



The Catholic Citizen

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This issue:

- ♦ Chastity and Homosexuality—Catechism of the Catholic Church
- ♦ The “Mark” of Saint John Paul II on the Church
- ♦ Repent and Believe
- ♦ Big Brother in the Classroom
- ♦ Bringing God back into the World
- ♦ Pope Francis: Mass Is for Lifting Hearts, Not Cell Phones
- ♦ Restoring and Preserving the Sacred
- ♦ Divine Grace May Yet Draw Millennials to the Joy Found in Christ

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How Catholics Can Welcome LGBT Believers

It's possible to stay faithful to the church's teachings without turning away millions

by Cardinal Robert Sarah, August 31, 2017

The Catholic Church has been criticized by many, including some of its own followers, for its pastoral response to the LGBT community. This criticism deserves a reply—not to defend the Church's practices reflexively, but to determine whether we, as the Lord's disciples, are reaching out effectively to a group in need. Christians must always strive to follow the new commandment Jesus gave at the Last Supper: “Love one another, even as I have loved you.”

To love someone as Christ loves us means to love that person in the truth. “For this I was born,” Jesus told Pontius Pilate, “to bear witness to the truth.” The Catechism of the Catholic Church reflects this insistence on honesty, stating that the Church's message to the world must “reveal in all clarity the joy and demands of the way of Christ.”

Those who speak on behalf of the Church must be faithful to the unchanging teachings of Christ, because only through living in harmony with God's creative design do people find deep and lasting fulfillment. Jesus described his own message in these terms, saying in the Gospel of John: “These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full.” Catholics believe that, with the guidance of the Holy Spirit, the

church draws its teachings upon the truths of Christ's message.

Among Catholic priests, one of the most outspoken critics of the church's message with regard to sexuality is Father James Martin, an American Jesuit. In his book *Building a Bridge*, published earlier this year, he repeats the common criticism that Catholics have been harshly critical of homosexuality while neglecting the importance of sexual integrity among all of its followers.

Father Martin is correct to argue that there should not be any double standard with regard to the virtue of chastity, which, challenging as it may be, is part of the good news of Jesus Christ for all Christians. For the unmarried—no matter their attractions—faithful chastity requires abstention from sex.

This might seem a high standard, especially today. Yet it would be contrary to the wisdom and goodness of Christ to require something that cannot be achieved. Jesus calls us to this virtue because he has made our hearts for purity, just as he has made our minds for truth. With God's grace and our perseverance, chastity is not only possible, but it will also become the source for true freedom.

continued on page 2

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Chastity and Homosexuality— Catechism of the Catholic Church

2357 Homosexuality refers to relations between men or between women who experience an exclusive or predominant sexual attraction toward persons of the same sex ... Basing itself on Sacred Scripture, which presents “homosexual acts as acts of grave depravity, tradition has always declared that “homosexual acts are intrinsically disordered.” They are contrary to the natural law. They close the sexual act to the gift of life. They do not proceed from a genuine

affective and sexual complementarity. Under no circumstances can they be approved.

2358 The number of men and women who have deep-seated homosexual tendencies is not negligible ... They must be accepted with respect, compassion and sensitivity. Every sign of unjust discrimination in this regard should be avoided.

2359 Homosexual persons are called to chastity.

LGBT *continued from page 1*

We do not need to look far to see the sad consequences of the rejection of God’s plan for human intimacy and love. The sexual liberation the world promotes does not deliver its promise. Rather, promiscuity is the cause of so much needless suffering, of broken hearts, of loneliness, and of treatment of others as means for sexual gratification. As a mother, the Church seeks to protect her children from the harm of sin, as an expression of her pastoral charity.

In her teaching about homosexuality, the Church guides her followers by distinguishing their identities from their attractions and actions. First there are the people themselves, who are always good because they are children of God. Then there are same-sex attractions, which are not sinful if not willed or acted upon but are nevertheless at odds with human nature. And finally there are same-sex relations, which are gravely sinful and harmful to the well-being of those who partake in them. People who identify as members of the LGBT community are owed this truth in charity, especially from clergy who speak on behalf of the church about this complex and difficult topic.

