



# The Catholic Citizen

CATHOLIC CITIZENS OF ILLINOIS

Winter 2015

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## Defending Life in All its Stages

In anticipation of the Synod on the Family, we reprint an excerpt from the homily of Saint John Paul II at the Capitol Mall in Washington on October 7, 1979.

**Human Life Is the Gift of God**—I do not hesitate to proclaim before you and before the world that all human life—from the moment of conception and through all subsequent stages—is sacred, because human life is created in the image and likeness of God. Nothing surpasses the greatness or dignity of a human person. Human life is not just an idea or an abstraction; human life is the concrete reality of a being that lives, that acts, that grows and develops; human life is the concrete reality of a being that is capable of love, and of service to humanity.

Let me repeat what I told the people during my recent pilgrimage to my homeland : “If a person’s right to life is violated at the moment in which he is first conceived in his mother’s womb, an indirect blow is struck also at the whole of the moral order, which serves to ensure the inviolable goods of man. Among those goods, life occupies the first place ....

Human life is precious because it is the gift of a God whose love is infinite; and when God gives life, it is forever. Life is also precious because it is the expression and the fruit of love. This is why life should spring up within the setting of marriage, and why marriage and the parents’ love for one another should be marked by generosity in self-giving. The great danger for family life, in the midst of any society whose idols

are pleasure, comfort and independence, lies in the fact that people close their hearts and become selfish. The fear of making permanent commitments can change the mutual love of husband and wife into two loves of self—two loves existing side by side, until they end in separation.

In the sacrament of marriage, a man and a woman—who at Baptism became members of Christ and hence have the duty of manifesting Christ’s attitudes in their lives—are assured of the help they need to develop their love in a faithful and indissoluble union, and to respond with generosity to the gift of parenthood. As the Second Vatican Council declared: Through this sacrament, Christ himself becomes present in the life of the married couple and accompanies them, so that they may love each other and their children, just as Christ loved his Church by giving himself up for her.

In order that Christian marriage may favor the total good and development of the married couple, it must be inspired by the Gospel, and thus be open to new life—new life to be given and accepted generously. The couple is also called to create a family atmosphere in which children can be happy, and lead full and worthy human and Christian lives.

To maintain a joyful family requires much from both the parents and the children. Each member of the family has to become, in a special way, the servant of the others and share their burdens. Each one

*Continued on page 2*

**The priest must  
be recognizable  
above all  
through his  
conduct, but  
also by his attire**

## **Priests Who Look Like Priests**

*Directory for the Ministry and the Life of Priests, Congregation for the Clergy, 2013 (no.61)*

In a secularized and basically materialistic society where the external signs of sacred and supernatural realities tend to disappear, deeply felt is the need for the priest—man of God, dispenser of his mysteries—to be recognizable in the eyes of the community by his attire as well, and this as an unequivocal sign of his dedication and identity as holder of a public ministry.

The priest must be recognizable above all through his conduct, but also by his attire, which renders visible to all the faithful, and to each person, his identity and his belonging to God and to the Church ....

The priest must:

- a) wear either the cassock “or suitable ecclesiastical dress ... ” (Code of Canon Law 284); when other than

the cassock, attire must be different from the way laypersons dress and consonant with the dignity and sanctity of the minister ...

- b) contrary practices ... must be absolutely eliminated by the competent authority.

The non-use of ecclesiastical attire may manifest a weak sense of one’s identity as a pastor dedicated entirely to the service of the Church.

Moreover, in its form, color and dignity the cassock is most opportune, because it clearly distinguishes priests from laymen and makes people understand the sacred nature of their ministry, reminding the priest himself that forever and at each moment he is a priest ordained to serve, teach, guide and sanctify souls ....

### **Life** *Continued from page 1*

must show concern, not only for his or her own life, but also for the lives of the other members of the family: their needs, their hopes, their ideals. *Decisions about the number of children and the sacrifices to be made for them must not be taken only with a view to adding to comfort and preserving a peaceful existence. Reflecting upon this matter before God, with the graces drawn from the Sacrament, and guided by the teaching of the Church, parents will remind themselves that it is certainly less serious to deny their children certain comforts or material advantages than to deprive them of the presence of brothers and sisters, who could help them to grow in humanity and to realize the beauty of life at all its ages and in all its variety.*

All human beings ought to value every person for his or her uniqueness as a creature of God, called to be a brother or sister of Christ by reason of the Incarnation and the universal Redemption. For us, the sacredness of human life is based on these premises. And it is on these same premises that there is based our celebration of life—all human life. This explains our efforts to

defend human life against every influence or action that threatens or weakens it, as well as our endeavors to make every life more human in all its aspects.

