

# RELIGIOUS LIFE

A PUBLICATION OF THE INSTITUTE ON RELIGIOUS LIFE



Aug/Sept/Oct 2021

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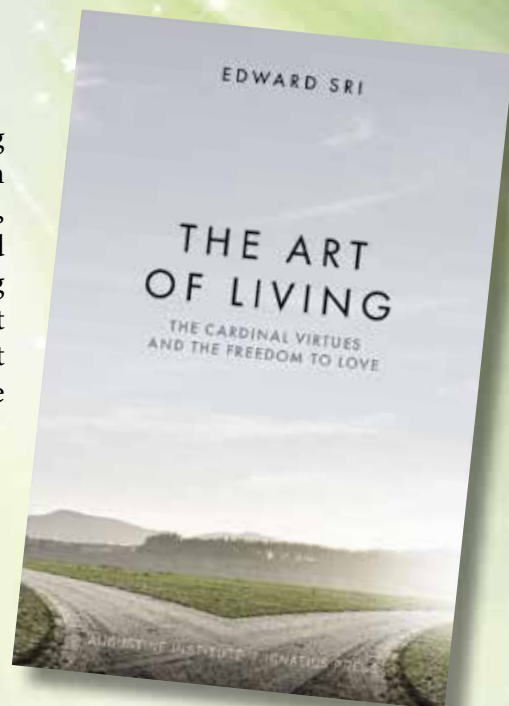
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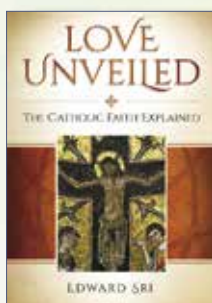
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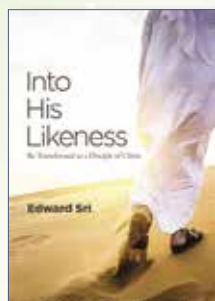


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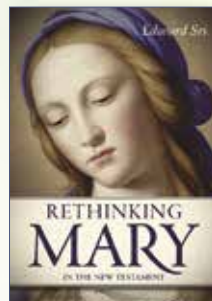
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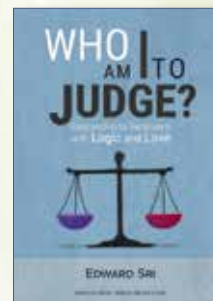
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## Managing Editor

Mr. Michael D. Wick

## Assistant Editor/Circulation

Mrs. Anne Tschanz

## Layout & Design

Catholic Creative Services, Inc.

## IRL Founder

+ Rev. John A. Hardon, S.J.

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## Institute Insights

REV. THOMAS NELSON, O.PRAEM.

**O**ur salvation depends upon our exercise of the spiritual and corporal works of mercy and since the angels are entrusted with our salvation they aid us in the practice of these works of mercy. This is why Servant of God Rev. John A. Hardon, S.J., in his *Theological Reflections* says we should work to promote devotion to the holy angels. Consecrated religious, according to Rev. Eusebius Schward, ORC, should especially encourage devotion to the holy angels since they, in a particular way, live the angelic life, as he writes in his article "Religious Life—Angelic Life." St. Thérèse of Lisieux lived the religious life in a heroic way, and as Rev. William Wagner, ORC, points out in his article, "The Little Flower & The Holy Angels," she had an explicit and profound devotion to the holy angels.



Saint Joseph lived his life guided by the holy angels and he is a model for all consecrated persons. Sr. Mary Joseph Calore, SSCJ., reflects upon this in her article "Saint Joseph: Model for Consecrated Persons." Saints are very close companions with the angels. What angels are in Heaven, saints are on earth. Saint Dominic is a great example of this. He preached the good news of the Resurrection as did the angels on Easter Sunday morning. We celebrate the 800th anniversary of his holy death this year and Pope Francis wrote a beautiful letter to the Dominicans commemorating the Angelic Doctor's passing into eternity.

The Sacred Liturgy is the meeting point between angels and men. The worship of God is a common good we both share. Religious who live the angelic life are especially dedicated to the Liturgy. It is a providential happening that the Liturgical Institute of the University of St. Mary of the Lake—Mundelein Seminary shares the same office building with the INSTITUTE ON RELIGIOUS LIFE and we often collaborate. In this issue of our magazine we interview Jesse Weiler, the Director of the Liturgical Institute, about its mission and its connection with religious life. Cloistered life, being the highest form of religious life, most reflects the angelic life in a more perfect way. In our *Affiliate in Focus* we present the Carmel of St. Teresa in Alhambra, California.

Angels do not have emotions as we do. Therefore, to live the angelic life requires that human emotions be integrated into reason and put at the service of the spirit. Drawing upon the insightful work of Dr. Conrad Baars, Rev. Brian Mullady, O.P., teaches us in his article "Prevention of Neurosis" how to keep the emotions subordinate to the spirit.

Rev. Albert Braun, OFM, was a most zealous priest who was a trailblazer of the faith dating back before World War I and extending past World War II. His life was truly amazing and shows us the power of faith as Anne Tschanz presents him in our column, *Religious Pioneers of America: Trailblazers of Faith*.

**About the Cover:** *Archangel Gabriel* is a Byzantine orthodox icon held in Tret'yakov Gallery in Moscow, Russia. The Archangel Gabriel is a significant heavenly figure who occupies a special place in the hierarchy of angels. This is why such icons are one of the most highly valued artifacts in the Orthodox world. His name means "God is my strength."



# Religious Life—Angelic Life

Angels play an important role in the work of Redemption by facilitating our encounter with God, and by protecting and guiding us on the way of salvation. Angels not only collaborate with the Church's mission, but they especially assist religious women and men to live their consecrated life to the full.

**By Rev. Eusebius Schwald, ORC**

**T**he title sounds like a contradiction of terms. The exceptional character of “holiness” hardly aligns with the mind-numbing repetitiveness of a “routine”—except, perhaps, in religious life!

## Imitation of the Angelic Life

Since early times, religious life has been called “angelic life.” What was the point of this comparison? Is it not exaggerated to claim that religious are angels? Evidently, religious are human beings with a body and soul. How “down to earth” and different they are from the angels who are pure spirits! But need we downgrade man for having a body? Is man not capable of great spiritual things?

So, let us take a closer look at what the early Church Fathers meant by calling Religious Life an “angelic life.”

Saint Cyprian, writing to consecrated virgins affirms: “What we are to be, you have already commenced to be. You already possess in this world the glory of the resurrection; you pass through the world without suffering its contagion. In preserving virginal chastity, you are the equals of the angels of God.”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> St. Cyprian, *De habitu virginum*, 22; PL IV, 462; cfr. S. Ambros., *De virginibus*, lib. I, c. 8, n. 52; PL XVI, 202.

St. John Paul II explains in *Vita Consecrata*: “The consecrated life is at the service of this definitive manifestation of the divine glory, when all flesh will see the salvation of God (cf. Lk 3:6; Is 40:5). The Christian East emphasizes this dimension when it considers monks as angels of God on earth who proclaim the renewal of the world in Christ.”<sup>2</sup> And further: “The consecrated life proclaims and, in a certain way, anticipates the future age, when the fullness of the Kingdom of Heaven, already present in its first fruits and in mystery, will be achieved, and when the children of the resurrection will take neither wife nor husband, but will be like the angels of God” (cf. Mt 22:30).<sup>3</sup>

The aspect highlighted is the eschatological aspect of Religious Life: the vocation to share the life of the angels as a life in the presence of God, a life of worship, a life as citizens of Heaven (cf. Phil 3:20): “You have approached Mount Zion and the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and countless angels in festal gathering, and the assembly of the firstborn enrolled in Heaven, and God the judge of all, and the spirits of the just made perfect, and Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant” (Heb 12:22-24).

<sup>2</sup> St. John Paul, *Vita Consecrata*, no. 27

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 32

In the heavenly Jerusalem, angels and men will build the one great community, united in God. Certainly, this great communion will be reached only on the final day in its definitive perfection, but there have always been individuals who have seen it as their vocation and mission from the Lord to strive after this reality in the greatest possible way already here on earth and to be pulled up to it; to offer to God already now reverent adoration and to place themselves completely in obedience to His will, to be totally at His disposition. This is the vocation of Religious Life. The vision of the heavenly Jerusalem, our goal, is present in the mind of religious and they want to be part of it already here on earth, and work for it already now as much as possible. The angelic life is made visible to all Christians, indeed to the whole world, through this radical Christian life style of the religious, so that the world might not forget what is our true goal in life. This is the reason why religious life is likened to the life of the angels.

### **A Life Dedicated to Adoration and Worship**

Benedict XVI says: “In the patristic period the monastic life was likened to the life of the angels. It was considered the essential mark of the angels that they are worshippers. Their very life is worship. This should hold true also for monks.”<sup>4</sup> What is said here of monks, is true for Religious Life in general: Prayer life is an essential part of it; it finds expression in their obligation to pray the Liturgy of the Hours at different times of the day and the daily celebration of the Eucharistic Sacrifice, which is the “source and summit”<sup>5</sup> of religious life. Moreover, other prayer obligations are assumed in accordance with the constitutions of each religious institute. By making it their first duty to pray always without losing heart (cf. Lk 18:1), religious want to imitate the angels who sing in Heaven the unending praise of God, as Benedictines say: “Our first office is to do on earth what the angels do in Heaven.”<sup>6</sup>

In fact, religious make an effort to live in the presence of God always, and penetrate even their daily work and apostolate with prayer. In a speech, Benedict XVI reminds religious of the angels, doing everything while “moving in God”: “Pope Gregory the Great, in one of his homilies, once said that God’s angels, however far afield

they go on their missions, always move in God. They remain always with Him.”<sup>7</sup>

The awareness of the presence of the angels at the Liturgy leads to a greater effort to be recollected in prayer, as Saint Benedict recalls in his rule: “Let us consider how we ought to comport ourselves in the sight of God and His angels and let us so take our part in the office that mind accord with voice.”<sup>8</sup>

### **A Free Decision to Respond to God’s Call with the Highest Intensity of Love**

From the very beginning, God’s plan was a plan of communion that embraced all of creation, in Jesus Christ: “For in Him were created all things in Heaven and on earth, the visible and the invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers; all things were created through Him and for Him” (Col 1:16).

Christ, the incarnate Son of God, is the center of all creation, also of the angelic world.<sup>9</sup> The angels are very much part of this plan of uniting all things in Christ: “for the fullness of times, to sum up all things in Christ, in Heaven (*angels*) and on earth (*visible creation*)” (Eph 1:10).

The angels, as pure spirits created by God, possess a much greater richness and variety than material creation, and thus reflect God’s beauty and majesty in a more perfect way: “By their great dignity and splendor, You show how infinitely great You are, to be exalted above all things” (*Preface of Mass in honor of the Holy Angels*). Being endowed with intelligence and free will, the angels were called to freely love God and serve Him. The far greater part of the angelic world freely chose to do so. “To have chosen God means that [the holy angels] turned to Him with all the interior force of their freedom, a force which is love. God became the total and definitive scope of their spiritual existence.”<sup>10</sup>

Here lies the parallel to religious life in the Church. The angels were called by God to existence and in their trial, the faithful angels chose to serve God in humility. Religious are called by God, chosen to stand up, follow the call, and respond to this calling by binding themselves to Him in their free decision. They correspond to this calling with the highest intensity of their love,

<sup>4</sup> Benedict XVI, Address, Visit to Heiligenkreuz Abbey, September 9, 2007

<sup>5</sup> *Lumen Gentium*, no. 11

<sup>6</sup> *Benedictine Monachism*, Declarations of the English Congregation, Decl. 16

<sup>7</sup> Benedict XVI, Address, *Marian Vespers with the Religious and Seminarians of Bavaria*, Basilica of Saint Anne, Altötting, September 11, 2006

<sup>8</sup> *Rule of St. Benedict*, Ch 19

<sup>9</sup> Cf. CCC, no. 331

<sup>10</sup> St. John Paul II, *General Audience*, July 23, 1986

giving Him their whole being. In humility, they submit themselves to God, and their life becomes completely centered on Him.

### **A life in Complete Disposition to God and the Service in the Church.**

Unfortunately, through the pride of some angels, the dissonance of the “*Non serviam*” broke into creation in these tragic words: “‘I will not serve’ (Jer 2:20), which manifest the radical and irreversible refusal to take part in the building up of the kingdom of God in the created world.”<sup>11</sup> Given the high degree of understanding and will of the angels, this decision is irreversible: “It is the result of choice, which for purely spiritual beings possesses an incomparably more radical character than that of man, and it is irreversible given the degree of intuitiveness and penetration of the good wherewith their intelligence is endowed.”<sup>12</sup>

Man, too, tempted by the fallen angels to “be like God” (cf. Gen 3:5), has abused the gift of freedom and stood up against God’s plan, thus falling into the slavery of sin.