It is my prayer that the world will finally heed the voices of Christians who experience same-sex attractions and who have

discovered peace and joy by living the truth of the Gospel. I have been blessed by my encounters with them, and their witness moves me deeply. I wrote the foreword to one such testimony, Daniel Mattson’s book, *Why I Don’t Call Myself Gay: How I Reclaimed My Sexual Reality and Found Peace*, with the hope of making his and similar voices better heard.

These men and women testify to the power of grace, the nobility and resilience of the human heart, and the truth of the Church’s teaching on homosexuality. In many cases, they have lived apart from the Gospel for a period but have been reconciled to Christ and his Church. Their lives are not easy or without sacrifice. Their same-sex inclinations have not been vanquished. But they have discovered the beauty of chastity and of chaste friendships. Their example deserves respect and attention, because they have much to teach all of us about how to better welcome and accompany our brothers and sisters in authentic pastoral charity.

Cardinal Sarah is prefect of the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments.

Appeared in the September 1, 2017, print edition of the Wall Street Journal.

The “Mark” of Saint John Paul II on the Church

john paul ii

On April 8, 2005—11 days before he was elected Pope and chose the name Benedict XVI—Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger gave the homily at the funeral Mass for his predecessor, Pope John Paul II. In his homily he said: The love of Christ was the dominant force in the life of our beloved Holy Father. Anyone who ever saw him pray, who ever heard him preach, knows that. Thanks to his being profoundly rooted in Christ, he was able to bear a burden which transcends merely human abilities: that of being the shepherd of Christ’s flock, his universal Church. None of us can ever forget how in that last Easter Sunday of his life, the Holy Father marked by suffering, came once more to the window of the Apostolic Palace and one last time gave his blessing “*urbi et orbi*” [to the City and to the World!]/ We can be sure that our beloved pope is standing today at the window of the Father’s house, that he sees us and blesses us! ... The Feast of Saint John Paul II is celebrated on October 22nd.

[1] **Theology of the Body**—Steeped in the theology of Saint Thomas Aquinas and Sacred Scripture, John Paul sought to introduce to the world an extended meditation on the human person, on what it means to be made in the image of God. John Paul’s anthropology gave the Church a new language with which to address the fallout of the sexual revolution and help Christians recover a sacramental understanding of the world.

[2] **World Youth Days**—Through the years crowds attending the gathering grew. The first World Youth Day was held in 1987. In 1995 more than five million—the largest crowd in history—greeted Pope John Paul II in the Philippines. The pope helped the

world to see that the Church didn’t need to change in order to inspire young people; rather, it needed to challenge young people to change—to be bolder, more faithful and more heroic in their faith. The gatherings also helped inspire a new generation of vocations to the priesthood and religious life, as well as new religious orders, apostolates and ministries in the Church.

[3] **Luminous Mysteries**—In 2002 Pope Saint John Paul II gave the Church the Luminous Mysteries of the Rosary, featuring highlights from his ministry and illuminating his mission in salvation history as the Son of God and Son of David, the new Adam and the new Moses.

[4] **Catechetical Renewal**—Twenty years after Vatican II the Bishops of the world realized that the state of catechesis in the Church had somewhat deteriorated, with the faith at times being handed on poorly, in pieces or barely at all. To get the Church back on track, the pope appointed a commission and issued The Catechism of the Catholic Church—the first in more than 400 years!

[5] **The Fall of Communism**—Pope John Paul was not a politician, but he was a diplomat. When the Berlin Wall came down in 1989, and the Soviet Union broke apart shortly thereafter, historians credited part of that victory to John Paul II, both for his example of prayerful resistance and the hope he gave millions behind the Iron Curtain.

[6] **A Cloud of Witnesses**—From the mid-13th century (when the Vatican formalized the process for sainthood) until 1978, the Catholic Church

continued on page 4

The love of Christ was the dominant force in the life of our beloved Holy Father.