And so, we will stand up every time that human life is threatened. When the sacredness of life before birth is attacked, we will stand up and proclaim that no one ever has the authority to destroy unborn life. When a child is described as a burden or is looked upon only as a means to satisfy an emotional need, we will stand up and insist that every child is a unique and unrepeatable gift of God, with the right to a loving and united family. When the institution of marriage is abandoned to human selfishness or reduced to a temporary, conditional arrangement that can easily be terminated, we will stand up and affirm the indissolubility of the marriage bond. When the value of the family is threatened because of social and economic pressures, we will stand up and reaffirm that the family is “necessary not only for the private good of every person, but also for the common good of every society, nation and state.”

**The Catholic Citizen**  
Winter 2015

Published quarterly by  
Catholic Citizens of Illinois

**Catholic Citizens of Illinois**  
106 Calendar Ct. PMB #122  
La Grange, IL 60525-2325  
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[www.catholiccitizens.org](http://www.catholiccitizens.org)

Catholic Citizens of Illinois  
is an organization of lay  
Catholics working to restore  
Catholic values to the public  
life and culture of Illinois,  
within the framework of  
genuine renewal, fidelity to  
the teaching of the Church,  
and the Holy Father.

Catholic Citizens of Illinois  
is a non-partisan,  
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# The Battle over Gay Rights Is THE Battle ... There Is No Other

by Brian Fischer, Guest Columnist, OneNewsNow

defending  
true  
marriage

**America's future will be determined by one thing and one thing only: whether the forces of light or darkness will win the battle over special rights based on sexually deviant behavior.**

This is for the simple reason that America must choose between homosexuality and religious freedom, between sodomy and liberty. There is no middle ground. As columnist Matt Lewis put it, the clash is a "zero-sum" game. Somebody wins and somebody else loses.

Every single advance of the homosexual agenda comes at the expense of religious liberty. Americans want to believe otherwise, that sodomy and religious liberty can coexist, but they cannot. Everywhere Big Gay gains ground, Christ is forced into retreat.

Everything hinges on the outcome of this cultural conflict. Whether America continues to be a beacon of faith, family and freedom will be determined by who wins this battle. If the forces of sexual normalcy and natural marriage prevail, America will once again move the world toward the sunlit uplands of civilization, family, morality, goodness and prosperity.

But if the forces of sexual deviancy prevail, every part of our culture will be corrupted and contaminated beyond repair, and America will plunge the world into a moral abyss of darkness and depravity.

The soul-crushing tyranny being imposed on wedding vendors is ample evidence. Christian bakers now face fines and jail time for politely declining to throw eggs and flour into an oven for the Gay Gestapo.

Lesbian writer Tammy Bruce correctly points out that for a baker to be forced to render service against his will is a barely disguised form of slavery, and to be forced to do so against his conscience is nothing less than abject tyranny.

Religious principle, tolerance and rights of conscience mean nothing to pro-sodomy advocates. They will remorselessly crush anyone and anything that gets in their path, without mercy and without a second thought.

In their quest for cultural domination, they will relentlessly extinguish the light of sexual normalcy and morality, as well as the light of Christianity.

They have the will to crush biblical Christianity into broken pieces. They lack only the power.

Religious liberty is the quintessential American characteristic, the value that has set us apart from every nation in the world. This country was founded by Christians looking for freedom to worship God and serve Him in daily life according to the dictates of conscience. The very first of the unalienable, God-given rights the Founders protected in the Constitution is the "free exercise" of the Christian religion.

The free exercise of religion means exactly that: it is the freedom to live out your faith, not just on Sunday mornings between 11 and noon, but 24 hours a day, seven days a week, including the freedom to run your business according to Christian principle.

Without religious liberty, America is not America. It is something else, something alien, something foreign, something Washington, Jefferson, Adams and Madison would not recognize.

