularist Catholics, de-facto dissenters will perform play a prominent, crucial, indeed *existential* role within *Caritas*.

“We must really make an effort to change this.”

That change will not come through an institutionalized, all-inclusive approach at a Pontifical Council for the New Evangelization; and it will not come through an institutionalized, governmentalized approach at *Caritas* and its member agencies. Look instead to private, truly-*non*-governmental, probably lay-run “spontaneous new” initiatives, “arising out of an authentic faith” – a faith that will

be, necessarily, *discriminating*. ↪

Jon Merrill is the founder of Militia Caritatis Dei, a traditionally orthodox, catholically Catholic international charity which conspicuously rejects government funding.



**William-Adolphe Bouguereau,
Charity (1878)**

Liberalism Is a Sin

By Stephanie Block

When I first came across the perennial, TAN Books title *Liberalism Is a Sin*, I thought it must be a joke. Practically everyone I knew was a liberal of one stripe or another and they were generous people: opposed to war, poverty, racism...all the things I opposed, too, and still do. And what they embraced was peace among men of good will, the fair shake, well-prepared food, laughter, music, education, and the occasional beer. All things I would – and continue to – champion.

What I learned, reading this little book, is that the term “liberal” has a lot of applications, often deliberately confused to promote political positions that may actually contradict the bon vivant and catholic benevolence of my adolescent understanding.

For instance, Sean Patrick – one of the bloggers at Called to Communion – makes the point that liberalism in religion promotes the “doctrine” that there is no positive truth in religion but one creed is as good as another. Obviously this is antithetical to Catholicism, which is meaningless if it isn’t true. The Church has no option but to point out the incompatibility between this sort of liberalism and its own teachings. Patrick uses the illustration of Sister Elizabeth A. Johnson:

...a nun and professor of theology at Fordham (a Jesuit university), [who] wrote an unorthodox book which among other things taught ideas about the Trinity which are inconsistent with the Catholic faith. The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) responded with a 22 page condemnation of the work. This is not the first time the USCCB has identified a Catholic book as unorthodox and it won’t be the last. The response is a good read and a look into the mind of the United States Bishops when faced with heterodoxy. [www.calledtocommunion.com/2011/04/liberalism-in-the-catholic-church]



Cardinal Donald Wuerl of Washington, chair of the U.S. bishops’ Committee on Doctrine, makes a similar point in a letter of explanation for the committee’s critique of Sister Johnson’s *Quest for the Living God*. The critique says that Johnson’s text “completely undermines the Gospel and the faith of those who believe in the Gospel” when it addresses doctrine of the Trinity. It further says that the book is filled with “misrepresentations, ambiguities and errors” that do “not accord with authentic Catholic teaching on essential points.”

When the Committee’s critique was made public, the board of the *Catholic Theological Society of America* – which is comprised primarily of “liberal” college professors, some of whom are religious – complained that “this criticism of Professor Johnson’s work seems to reflect a very narrow understanding of the theological task.” Cardinal Wuerl responded that bishops, not college professors, have the “clear and defined role as the authentic teachers of the faith.”

It’s more tactful than my distillation of the message, of course, and a good deal more...developed. He writes:

The book in question is an already published work not primarily directed to professional theologians for theological speculation, but rather one used as a teaching instrument for undergraduate students, many of whom are looking for grounding in their Catholic faith. The background against which the bishops must exercise their teaching responsibility today is the generally recognized catechetical deficiencies of past decades beginning with the 1970s. The result is a generation or more of Catholics, including young adults today, who have little solid intellectual formation in their faith. It is in this context that books used in religious studies/theology courses at Catholic colleges and universities must be seen as *de facto* catechetical and formational texts. While the content of a book may be highly speculative and of interest for trained theologians, when it is used

in a classroom with students often ill-prepared to deal with speculative theology, the results can be spiritually harmful. The bishops are rightly concerned about the spiritual welfare of those students using this book who may be led to assume that its content is authentic Catholic teaching. The Committee on Doctrine expresses serious concern about the pastoral implications of the teaching in this book. [Donald Cardinal Wuerl, "Bishops as Teachers," www.usccb.org/doctrine/BISHOPS-AS-TEACHERS-CARDINAL-WUERL-4-18-11.pdf]

Bravo! Bravo!