But God’s plan was, from the very beginning, much greater: His Son takes our human nature and stands as Redeemer in the center of the cosmos. In His love as the Good Shepherd, He has mercy on mankind and saves us by laying down His life on the Cross. We are offered the chance to repent, to convert and to return to the Father’s House. We are called to live a holy life in imitation of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

The angels play an important role in this work of Redemption: as they behold the Face of the Father in heaven, they are “ministering spirits sent to serve, for the sake of those who are to inherit salvation” (Heb 1:14). They rejoice when a sinner repents and returns to God (cf. Lk 15:10). As divine messengers, they facilitate men’s encounter with God. They serve men closely as personal guardian angels, to protect, strengthen, enlighten, encourage and guide men on the way of salvation. But they are not only facilitators of man’s encounter with God, they are also our fellow servants before God (cf. Rev 19:10; 22:9): they serve God in communion and in collaboration with us, they interact with us and become our brothers and friends.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*

They collaborate with the Church’s mission: they accompany the apostolic efforts of the Church, freeing the Apostles from jail and encouraging them to return to proclaiming the Word of God (cf. Acts 5,18-20). They guide people to the Church, like the first pagan Cornelius (cf. Acts 10:1-6). In his humility, St. Michael the Archangel, Prince of the heavenly hosts, protector of the Church, stands firm with the heavenly army, and in the power of God he casts into hell “Satan and all other wicked spirits who prowl about the world seeking the ruin of souls.”<sup>13</sup>

Religious place their whole life in God’s service through their profession of vows, so that they can be deployed in the Kingdom of God wherever they are needed, to collaborate in the plan for the salvation of mankind, according to the charism of their institute: in a contemplative life, in pastoral care, in education, in works of charity etc. Similarly, the angels, “mighty in strength and attentive, obedient to [God’s] every command” (Ps 103:20), are sent by God in different services in the Kingdom of God, be it regarding the salvation of mankind or missions concerning the whole of creation.

Being so closely related to religious, the angels are interested in them, and very eager to assist them to live their consecrated life to the full. They reveal to them the greatness and glory of God, remind them of His loving presence, guide them to reverent adoration of God in liturgy and prayer, enlighten their minds in the contemplation of God’s mysteries, guide them on their way of sanctification, create an atmosphere of understanding, peace and harmony in community life and assist them in their apostolate.

As we face many challenges and tribulations in our time, it is consoling and encouraging to recall that religious life is an angelic life, a life that points towards Heaven, gives hope and joy, and that the powerful presence of the angels around us is a sign of God’s continuous loving care for us. ☺

<sup>13</sup> St. Michael Prayer

Rev. Eusebius Schwald, ORC, is the Vocation Director for the Order of Canons Regular of the Holy Cross (Cruzios.org).





# The Little Flower & the Holy Angels

—An Expression of Faith in God and in His Promise—

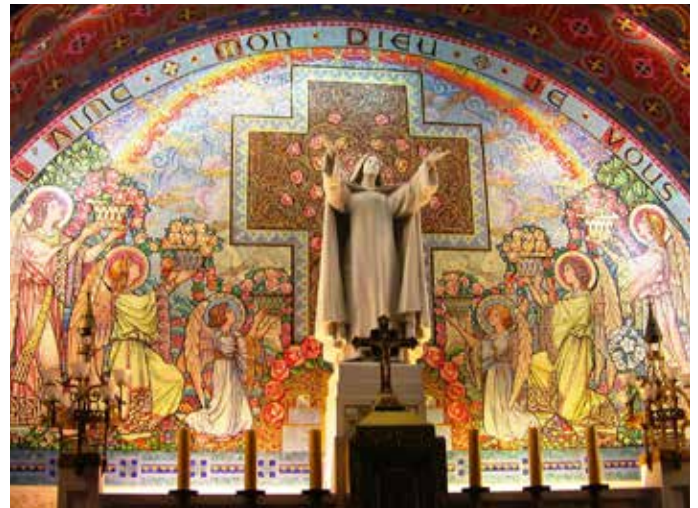
By Rev. William Wagner, ORC

St. Therese of Lisieux cherished a special devotion of the holy angels. How well this fits her Little Way, for did not Our Lord associate littleness with the presence and care of the angels: “See that you do not despise one of these little ones; for I tell you, their angels in Heaven always behold the face of My Father in Heaven” (Mt 18:10).

When we look to see what the Little Flower says about the Holy Angels, we do not expect a ponderous treatise, but rather a medley of songs issuing from her heart. From her childhood they formed a part of her experience and spiritual environment.

As a child of nine years, before her First Holy Communion, Saint Thérèse consecrated herself to the Holy Angels as a member of the “Association of the Holy Angels” with the words: “I solemnly consecrate myself to your service. I promise, in the presence of God, of the Blessed Virgin Mary and my companions, to be faithful to you and to apply myself to imitate your virtues, principally your fervor, your humility, your obedience and your purity.” Already as an aspirant she had promised: “to honor with a special devotion the Holy Angels and Mary, their august Queen.... I will work with all my strength to correct my faults and acquire virtues, to fulfill all my duties as a student and as a Christian.”

The members of the association also fostered a particular devotion to the Guardian Angel, to whom they prayed: “Angel of God, heavenly prince, vigilant guardian, faithful guide, charitable shepherd, I rejoice that God created you with so many perfections, that He sanctified you through His grace and that He has crowned you with glory for having persevered in His service. May God be praised for all the many good things He has done for you! May you yourself be blessed for all the good you do for me and my associates! I surrender to you my body, my soul, my memory, my intelligence, my imagination and my will. Govern me, enlighten me, purify me and dispose of me according to your good



pleasure” (*Manuel de l'Association des Saints Anges*, Tournai).

The mere fact alone that the future Doctor of the Church made this consecration and said these prayers as a child does not, of course, make it part of her mature spiritual doctrine. However, in her maturity she not only recalls these consecrations with joyful approbation but commends herself to the angels in different forms. In *The Story of a Soul* she writes: “Almost immediately after my entrance at the Abbey, I was received into the Association of the Holy Angels. I loved the pious practices it imposed, as I had a very special attraction to pray to the blessed spirits of heaven, particularly to the one whom God gave as the companion of my exile” (*Story*, ch. IV, 40v).

## The Guardian Angel

The Little Flower grew up in a family on familiar

terms with the angels. Her parents spoke spontaneously of them in varied circumstances (cf. *Story* I, 5ro; *Letters* = LT 120). And Pauline, her older sister, assured her daily that the angels were there to watch over and protect her (cf. *Story*, II, 18vo).

In her play, *The Flight into Egypt*, she describes important aspects of the mission of the Guardian Angel. There the Blessed Virgin tells Susanna, the wife of a brigand and the mother of the infant Dismas, sick with leprosy: "Ever since his birth, Dismas has always been accom-



panied by a heavenly messenger and this messenger will never leave him. As he, you too have an Angel charged to guard you night and day, it is he who inspires the good thoughts and virtuous actions that you accomplish."

Susanna responds, "I assure you that no one other than yourself has ever inspired me with good thoughts and that I have not yet seen the messenger you speak of." Mary replies: "You have not seen him, I know that, because the Angel who stands at your side is invisible, nonetheless he is as truly present as I am. It is thanks to his heavenly inspirations that you have felt the desire to know God and to see Him draw near to you. All the days of your earthly exile these things will remain mysteries for you, but when the time comes you will see the Son of God descending upon the clouds of heaven, accompanied by all His legions of angels" (*Act I*, Scene 5). In this way, Thérèse gives us to understand that Dismas' Angel accompanied him through all the thick and thin of his criminal life and finally helped him recognize Christ's divinity on the Cross and awakened his longing for God, thus helping him to steal Heaven and become the Good Thief.

On a personal plane, she sought guidance from her Guardian Angel: "My holy Guardian Angel, cover me with your wing. / With your fire light the road that I'm taking. / Come, direct my steps... help me, I call upon you / Just for today" (*Poems* = PN 5, 12), and protection, lest she fall into sin: "O my Holy Guardian Angel! Cover me always with your wings so that I may never have the misfortune to offend Jesus" (*Prayers* = Pri 5, 7).

Confident in her intimate friendship with her Angel, Thérèse did not hesitate to ask specific favors of him. For example, to her uncle mourning the death of a friend she wrote: "I place myself in my good Angel's hands; I think that a messenger from Heaven will carry out my message well. I'm sending him to my dear Uncle to pour some consolation into his heart insofar as our soul can contain it in this valley of exile..." (LT 59 8/22/1888). In a similar way she could send her Angel to participate in the Mass her spiritual brother, Fr. Adolphe Roulland,

a missionary in China, would be offering for her: "On December 25th, I will not fail to send my Angel so that he may place my intentions near the host that will be consecrated by you" (LT 201 9/1/1896).

This mediation of our prayers is articulated more formally in her play, *The Mission of Joan of Arc*; Sts. Catherine and Marguerite tell Joan: "Lovely child, our sweet companion, your voice so pure has ascended to Heaven. The Guardian Angel who always accompanies you has presented your wishes to the Eternal Godhead" (Scene 5). Had not Saint Raphael assured Tobit: "When you prayed,... I offered your prayer to the Lord!" (Tob 12,12)?

When the hour of her death arrived, though, Joan was initially revolted at being betrayed. But Saint Gabriel came and showed her that by suffering death through betrayal she would be more closely associated to Christ who also was betrayed. Joan responds: "O beautiful Angel! Your voice is sweet! I feel hope being reborn in my heart when you speak to me of the sufferings of Jesus..." (*The Combat and Victory of Joan of Arc*, Scene 5). Similar thoughts must have sustained Thérèse of the Face of Jesus in her bitter trials at the end of her life.

### Uniting with the Angels

Thérèse sought neither visions nor consolations: "You will remember that it's 'my little way' not to desire to see anything. You know well that I've said so often to God, to the angels, and to the saints: my desire is not see them here on earth..." (*Yellow Notebook of Mother Agnes* = CJ, 6/4/1897). "...I've never wanted any visions.

We can't see here on earth, Heaven, the angels, etc., just as they are. I prefer to wait until after my death" (*ibid*, 8/5/1897).

How did she prepare for Our Lord's coming? She said: "I picture my soul as a piece of land and I beg the Blessed Virgin to remove from it any rubbish that would prevent it from being free; then I ask her to set up a huge tent worthy of heaven, adorning it with her own jewelry; finally, I invite all the angels and saints to come and conduct a magnificent concert there. It seems to me that when Jesus descends into my heart He is content to find Himself so well received and I too" (*Story*, VIII, 79vo-80ro).

The angels too delight in this banquet which makes us "their brother" as Thérèse has Saint Cecilia explain to her convert spouse, Valerian: "You must go sit at the Banquet of Life / To receive Jesus, the Bread of Heaven. / Then the Seraphim will call you his brother, / and seeing in your heart the throne of his God, / he will have you leave earth's shores. / You will see the dwelling of this spirit of fire" (PN 3 St Cecilia, ll.67-72).

Still, the mere help of the angels alone wasn't enough for the Little Flower, she wanted their friendship and an intimate share in the intensity of their love for God, indeed, she desired that they adopt her as their own. Hence, her audacious prayer: "O Jesus, I know it, love is repaid by love alone, and so I searched and I found the way to solace my heart by giving you Love for Love.... Remembering the prayer of Elisha to his Father Elijah when he dared to ask him for his double spirit, I presented myself before the angels and saints and I said to them: 'I am the smallest of creatures; I know my misery and my feebleness, but I know also how much noble and generous hearts love to do good. I beg you then, O blessed inhabitants in heaven, I beg you to adopt me as your child. To you alone will be the glory which you will make me merit, but deign to answer my prayer. It is bold, I know; however, I dare to ask you to obtain for me your double love'" (*Story*, Ms B. 4ro).

True to the Little Way, Thérèse sought not glory, but only love: "The heart of a child does not seek riches and glory (even the glory of Heaven). She understands that this glory belongs by right to her brothers, the angels and saints. Her own glory will be the reflected glory which shines on her Mother's (the Church) forehead. What this child asks for is Love. She knows only one thing: to love You, O Jesus" (*ibid.*).

But once she gets to Heaven, she would behold God to her heart's content.

Thérèse, beyond availing herself of the angels' intercession and willing assistance, went so far as to claim their holiness, so as to grow in the same herself. In her *Oblation to Divine Mercy*, she prays: "I offer you all the merits of the Saints (in Heaven and on earth), their acts of Love and those of the Holy Angels. Finally, I offer You, O Blessed Trinity, the love and merits of the Blessed Virgin my dear Mother. It is to her I abandon my offering, begging her to present it to you" (Pri 6). She similarly implored her Guardian Angel: "O Fair Angel of the Fatherland, / give me your holy fervor. / I have nothing but my sacrifices / and my austere poverty / With your celestial delights, / offer them to the Trinity" (PN 46, 4 To My Guardian Angel).

In her own religious consecration to God, Thérèse also felt a deep union with the Holy Angels. "Chastity makes me the sister of angels, / of those pure, victorious Spirits" (PN 48, 3 My Weapons). She encouraged her novice, Sr. Mary of the Trinity, with the verses: "Lord, if You cherish the purity of the Angel, / Of that spirit of fire which swims the azure skies, / Do You not also love, rising above the mire, / the lily that Your love knew how to keep pure? / My God, if the Angel with vermilion wings / Who appears before You is happy, / My joy even here below is like his, / Since I have the treasure of virginity!..." (PN 53, 4 For Sr. M. of the Trinity).

On their part, the angels' esteem for the consecrated souls focuses more upon the special spousal relationship souls enjoy with Christ (and in which every soul can share): "Today the angels envy you. / They would like to enjoy the happiness / That you possess, O Marie! / As the Lord's spouse" (PN 10, 9 Shepherdess Queen; cf. PN 43, 12. Profession of Sr. M. Madeleine).