Washington, for instance, literally drummed homosexuals out of the Continental Army, and Jefferson wrote a Virginia law in 1778 that prescribed castration as the penalty for sodomy. I don't advocate the reinstatement of Jefferson's penalty today. My point is that the concept of marriage based on the infamous crime

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**Without  
religious liberty,  
America is  
not America.**

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*Continued on page 4*

## No Means No

Cardinal Mauro Piacenza, major penitentiary of the Tribunal of the Apostolic Penitentiary

In an interview with Zenit, 15-12-2014:

If then you refer to the reiterated topic of the priestly ordination of women, I cannot but quote Pope Francis who affirms textually: “The Church has spoken and has said no. John Paul II pronounced himself with a definitive formulation, that door is closed” ... From the point of view of the “visibility” of women in the Church, and in her “structures,” it is not about foreseeing “female quotas”; for the Church, baptism suffices. However, objectively, nothing

would impede, for instance, having a woman at the top of Vatican structures, where sacred ordination is not required. We think of social communications; financial, charitable, cultural, etc. ambits. In all those posts, in which the priestly “munus” is not required, the only criterion should be the real competence and identification with the thought and working of the Church.

[http://stoneswillshout.com/wp/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/2015\\_0102JanFebruary.pdf](http://stoneswillshout.com/wp/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/2015_0102JanFebruary.pdf)

**Battle** *Continued from page 3*

against nature would have been inconceivable to the men who founded this country.

Advocates of sodomy-based marriage want to push Christians so far into retreat that they dare not poke their heads out of their own church buildings. This is the very spirit of Hitler, who bottled up the Christians of his day inside the four walls of their buildings.

Hitler and his propaganda machine concocted slogans such as “Politics do not belong in the church” and “The church must be separate from the state” to neuter Christians and paralyze the church’s ability to resist his totalitarian impulses. (Yes, you read that right. Those slogans did not come from so-called civil libertarians like the ACLU, they came from the fevered mind of Adolf Hitler.)

A lesbian activist once spoke these words to me when I was pastoring and just beginning to publicly oppose the homosexual agenda: “I don’t care what you do in your church. I don’t care what you preach in your church. I don’t care what you believe in your church, as long as you keep it there. The church may belong to you, but the public square belongs to us.”

The battle is not over constitutional rights, such as religion, speech, the press,

assembly and self-defense, which we want to protect for everybody. The battle is over special rights. You can read the Constitution backwards and forwards, upside down, from right to left and in Sanskrit, and you will find no mention whatsoever of any right to engage in sexual perversion or the right to compel others against their deeply held convictions to endorse, promote, sanction and approve of immoral, unnatural and unhealthy sexual behavior.

Said Winston Churchill: “If you will not fight for right when you can easily win without bloodshed; if you will not fight when your victory is sure and not too costly; you may come to the moment when you will have to fight with all the odds against you and only a precarious chance of survival. There may even be a worse case. You may have to fight when there is no hope of victory, because it is better to perish than to live as slaves.”

The time to stand against the war machine of the homosexual regime is now. Today. It is still a battle the forces of goodness can win. But we must not wait another day.

<http://onenewsnow.com/perspectives/bryan-fischer/2014/03/06/the-battle-over-gay-rights-is-the-battle-there-is-no-other#.VND0pZ3F8b0>

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**The battle  
is over  
special rights.**

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# Inspections for Tanning Salons but Not Abortion Clinics—Really?

by Robert Gilligan, executive director of the Catholic Conference of Illinois

regulating  
abortion

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Every January 22, millions of people march to call attention to the devastating impact of the U.S. Supreme Court's decision in *Roe v. Wade* and *Doe v. Bolton*. Because of these rulings millions of innocent infants have not been born. Discussing abortion can bring sharp disagreement, but whether one identifies as “pro-life” or “pro-choice” there is an area in which all should agree.

A report recently released from Illinois Right to Life provides a ray of hope for Democrats and Republicans to come together on this topic. One would think after reading this report lawmakers would enact a law that would require every abortion facility to be inspected at least once a year.

Among the more startling revelations in the report is that 54 percent of abortion facilities are not licensed by the state of Illinois—they have never received a health and safety inspection. The state department of public health has no authority over unlicensed abortion facilities even if they perform surgical abortions. The remaining 46 percent of facilities that are licensed by the state of Illinois went nine to 13 years without an inspection between 2000–14.