Repent and Believe

Pope Benedict XVI, General Audience, 17-02-2010

4

To be converted means to change direction along the way of life

Through it all he led the world to a deeper understanding of the feminine genius

“Repent and believe in the Gospel” ... The call is to conversion, a word that must be taken in its extraordinary seriousness, discovering the amazing novelty it contains.

The call to conversion, in fact, uncovers and denounces the easy superficiality that very often characterizes our way of living. To be converted means to change direction along the way of life—not for a slight adjustment, but a true and total change of direction. Conversion is to go against the current, where the “current” is a superficial lifestyle, inconsistent and illusory, which often draws us, controls us and makes us slaves of evil, or in any case prisoners of moral mediocrity.

“Mark” *continued from page 3*

canonized fewer than 450 men and women. Between 1978 and 2005 however, Pope Saint John Paul II conferred that honor on more than 480 people. He also beatified nearly 1,300 more. Through both the number and kinds of saints Pope John Paul II raised to the altar, he demonstrated that holiness wasn't for a precious few.

[7] **A New Feminism**—Early in the 20th century, as debates raged about the role of women in society, three Catholic women—Edith Stein, Gertrud von le Fort and Caryll Houselander—articulated a philosophy of women as spiritual mother. As John Paul II built upon their work, he defended women against those who reduced them to sexual objects, denied their unique orientation toward bearing and nurturing life, or denied their equal dignity to men. Through it all he led the world to a deeper understanding of the feminine genius: and

With conversion, instead, one aims to the lofty measure of Christian life; we are entrusted to the living and personal Gospel, which is Christ Jesus. His person is the final goal and the profound meaning of conversion; he is the way which we are called to follow in life, allowing ourselves to be illumined by his light and sustained by his strength that moves our steps.

In this way conversion manifests its most splendid and fascinating face: It is not a simple moral decision to rectify our conduct of life, but it is a decision of faith, which involves us wholly in profound communion with the living and concrete person of Jesus.

offered a life-giving alternative to the dominant strains of Western feminism.

[8] **New Evangelization**—Although Vatican II charged the faithful with engaging the culture and renewing the temporal order, the post-conciliar Church was defined more by inner squabbling, rather than Evangelization. Pope John Paul II set out to change that, calling for a New Evangelization that reached out to the baptized and unbaptized alike. He also “showed” us the New Evangelization by traveling the world to preach Christ, using the media to reach people outside the Church, and showing the relevance of the Faith to every aspect of life. The goal of the New Evangelization, according to the pope, was not merely “more Catholics,” but rather the transformation of the culture of death into a culture of life and a civilization of love.

Reprinted from the bulletin of St. Isaac Jogues Parish, Hinsdale, IL, October 16, 2016.

Big Brother in the Classroom

Schools should empower parents to educate their children, not big government to impose its ideological understanding 'civil rights'

by Joseph Pearce, November 17, 2017

The late Joseph Sobran (1946—2010) was a journalist who thrived on controversy. He was the sort of writer who did not try to please all of the people all of the time, or even most of the people most of the time. There were few readers, therefore who did not disagree with him sometimes.

Some found his views on the Middle East problematic; others his abrasively critical approach to almost everything. For my part, I found his quirkily quixotic insistence that Shakespeare did not write his own plays to be quite frankly bizarre, and his book on the subject poorly reasoned.

At his best, however, Sobran was second to none. Take, for instance, an article he wrote for *The Wanderer* in 2003 in response to a statement by Ron Paige, the secretary of education in the Bush administration, that “education is a civil right [and that] there should be equal access for all, not just the privileged few.”

One would have thought that this was an unproblematic statement with which few could disagree. But in his article “Educating for Damnation,” Sobran was quick to point out the devil lurking in the detail. “Certainly, children should be taught something,” Sobran wrote, “but what? And if it’s a ‘civil right,’ does that mean the state should decide what it means and enforce it?” These questions needed to be answered before anyone could be comfortable with the government defining it as a “civil right.”