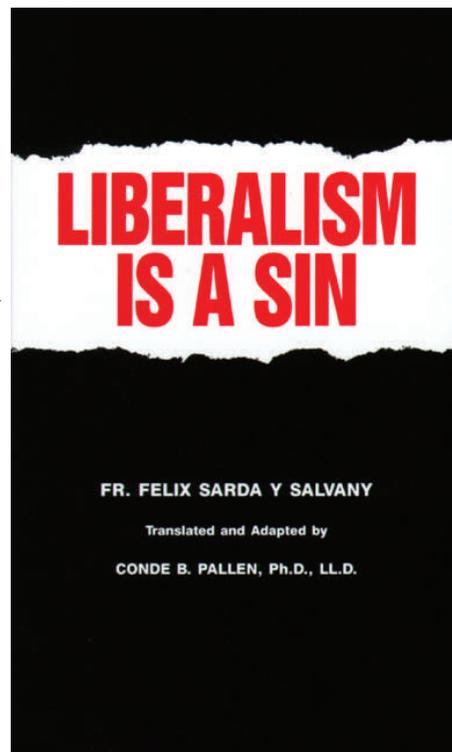
Among the problematic elements found in *Quest for the Living God*, is the idea that because God is the primordial mystery "there is no end to the being and fullness of God," which "opens the possibility that others might have distinct encounters with the divine that can be new resources for Christian exploration into the overabundance of God. To put it simply, the living God is not a Christian." [*Quest...*, p 161, 2)

Johnson knows her modern gospel well. She's got the liberal creed down pat. Trouble is, it distorts Scripture or Church teaching: God may not be "a Christian" but He *is* Christ...and He went to an awful lot of trouble to establish a Church. People in other religions may have "encounters with the divine" but, uniquely, Christians say of Jesus "There is no salvation through anyone else, nor is there any other name under heaven given to the human race by which we are to be saved." [Acts 4: 12]

The USCCB Committee on Doctrine explains it this way:

Sr. Johnson's position on that matter is not in keeping with the Christian understanding of Jesus as the fullness of truth. For the fullness of "truth," according to Johnson's argument, one needs Jesus + Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam, etc (see 174-179). Sr. Johnson's conclusion is contrary to Church teaching.

Sr. Johnson's conclusion is contrary to Church teaching. One creed is *not* just as good as another. New theological "discoveries" aren't worth beans if they aren't true. And pertinacious liberalism *is* a sin. ☩



Carmelite Nuns of Compiègne (1794)

Feastday: July 17

Sixteen discolored Carmelites from the monastery in Compiègne France defied the French Revolutionary government's order to disband and remained in community. For this act, they were arrested in 1794 and condemned to the guillotine, which they approached singing the *Salve Regina*.

Pope's Conversation with Astronauts is a Signal Event in History

By Father Dominic Vincent Nkoyoyo

Saturday 21, May 2011 will go down into history books as the day of the greatest historic encounter between science and faith/religion in modern times!

On this day, Pope Benedict XVI spoke to the crew of astronauts at the International Space Station!

In the article "Pope Talks to Astronauts in Space," Allvoices [a news service] reported that Pope Benedict XVI has broken ground here on earth; now he has entered where no Pope has gone – space. Astronaut Mark Kelly, aboard the International Space Station received a visitation by the Pontiff via satellite. The chat from Pope Benedict marks an historic event — the first time that a Pontiff has linked-up in space. The Vatican was connected with the International Space Station, Kelly, his five-man crew, and six station residents.

The conversation between the Pontiff and the astronauts revealed to the world the unity between science and religion. From the article "The Pope blesses astronauts in 1st papal call to space," by Associated Press, we read that Benedict told the space travelers, "You are our representatives spearheading humanity's exploration of new spaces and possibilities for our future."

Space station astronaut Ronald Garan Jr spoke of the paper-thin layer of atmosphere "that separates every living thing from the vacuum of space." And shuttle crewman Fincke described how he and his colleagues "can look down and see our beautiful planet Earth that God has made."

Benedict expressed concern for astronaut Paolo Nespoli, whose 78 year-old mother died while he was serving on the space station. "How have you been living through this time of pain on the International Space



Station?" the Pope asked.

"Holy Father, I felt your prayers and everyone's prayers arriving up here..."

This is a memorable event that has repaired and settled once and for all the misunderstanding and conflict between Galileo and the Catholic Church. It cements the apologies already offered by the late John Paul II on this matter. In addition, it opens a new era in the relationship between religion and the scientific community.