It is hard to imagine how lawmakers can turn a blind eye to inspecting abortion facilities every year when lawmakers have recognized the need to require regular inspections of tanning salons, restaurants, nursing homes and other places where one's health and safety are at risk. Even barber shops and cosmetologists require registration with the state.

Regulations under the Tanning Permit Act require a tanning facility to be inspected at least once a year, and the rules are quite specific. They specify that sun lamps shall incorporate a timing device with multiple settings and that protective eyewear is required. Interesting, unlike the parental

notification of abortion law where there are exceptions, and a parent may consent to their child's abortion, this is not the case when it comes to tanning salons. The law clearly states that a person under age 18 may not be allowed to use a tanning salon even if the minor has the permission of a parent.

How can the state justify regularly inspecting a tanning salon and not an abortion facility? Without oversight, what assurance is there that instruments are properly sterilized? Is medical waste being disposed of properly, and more importantly, what happens to the human remains after an abortion? If something goes wrong, what alternative does a woman have?

That is the question many asked surrounding the death of 24-year old Tonya Reaves, who died after a botched second trimester abortion in July 2012. Reaves had an abortion at an unlicensed abortion facility owned by Planned Parenthood in Chicago and died 12 hours later as a result of what happened at that facility.

In 2011, the nation was shocked to learn about the horrors occurring in the abortion facility operated by Kermit Gosnell. That facility had not been inspected since 1993. Gosnell is now serving a term of life without parole after he was convicted of three counts of murder that occurred at the abortion facility he owned in Philadelphia. Media reports stated that furniture and blankets were stained with blood, freely roaming cats deposited their feces wherever they pleased and that non-sterilized equipment was used and reused on patients.

In Illinois we know that tanning salons are safe, but without proper state oversight and inspection we do not know what is happening in abortion facilities. Those who are pro-choice should support legislation

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of abortion  
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state of Illinois**

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**fasting may be  
said to be an  
outward sign  
of the inner  
grace of fuller  
conversion**

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**“What is  
liberty without  
wisdom and  
without  
virtue?”**

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## **The Purpose of Fasting**

Fasting from meat, or from other foods during Lent, continues to hold a certain fascination for non-Catholics and, indeed, for nonbelievers. Many people take up this practice simply as a way of losing weight or becoming more healthy. These motivations are not to be dismissed, but they fall short of the biblical spirituality of fasting. They are not the purpose of the “religious fast,” which helps us grow in holiness.

Fasting has three meanings. First, fasting is an act of asceticism. When we fast, we are forced to confront our own mortality. Without food we would die. We depend on God and others for our sustenance. Without a whole range of material and spiritual things external to us we would die. Thus fasting may be said to be an outward sign of the inner grace of fuller conversion to Christ. Fasting is not an end in itself, but a means toward a more faith-filled sense of God’s lordship over our lives. Fasting is a means of imbuing in us a great sense of spiritual need.

Second, fasting is an act of justice. We fast so that others may eat. Through mass media we are now more aware than ever of the problems of starvation and hunger through the world. When we fast, from whatever it is we are abstaining from, the “second part” of the fast is to give what was saved to assist those in need.

Third, fasting is an act of faith. In fasting we recognize that until the coming of the kingdom of God we will always be hungry in spirit. Fasting empties us out so that God can fill us up. Through fasting, we grow in our dependence on God. The writings of Isaiah, the words of Jesus and the great visions of the Book of Revelation portray the coming of the Kingdom as the coming of a great heavenly banquet. The coming of the Kingdom will mean an end to all the hungers of the human heart. The Christian Eucharist, as Saint Thomas Aquinas described it, is a “pledge of future glory.”

## **Liberty without Virtue**

Edmund Burke was considered the most influential orator in the House of Commons and known for his famous quote: “All that is necessary for evil to triumph is for good men to do nothing.”

At the time of the French Revolution in 1791, Edmund Burke wrote in “A Letter to a Member of the National Assembly”: “What is liberty without wisdom and without virtue? It is the greatest of all possible evils; for it is folly, vice and madness, without restraint. Men are qualified for civil liberty in exact proportion to their

disposition to put moral chains upon their own appetites; in proportion as they are disposed to listen to the counsels of the wise and good in preference to the flattery of knaves.”

Edmund Burke continued: “Society cannot exist, unless a controlling power upon will and appetite be placed somewhere; and the less of it there is within, the more there must be without. It is ordained in the eternal constitution of things, that men of intemperate minds cannot be free. Their passions forge their fetters.”