### **Suffering and the Angels**

The Little Flower was acutely aware of the profound difference separating angels and men. One might have thought she would envy them. Quite the contrary, she understood the Incarnation too well: "When I see the Eternal God wrapped in swaddling clothes, / when I hear the poor cry of the Divine Word, / O my dearest Mother, I no longer envy the angels, / for their Powerful Lord is my dearest Brother!..." (PN 54, 10 *Why I Love You, O Mary!*). In a Christmas play, where she names the angels according as their task is related to Christ, she has the Angel of the Final Judgment sing, "Before You, sweet Child, the Cherubim bows low / lost in admiration, he ponders Your ineffable love. / As You, he

(Continued on page 24)



# Saint Joseph: Model for Consecrated Persons

By Sr. Mary Joseph Calore, SSCJ

Saint Joseph is the preeminent model of the interior life, the life of continual mindfulness of Divine Love and God's abiding presence in every moment of our lives. For those in consecrated life, Saint Joseph is a living rule by which we can measure our own fidelity and authenticity to be better conformed to the ideal of perfection to which we are called. The following are a few reflections on Saint Joseph as a model for consecrated persons, based on a meditation on Saint Joseph by St. Joseph Sebastian Pelczar (1842-1924), a Polish bishop and Founder of the Congregation of Sister Servants of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus.



**1. "Consider that the entire life of Saint Joseph was interior and hidden in God; so little known to the world that but a few holy writers mention him in some few places; and of his death give no information. This was a life of prayer, quiet work, and constant sacrifice, and at the same time, a life shining with the splendor of all virtues."**

Our inner self, the inner depths of our communion with God, is revealed and made manifest, first by our thoughts and then by our words and actions that follow. As consecrated persons, we are called to live out externally by the witness of our life what is essentially a living expression of the reality that should be transpiring within us, namely that hidden exchange of love between ourselves and our Beloved.

In this exchange of love, holy desire, and spiritual union, heart speaks to Heart, the fruit of pure grace on God's part, and our cooperation in fidelity, prayer, unity in charity, and purity of heart. Saint Joseph can be for us that

model of interiority with engagement, intentionality, availability, self-surrender, and above all, self-gift.

Yet, what if our inner life is depleted by an overwork that tries to escape a gnawing emptiness? Or perhaps the disappointments of community life or the apostolate have made us hardened to resist the inner conversation of love. The trials of life can make us arid and can drown out our canticle of love, causing our spirit to be interiorly despondent, thereby losing our first love (cf. Rev 2:4). If we find ourselves in such a state, above all, do not lose heart; God who is faithful

(cf. 1 Cor. 1:9) will not abandon us. We have only to call upon Him in our misery, and He will deliver us from ourselves. Seeing our good will and our desire to make real changes to put Him first, God will restore the joy of our youth (c.f. Ps 43:4). With the help of Saint Joseph, the patron of the interior life, grace will spur us on to desire God more and more, and our inner life can once again flourish, giving us joy and giving God glory.

**2. "Ponder only that by having married the Virgin Mary, Saint Joseph renounced the dignity of fatherhood—so dear to the Israelites, and voluntarily lived in lifelong virginity so that he could belong totally to God. This was a life of mortification and chastity."**

Chastity consecrated for the Kingdom of God is a continual oblation before the Lord. It consumes us completely because it is an act of self-gift that involves the deepest desire of our humanity, namely to be loved and cherished. Only when we truly know ourselves to be deeply loved and cherished by God can we be truly free to place all

our gifts of nature and grace on the altar of sacrifice, together with our Spouse, in an offering united with His own complete offering of Himself. To remain pure and selfless in body, mind and soul is not always easy, but it is a noble struggle in which Saint Joseph can aid us by his powerful intercession and protection.

**3. “While a descendant of the royal family, he worked every day for a living in the craftsman’s workshop—Jesus being all his wealth. Behold his life of self-denial and poverty.”**

Saint Joseph can teach us the dignity of work and help us to keep it in its proper perspective. Our value is not in our productivity or in others’ recognition of us. St. Joseph the Worker is an example of prayer joined to hard work undertaken always with pure intention and union with God. Saint Joseph knew privations and the harsh demands of labor; for us as religious, to be honest, we really live a privileged life—all our needs are met. Seldom do we feel the sting of poverty; but Saint Joseph’s poverty and labor call us to look more deeply into the true state of our spirit of self-denial. How many are the inner demands and earthly attachments by which we complicate our lives and compromise our ideals! How discontented we are with what God gives us: our limitations, assignments, companions, setbacks and sufferings? Poverty of spirit in the spirit of Saint Joseph can free us from ourselves, from our selfishness, our self-preoccupation, and our laziness.

**4. “Saint Joseph, as the highest of the patriarchs and a witness to the mysteries of God, could convert the world, and yet he enclosed himself in a small town, being completely devoted to Jesus. This was a life of humility and prayer.”**

As consecrated persons, our greatness lies chiefly in our ability to remain

hidden, for to God alone belongs all praise. Humility is contentment to remain in the background, letting the credit go to God and others; Humility, being truth, knows its dignity, and this assurance makes one able to surrender the outcomes, not grasping or coveting, not wanting to shine. Devoid of self-seeking, to live in humility means to cast all that we have and all that we are before the feet of Jesus, in deference to His sovereignty. The fruit of such humility is freedom.

**5. “Saint Joseph was such a great lover of God, but was afflicted by much suffering which he endured with a wonderful fortitude. This was a life of love for the cross and submission to the will of God. Do you have similar virtues?”**

Adversity is an integral part of the Christian life, for whoever does not take up the cross daily and follow Christ is not worthy of Him (cf. Mt 10:38). The cross can make us better or it can make us bitter, it all depends on our acceptance of the cross or not. Love for the cross does not come from a self-hatred that wallows in misery, but a loving trust that says, “yes, this too, is being allowed by a loving God, who does not let me bear my suffering alone.” It means seeing the crosses caused by others in a supernatural light, knowing that God has permitted sufferings at the hands of others so that a greater good may come of it. Trials are permitted to fill up in our own flesh what is lacking in the sufferings of Christ (cf. Col 1:24) and what is lacking is principally our part in that suffering for the sake of the Church.

**6. “If you want to know the faith of Saint Joseph, observe in the stable of Bethlehem his worshipping of the Incarnate Word, venerating in Him his Lord and God.”**

Saint Joseph was a just man who lived by faith (cf. Rom 1:17). He re-

mained steadfast in unwavering confidence in trials until God sent clarity to him to marry the Virgin Mary. In trust he underwent persecution by the wicked Herod, knowing that God would go before him into the unknown. Moreover Saint Joseph placed all his hope in God when, for three days, Jesus was lost to him and the Blessed Mother in the Temple. In consecrated life, our faith, like Saint Joseph’s, must be real and active. We must be imbued with a lively faith or else we will not withstand the temptation to preserve ourselves. Seeing everything only in a natural way, we will begin to seek our own interests, what is truly a calamity for the consecrated soul.

**7. “If you want to know Saint Joseph’s obedience, look at how he rose at night at the angel’s voice and, giving no care to hunger, hardships or cold, went to Egypt where he led a hard life until the next command of God. Do you have similar virtues?”**

My joy is to do your will, O God (cf. Ps. 40:9) says the Psalmist, and for the religious this will is revealed through the superiors, the rule of life, the schedule of the day, and the unfolding of daily experiences. The religious is not at the mercy of others, but in the hands of God, and His loving will. We will never know if we truly do God’s will unless there is a holy resignation to it and openness for obeying it, even as promptly as did Saint Joseph. ☺

*Sr. Mary Joseph Calore, SSCJ, is a perpetually professed member of the Sister Servants of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, founded in 1894 in Krakow, Poland, by St. Joseph Sebastian Pelczar and Bl. Klara Szczena. For more information please visit [SacredHeartSisters.org](http://SacredHeartSisters.org).*





## Wake Up the World!

Essential Elements of  
Religious Life Revisited

# O Beauty Ever Ancient, Ever New

By Mother Marie Julie Saegaert, S.C.M.C

The title of this article is taken from Saint Augustine's *Confessions*. These words of the great Father and Doctor of the Church, breathed as an act of love to God whom he had finally "discovered" after years of searching, express the rapture of his heart when contemplating the Divine Mysteries. This phrase might also rise spontaneously from our own hearts during our time of adoration before the Blessed Sacrament or at Holy Mass, when seeing the glory of nature or gazing on the perfect loveliness of a newborn child. Deep within each of us is a longing for beauty and a desire for all things holy. We were made for beauty—the possession of Divine Beauty—which will embrace us in ecstatic union for all eternity.

For us who are consecrated religious, our vocation is revealed to us as a foretaste of Heaven. Most of us in responding to the still, silent invitation of Jesus to live entirely for Him were drawn to the consecrated life, the religious life, because we saw in it, as in a mirror, the life of the Trinity (Community), and the sublime life of Jesus on earth (the evangelical counsels). It doesn't take an artist, then, to see the consecrated life in its intrinsic fullness as *beauty, ever ancient, ever new*.



In the following series of articles entitled, "Wake Up the World!" I have set out to reflect prayerfully on the May 31, 1983 document from the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life (then known as the Sacred Congregation for Religious and for Secular Institutes) entitled *Essential Elements in the Church's Teaching on Religious Life as Applied to Institutes Dedicated to Works of the Apostolate* (hereafter in this article referred to as *Essential Elements*). Coming as it did barely twenty years after the beginning of the experimentation in religious life that shook many religious orders and institutes to their roots, this document became the benchmark for all members, col-

lectively and personally, by which to set the bar for authentic religious life going forward. It is now nearly forty years since it was given to us, with a beautiful introduction in the *Letter of His Holiness (St.) John Paul II to the Bishops of the United States*, written in April of that year. Within the pages of these two documents is a reiteration of all that has come to define the consecrated life through the centuries with its sacred traditions, precepts, practice, and praxis—as well as the canonical norms relative to religious life.

*Essential Elements* was written in a spirit of hope and reverence both for the vocation of the consecrated life and for individual religious who seek to live this life in faith and fidelity. Through the centuries, many forms of consecrated life have appeared on—and, sadly disappeared from—the landscape of the Church. From its earliest times, the consecrated life has been seen as a model of the life of Jesus, providing men and women who desire to imitate Him more closely with a form and format to do so without distraction and to grow toward the perfection of charity in His name. The history of religious life is beautiful in its development, but also painful to study because, in addressing the need to adapt itself to the various cultures and changing needs of the People of

God without losing its essential character, one sees the suffering that has occurred in the process. One thinks of the persecutions, the misunderstandings and the inner conflicts that have shaped its history, even to this day. Yet religious life has

endured, and thrived, in spite of all this.

History has shown, however, that few good things have succeeded without suffering, and the trials of religious and our way of life throughout the centuries have strengthened it in marvelous ways. Clearly, the power of the Cross shines through the story of the development and the flourishing of religious life. Because of the cost of protecting the very roots of the consecrated life, founders and members have found themselves in a position of having to contemplate with profound love and fidelity the meaning of this way of life, and those elements that are essential to its existence. In other words, the *raison d'être* of religious life has not been taken for granted—not by the Church, nor by its members who have fiercely defended and safeguarded it. By constant reflection and prayerful consideration of the relevance of this life to its aim and its embracing of the respective founding charisms, religious orders and institutes emerged from the shadows of suffering into the radiance of the dawn.

This has happened over and over. The Early Fathers of the Church have been diligent in safeguarding the purity of the consecrated life in their sermons, maxims and writings.

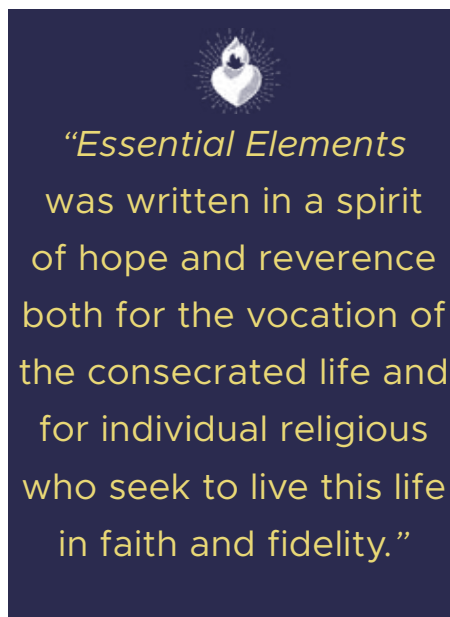


to the People of God whom they have been called to serve.