But it is important to remember that apart from isolated incidents, which sometimes are exaggerated, the Catholic Church has never been hostile to science. And the Pontifical Academy of Sciences through its members and the Vatican Observatory have made a lot of contributions to scientific and technological developments.

The list of these members who are from diverse religious and cultural backgrounds is long but just to mention a few: Fr Georges Lemaître (1894-1966) the father of the Big Bang theory, was the President of this Pontifical Academy from 1960 to his death in 1966; American Charles H. Townes, Nobel Physics prize 1964; Israel's Aaron Ciechanover Nobel Chemistry prize 2004; German Gerhard Ertl Nobel Chemistry prize 2007; Egyptian Ahmed Zewail Nobel Chemistry prize 1999, etc.

It should also be remembered that the Vatican Observatory is one of the oldest astronomical research institutions in the world! In 1993 its modern, 1.8 meters wide, Advanced Technology Telescope was completed on Mount Graham in Arizona USA.

One source says, given its excellent optical qualities, the telescope has been used primarily for imaging work in which it regularly outperforms much larger telescopes located elsewhere. Among the notable results from this telescope has been the discovery of MACHOs in Andromeda Galaxy. (MACHO stands for Massive Astrophysical Compact Halo Object.)

The long list of priests who have greatly contributed to the development of science and advancement of technology also testifies to the fact that the Church has not always been hostile to science as some people think. This list includes:

- Nicolaus Copernicus (1473-1543), besides being a Catholic cleric, was a mathematician, astronomer, and a physician. He is the father of modern astronomy.



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- Fr Nicolas Steno (1638-1686) is considered the father of geology.
- Fr Francesco Maria Grimaldi SJ (1618-1663) was a mathematician, physicist and astronomer. The Crater Grimaldi on the moon is named after him!
- Fr Giovanni Battista Riccioli SJ (1598-1671) was an astronomer and the first person to measure the rate of acceleration of a free-falling body.
- Gregor Johann Mendel (1822-1884) was an Augustinian monk. He is the undisputed father of the genetic sciences.

Apart from Galileo Galilee, other devout Catholic lay people have also contributed greatly to the development of science and technology. These include:

- Blaise Pascal (1623-1662), a convert to Roman Catholicism, is one of the greatest minds of all time! He was a mathematician, physicist, astronomer and philosopher who invented the calculator.
- Louis Pasteur (1822-1895) was a great biologist who invented pasteurization.

Both science and religion/faith are gifts of God to the human family. Moreover, it is very interesting that even the Bible itself, written many centuries before the age of our modern science, has room for natural science! In the book of Sirach, we read, "Honor physicians for their services, for the Lord created them; for the gift of healing comes from the Most High, and they are rewarded by the king. The skills of physicians make them distinguished. The Lord created medicine out of the earth and the sensible will not despise them." (Sir. 38:1-4)

Pope Benedict's approach to science is in total agreement with the scriptures! And in my opinion he, more than any other pontiff, has invested a lot of energy in bridging the gap between science and faith.

As we have two bodily eyes at the physical level, we also have two eyes at the spiritual level, one eye is science and another faith; both looking at one and the same reality but from different perspectives. To have a better perspective of reality, both eyes are needed! ☞

Fr. Dominic Vincent Nkoyoyo serves at the Monastery Val Notre-Dame in Canada.

July Calendar

Los Pequeños Monthly Meeting
July 15, 2011
Call (505) 293-8006 for information.

Pro-life Prayer:
Planned Parenthood Abortuary
701 San Mateo Blvd.
Holy Innocents Chapel:
(505) 266-4100
Times: Daily 8 AM – 3 PM

Helpers of God's Precious Infants
Planned Parenthood Abortuary
701 San Mateo Blvd.
Tuesdays, Thursdays, Fridays: 8 AM – 11:30 AM
Wednesdays: 12 Noon – 3:00 PM
For more information, call Phil Leahy:
(505) 440-3040

Mass at the Holy Innocents Chapel
at noon
Tuesday, Wednesday, & Thursday
For more information, call
(505) 266-4100



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Check out *Project Defending Life's* radio show, **Lifetalk**, which airs on 1050 AM KTBL every Saturday at 2:00 pm till 3:00 pm.

“We’ve had enough of exhortations to be silent! Cry out with a hundred thousand tongues. I see that the world has become rotten because of silence.”

~ St. Catherine of Siena

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