Sobran continued: “Since Paige and the president haven’t defined ‘it,’ we don’t have any way of knowing; but they evidently agree that the federal government must take the lead in seeing that every American child has equal access to ‘it.’” Surely, Sobran

insisted, “any rational discussion of education must begin with the things every child needs to know.” The problem is that, as a society, we cannot agree on what every child needs to know. It depends on our understanding of human nature.

If man is just an animal, as the materialists claim, education can be seen as “imparting to children certain practical skills that will enable them to serve their bodily needs, desires and comforts.” If, on the other hand, as Christians believe, man is made in God’s image, with an immortal soul, education must impart knowledge of how the Creator has revealed himself to humanity. The problem is that secular education, at least as it is construed in the United States, will always conform to the materialist and not the Christian model.

“If education is the domain of the state, as it is in America, and if the state must be neutral about religion, as the U.S. Supreme Court understands religious ‘neutrality,’ then the public schools may be organized on materialist dogmas but not on Christian dogmas. Separation of church and state, you know. Heads the materialist wins; tails the Christian loses. That’s neutrality for you.”

The bottom line is, therefore, that the “education” to which every American child has a “civil right” is inevitably going to be materialist, secularist and Godless. “And the larger the role of the federal government in ‘education,’ the worse for Christian education.”

The only solution is to switch the discussion from a “civil right” that Big Brother imposes to a discussion of the “civil responsibility” of parents to raise their

continued on page 6

The problem is that secular education ... will always conform to the materialist and not the Christian model.

Bringing God back into the World

by Lawrence P. Grayson, Our Sunday Visitor, September 18, 2016

6

Too many Catholics now lead their lives as if God does not exist,

Archbishop Charles J. Chaput of Philadelphia said in a 2010 address: “God has never been more absent from the Western mind than he is today. Additionally, we live in an age when ... there is a basic confusion about what—if anything at all—it means to be human.”

How do individual Catholic Americans react to this profound secularism? Most are indifferent, as long as it does not affect them personally. Oh, they may express interest in the events of the day or indignation at the latest atrocities, but they go no further. Jaded by a desire to assert the “self,” materialism and a drive for wealth, prestige and pleasure, they have organized their public and private lives in a totally temporal way. The result is a crisis of faith. God has become an afterthought, with one’s conscience, no matter how ill-formed, becoming the standard for personal behavior. Too many Catholics now lead their lives as if God does not exist, while others make a perfunctory commitment to religion just in case he does. This is the “modern day heresy” of Secularism which, according to Pope Saint John Paul II, Pope Benedict XVI, and Pope Francis I must be resisted by the faithful.

Reversing this widespread secularism will not be easy. The world is brutal and indifferent, but is not too dissimilar from the one Our Lord sent the apostles

to evangelize. He said, “Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul; rather, be afraid of him who can destroy both soul and body in Gehenna” (Mt 10:28). And so, a courageous faith is necessary for all of us!

America, and indeed the world, must be reevangelized! God must be brought back into public consideration. We must remember that the freedom of religion in our nation is not freedom from religion. The secular world around us, lead by our elected officials, wishes to limit our religious freedom to a freedom of worship ... meaning, we’re free to worship as we please within the walls of our churches, BUT, we may not bring those religious beliefs into the world and allow them to permeate our institutions and activities. But, that evil of secularism and rejection of the principle of freedom of religion must be resisted and rejected.

Let us—you and I—lead this effort by example. Pray to Our Lord, for he never fails his people. Listen for his voice in your life. Detach yourself from the allure of the world, and with faith, say the simple proclamation: “Jesus, I trust in You!” Make the Rosary, Eucharistic adoration and frequent attendance at Mass the means to enable you to personally experience the love of our merciful savior and become his instrument to change our society.

Brother *continued from page 5*
children without the ideological intrusion of the government.

It is not a question of “rights” to be imposed by the state, but of the “freedom” of parents to choose the sort of education that they believe is best for their children.

Schools should empower parents to educate their children and should not empower big government to impose its own ideological understanding of what constitutes a “civil right.”