What is the mystery that has drawn individual men and women, some at a very young age, and others more mature in their faith and experience,

Other great men and women have supported it by the encouragement, aid and cooperation in the ministries undertaken by religious, both missionary and local. Countless lay individuals and organizations have contributed to the fostering of vocations and the support of those who have responded to the divine invitation to

to embrace the evangelical counsels throughout the history of the Church? And beyond that, what have been the essential elements of religious life that have enabled orders and institutes to flourish in the common observance of the radical imitation of Jesus in service to the Heavenly Father and to the People of God? In this series of articles, let us reflect together on both the mystery and the essential elements laid down by the Church through these more than twenty centuries, with a mind to answering these questions. In doing so, may we, religious women and men who have been so gloriously blessed by God in our vocation to the consecrated life, and you, our lay collaborators who have strengthened us by your prayers and encouragement, grow in greater understanding of the beauty ever ancient, ever new, of the gift of the consecrated life to the Church. ✠



live the life of religious women and men. And, there have been martyrs. We are painfully aware of consecrated religious, sometimes accompanied by faithful lay associates, who have suffered at the hands of political regimes and individual enemies, willingly surrendering their very lives in fidelity to God, to the Church, and

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## Answering the Master's Call

**Vocation Stories**

# My Child Give Me Thy Heart

**By Sr. Mary Stephen Vamosy, P.B.V.M.**

I grew up as the fourth child of eight—six girls and two boys. During the early years of our lives, we had our routines. The older girls helped dad with milking cows and Emily and I took care of the chickens. During the month of May, every night after supper, we knelt as a family in front of the picture of Our Lady of Lourdes with Saint Bernadette to say the Rosary. We all took turns leading the prayers and that is how we learned the Mysteries of the Rosary. That picture of Saint Bernadette and Our Lady now hangs in my room at the convent.

I attended public school and went to Religious Education once a week, at my parish church of the Sacred Heart in Stamford, New York, just a five-minute walk from school. I have always believed that my parent's faith and example were the cause and nourishment of my vocation to become a sister. In my senior year of high school, I knew that I wanted to be a sister. When I told my parents, Mom cried, and Dad told her that they had always prayed that one of their children would be a priest or a sister. During those formative years, they were always happy and supportive of my desire to be a sister.

While I was discerning my vocation, my mom took me to visit the Sisters of St. Joseph in Latham, New York. Meanwhile, my sister Mary Lou

heard of a community that had an orphanage that she thought I might be interested in visiting. The name of the home was St. Colman's in Watervliet, New York. My mother again took me on the road, and we visited St. Colman's which was staffed by the Sisters of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

The sisters originally came to the United States from Ireland in 1881 at the request of Rev. William Sheehan, the pastor of St. Patrick's Church in Watervliet. He saw the desperate need for their ministry, which was founded by Nano Nagle to work with the poor, especially children. Father wanted the sisters to care for children and to keep families of children together. In a newspaper, he had read about a young couple who met, fell in love and wanted to marry. During the marriage preparation, they found that the reason they had so much in common was that they were brother and sister who had been separated when they were younger. How sad!

When we visited St. Colman's, we were greeted by Reverend Mother Bernadette and had a wonderful visit. She gave us a tour, explained how St. Colman's was founded, what their mission was and what it was like to be a sister. I told her I wanted to be a sister. But Mother explained to us that they had found through experi-



ence that young girls coming to enter right out of high school were not able to adjust as well as those who had experienced living on their own away from home. This period of independence, she felt, was very necessary. This could be achieved in a number of ways. The young women could attend college or get a job and live in their own apartment. The highlight of my visit to St. Colman's was the visit to the chapel, where I saw over the main altar, "My Child Give Me Thy Heart." I knew then that this was the place where God wanted me to be and Mom felt the same way.

Mother suggested that I go to St. Catherine's Infant Home in Albany and in the Fall, I started their year-long live-in program. It was run by the Daughters of Charity and dealt with children from new-born infants to five years of age. There were about forty other women that I joined with the goal

of becoming a childcare technician. It would take me only one year and then I could revisit the idea of becoming a sister. We all felt so important; we dressed like nurses, white uniforms, white stockings and shoes and we even got to wear a little white cap after we completed required classes! Here I made some of life-long friends that I'm in contact with, sixty years later!

The children at St. Catherine's were divided by age. We the child-care workers were also divided into the same number of groups as the children, so that we would get the experience of working with all of the different age groups. Our child-care education was very complete and intense. We learned to deal with a variety of behaviors, what to expect of each age group and the growth and development of all ages of children. This experience really helped me when I entered St. Colman's the following year.

September 8, 1962, Our Blessed Mother's Feast Day, was my Entrance Day. Joining me for my trip to St. Colman's were my Mom and Dad, my brothers Steve and Joe, and my baby sister Peggy. How I would miss them all but especially Peggy who was only four years old! Mother Bernadette and Mother Michael welcomed us and then she took me to the novitiate, where I changed into my postulant dress, stockings, cape, veil, "nun shoes," and stiff white cuffs and a collar.

What a transformation! But I would get used to it pretty quickly. My Dad was the family photographer and took pictures for the rest of my family who couldn't be with me for this happy day, to see the "Sister" now in the family. Other young ladies entering that day also got dressed in their Postulant clothes and came down to their families. There were seven of us and we called ourselves the Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit! After pictures



and a short visit with our families we all went to the chapel for the Rosary. When the Rosary was finished our families left for their slow trip home.

Now I was with my new family, the Sisters of the Presentation. I knew that this was the place that God wanted me to be. As postulants we went to Maria College, a junior college, which at that time was just for religious sisters from all different communities, where we were taught by the Religious Sisters of Mercy. Then, I attended the College of St. Rose in Albany where I received my Bachelor of Science Degree in Music. As a novice, I took organ lessons and was able to practice with the sisters and the children in our home in our own beautiful chapel! The children at St. Colman's had choir practice every week to learn all the new hymns for Mass. In 1972, our day care program for two-to five-year-olds was started. I worked with each age group until I reached the kindergarten group.

As society changed and more mothers were working, it was necessary to establish nursery and pre-k programs in our parish schools. I

taught eighth, seventh, third, second, first, art and music and then finally my favorite, KINDERGARTEN!! Those twenty years of kindergarten flew by, but oh! what fun we had. Whenever I run into my former students, we share happy memories and they bring me up to date on their children and grandchildren. Just a few weeks ago, I received my last COVID-19 shot from one of my former students!

In my later years, I continue to play organ and lead the choir for our sisters. I also enjoy being a Eucharistic Minister and a Lector at Mass at our Motherhouse and being a part of the diocesan and community vocation teams. On the fun side, I am one of the "Rally Nuns" for the Siena College Men's Basketball team and enjoy attending their games and cheering them on! Go SAINTS!! People are always appreciative to see sisters wearing religious habits and stop us to talk. It brings back memories of the sisters who played very important roles in their lives and they are happy to share those memories with us. Mom and Dad's prayers have definitely been answered. One of their children has become a sister, a Sister of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary. I am that BLESSED one. ☺

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[PresentationSistersWatervlietNY.com](http://PresentationSistersWatervlietNY.com)



## Religious Pioneers in America

*Trailblazers of Faith*

### Rev. Albert Braun, O.F.M. —The Last of the Frontier Priests—

By Anne Tschanz

When Fr. Albert Braun, O.F.M., was a young priest, his superior accused him of being an adventurer. While “Father Al” did not specifically seek out adventure, like a magnet, it certainly found him. As a World War I chaplain, an apostle to the Apaches, a prisoner of war, an undercover champion for persecuted Mexicans and a chaplain during the atomic bomb tests on Eniwetok Atoll, Father Al took an active role in all the human dramas of the first half of the 20th century. All obstacles were addressed by him in one word: “Insignificant!”

There were times when he did not do things according to the letter of the law; like stealing food for his starving comrades in a prisoner of war camp or blowing up a church so that the Mescalero Apaches could get the glorious Church he thought they deserved. He could put the fear of God in people like no other, yet they loved him for it. He was also a popular guest at festivities, for he loved music and welcomed a little drop of “Irish Holy Water.” His niece said: “He just had something about him that made people happy.”

John William Braun was born on September 5, 1889, in Los Angeles, California, to John and Caroline Braun, the third of six children born



into a family of German descent. “Bud” as he was known, grew up in a loving, Catholic family where discipline was strict, love abounded, and a strong work ethic prevailed. As a child, Bud was stubborn, quick-tempered, and “full of the devil.” After he got into some mischief one summer, his father put him to work on a sheep ranch. When the ranch owner asked what wages should be paid, Bud’s father responded: “Wages? Teach him how to work!”

Young Bud was a diligent, strong worker, and usually good natured, but with a temper on a short fuse. During his second summer on the ranch, he put dung into an irksome foreman’s

boot and a fight ensued. Bud quit before he was fired. On his own volition, he decided to follow his friend Willie to St. Anthony’s High School Preparatory Seminary in Santa Barbara, run by the Franciscans. He told his no doubt startled parents: “I’m going to be a priest.”

Arriving unannounced, he was accepted on a trial basis. Though he was told: “You’ll never be a priest, you’re too stubborn,” he and Willie, though not stellar students, persevered and were accepted into the novitiate where Bud received the name Albert. Professing Solemn Vows in 1912, he was ordained in 1915 by Archbishop John Joseph Glennon in Saint Louis.

Inspired by the stories of the missionaries, he hoped to go to China. But his Provincial wanted to keep an eye on him and sent him to the Apache Reservation at Mescalero, New Mexico. During his first sparsely attended Mass, a dog sat in front of the pulpit and barked, disrupting his homily. He threw away his prepared notes and just talked, learning how to convey universal truths in a simple, dynamic, practical way that resonated with people. His first collection was 17 cents, so he decided then and there to become a farmer so he would never starve.

His whole “parish” covered 720 square miles. To reach one particular family, he had to travel 30 miles over the mountains by horseback. On the way, he “would stop at every Apache Camp and stay overnight with them, share a meal, and then start to the next camp,” recalled Virginia Shanta, whose family was mostly Catholic because of Father Al. “He was a person of God...a true Franciscan. He didn’t care whether someone was another religion—he wanted them to know about God.” He pitched in with their work, joined in their celebrations, and became part of the community. As Father Al vividly put it: “Christ told his disciples to go out into the world,” not sit at their desks “and push papers around.”

Father Al was learning the Apache ways while they were learning the basics of the Faith. He gained the bishop’s support for their annual Puberty Ceremonial that some outsiders wanted abolished. Father Al saw it as a beautiful expression of man cooperating with God in the gift of procreation. “These simple people put us to shame,” said Father Al, “They can teach us the sacredness of Natural Law, God’s law.”

In 1917, his request to serve as a World War I chaplain in Europe was eventually approved. In October, 1918, he participated in the bloody Meuse-Argonne offensive and as he tersely put it: “I was wounded” while going “over the top.” All day and night he tended the injured, carried men to safety and administered last rites. After the battle, for which he received a Purple Heart and a Silver Star, he collected the bodies of the dead and buried them in shell holes, in a location that later became Meuse-Argonne American Cemetery, with over 14,000 American graves, mostly from that offensive. After hostilities concluded,



Father Al nearly died from the deadly influenza outbreak, aggravated by the gassing he experienced in the trenches, but slowly recovered. The military chaplaincy said: “Withsoever he has gone he has made a splendid name for the Church and himself.”

He returned to Mescalero in 1919 where, inspired by the grand cathedrals of Europe, he wanted to build a church that could unite and become the center of the community. However, permission to tear down the old crumbling adobe church was denied. One night, he packed black powder into the cracks in the church and basically blew it up. It was then condemned. With the help of an elderly stonemason from California, he quarried stone by hand, made his own mortar and slowly built the great edifice. Chronically short of funds, he begged and borrowed to meet every obligation. To those who criticized his grandiose plans, one priest friend said: “That’s Al! He didn’t think in small portions...we get too small. We don’t have the expansive blessed soul he had.”

Meanwhile, in Mexico, the anti-clerical revolutionary government was persecuting Catholics and con-

fiscating Church property. Father Al and a diocesan priest-friend volunteered for the very dangerous assignment of trying to preserve Franciscan properties for the Order. Disguised as businessmen, they secretly met with clerics and religious and quietly transferred the titles into Father Al’s name. (Eventually, these were returned to their rightful owners.) He also was instrumental, after much travail, in bringing the Mexican novitiate to Mescalero for a time, so Franciscans could continue their studies.

During the Depression, Father Al joined the Civilian Conservation Corps where his chaplain’s salary paid bills and provided food for the exiled seminarians. While he was often dead broke, his days in Mescalero were the happiest of his life. On July 4, 1939, the “Apache Cathedral” was dedicated to Father Al’s comrades who had not returned from World War I.

In late 1940, Father Al received orders and was eventually assigned to the 92nd Coast Artillery on Corregidor, an island in Manila Bay in the Philippines. In early 1942, the Japanese began a massive, relentless bombardment of the island with Father Al to be found pulling survivors out of rubble, sneaking across to Bataan to administer the sacraments and consoling the dying in the tunnels that served as a hospital. For his heroism, he earned his second Silver Star in his second war. He was ever encouraging, self-sacrificing and calm, “my idea of an Army chaplain,” said a captain. On May 7, 1942, the American flag was lowered on Corregidor.

Father Al was eventually sent to a prison camp in Luzon that was “hell on earth.” Most of the men, including Father Al, contracted debilitating if not deadly diseases like beriberi, diphtheria, malaria and dengue fever. Their starvation rations were supple-

mented by things they could capture like lizards, snakes, grasshoppers and dead animals but nonetheless men were dying at a rate of 50-60 per day. Religious services were usually forbidden but Father Al said Mass regularly despite the beatings if he were caught.