**Inspections** *Continued from page 5*  
requiring abortion facilities to be inspected annually. Those who are pro-life recognize that abortion is the taking of an innocent unborn child, and protecting the life of all

mothers is one-step towards protecting the unborn as well.

*Originally published in the Rockford Register Star. <http://www.ilcatholic.org/inspections-for-tanning-salons-but-not-abortion-clinics-really/>*

# Indissoluble Means Indissoluble

by Father Claude Barthe, L'Homme Nouveau (French Periodical), November 12, 2014

## Four Days after Synod Closes, CDF Responds Officially: No Communion for “Remarried” Divorcees who live as if they were married, Period.

The question of the situation of Catholics who are divorced and civilly remarried was especially discussed at the extraordinary assembly of the Synod on the theme, “*The pastoral challenges of the family in the context of the evangelization*,” that ended in Rome on October 18.

A text of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, in response to a question sent by a priest, has just added, on a specific point concerning the pastoral work related to these persons, an important element, that is particularly clarifying in the general disturbance of the spirits. This response has the advantage of putting forward the problems related to the Eucharistic communion of the remarried divorced. It in fact settles what must be the attitude of priests who work in the ministry of reconciliation for those same remarried divorcees.

Therefore, we publish here the full text, respecting its format:

### Response to the Question of a French Priest: “Can a confessor grant absolution to a penitent who, having been religiously married, has contracted a second union following divorce?”

The Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith responded on October 22, 2014:

“We cannot exclude *a priori* the remarried divorced faithful from a penitential process that would lead to a sacramental reconciliation with God and, therefore, also to Eucharistic communion. Pope John Paul II, in the Apostolic Exhortation *Familiaris Consortio* (n.84) envisaged such a possibility and detailed its conditions: ‘Reconciliation in the sacrament of Penance which would open the way to the Eucharist, can only be granted to those who, repenting of having broken the sign of the Covenant and of fidelity to Christ, are sincerely ready to undertake

a way of life that is no longer in contradiction to the indissolubility of marriage. This means, in practice, that when, for serious reasons, such as for example the children’s upbringing, a man and a woman cannot satisfy the obligation to separate, they “take on themselves the duty to live in complete continence, that is, by abstinence from the acts proper to married couples.”’ (cf. also Benedict XVI, *Sacramentum Caritatis*, n. 29)

“The penitential process to be undertaken must take into consideration the following elements:

“1—Verify the validity of the religious marriage in the respect of truth, all the while avoiding giving the impression of a kind of ‘Catholic divorce.’

“2—See eventually if the persons, with the aid of grace, can separate from their new partners and reconcile with those from whom they had separated.

“3—Invite remarried divorced persons who, for serious reasons (for instance, children), cannot separate from their partner to live as ‘brother and sister.’

“In any event, absolution cannot be granted if not under the condition of being assured of true contrition, that is, ‘a sorrow of mind, and a detestation for sin committed, with the purpose of not sinning for the future’ (Council of Trent, *Doctrine on the Sacrament of Penance*, c. 4). In this line, a remarried divorcee cannot be validly absolved if he does not take the firm resolution of not ‘sinning for the future’ and therefore of abstaining from the acts proper to spouses, by doing in this sense all that is within his power.”

**Luis F. Ladaria, SJ**

*Titular Archbishop of Thibica, Secretary*

*Reprinted from L'Homme Nouveau (French Periodical), November 12, 2014 <http://rorate-caeli.blogspot.com/2014/11/four-days-after-synod-closed-cdf.html#more>*

contrition  
and  
conversion

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**absolution  
cannot be  
granted if  
not under  
the condition  
of being  
assured of true  
contrition**

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***It is only  
because we  
are dependent  
on God  
that we are  
independent as  
persons from  
the total will  
of any man***

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## ***Independence Comes from Dependence on God***

*A Declaration of Dependence, Bishop Fulton Sheen (1941)*

In these days when everyone talks of rights and few of duties, it is important for us Americans to recall the Declaration of Independence is also a Declaration of Dependence. The Declaration of Independence asserts a double dependence on law as derived from God. Where do we get our right of free speech? Where do we get freedom of conscience? Whence is derived the right to own property? Do we get these rights and liberties from the State? If we did, the State could take them away. Do we get them from the federal government in Washington? If we did, the federal government could take them away.