Reprinted from the Journal of the Cardinal Newman Society, November 2017

Pope Francis: Mass Is for Lifting Hearts, Not Cell Phones

Pope Francis has a message for Catholics: Put down your smart phone during Mass! During a general audience at St. Peter's Square in Vatican City in November, 2017, Francis chastised Catholics who use their phones during Mass.

The Holy Father said: "At some point, the priest during the Mass says, 'Lift up your hearts,' He does not say, 'Lift up your cell phones to take pictures.'" The remarks drew applause, particularly after Francis called the use of phones during services a "very ugly thing."

"It makes me very sad when I celebrate Mass here in the piazza or in the basilica," Francis said, pointing to St. Peter's Basilica behind him, "and I see so many cell phones held up." "Please," he said, "the Mass is not a show. It's a meeting with the passion and the resurrection of our Lord." It is not the first

time that the pope has advised Catholics on when to use their smart phones. The dinner table should also be off limits. In his 2016 teaching on the family, Francis encouraged families to spend time chatting over a meal rather than staring at their screens.

In the teaching, "*Amoris Laetitia*," Latin for "The Joy of Love," he wrote, "We know that sometimes they can keep people apart rather than together, as when at dinnertime everyone is surfing on a mobile phone, or when one spouse falls asleep waiting for the other who spends hours playing with an electronic device. A family that almost never eats together, or that never speaks at the table but looks at the television or the smart phone, is hardly a family."

And this year, the pope urged followers to consult their Bibles as much as they consulted their phones.

liturgy

7

"The Mass is not a show. It's a meeting with the passion and the resurrection of our Lord."

Restoring and Preserving the Sacred

by Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI [from, *Spirit of Liturgy*]

I am convinced that the crisis in the Church that we are experiencing today is, to a large extent, due to the disintegration of the liturgy. It is also worth observing here that the "creativity" involved in manufactured liturgies has a very restricted scope. It is poor indeed compared with the wealth of the received liturgy in its hundreds and thousands of years of history. Unfortunately, the originators of homemade liturgies are slower to become aware of this than the participants ...

Not surprisingly, people try to reduce this newly created role by assigning all kinds of liturgical functions to different individuals and entrusting the "creative" planning of the Liturgy to groups of people who like to, and are supposed to, "make a contribution of their own," as if the ancient liturgies of the Church are incapable of efficacy. Less and less is God in the picture, emotions mistakenly reign supreme. More and more important is what is done by the human beings who do not like to subject themselves to a "pre-determined pattern."

"We belong to the Church militant; and She is militant because on earth the powers of darkness are ever restless to encompass Her destruction. Not only in the far-off centuries of the early Church, but down through the ages and in this our day, the enemies of God and Christian civilization make bold to attack the Creator's supreme dominion and sacrosanct human rights."

—Pope Pius XII, October 14, 1953 North American College, Rome

Divine Grace May Yet Draw Millennials to the Joy Found in Christ

Young people are reacting against the moral chaos they have lived through in their own broken homes and decaying culture

by Fr. George Rutler

8

As a demographic cohort, “millennials” are the last generation to have been born in the 20th century. By conventional assessment, they are agile with technology, shaped by social media, self-absorbed, fixed in the moment and ignorant of history, morally immature and unaware that they have been shortchanged by inadequate and polemical educators. They are as vulnerable as Shakespeare’s “wealthy curled darlings of our nation.” Their lack of reason, and their subservience to political correctness, can be astonishing. But these are generalizations, and one can be just as astonished by the integrity and spiritual vigor of many who are lumped together with their superficial contemporaries.

There has been a big drop in religious commitment among the millennials, but youths predictably assert their independence and return to serious thoughts about God later on. What seems to be an abandonment of faith, may largely be due to the delay in maturation and marrying and the assumption of other responsibilities. Of those who lack a religious outlook, nearly 90 percent were never reared in a stable environment. The large number of millennials who embrace Christianity are outnumbering the “Baby Boomers” who were warped by the trauma of the psychedelic 1960s. They react against the moral chaos they have lived through in their own broken homes and decaying culture.