His ministry flourished in this field of great suffering. He baptized, anointed, instructed and boosted morale. One prisoner recalled: "He thought of us first. He constantly gave up his food for others he believed needed it more." The men who were from good, disciplined homes survived, he noted. The ones who were self-willed and spoiled did not. "Being an optimist," he said, "kept me alive when we were naked, sleeping in the mud, and living on two spoons of rice a day."

On Christmas Day, 1943, he received a card signed by hundreds of prisoners. In part it read: "As a fellow prisoner, you have carried your share of the load; as a soldier you have been a guide and example; and as a priest you have aided us immeasurably in living in conformity to God's laws. We thank God...that the Christ Child permits us, your fellow Catholics, the inspirational consolation of your presence."

Eventually, he was transferred to a

camp in Tokyo Bay. One day, forgetting to salute a particularly cruel Japanese sergeant, he was made to stand outside, nearly naked, in frigid December weather for hours. Father could hear American bombers overhead and prayed to Saint Joseph that the camp be blasted off the face of the earth. At one point, the sergeant came lunging at him with a steel-tipped bamboo pole, aiming for the jugular. Father turned at the last second and the soldier went sprawling to the ground. The air raid sirens caused a distraction, the sergeant lost face, and Father was spared.

Father Al was liberated in August 1945, down 80 lbs, the once robust frame left permanently weakened, especially in his legs. In Mescalero, he dedicated the Apache cathedral to the Americans who had died in both World Wars while he in turn received recognition from them as "God's Warrior." His many awards were placed above eye level, he said, "Lest I should get a swelled head." For a while he was stationed in Hawaii and then Eniwetok Atoll where top secret nuclear tests were being conducted.

Finally, he was given "light duty" in Phoenix but when Father saw the spiritual and temporal neglect of the

Mexican migrants living without running water and electricity or adequate food, shelter or medical care, he went full speed ahead once again. He attended city council meetings, corralled delinquents, broke up a drug ring, and with the people's sacrifices and prayers, built Sacred Heart Church and other chapels for them, to bring the community together. "Literally thousands of mostly poor Mexicans filled those Churches," said a friend. "This great apostolate was just short of a miracle."

As old age and infirmities overtook him, he moved into a Little Sisters of the Poor home in Phoenix. In 1980, his leg was amputated but with his wheelchair careening down the street, he still sought the lost sheep. He died on March 6, 1983, invoking the Blessed Mother to whom his devotion, said a friend, was unbelievable. He was buried inside St. Joseph Church in Mescalero.

"He saw the worst in human nature," said his biographer Dorothy Cave, "but kept throughout his life an almost unbelievable innocence, for he saw also, and always, the Holy Spirit in all mankind."✠

*An excellent biography of his life is: "God's Warrior" by Dorothy Cave.*

## Monument to Faith, Patriotism and Courage Rebuilt

**F**r. Albert Braun didn't have much outside his Purple Heart medal when the 30 year old returned from WWI in 1919—\$100 in U.S. Army pay, three shovels and a stonemason friend in California—but he believed he had enough to build a majestic church on the Mescalero Apache Reservation in New Mexico to replace a crumbling adobe structure.

His dream was so contagious, he received free floor plans for a Romanesque-style church from noted Philadelphia architect William Stanton. His stonemason friend, Antonio

Leyva, helped out big time. By 1939, Franciscan friars and Apache volunteers completed St. Joseph Apache Mission. In 1945, after surviving 40 months as a prisoner of war in WWII, Father Braun rededicated the church as a towering tribute to both Apache and American veterans killed in war.

But the years had not been kind. Wind, rain, bats, birds—all found their way into the church through the crumbling lime mortar. In 2000, major restoration work began. After raising over \$2.3 million dollars and 14 years of clearing and replacing

the lime mortar, the restored mission was completed in 2014.

Through it all, nobody forgot that this dual-purpose building stood for so much. Father Braun, who dreamt this spiritual war memorial into being, died in 1983 and is buried at the mission. His dream church remains a divine tribute to faith, patriotism and courage.





# Called to Preach the Gospel of God's Merciful Love

The following is a letter of Pope Francis to Brother Gerald Francisco Timoner, O.P., Master General of the Order of Preachers for the 8th Centenary of the death of St. Dominic of Caleruega.

**P***raedicator Gratiae*: among the titles attributed to Saint Dominic, that of “Preacher of Grace” stands out for its consonance with the charism and mission of the Order he founded. In this year that marks the eight hundredth anniversary of Saint Dominic’s death, I gladly join the Friars Preachers in giving thanks for the spiritual fruitfulness of that charism and mission, seen in the rich variety of the Dominican family as it has grown over the centuries. My prayerful greetings and good wishes go to all the members of that great family, which embraces the contemplative lives and apostolic works of its nuns and religious sisters, its priestly and lay fraternities, its secular institutes and its youth movements.

In the Apostolic Exhortation *Gaudete et Exsultate*, I expressed my conviction that “each saint is a mission, planned by the Father to reflect and embody, at a specific moment in history, a certain aspect of the Gospel” (no. 19). Dominic responded to the urgent need of his time not only for a renewed and vibrant preaching of the Gospel, but, equally important, for a convincing witness to its summons to holiness in the living communion of the Church. In the spirit of all true reform, he sought a return to the poverty and simplicity of the earliest Christian community, gathered around the apostles and faithful to their teaching (cf. Acts 2:42). At the same time, his zeal for the salvation of souls led him to form a corps of committed preachers whose love of the sacred page and integrity of life could enlighten minds and warm hearts with the life-giving truth of the divine word.

In our own age, characterized by epochal changes and new challenges to the Church’s evangelizing mission, Dominic can thus serve as an inspiration to all the baptized, who are called, as missionary disciples, to reach every “periphery” of our world with the light of

the Gospel and the merciful love of Christ. In speaking of the perennial timeliness of Saint Dominic’s vision and charism, Pope Benedict XVI reminded us that “in the heart of the Church, a missionary fire must always burn” (*Audience of February 3, 2010*).

Dominic’s great call was to preach the Gospel of God’s merciful love in all its saving truth and redemptive power. As a student in Palencia, he came to appreciate the inseparability of faith and charity, truth and love, integrity and compassion. As Blessed Jordan of Saxony tells us, touched by the great numbers who were suffering and dying during a severe famine, Dominic sold his precious books and, with exemplary kindness established a center for almsgiving where the poor could be fed (*Libellus*, 10). His witness to the mercy of Christ and his desire to bring its healing balm to those experiencing material and spiritual poverty was to inspire the foundation of your Order and shape the life and apostolate of countless Dominicans in varied times and places. The unity of truth and charity found perhaps its finest expression in the Dominican school of Salamanca, and particularly in the work of Friar Francisco de Vitoria, who proposed a framework of international law grounded in universal human rights. This in turn provided the philosophical and theological foundation for the heroic efforts of Friars Antonio Montesinos and Bartolomé de Las Casas in the Americas, and Domingo de Salazar in Asia to defend the dignity and rights of the native peoples.

The Gospel message of our inalienable human dignity as children of God and members of the one human family challenges the Church in our own day to strengthen the bonds of social friendship, to overcome unjust economic and political structures, and to work

for the integral development of every individual and people. Faithful to the Lord's will, and prompted by the Holy Spirit, Christ's followers are called to cooperate in every effort "to give birth to a new world, where all of us are brothers and sisters, where there is room for all those whom our societies discard, where justice and peace are resplendent" (*Fratelli Tutti*, no. 278). May the Order of Preachers, now as then, be in the forefront of a renewed proclamation of the Gospel, one that can speak to the hearts of the men and women of our time and awaken in them a thirst for the coming of Christ's Kingdom of holiness, justice and peace!

Saint Dominic's zeal for the Gospel and his desire for a genuinely apostolic life led him to stress the importance of life in common. Again, Bl. Jordan of Saxony tells us that, in founding your Order, Dominic significantly chose "to be called, not sub-prior, but Brother Dominic" (*Libellus*, 21). This ideal of fraternity was to find expression in an inclusive form of governance, in which all shared in the process of discernment and decision-making, in accordance with their respective roles and authority, through the system of chapters at all levels. This "synodal" process enabled the Order to adapt its life and mission to changing historical contexts while maintaining fraternal communion. The witness of evangelical fraternity, as a prophetic testimony to God's ultimate plan in Christ for the reconciliation and unity of the entire human family, remains a fundamental element of the Dominican charism and a pillar of the Order's effort to promote the renewal of Christian life and the spread of the Gospel in our own time.

Together with St. Francis of Assisi, Dominic understood that the proclamation of the Gospel, *verbis et exemplo*, entailed the building up of the entire ecclesial community in fraternal unity and missionary discipleship. The Dominican charism of preaching overflowed early into the establishment of the varied branches of the larger Dominican family, embracing all the states of life in the Church. In succeeding centuries, it found eloquent expression in the writings of St. Catherine of Siena, the paintings of Blessed Fra Angelico and the charitable works of St. Rose of Lima, Bl. John Macias and St.

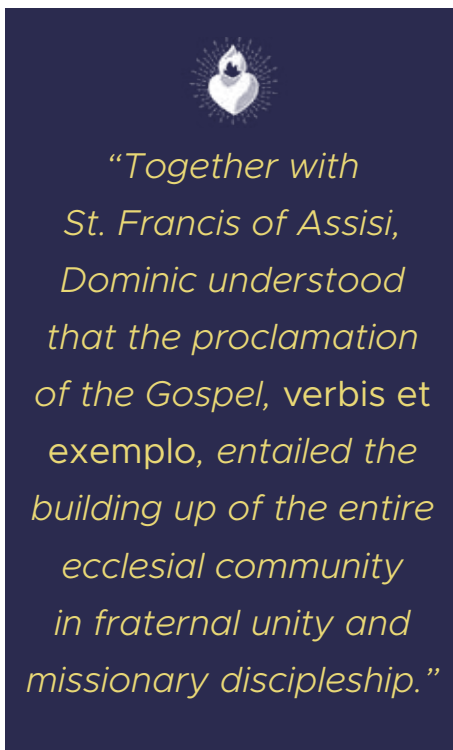
Margaret of Castello. So too, in our own time it continues to inspire the work of artists, scholars, teachers and communicators. In this anniversary year, we cannot fail to remember those members of the Dominican family whose martyrdom was itself a powerful form of preaching. Or the countless men and women who, imitating the simplicity and compassion of St. Martin de Porres, have brought the joy of the Gospel to the peripheries of societies and our world. Here I think in particular of the quiet witness given by the many thousands of Dominican tertiaries and members of the Dominican Youth Movement, who reflect the important and indeed indis-

pensable role of the laity in the work of evangelization.

On the Jubilee of the birth of Saint Dominic into eternal life, I would like in a particular way to express gratitude to the Friars Preachers for the outstanding contribution they have made to the preaching of the Gospel through the theological exploration of the mysteries of the faith. By sending the first friars to the emerging universities in Europe, Dominic acknowledged the vital importance of providing future preachers with a sound and solid theological formation based on sacred Scripture, respectful of the questions posed by reason, and prepared to engage in disciplined and respectful dialogue in the service of God's revelation in Christ. The Order's intellectual apostolate, its numerous schools and

institutes of higher learning, its cultivation of the sacred sciences and its presence in the world of culture have stimulated the encounter between faith and reason, nurtured the vitality of the Christian faith and advanced the Church's mission of drawing minds and hearts to Christ. In this regard too, I can only renew my gratitude for the Order's history of service to the Apostolic See, which dates back to Dominic himself.

May the celebration of the Jubilee Year shower an abundance of graces upon the Friars Preachers and the entire Dominican family, and usher in a new springtime of the Gospel. With great affection, I commend all taking part in the Jubilee celebrations to the loving intercession of Our Lady of the Rosary and your patriarch Saint Dominic, and cordially impart my apostolic blessing as a pledge of wisdom, joy and peace in the Lord. 🌹





## Doctor of the Heart, Healer of the Soul

*The Spiritual Counsel  
of Dr. Conrad W. Baars*

# Prevention of Neurosis

By Rev. Brian Mullady, O.P.

The whole question of the prevention of neurosis forms an ideal opportunity for examining the correct formation of the passions. First, it is important to emphasize that cold and insensitive people normally do not become neurotics. Only those with a rich emotional life are ideal candidates for repression. Repressive neurotics are normally very intelligent people too. People are especially prone to repression during childhood because since the intellect is far from penetrating and ennobling the emotional life of the child, the child reacts to things mostly on the sensitive level.

For example, there are certain Christian teachings that one should not emphasize too much with children. A good example is the teaching on the punishment of hell. A religious once had to leave teaching because she caused a huge phobic reaction in a second grader. When asked what she had done, she replied that she had only told the class about the punishments of hell which had just been the subject of one of her summer retreat conferences. Though this religious was well-intentioned, she was not very prudent because this is not matter for the second grade. Children react to things mostly on the level of emotions and the teaching on hell is

an extremely sophisticated one which can only succeed in causing an intense fear in people without developed intelligence.

Though the child must be allowed to discover emotions and develop them freely this does not mean license. "This does not mean that the child must be given everything it desires or be free to do as it pleases. On the contrary, the child must be brought up in a reasonable manner, because it is after all a rational being even though its emotional life has not yet been subordinated to reason."<sup>1</sup> The purpose of this subordination to reason is to bring about an interior tranquility of order—an ordered character which results from a gradual and correct formation of the passions. The whole basis for education then, must be the recognition of the child as a human being with the normal human psychology already discussed. Since they are not able to control their pleasure and pain appetites by reason or how they use the utility emotions in this regard, parents and educators must do this for them.