Whence comes the right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness? Read the Declaration of Independence and there find the answer: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness." Notice these words: The Creator has endowed men with rights and liberties; men got them from God! In other words, that initial dependence is the foundation of our independence. Suppose we interpret independence, as some liberal jurists do, as independence of God; then

rights and liberties come either from the State, as Bolshevism contends, or from the dictators, as Nazism and Fascism believe.

But if the State or the Dictator is the creator of rights, then the State or the Dictator can dispossess men of their rights. That is why in those countries where God is most denied, man is most tyrannized, and where religion is most persecuted, man is most enslaved. It is only because we are dependent on God that we are independent as persons from the total will of any man on earth. Let us not think that by denying God we have purchased independence. The pendulum of the clock that wanted to be free from its point of suspension, found out that on becoming independent of its suspension, it was no longer free to swing ....

Democracy is based not on the divine right of kings but on the divine right of persons. Each person has a value because God made him, not because the State recognizes him. The day we adopt in our democracy the already widespread ideas of some American jurists that right and justice depend on convention and the spirit of the times, we shall write the death warrant of our independence. When we deny God as the foundation of our rights, we shall no longer have rights.

### ***Advice for a Bishop***

Pope Francis to newly ordained bishops, (October, 2013): Proclaim the word at all times, whether opportune or inopportune. Admonish, reprimand, exhort with all magnanimity and doctrine, and through prayer and the offering of sacrifice for your people, attain the fullness of sanctity of Christ, the manifold richness of divine grace, through prayer.

A bishop who does not pray is a halfway bishop, and if he does not pray to the Lord, he ends up in worldliness. In the Church that has been entrusted to you, be faithful custodians and dispensers of the mystery of Christ, placed by the Father at the head of his family. Follow always the example of the Good Shepherd who knows his sheep and is known by them, and who did not hesitate to give his life for them. *Zenit.org*



# Three Myths about Faith

by Carl E. Olson—from, *the Catholic Answer*

faith &  
reason

Ordinarily, we don't think of papal texts as being apologetic in nature. However, the first pope, Saint Peter, famously wrote, "Always be ready to give an explanation [apologian] to anyone who asks you for a reason for your hope!" (1 Pt 3:15).

Many papal writings contain passages that are apologetic in nature. *Lumen Fidei* ["The Light of Faith"], the papal encyclical released by Pope Francis on July 5, 2013, is a wonderful case in point. The encyclical contains several points of significant value for the apologist. Here are three apologetic-oriented points made by Pope Francis (and Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI, whose original draft was completed by his successor) about myths regarding the nature of faith.

**Myth #1:** Faith is blind and irrational. In "speaking of the light of faith," writes Francis, we can almost hear the objections of many of our contemporaries" (#2). The first objection is that faith—specifically Christian faith—is outdated precisely because it is irrational, offering "an illusory light" to a rational, modern culture. Faith is said to be fine for those wanting blind assurances, but it supposedly collapses under the pressure of facts and reason. The erroneous assumption made by so many skeptics and self-professed freethinkers is that faith is just a "leap in the dark" that is "driven by blind emotion" (#3). The pope notes that one problem with this belief is that "the light of autonomous reason is not enough to illumine the future." The reach of reason is itself limited, and these limitations indicate that rational thought, which is a great good, can only go so far in answering the deepest questions of the human heart. Reason is like a tall building from which we can view many vistas, but it cannot show us the entire picture. The light of faith, however, "is unique, since it is capable of illuminating every aspect

of human existence," precisely because it comes from God himself.

**Myth #2:** Faith is private and individualistic. This myth, unfortunately, is found among non-Christians and Christians alike. Many say, for example, that Christians should keep their beliefs to themselves. Since a pluralistic society welcomes (or at least tolerates) a wide range of competing beliefs about God, man, society and everything else, absolute statements should be avoided. Of course, that premise itself reflects an absolute belief in man's inability to know absolute truth, which is inherently contradictory. The key issue here is truth: Does it exist, and can it be known? Yes and yes! Faith is intimately related to truth, for faith is only transformative and saving if it is rooted in objective, transcendent Truth. But the absence of faith opens the door to relativism, "in which the question of universal truth—and ultimately this means the question of God—is no longer relevant" (#25). Yet *Lumen Fidei* also focuses on the notion, held by some Christians, that faith is entirely or primarily individualistic. "Faith is not a private matter," writes Pope Francis, "a completely individualistic notion or a personal opinion: it comes from hearing, and it is meant to find expression in words and to be proclaimed" (#22). No one comes to faith on their own. Faith, then, is relational and oriented to communion, with others and with the Other, the Triune God who gifts us with faith. Thus the need for the Church and the God-given authority of the magisterium.