Many so-called mainline denominations are collapsing, but these almost invariably are those that have tried to “keep up with the Spirit of the Age” rather than with the

Holy Spirit. Quoting one sociologist: “When the so-called ‘progressive’ churches question the historicity of Jesus, deny the reality of sin, support abortion, ordain clergy in same-sex relationships and perform their marriages, people desiring real Christianity head elsewhere.”

A joint study by researchers at Indiana and Harvard universities contradicts the impression that religion is in decline. The number of Americans who are the most vigorous in prayer and worship is actually increasing, from 39 percent in 1989 to 47 percent today. And another study estimates that the percentage of Americans who attend church regularly is four times greater today than it was in 1776.

Young people who engage in healthy friendships and religious worship, and who work responsibly, are far happier than those who spend a lot of time on the internet. For Socratic philosophers before Christ, the goal of life was eudaimonia, or “happiness of soul.” Virtue alone could not attain that. “Fullness of joy” (Psalm 16:11) is to be found in Christ (John 17:13; 1 Peter 1:8-9).

Saint Augustine said that “happiness is itself a joy in the truth, and this is a truth in you, God, who are the truth ...” For the Christian, happiness is not an option; it is an obligation. In some ways the young Augustine—like many millennials—had been absorbed in himself, but divine grace pulled him out of that, and none too soon: “Late have I loved thee, beauty ever ancient ever new.”

Reprinted from the National Catholic Register

Of those who lack a religious outlook, nearly 90 percent were never reared in a stable environment.

Conscience and Truth

Many people have it upside down, insisting that their conscience provides a unique moral code

by Carl Olson, *The Catholic Answer*, 6/30/2017

Years ago I read a most revealing article in a national newspaper that carries the descriptive “Catholic” in its masthead but rarely carries much orthodox Catholic teaching below the masthead.

The article, written by a young woman, was titled, “I Am a Prochoice Catholic.” Her main assertion was simple: “I am a pro-choice Catholic because my Catholic faith tells me I can be.” She recounted spending “several years” praying, reading and studying what both the “church hierarchy” and “the Catholic church—the faithful” had to say about the “right to abortion.” The result? “In the end,” she proclaimed, “after months of avoiding my conscience as to not stir up any controversy in my life, I finally discerned that I am a prochoice Catholic.”

Three quick, initial observations. First, the language she used, especially regarding the seemingly infallible nature of conscience and the vehicle of discernment, echoes what some have been saying about persons in “irregular unions”—that is, adultery. Second, this appeal to the conscience as the final word on one’s choices and actions has been a key playing card for the past 50 years or so for those who oppose the Church’s clear teaching about abortion, contraception and other evils related to sexuality. Third, I never cease to be amused and annoyed by the glaring internal contradiction that exists in appealing to Church authority in order to dismiss that same authority!

Consider the supposed logic: 1) “I am opposed to the Church’s teaching about abortion”; 2) “I am obligated to oppose that teaching because of my conscience”; 3) “And I must follow my conscience, because the Church says I must!” In other words, such folks find it convenient to follow apparent Church teaching when they desire to deny

other, inconvenient teachings of the Church. Yes, it’s moderately clever, quite superficial and entirely misleading.

If we follow the logic used above, we arrive at a singular conclusion: that one’s conscience is supreme—even greater than God, truth, good and evil (though few are willing to put it that way). And, of course, this infallible supremacy of the individual conscience is not just acceptable, but is gospel truth for far too many people, including a great number of Catholics.

Yes, it’s true the Church teaches that man’s conscience holds a special place in his person, describing it as man’s “most secret core and his sanctuary. There he is alone with God whose voice echoes in his depths” (Catechism of the Catholic Church, No. 1776). Unfortunately, many people ignore the fine print—or, in this case, the print period. The three essentials to keep in mind here are:

1) The conscience is not man’s creation, but “a law which he has not laid upon himself but which he must obey” (No. 1776). Conscience is not involved in creating truth, but rather in recognizing truth. In other words, conscience is a guide, not a god.