Again it must be stressed that this is not the same thing as being "nice" or not "wanting to hurt their feelings." When parents give their children everything to be nice they do not give them the joy of having a more mature

aspect in their emotions. When they refrain from punishing them in a human and ordered way because they "do not want to hurt their feelings," they allow them to express their emotions without any guidance of reason. On the other hand, when they undervalue play, emphasize only success or engage in explanations of sin or hell which stimulate excessive fear, then they are setting the child up for too much emphasis on the usefulness emotions like fear and courage.

"The insight that the feelings of young people should not be repressed was translated into the maxim that 'feelings should not be hurt' or interfered with, and that children should be allowed to 'go through a phase.'"<sup>2</sup> Instead one must have a balance of emotional health food in which the passions are properly stimulated and at the same time feed the child with intellectual truths which he is capable of absorbing at his age.

Educators may make a reasonable use of the passions in the utility appetite like fear, anger or courage to help the child to mature, provided these are guided by the reason of the educator. If the educator himself merely acts out of his own emotional imbalance, as for example when he excessively or derisively punishes the child just to satisfy his own feelings, but without

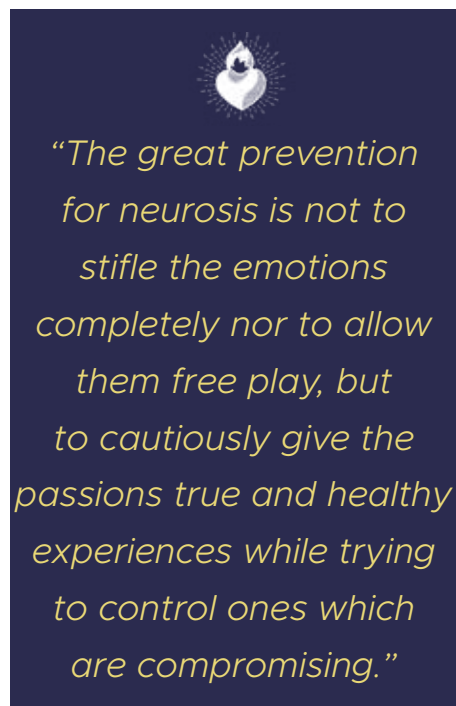
any relationship to reason, then he can easily excessively stimulate the passions of fear or emotional energy. The child can become as utilitarian as the parent and instead of just enjoying things because they are pleasant, the child must always be accomplishing something. "Neurotic parents raise neurotic children."<sup>3</sup>

Just urging a child to work harder or to be courageous does not in itself increase the child's potential for neurosis. It is only when this is connected to things like the parent living his frustrated life through the child with no consideration for the child's personality, needs or individuality that this can happen. This is true with regard to anger which is a much misunderstood emotion in today's culture. Here it is important to make a distinction between repression and suppression. Baars says that repression is an *unconscious process* in which the person is not aware of his deep anger. Suppression is a *conscious process* in which the person feels anger, is aware of it, but decides not to show it for the wrong reasons.

Baars speaks about the difference between feeling anger and its expression. A person may punish a child for throwing a tantrum, but the weight of the punishment should not be that the child should not feel anger, but that this is not an appropriate way to express anger. If the child gets the idea that it is always wrong to feel anger, then this emotion can atrophy or be buried alive and never reasonably guided. Being angry reasonably is like learning how to walk. You may stumble for a while but eventually you get the hang of it. God gave us anger just as He gave us legs. Instead of denying anger exists, we must learn the proper way to feel and express it. Baars explains that when he was in the concentration camp of Buchenwald he

was kept alive because his adrenaline was heightened by his interior anger at the evil of his captors. This prevented him from easily succumbing to hunger and disease. But it was an anger he could never express openly because it would have meant his death.

The problem of anger does have an important moral and psychological expression which is experienced in forgiveness. There are two kinds of forgiveness: one not indicated because it is premature and based on repres-



sion and the other which is a sign of maturity.

Premature forgiveness occurs when a person does not want to face his anger. Since he has no satisfactory way of expressing his anger he will if possessed of a moral sense and good will forgive. But this is premature if the person thinks the passions will easily and naturally come along without patience. Many who prematurely "forgive" complain that they continue to feel anger and resentment. Dr. Baars holds that this is due to the fact that these people do not understand what true forgiveness entails. He calls this

a wonderful "self-help 'technique.'"<sup>4</sup>

To practice true forgiveness, one must first realize that it is a matter of the intellect and will and usually demands only one act of the will. The feelings do not always follow along. So one can forgive but it seems that one does not forget in the sense that one still *feels* resentment at the person. This is not due to the fact that we have not forgiven but to the weakness of our passions as a result of the Original Sin. Integrity is now a struggle for us, but one joyfully born because Christ and His cross stand at the center of our souls. Our suffering in experiencing this lack of emotional ardor in forgiveness is our share in the Passion of Christ. Dr. Baars thinks that a very psychologically helpful practice in this difficulty is to make a short prayer asking Christ to quiet our feelings of resentment while visualizing the person we have forgiven.

The great prevention for neurosis is not to stifle the emotions completely nor to allow them free play, but to cautiously give the passions true and healthy experiences while trying to control ones which are compromising. Junk food is not the way to solve a vitamin deficiency or starvation. Carefully chosen experiences and the nurturing of positive and ordered emotions by the direction of reason are the key.

Interestingly, Dr. Baars finds a good example of this development to be St. Thérèse of Lisieux. Instead of will power and concentration of using our emotions of fear and energy, surrender to the direction of God is not only spiritually good but also emotionally healthy. This leads us to mortification of the passions of fear and energy too. "For the obsessive-compulsive neurotic that is the hardest thing to learn, much harder

*(Continued on page 26)*



# With Mr. Jesse Weiler

## Director of the Liturgical Institute of the University of St. Mary of the Lake—Mundelein Seminary

*Jesse, many people know you as the host of the IRL's Facebook Live interviews, held each Thursday at 2:30pm Central. Tell us a little about your own background and why you have such an appreciation for religious life.*

I have always had a fondness for religious life. Growing up, my parish was served by the Benedictine monks of Marmion Abbey in Aurora, Illinois. In high school at Marmion Academy, I had a number of monks as teachers. It's a common theme among those who have discovered a call to the religious life but just seeing the monks all the time allowed me to experience the beauty of the monastic life.

In college, I became aware of my passion for community and after college I discovered my passion for a simple life of prayer. These realizations moved me to visit the Franciscan Friars of the Renewal in New York. At the time, I was 100% certain that I was called to be a CFR, so you can imagine how disheartened I was when I was told to wait a couple more years.

While I thought I was running towards a communal life of simple prayer, I discovered that I was actually running away from the fear of responsibility. I looked at religious life as a way to avoid making important life decisions like financially providing for a family.

Even though I wasn't called to the religious life, that passion and admiration still remains in me. My wife and I often pray that our children may be called to the priesthood or religious life. I believe that Bishop Donald Hying said it best at the most recent IRL National Meeting: "The Church can never be fully Herself without the fullness of religious life. Religious life speaks something essential both to the Church and to the world."

### *What drew you to the work of the Liturgical Institute (LI)?*

I started working at the LI in 2015 as a marketing and communications specialist. I didn't actually have an explicit interest in liturgy other than the fact that I was a devout Catholic. It didn't take me long to understand the importance of the mission to renew the Sacred Liturgy. Even though I spent 18 years in Catholic schools, much of what I have learned from my LI colleagues was missing from my formation.

Another reason that I love working at the Liturgical Institute is the mutual enrichment of prayer and study. Every class day, conference, or retreat begins and ends with chanted Liturgy of the Hours. Of course, this tradition comes to us from the deep roots of religious life. While most people assume that this type

of prayer is only for priests and religious, I firmly believe that the laity can greatly benefit from its treasures. It says as much in the major document of Vatican II: "Pastors of souls should see to it that the principal hours, especially Vespers, are celebrated in common in church on Sunday and on the more solemn feasts. The laity, too, are encouraged to recite the Divine Office, either with the priests, or among themselves, or even individually" (*Sacrosanctum Concilium*, no. 100).

### *What is the mission of the Liturgical Institute and how did it get started?*

The Liturgical Institute was established in the year 2000 by Francis Cardinal George, O.M.I., in order to prepare Catholics for a "new era in liturgical renewal." We offer an integrated and balanced program for the advancement of the renewal promoted by the Church, rooted in the ideals of the twentieth-century liturgical movement, the writings of recent popes (including St. Pius X, St. John Paul II and Benedict XVI), and the authentic achievements of the post-conciliar era. To this end, students enjoy a mix of intense study and research; invigorating lectures and discussions; and active, intelligent participation in the Institute's liturgical life with the daily celebration

of Mass and the Liturgy of the Hours.

Liturgical Institute students have a vision: they desire to lead people to the source and summit of the Christian life, and therefore to the very source of divinization in Christ. But they know that all theological education is for the service of others and so it is pastoral in intent, and that all pastoral work is enriched by careful study and deep knowledge. That's why our curriculum is deeply traditional yet appropriately innovative, distinctly theological yet eminently practical.

***Many religious have attended your classes. What is drawing them to your program and what experiences and knowledge are they bringing back to their own communities?***

Religious love our program because it is a seamless transition for them. They are already used to living a full liturgical life in their communities. Because of that, they can really spend their time efficiently in the classroom developing their understanding of Sacramental Theology.

One of our current students, Sr. Teresa Maria Leis, F.S.G.M., had this to say about her time in our summer program: "I appreciate the foundation for how I take the liturgy into my apostolic life or my life as a sister. I feel very confident and competent to take that back to my community and then those I serve in our apostolate. I encourage all religious communities to send at least one, if not more, of their members to the Liturgical Institute."

It truly is important for religious communities to have someone who is properly trained in liturgy and we are overjoyed when we get the chance to form them. When we have religious students in our class-



rooms, it brings a new hope and joy to what we are doing. They always bring a spark to the student community that is unmatched.

***Why is it important for you to collaborate with the INSTITUTE ON RELIGIOUS LIFE?***

As the Director of the Liturgical Institute, I am very excited to be collaborating with the INSTITUTE ON RELIGIOUS LIFE. There is a true mutual enrichment between our programs. A major piece of what we teach comes from the great figures of the Liturgical Movement, many of whom were religious. In fact, it was the reestablishment of the Benedictine Priory of Solesmes in 1833 by Dom Prosper Guéranger that is thought to mark the beginning of the modern Liturgical Movement.

Since religious communities live out a clearly visible, liturgical life, it is not difficult to see how integral they are for liturgical renewal. In addition, religious live a very visible sacramental life, one that aids

in the development of the Domestic Church. As laity, there is a lot to be gained from understanding the liturgical life of religious.

We've put that concept into action with a recent collaboration with the IRL. We just released an online course on how the laity can live a more structured life based on monastic principles laid out in the Rule of Saint Benedict. The course is taught by Abbot Austin Murphy, O.S.B., of St. Procopius Abbey in Lisle, Illinois.

It is my hope that we can continue to work together on conferences, retreats, and maybe even the *Vita Consecrata* Institute. I see such a hunger for knowledge in my conversations with religious. They love learning more about liturgical theology, and that in turn flows out into the rest of the Church. Our mission at the Liturgical Institute is to ensure that as many people as possible know about the path to sanctification through the sacraments. Investing time and energy into religious communities makes that task infinitely easier. That is why I see the Liturgical Institute and the INSTITUTE ON RELIGIOUS LIFE enjoined in one mission. 🙏

***For more information visit:***  
***[LiturgicalInstitute.org](http://LiturgicalInstitute.org)***

**The Little Flower** (cont. from pg. 8)  
would like, upon the somber hill, / to be able to die one day!" Then, all the angels sing in refrain: "How great is the happiness of the humble creature / the Seraphim, enraptured, would abandon / O Jesus, their angelic nature / and become infants!" (*Angels at the Crib*, Final Scene).

Here we encounter the Little Flower's favorite theme in relation to the Holy Angels, their "holy envy" of mankind, for whom the Son of God was made flesh and died. Another Seraph, contemplating the Infant Jesus in the Crib and His love on the Cross, cries out to Emmanuel: "Alas! Why am I an Angel, / incapable of suffering? / Jesus, by a sweet exchange / for You I would like to die!!! ... (*Angels at the Crib*, Scene 2).

In Heaven, the angels and saints, in the communion of glory, shall share in and rejoice in one another's glory. Thus there is a wonderful symbiosis between the angels and saints in the economy of salvation.

Thérèse expresses this idea to her sister, Céline, explaining why God hadn't made her an Angel: "If Jesus did not create you an Angel in heaven, it is because He wants you to be an Angel on earth; yes, Jesus wants to have His heavenly court here below just as up above! He wants angel-martyrs, He wants angel-apostles, and He has created a little unknown flower, who is named Céline, with this intention in mind. He wills that His little flower save souls for Him; for this, He wills only one thing: that His flower look at Him while suffering her martyrdom... and it is this mysterious glance exchanged between Jesus and His little flower that will effect marvels and will give Jesus a multitude of other flowers" (LT 127 4/26/1891).