**Myth #3:** The opposite of faith is skepticism. Pope Francis explains that what really opposes faith, in the end, is idolatry. We either seek God or we seek, knowingly or otherwise, to replace God with false gods. History certainly bears this out, as do our

*Continued on page 10*

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**erroneous  
assumption ...  
is that faith is  
just a "leap in  
the dark" that  
is "driven by  
blind emotion**

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**to give God the first place, is a journey that every Christian must undertake**

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## Is He the Lord or Am I?

Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI, 13-02-2013

Reflecting on the temptations undergone by Jesus in the desert is an invitation for each of us to answer a fundamental question: what is truly important in our lives? ... What is the crux of the three temptations that Jesus undergoes? It is the proposal to manipulate God, to use Him for one's own interests, for one's own glory and success. And, in essence, to put oneself in the place of God, removing Him from one's life and making Him seem superfluous. Everyone should then ask himself: what is God's role in my life? Is He the Lord or am I?

Overcoming the temptation to place God beneath oneself and one's own interests or to place Him in a corner and to convert to the proper ordering of priorities, to give God the first place, is a journey that every Christian must undertake. "Conversion," an invitation that we will hear many times in Lent, means to follow Jesus in such a way that his Gospel is a real guide for life; it means letting God transform us, to stop thinking that we are the only creators of our lives; it means recognizing that we are creatures who depend on God, on His love, and only by "losing" our life in Him can we gain it. This requires making our choices in the light of the Word of God.

Today one can no longer be Christian as a simple consequence of living in a society with Christian roots: even those who come from Christian families, and are brought

up religiously must renew every day the choice to be Christian, that is, to give God the first place, in front of the temptations that a secularized culture presents us with all the time, before the criticism of many of our contemporaries. The tests to which modern society subjects Christians, indeed, are many, and affect both personal and social life. It is not easy to be faithful to Christian marriage, to practice mercy in everyday life, to leave space for prayer and inner silence; it is not easy to publicly oppose choices that many consider obvious, such as abortion in the event of an unwanted pregnancy, euthanasia in the case of serious illness or the selection of embryos to prevent hereditary diseases. The temptation to set aside one's faith is always present, and conversion becomes a response to God which must be confirmed repeatedly in life ....

In this time of Lent ... we renew our commitment on the way of conversion, to overcome the tendency to close in on ourselves and to make room for God instead, looking at our daily reality through His eyes .... Conversion means not closing in on oneself in the pursuit of one's own success, one's own prestige, one's own position, but making sure that every day, in the small things, truth, faith in God and love become the most important thing.

*Zenit.org*

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**Myths** *Continued from page 9*  
own struggles with temptation and sin. Idolatry, the pope explains, "is always polytheism, an aimless passing from one lord to another" (#13). This profound observation helps the apologist make sense of the sometimes bewildering array of false paths chosen by those who reject or ignore the true way of Jesus Christ. But faith "consists

in the willingness to let ourselves be constantly transformed and renewed by God's call. Herein lies the paradox: by constantly turning towards the Lord, we discover a sure path which liberates us from the dissolution imposed upon us by idols."

*Reprinted from the St. Isaac Jogues Bulletin for January 25, 2015.*

## Forum Speakers

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**March 13—David M. Carollo**, national executive director of the World Apostolate of Fatima—Our Lady's Blue Army. He served as a member of the board of trustees of the apostolate for 10 years and as the national president of the organization for five years from 2007 until he assumed the role of director in 2012. He is a member of board of trustees of the World Apostolate of Fatima International. David is a regular guest on EWTN television, appearing on such shows as *Sunday Night Prime*, *The Church Universal* and *Vaticano from Rome*. He is heard on several radio shows on Radio Maria and Relevant Radio. He holds B.A. degree from Illinois State University. The subject of his talk will be the Message of Fatima.