2) Conscience must be formed and informed. “A well-formed conscience is upright and truthful”; it forms judgments that conform “with the true good willed by the wisdom of the Creator.” It must be educated and formed because humans “are subjected to negative influences and tempted by sin to prefer their own judgment and to reject authoritative teachings” (No. 1783).

This education is a lifelong work involving virtue and humility. But it is worth it because “education of the conscience guarantees freedom and engenders peace of heart” (No. 1784).

Conscience is not involved in creating truth, but rather in recognizing truth.

To Christian Spouses

by Pope Benedict XVI

10

The family can only fulfill this mission if it is supported by divine grace.

My thought is directed to all Christian spouses: With them I thank the Lord for the gift of the sacrament of marriage, and exhort them to remain faithful to their vocation in each stage of life, “in joy and in sorrow, in health and in sickness,” as they promised in the sacramental rite.

May Christian spouses, aware of the grace received, build a family open to life and capable of facing together the numerous and complicated challenges of our time. Their testimony is particularly necessary today. Families are needed that do not let themselves be drawn by modern cultural currents inspired by hedonism and relativism, and that are willing to realize their mission in the Church and in society with generous dedication.

In the apostolic exhortation *Familiaris Consortio*, the Servant of God John Paul II

wrote that the sacrament of marriage “makes Christian married couples and parents witnesses of Christ ‘to the end of the earth,’ as authentic ‘missionaries’ of love and life.” This mission is oriented both to the internal life of the family—especially in mutual service and in the education of children—as well as the external: the domestic community, in fact, is called to be the sign of God’s love to all. The family can only fulfill this mission if it is supported by divine grace. For this reason, it is necessary to pray tirelessly and to persevere in the daily effort to keep the commitments assumed on the wedding day.

I invoke the maternal protection of the Virgin and of Joseph her spouse on all families, especially those going through difficulties. Mary, Queen of the Family, pray for us!

Angelus Address 08-10-2006, Zenit.org

Truth *continued from page 9*

3) A conscience can be bad, poorly formed and warped by sin. Many factors can contribute to a deeply flawed conscience: “Ignorance of Christ and his Gospel, bad example given by others, enslavement to one’s passions, assertion of a mistaken notion of autonomy of conscience, rejection of the Church’s authority and her teaching, lack of conversion and of charity: these can

be at the source of errors of judgment in moral conduct” (No. 1792).

Alas, many people have it upside down, insisting that their conscience provides a unique moral code, rather than seeing how conscience guides one’s judgments about particular situations in light of universal and objective—that is, God-given—truth and goodness.

Carl E. Olson is the editor of Ignatius Insight (www.ignatiusinsight.com).

The Family: The Original Place of Beauty in the Catholic Faith

from the talk by Bishop Athanasius Schneider, October 30, 2017

The beauty of the Catholic faith manifests itself in a special manner in large families. We possess one of the most striking and illuminating affirmations of the Magisterium on this theme in the following words of Pope Pius XII addressed to the Associations of Large Families: “Large families are the most splendid flower-beds in the garden of the Church Their youth never seems to fade away, as long as the sweet fragrance of a crib remains in the home, as long as the walls of the house echo to the silvery voices of children and grandchildren.

Upcoming Speakers at Catholic Citizens Forum—Winter 2018

upcoming speakers

Note: The February 9 luncheon featuring John DeJak speaking on the life of Fr. Walter Ciszek's, S.J. was cancelled because of weather conditions and has been rescheduled for May 11, 2018.

March 6—Timothy N. Wittman is an architectural historian and historic preservationist who lives and works in Chicago, Illinois. He is a graduate of Hiram College in Ohio, and earned his master's degree in art history, specializing in architectural history, from the University of Chicago. He serves as an adjunct professor at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and at Lake Forest College. In his consultancy he has worked for architects, engineers and for public and private preservation organizations, and he has given expert testimony in defense of significant historic resources. He has curated several exhibitions and lectures widely in the Midwest on topics related to modern and American architecture. **The subject: "Fireproof, the History of Church Construction in Chicago before and after the Great Chicago Fire."**