Later, she assured her that the angels, "like the vigilant bees know how to gather the honey contained within the mysterious and multiple calyxes that represent souls or rather the children of the virginal little flower..." (LT 132 10/20/1891), that is, the fruits of expiatory love.



### Her Mission on Earth and in Heaven

As the Little Flower approached her death, she confessed: "I feel that I am about to enter into my rest. But I feel especially that my mission is about to begin, my mission of making God loved as I love Him, of giving my little way to souls. If God answers my desires, my Heaven will be spent on earth until the end of the world. Yes, I want to spend my Heaven in doing good on earth. This isn't impossible, since from the bosom of the beatific vision the angels watch over us" (CJ 7/17/1897). Thus we see how she understood her heavenly mission in light of the angelic ministries.

To Fr. Alfredo Roulland, her missionary "brother" in China, she writes: "Ah! Brother, I feel it, I shall

be more useful to you in Heaven than on earth, and it is with joy that I come to announce to you my coming entrance into that blessed city, sure that you will thank the Lord for giving me the means of helping you more effectively in your apostolic works. I really count on not remaining inactive in Heaven. My desire is to work still for the Church and for souls. I am asking God for this and I am certain He will answer me. Are not the angels continually occupied with us without their ever ceasing to see the divine Face and to lose themselves in the ocean of love without shores? Why would Jesus not allow me to imitate them?" (LT 254 7/14/1897).

### Final Synthesis

Behold the Little Way of the Little Flower in the light of the angels. How clearly they formed an integral part of her interior life! They were her companions, her brothers, her light, strength and protection upon her spiritual journey. She could count on them, faithful servants of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom she had consecrated herself as a child, to whom she had given herself to be their spiritual child in her maturity. She is a guiding light for the members of the Work of the Holy Angels, for unless we become like little children (the essence of the Little Way), we shall never attain to any real intimacy with these heavenly spirits. On this path alone shall we be able to fulfill in union with the angels our mission in the service of Christ and His Church. ☪

Rev. William Wagner, ORC, is a priest with the Order of Canons Regular of the Holy Cross. For more information on the Work of the Holy Angels, please visit: [OpusAngelorum.org](http://OpusAngelorum.org)





## Dominican Sisters of Mary, Mother of the Eucharist Elect New Prioress General

On June 22, 2021, the delegates for the General Chapter of the Dominican Sisters of Mary, Mother of the Eucharist in Ann Arbor, Michigan, held their elections for the Prioress General, which was witnessed by Bishop Earl Boyea, the ordinary of the Diocese of Lansing. Mother Amata Veritas Ellenbecker, O.P., was elected the new Prioress General. She succeeds Mother Mary

Assumpta Long, O.P., one of the four original foundresses of the Order in 1997. The community, canonically established in 1997 in response to Pope St. John Paul II's call for a New Evangelization, seeks to share God's message of faith and the joy of religious life through various outreaches including education, vocations, and culture.

For more information please visit [SistersofMary.org](http://SistersofMary.org).



## Hanceville PCPA Elect New Abbess

On July 29, 2021, the Poor Clares of Perpetual Adoration in Hanceville, Alabama, elected Mother Mary Paschal as the new abbess of Our Lady of the Angels Monastery. Most Rev. Steven Raica, Bishop of the Diocese of Birmingham, was present to witness the election.

Dedicated on May 20, 1962, the monastery was founded by Mother M. Angelica Rizzo, PCPA, and several other founding sisters from *Sancta Clara* Monastery in Canton, Ohio. The nuns were inspired to found a monastery that would appeal to African Americans in the southern states. It was named Our Lady of the Angels Monastery and located in Irondale, Alabama. Later it was relocated to the grounds of the Shrine of the Most Blessed Sacrament.

"It is with overwhelming gratitude to Our Eucharistic Lord for His great goodness, and to you who have assisted us in countless ways

these past years, that we ask for your continued prayers," the monastery said in the announcement of Mother Mary Paschal's election. "Please pray for each of us at Our Lady of the Angels Monastery, that the Holy Spirit may overshadow and guide us as we begin this new chapter and continue anew in this venture of faith and adoration."



For more information, please visit [OLAMShrine.com](http://OLAMShrine.com).

## Mother Angela Perry, PCPA, Rest in Peace

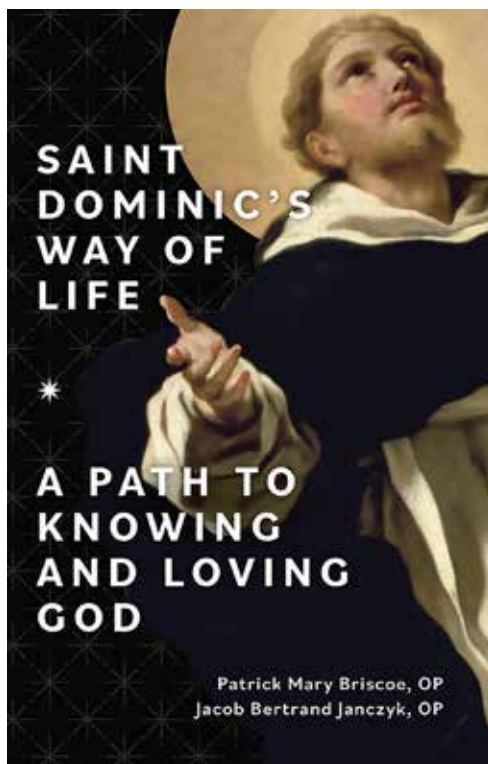
Mother Mary Angela Perry, PCPA, Religious Superior of the Monastery of Poor Clares of Perpetual Adoration in Cleveland, Ohio, and later in Washington, D.C., passed peacefully unto eternal life on June 6, 2021, the Solemnity of *Corpus Christi*.

Born in 1929 in Hubbard, Ohio, Mother Mary Angela entered the Order of Poor Clares of Perpetual Adoration in Cleveland in 1949, made her religious profession on October 19, 1950, and was blessed

with 70 years of vows. She was also instrumental in the reopening of the "cradle" Monastery of the PCPA Order in Troyes,

France. "One always found in her a warm, caring, compassionate spirit," said her community, "accepting of all, and wise in her counsel and encouragement."





## Saint Dominic's Way of Life: A Path to Knowing and Loving God

As the Dominican family and the Church celebrates the 800<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the death of Saint Dominic in 1221, a new book: *Saint Dominic's Way of Life: A Path to Knowing and Loving God* by Fr. Patrick Mary Briscoe, OP, and Fr. Jacob Bertrand Janczyk, OP, explores Dominic's rich approach to Christian living, not only for members of the Order of Preachers, but for all Catholics. Published by *Our Sunday Visitor* ([OSVCatholicBookstore.com](http://OSVCatholicBookstore.com)), the book includes a preface by Fr. Peter John Cameron, OP, and an epilogue by Fr. Gerard Fran-

cisco Timoner III, Master of the Order of Preachers.

"The twenty-first century remains in need of the witness and ministry of Saint Dominic, the thirteenth-century priest who consecrated his life to the sharing of saving truth," says Rev. Sebastian White, OP, editor-in-chief, *Magnificat*. "Fortunately, Fathers Briscoe and Janczyk have produced a highly readable and inspiring book that enables the men and women of our own time to discover the graces that Dominic continues to bring to us as an instrument of God, the author of grace."

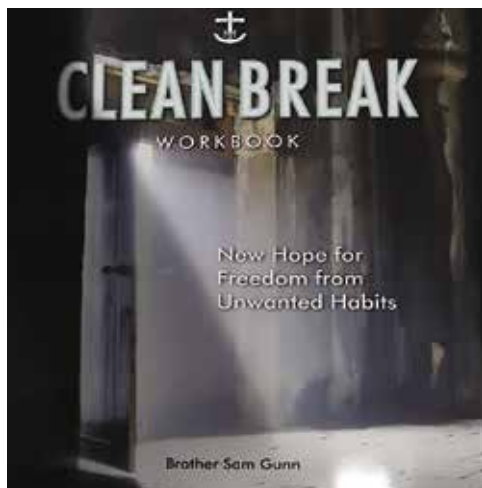
## Resources to Help College Students Keep and Live the Faith

Br. Sam Gunn, BH, of the Brotherhood of Hope, has written two very helpful resources for those working with young people on college campuses.

The first is a called *Clean Break: New Hope for Freedom from Unwanted Habits* ([VianneyVocations.com](http://VianneyVocations.com)). With colorful graphics and a usable, workbook format, Brother Sam helps young Catholics develop

a deep self-awareness of their harmful patterns of thought and behavior, then applies tried-and-true Catholic principals that allows them to find freedom through prayer, accountability, reconciliation, and "training in truth." The workbook delves into traditional Catholic approaches to Confession, scripture, prayer against evil, and more.

The second is a free downloadable resource from the Brotherhood of Hope website called *Builders: The Catholic Campus Minister's Guide to Building Communities of Evangelization*. The book offers practical ideas and insights for conducting campus ministry taken from their 40 years of experience. *Builders* also includes helpful approaches used by other organizations such as CCMA, University Christian Outreach and Saint Paul's Outreach ([BrotherhoodofHope.org/news/builders-new-book](http://BrotherhoodofHope.org/news/builders-new-book)).



### Prevention of Neurosis

(cont. from pg. 21)

much harder than the mortification of the emotions of the pleasure appetite, even though he usually is already an expert at this. Yet, he too, when assisted by an understanding and compassionate therapist can learn to live the Little Way of St. Thérèse of Lisieux, the way of faith and surrender."<sup>6</sup>

#### Footnotes:

<sup>1</sup> Conrad W. Baars, *Psychic Wholeness and Healing*, New York: Alba House (1981), p. 66.

<sup>2</sup> Baars, *Psychic*, p. 73.

<sup>3</sup> Baars, *Psychic*, p. 72.

<sup>4</sup> Baars, *Psychic*, p. 73.

<sup>5</sup> Baars, *Psychic*, p. 80.

<sup>6</sup> Baars, *Psychic*, p. 90.

<sup>7</sup> Baars, *Psychic*, p. 93.

<sup>8</sup> Baars, *Psychic*, p. 104.

## Dominicans Celebrate Anniversary Milestones

In 2021, the Dominican Order is celebrating 800 years since the death of Saint Dominic and the arrival in 1221 of the Dominican Order in Great Britain. To commemorate the event in England, a group of Dominicans made a 15-day pilgrimage from the English coast to Oxford, 240 miles of walking, retracing the footsteps of Gilbert de Fresnay and his companions who made the same journey in

1221. Stops along the way included Canterbury Cathedral, Leeds Castle where they were able to view an altarpiece which originally hung in the only pre-Reformation monastery of Dominican nuns, London where they visited the sites of all three previous Dominican priories in the city and eventually Oxford where the first British Dominican house was founded. Their fascinating journey is



documented on the Dominican English Province FACEBOOK page.

## IRL Websites Attract Over 20,000 Visitors Per Month

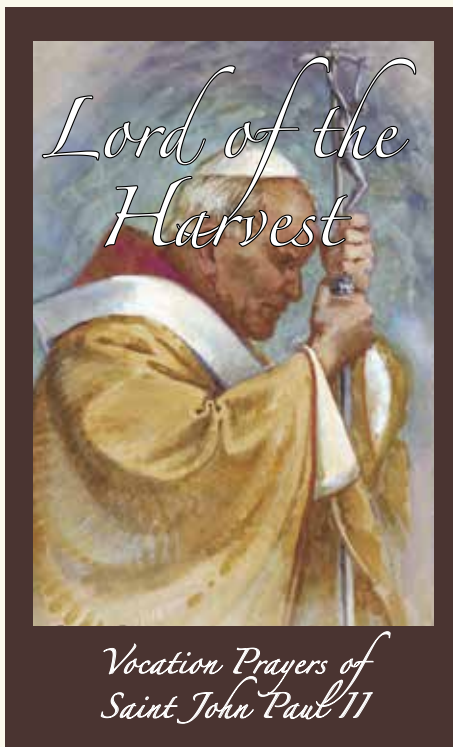
The IRL's four websites: [ReligiousLife.com](http://ReligiousLife.com), [CloisteredLife.com](http://CloisteredLife.com), [ReligiousBrotherhood.com](http://ReligiousBrotherhood.com) and [VocationBlog.com](http://VocationBlog.com) receive over 20,000 visitors per month. On [ReligiousLife.com](http://ReligiousLife.com), over 124,000 pages were viewed during the last year, the most popular

being the "Vocation Search" profiles of the almost 200 IRL Affiliate Members. We thank you for spreading the word about these resources and encourage you to also tune into our weekly FACEBOOK Live interviews with religious, which also garner between 500 and

1,000 views per episode. No FACEBOOK account is necessary for viewing!



## Lord of the Harvest Devotional Updated and Back in Print!



The Lord of the Harvest: Vocation Prayers of Saint John Paul II is back in print. It has been updated with color photos and the recognition that Pope John Paul II is now a saint! The booklet is a compilation of the prayers that concluded John Paul II's "World Day of Prayer for Vocations" messages from 1979 to 2005. These heartfelt invocations are statements of faith in the Lord of the Harvest, reminding all believers of the urgent need to implore Heaven so that many young people will generously respond to the call to serve the Church as priests, religious and missionaries.