**April 10—Fr. Piotr (Peter) Gnoinski**, associate pastor of St. Paul of the Cross Parish in Park Ridge. Fr. Peter was born in Southern Poland and grew up on a farm in Olesno, where the parish was founded in 1410. In 1998, he entered the seminary in Tarnow, Poland. After meeting the rector of Bishop Abramowicz Seminary who had come to Poland to recruit "missionary" priests on behalf of Cardinal George, he transferred to that seminary in Chicago. He received a master's degree in theology and was ordained in May of 2005. Fr. Peter will speak on Saint John Paul II.

**May 8—Sr. Rosemary Connelly, RSM**, executive director of Misericordia. She is a member of the Religious Sisters of Mercy. A native Chicagoan, she attended parochial schools and taught in several Archdiocesan schools while continuing her studies. In 1959, Sister Rosemary earned a B.S. degree in social science. She then earned a master of arts in sociology from St. Louis University in 1966 and a master's degree in social work from Loyola University Chicago in 1969. She was appointed administrator of Misericordia in 1969. Sister Rosemary's leadership has been integral to Misericordia growing into a loving, challenging and dignified environment for more than 600 children and adults with developmental disabilities. The subject of her talk will be The Mission of Misericordia.

**June 12—Robert Reilly**, senior fellow for strategic communication with the American Foreign Policy Council. Mr. Reilly has taught at the National Defense University, and served in the Office of The Secretary of Defense, where he was senior advisor for information strategy (2002–06). He participated in Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2003, as senior advisor to the Iraqi ministry of information. He was director of the Voice of America, where he had worked the prior decade. Mr. Reilly has served in the White House as a special assistant to the president (1983–85), and in the U.S. Information Agency both in D.C. and abroad. He has published widely on foreign policy, "war of ideas" issues, and classical music. He is the author of *The Closing of the Muslim Mind: How Intellectual Suicide Created the Modern Islamist Crisis*. His latest book: *Making Gay Okay* will be the subject of his talk.

**July 10—Mickey Straub**, mayor of Burr Ridge, IL. He received his B.S. degree from Indiana University, with a major in criminology. He was awarded the Director's Award for Scholastic Excellence, U.S. DOD, Washington, D.C. Mr. Straub served as a federal agent for two years and is the owner of Sales Activity Management, Inc. He has been an active leader in civic affairs and a dedicated patriot. He became the first and only person in the country to take a patriotic pilgrimage across the country; he drove to **50 Capitols in 50 Days** for love of God and country and in honor of our veterans and Abraham Lincoln. The subject of his talk: The Patriotic Pilgrimage.

**Luncheons are at 11:45 A.M. at the Union League Club, 65 W. Jackson Blvd., Chicago. Tickets are \$35. Business attire. Reservations required. Call Maureen at 708-352-5834.**

## president's report

by Mary Anne Hackett

## Winter 2015 Update

We are pleased to announce that Cardinal Raymond L. Burke will be the speaker at our Annual Dinner on September 22, 2015. The dinner will be at The Carlisle in Lombard, IL. Please mark your calendar for the date. More information will follow. We plan to have an ad book for the dinner. We invite you to place an ad or a listing welcoming Cardinal Burke. An ad form is inserted in this newsletter for your consideration.

We have been notified by the Union League Club, that after many years and because of the rising costs of food, it is necessary for them to raise their price for our luncheons. The monthly luncheons and wonderful Catholic speakers are a major

part of our mission to bring the truths of our Faith into the Public Square, truths that many Catholics are not receiving from the pulpit. We don't want to raise the price of our luncheons because we realize it would be a financial burden for many of those attending and would exclude their participation. Even though distance and various obligations might make it impossible for you to attend all or some of the luncheons, yet we make a special plea that you would be a part of our mission by helping to underwrite the cost of speakers and other expenses of our luncheons. You will notice a special place on the return card to make such a contribution. We thank you in advance for your consideration.

## Name It

"The first way to resist evil is to recognize it, to call it by its name, without deception. We can say that the greatest sin is not to recognize sin and to structure ways of self-justification that, in fact, frustrate the Cross of Our Lord Jesus Christ."

—Cardinal Mauro Piacenza

"Given the breakdown in family life, the wholesale attack on innocent and defenseless human lives, and the violation of the integrity of the union of marriage in our society, the call to the martyrdom of witness is ever more urgent."

—Cardinal Raymond Burke