April 13—Philip B. Haney, founding member of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) in March of 2003; customs & border protection officer (CBP); retired honorably on July 31, 2015 with 15 years combined federal service. Author of *See Something, Say Nothing*, a best-selling expose of the Obama Administration's submission to the goals and policies of the Muslim Brotherhood, as well as other Islamic groups operating here in America and around the world. Inaugural recipient of the American Freedom Award from the American Freedom Alliance (AFA) on May 21, 2017. Senior Fellow (Emeritus) at the Center for Security Policy from August 2015 through present. Serving in threat analysis and intelligence he conducted numerous interview of individuals with potential links to terrorism, credited with finding 300 individuals with potential links to terrorism. Extensive familiarity with Arabic/Middle Eastern culture, history, politics and the religion of Islam. **The subject: "Our Sovereignty & Constitution vs. Islamic Sharia?"**

May 11—John M. DeJak, an attorney and Catholic educator, is currently president of Father Gabriel Richard High School in Ann Arbor, Michigan. He practiced law and served on active duty as an officer in the U.S. Army's 10th Mountain Division prior to being named the founding headmaster of two private high schools in the Twin Cities area: Chesterton Academy and Holy Spirit Academy. He has taught Latin, Greek, literature, government and theology in high schools in Chicago, Cleveland, the Twin Cities and Ann Arbor. He is the co-editor of *With God in America: The Spiritual Legacy of an Unlikely Jesuit* (Loyola Press, 2016). A member of the Fellowship of Catholic Scholars, his articles have appeared in *Chronicles*, *The Wanderer*, *The Bellarmine Forum Magazine*, *Gilbert Magazine*, *the Distributist Review*, and *The St. Austin Review*. **The Subject: "Fr. Walter Ciszek: Working for the City of God in the City of Man."**

June 8—Most Reverend Donald J. Hying, bishop of the diocese of Gary. Bishop Hying is a native of West Allis, Wisconsin, ordained in 1989 and ordained auxiliary bishop of the Archdiocese of Milwaukee, having previously served as rector of S. Francis de Sales Seminary from 2007–2011. He served in numerous parishes, as well as La Sagrada Familia, the archdiocese's parish in the Dominican Republic. Bishop Hying serves on the USCCB Subcommittee to Aid the Church in Central and Eastern Europe. **The subject: The Urgency of the New Evangelization."**

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

president's report

by Mary Anne Hackett

Winter 2018 Update

The lead story is an article by Cardinal Sarah (posted in the *Wall Street Journal*) on the book and speeches of Fr. James Martin, S.J. After many of Fr. Martin's talks were cancelled because of his dissent from Church teaching, it was reported that Cardinal Cupich has invited Fr. Martin to speak during Lent on March 22 and 23 at Holy Name Cathedral.

Reading the news from the Vatican, it is hard not to be concerned about what seems to be a change in doctrines and disciplines of the Church. Particularly, as we approach the 50th anniversary of *Humanae Vitae*, described as the "jewel" of Pope Paul VI's pontificate, there are rumors of a secret commission, first denied and then admitted

to, with the purpose of re-interpreting *Humanae Vitae* in line with *Amoris Laetitia*.

Suggestions are floated on "Church blessings" for same-sex couples. Doctrines on marriage and now on contraception are referred to as "ideals" not reflected in the lives of real people in real situations.

I urge you to follow the talks, writings and interviews of Bishop Athanasius Schneider, a courageous and outspoken defender of the family and the faith. Pray to Our Blessed Mother and the Holy Spirit for the Church, and remember that the Church belongs to Jesus and he will keep his promises. We wish you a holy and transforming Lent and a Blessed Easter.

Fear of Death

by St Augustine

But every man is afraid of the death of the flesh; few, of the death of the soul. In regard to the death of the flesh, which must certainly come some time, all are on their guard against its approach: this is the source of all their labor.

Man, destined to die, labors to avert his dying; and yet man, destined to live forever, labors not to cease from sinning. And when he labors to avoid dying, he labors to no purpose, for its only result will be to put off death for a while, not to escape it; but if he refrain from sinning, his toil will cease, and he shall live forever.