The price of the 48-page book is \$3.95/ea + S&H. To order visit [ReligiousLifeCatalog.com](http://ReligiousLifeCatalog.com) or call 847-573-8975.

## Boston Regional Meeting -Save the Date!



The 2021 Boston Regional Meeting will take place on November 13, 2021, at the historic Basilica of Our Lady of Perpetual Help in Boston, MA. The theme of the meeting is: "Saint Joseph and the Theology of the Body."

Religious, priests, consecrated persons, laity and students are most welcome to attend. Speakers include Sr. Helena Burns, D.S.P., Fr. Andrew Beauregard, F.P.O., and another speaker to be named later.

For more information please visit [ReligiousLife.com](http://ReligiousLife.com).



## 2021 VCI Summer Courses Great Success

*Each year, during the month of July, the INSTITUTE ON RELIGIOUS LIFE conducts the Vita Consecrata Institute at Christendom College, a time of study, prayer and fraternity for religious men and women. This year, 41 students attended Session I while 33 came to Session II. The following is a reflection from Sr. Marie Isabel, S.s.E.W., of the Sister Servants of the Eternal Word, one of the attendees. It captures the spirit and intent of the program so wonderfully. Thank you, Sister!*

Seeking prayer, formation, fraternity, and a little fun, Sr. Mary Anthony, Sr. Benedicta Maria, Sr. Madeline, and I traveled to Front Royal, Virginia for two weeks to attend the INSTITUTE ON RELIGIOUS LIFE's *Vita Consecrata* Institute (VCI) at Christendom College.

What is the VCI? The VCI is a program of graduate level studies centered on the theology of the consecrated life as it is lived in the mission and life of the Church. Religious from all over the country come to participate and develop a greater insight into the consecrated life as "a gift of the Father to His Church through the Holy Spirit" (VC, no.1).



The program's director, Fr. Thomas Nelson, O.PRAEM., laid out the means used to achieve the spiritual goals of the VCI at the opening Mass:



**Common religious observance.** All of the religious participating prayed the Divine Office, a Eucharistic Holy Hour, the Rosary, and the source and summit of the Christian life, the Mass, daily in common. As the saying goes "a family that prays together, stays together." In all of our prayer, with voices lifted in unison and in praise of Our Heavenly Father, we are more deeply connected to one another. We intercede for one another and for the whole world. As religious, we are professional "pray-ers." What a joy to come together in our diversity of backgrounds and communities and live that vocation together!

**Classes, lectures, study, and reading.** Our main reason for attending VCI was for the formation

provided by the classes we took, one on Vatican II and the religious life, the other on the Scriptural foundations of religious life. Father Nelson said that to enlighten the mind with Divine Truth enables us to better choose with the will. With contemplative listening to our lectures and praying with Sacred Scripture, we have the opportunity to integrate the interior life with our studies. We grow in love as well as knowledge.





I certainly found this to be true. Learning the history, progression, and effects of Vatican II, especially on religious life, increased my awareness and awe of the Holy



Spirit's ever-present guiding of the Church. Fr. Gregory Dick, O.PRAEM.'s class on the Scriptural foundations of religious life was essentially a class-long *lectio divina*. My heart was inflamed with love for Our Lord, His Church, and, most gratefully, the vocation He has called me to.

**Fraternal life together.** How beautiful and varied the Holy Spirit's inspiration and call! It brings to mind the words of Saint Paul: "Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of

working, but it is the same God who inspires them all in everyone" (1 Cor 12:4-6). Together, we had music, basketball games, ice cream (a personal favorite), kayaking, a trip to Washington, D.C., and a talent show to top it all off.

It was so much fun meeting and living with the other religious attending the VCI. I learned a lot from the experiences and stories of the other communities and was inspired by the vocation stories, trials, and triumphs shared. It was a vivid presentation of the Body of Christ in its richness. I am so happy to be a Sister Servant but I am also so glad that other religious are who they are and live their own unique charisms. I also love meeting other people who love Jesus, for I love Him so dearly and meeting all of His friends warms my heart immensely. I want everyone to know Him and

meeting others who feel the same always makes me so excited! How great a Savior we have! And He called us all.

All in all, I look back at VCI as a wonderful time with memories to spare, love to share, and a Lord to thank for the opportunity!





# Carmel of St. Teresa Discalced Carmelite Nuns Alhambra, California

*"God Alone Suffices"*



St. Teresa of Avila made prayer the foundation of the life of her daughters and their primary activity. For this reason, the Church asks all Teresian monasteries to enter into the mystery of contemplative prayer and to offer an exemplary witness to it among God's People. The Carmelite Nun imitates the life of Christ contemplating on the mountain. She thereby gives witness in the Church to a life of unceasing prayer.

The Discalced Carmelite Nuns of Alhambra, California, continue this rich spiritual tradition. Their day is made up of personal and liturgical prayer. Saint Teresa longed to contribute to the building up of the Body of Christ. She felt that the best way to do this was by prayer and living according to the Gospel. Prayer and immolation would be the nun's service to the Church. United with Christ, members offer themselves and their prayers for the People of God mindful that "God alone suffices."

In accordance with a concept nurtured by Saint Teresa herself, each Carmel is limited to 21 members. At the present, there are 12 professed members at the Carmel of St. Teresa. They live together in a lifestyle which is that of a small family and help one another toward sanctity. It is a life where joys and sorrows are shared, and the members are committed to



one another as sisters for their entire lives. Their love for one another is in imitation of Christ, who gave His life for us all. This mutual love is a proof of the authenticity of their life of prayer.

The vocation of the Discalced Carmelite nun is a gift from God. Each member was brought here by Our Lord for the same purpose of belonging to Him in a contemplative life of prayer. Yet each one's call is personally unique.

The sisters go through a stage of initial formation which lasts for about nine years: one year of aspirancy, one year of postulancy, two years of novitiate, after which the novice makes

simple vows for three years and then renews vows for two more years before making solemn vows.

Formation, nevertheless, does not stop there; it is ongoing as their relationship with Christ is developed and deepened through silence, solitude, prayer and the support of the community. Their lives are a daily saying "yes" to God; and their prayer time makes them sensitive to the voice of God within.

The lifestyle of a cloistered Carmelite nun is almost as it was for St. Teresa of Avila: prayer, silence, penance, and sacrifice. A typical day begins at 5:30 A.M. and ends at 10:00 P.M. It is filled with various forms of



prayer: Mass, personal prayer, spiritual reading and the Divine Office. Manual labor, an external expression of the life of prayer and an expression of poverty, occupies half of their day. The packaging of hosts for distribution to parishes throughout the area is the community's main work; however, they attend to as much of the general maintenance of the Carmel as is possible: cooking, sewing, cleaning, taking care of nuns who are ill. Gardening, painting, and minor repair work is also done, when possible

There are two one-hour recreation periods during which the sisters talk, laugh, and enjoy sharing the daily events of their lives. They also read, knit, crochet, do needle point, embroider, sew and other quiet pastimes.✚



*For more information contact:*

Carmel of St. Teresa  
215 East Alhambra Road  
Alhambra, CA 91801  
626-282-2387  
[vocations@carmelteresa.org](mailto:vocations@carmelteresa.org)  
[CarmelTeresa.org](http://CarmelTeresa.org)

*In the Spirit of the Founders. . .*

## An Overflow of Love

**T**he Order of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Mount Carmel was established on Mount Carmel in the Holy Land in the 13th century, "near the spring of Elijah." The Order is both contemplative and apostolic.

The first Carmelites were hermits living on the slopes of Mount Carmel. The contemplative aspect is the essence of the Order and the apostolic ideal flows from it as an overflow of love of God into love of neighbor.

In the 16th century, St. Teresa of Avila initiated a reform of the Order and from Spain it spread throughout the world.

The Carmel of St. Teresa in Alhambra was established in 1913. Five nuns from the monastery in St. Louis, Missouri, came to Los Angeles to begin the Carmelite life in Southern California. The sisters lived in rented houses in Los Angeles for ten years until the present monastery could be built in Alhambra.

The site in Alhambra was chosen because of its beauty. The area



was just beginning to be developed and had originally been an orange grove. There was an unrestricted view of the San Gabriel mountains to the east with snow-capped ranges just beyond—a very lovely sight.

The monastery and chapel are constructed of red brick with a tile roof, this type of architecture having been chosen as it was more in keeping with both the history of the Order and of California.

In this contemplative life, members answer the divine call to



follow Christ in a life of consecrated chastity, poverty, and obedience. Like the many Carmelite saints who preceded them, they surrender themselves, heart and soul to God whom they love above all else and are totally consecrated to Him.



BY REV JOHN A. HARDON, S.J.

SERVANT OF GOD/IRL FOUNDER (1914–2000)



## The Holy Angels & the Works of Mercy

**W**hat do the angels have to do with the corporal and spiritual works of mercy?

The answer is, everything!

The seven corporal works of mercy are: to feed the hungry, to give drink to the thirsty, to clothe the naked, to shelter the homeless, to visit the sick, to visit those in prison, and to bury the dead.

These works of mercy are the seven conditions on which Christ prophesied our salvation would depend. It is not coincidental that, on the last day He will tell those who are lost, "Depart from me, accursed ones, into the everlasting fire which was prepared for the devil and his angels" (Mt 25:41).

Why will human beings be lost? Because during their life on earth they had allowed themselves to be seduced by the devil into selfishness and failed to practice the works of mercy.

The good angels are especially chosen by God to protect us from the self-idolatry which ignores the needs of others and thus paves the way for the eternal loss of a heavenly destiny.

The good angels protect us from the selfishness of the devil, so we might practice the corporal works of mercy. But the good angels also inspire us to practice the spiritual works of mercy. They are: converting the sinner, instructing the ignorant, counseling the doubtful,

comforting the sorrowful, bearing wrongs patiently, forgiving injuries, and praying for the living and the dead.

As twenty centuries of Christianity tell us, our salvation also depends on our practice of the spiritual works



of mercy. If anything, the devil is more anxious to prevent us from practicing the spiritual than the corporal works of mercy. We need the help of the good angels to protect us from the devil's instigation on both levels.

I once spent a week in Haiti, giving instructions to the Missionaries of Charity. While there, I visited one of the five homes for the dying conducted by the Sisters. I administered more infant baptisms, more

anointings of the dying, and gave more absolutions in a few hours than I had given in the past five years. Here is a nation dreadfully in need of the corporal and spiritual works of mercy, and there are so few dedicated Catholics available to meet what I

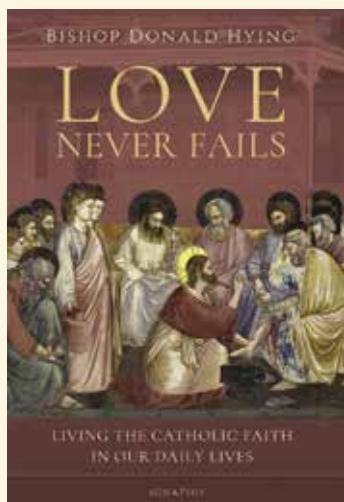
can only call superhuman needs, in a subhuman society, literally dying for lack of Christian charity. Do not tell me this is not the work of the evil spirit. Do not tell me that we do not need to promote the angelic apostolate among the faithful.

Devotion to the angels includes the apostolate to the angels. This should be taken literally. Of course, we must first develop our own deep veneration for the angels and frequent prayer to the angels. But we dare not stop there. We are to do everything in our power to inspire others to follow our example.

The apostolate to the angels, I sincerely believe, is one of the most gravely needed in contemporary Christianity.

The angels are sent by God to us. We in turn are being sent by the angels to others to bring to everyone whose life we touch a deeper veneration of the angels, a more fervent prayer to the angels, and a more zealous dependence on the angels to protect a world that is immersed in self-adoration to the rejection of the most elemental laws of God. ☪

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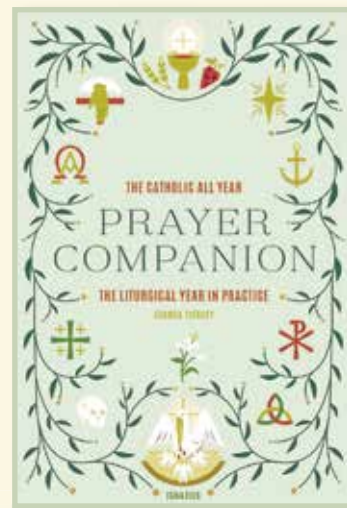
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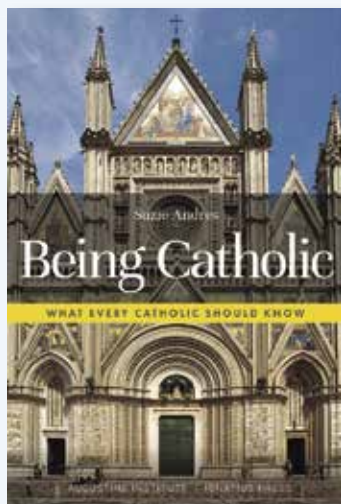
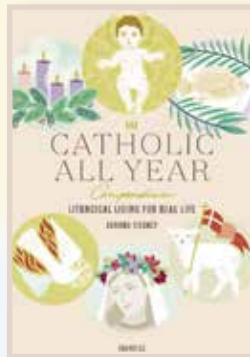
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