



Adsum

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LETTER FROM THE RECTOR

Dear Friends and Benefactors,

Among the many shining examples to inspire our Catholic youth, St. Maria Goretti in particular stands out for our admiration and imitation. At the tender age of 11, she chose martyrdom rather than to sin against holy purity. Born at Coronado, Italy, in 1890, Maria lost her father at the age of nine; this left her mother and siblings to manage the family farm on their own. With the need for extra manual help her mother hired a farm laborer and his son Alessandro, aged 20, to tend the farm. During this time, Alessandro waited for the opportunity to find Maria alone in order to lead her into sin. When that occasion presented itself, Maria courageously resisted the temptation. Frustrated and angry, Alessandro then threatened to stab her to death if she would not consent to sin, and Maria chose death rather than offend God. Among Maria's dying words were, "What are you doing, Alessandro? You will go to hell!"

During this month of July, we can recall Our Lady's words at Fatima during her July apparition, in which she showed the children a vision of hell. Our Lady said, "You have seen hell where the souls of poor sinners go. In order to save them, God wishes to have devotion to

my Immaculate Heart established throughout the world." In our own times when we are surrounded by all manners of occasions of sin, let us have recourse to the Immaculate Heart of Mary as our safe refuge. Let us also imitate the beautiful example of St. Maria Goretti, who chose death rather than offend God.

This month of July is always the busiest month of the summer. Besides our biannual priests' meeting at the end of the month, we also conduct a girls' and boys' camp. This year's girls' camp has been our largest ever with 115 girls!

Included in this July's newsletter, we have written for a second time on the issue of the Catholic Church's teaching on Baptism of Desire. The reason for this is that occasionally and unfortunately we run across small numbers who reject this teaching of the Catholic Church. These misguided souls tragically place their own personal misinterpretations over the clear and consistent teaching of the Catholic Church both in her solemn decrees and in her ordinary universal magisterium. In an earlier issue of the *Adsum* (March 2017) and also in this issue we present what the Catholic Church has always taught on this matter.

With our prayers and blessing,

Most Rev. Mark A. Pivarunas, CMRI



Our annual priests' retreat concluded on the feast of Corpus Christi with a Solemn High Mass and Procession of the Blessed Sacrament

When we consider the teachings of the Catholic Church over the course of nearly 20 centuries, we must admire the wonderful consistency and harmony of the magisterium (teaching authority) established by Jesus Christ. And this could not be otherwise when we reflect on the words of Our Divine Saviour to His Apostles: “He who hears you hears Me.” (Luke 10:16); “Go teach all nations... all things whatsoever I have commanded you... I am with you all days even unto the consummation of the world.” (Matt. 28:19); and “Whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven.” (Matt. 16:18). How beautifully Pope Leo XIII expressed this in his encyclical *Satis Cognitum*: “If it (the living magisterium) could in any way be false, an evident contradiction follows, for then God Himself would be the author of error.”

This is especially true in the Catholic Church’s teaching on Baptism of Desire. When we carefully look at the teachings of the Popes, the Council of Trent, the Fathers and Doctors of the Church and the consistent and universal teachings of Catholic theologians we find marvelous harmony.

To begin with, the Council of Trent taught the necessity of the Sacraments for salvation and used the words “without them or without the desire of them” in the chapter on the Sacraments in general (Denzinger 847). Furthermore, the same Council, in its chapter on justification defined it as the translation from the state of original sin to the state of grace and that this cannot be accomplished “without the laver of regeneration or the desire for it.” A further parallel is found in the Council’s teaching on perfect contrition which reconciles man to God before the Sacrament of Penance is actually received. “This reconciliation, nevertheless, must not be ascribed to the contrition itself without the desire of the Sacrament which is included in it.” (Denzinger 898)

At the Council of Trent itself it was determined that a catechism be issued to supply parish priests with an official book of instructions for the faithful, known as *The Catechism of the Council of Trent*. This catechism, in the section on Baptism, taught the absolute necessity of the baptism of infants as soon as possible, for that is their only way of attaining to eternal salvation; however, this same urgency is not required of adults to be baptized. Adults are to be instructed in the truths of the Faith over a period of time, and if they die before

baptism, the catechism teaches that their desire for the Sacrament of Baptism can avail them to grace and righteousness.

Now when we study the 1917 Code of Canon Law, compiled under the authority of Pope St. Pius X and promulgated by Pope Benedict XV, we find reference to the Council of Trent teaching on Baptism of Desire. Canon 737 states that Baptism is “necessary for salvation in fact or at least in desire.” (*The Sacred Canons*—Abbo/Hannon, vol. 1 p. 744) The footnote in the Latin text of the Code of Canon Law for Canon 737 directly refers to the Council of Trent’s chapters on the Sacraments in general and justification as the source of this Canon. Furthermore, in regard to Catholic burial, Canon 1239 declares that “Catechumens who, through no fault of their own, die without baptism are to be treated as baptized.” Although the 1917 Code was promulgated for the Latin Rite of the Catholic Church, it is clear that those Canons which pertain to Divine Law bind both the Latin and Eastern Rites. Canonists state that where the 1917 Code reiterates Divine Law, it pertains to all Catholics and they explicitly give Canon 737 on Baptism as an example (*The Sacred Canons*—Abbo/Hannon, vol 1 p.5).

Numerous references of Papal teaching on this matter of Baptism of Desire can be cited. Pope St. Pius V condemned the errors of Michael du Bay where he denied that perfect contrition can be in catechumens and penitents without the remission of sins (Denzinger 1031). Pope Pius XI approved of the latest edition of the *Rituale Romanum*, which contains the ceremonies for the Sacraments, Blessings and Consecrations. In the general instructions given before the rite of Baptism, it states the necessity of Baptism for salvation “in act or at least in desire.”

Pope Pius XII, on July 28, 1949, approved the instructions of the Holy Office, which dealt with the Catholic Church’s teaching on Baptism of Desire (*Canon Law Digest*—Bouscaren/O’Connor, vol. III p. 525). The Holy Office explicitly referred to the Council of Trent and also to the encyclical of Pope Pius XII, *Mystici Corporis*, to insist on Baptism of Desire as a clear teaching of the Catholic Church.

The Doctors of the Church—St. Ambrose, St. Augustine, St. Thomas Aquinas, St. Alphonsus Liguori, St. Robert Bellarmine—all taught that men can be

saved by Baptism of Desire if through no fault of their own they die without baptism. Baptism of Desire has been the universal and consistent teaching of Catholic theologians through the centuries. On this point it is most pertinent to consider Pope Pius IX's address to Archbishop Scherr of Munich; the Pope clearly stated that the obligation of faith for Catholics extends "to those things which, through the ordinary teaching of the whole Church throughout the world, are proposed as divinely revealed and, as a result, by universal and constant consent of Catholic theologians are held to be matters of faith." (*The Church Teaches*—Clarkson/Edwards/Kelly/Welch, p. 83)

One year later, this same Pope, in his *Syllabus of Error* (Denzinger 1722) condemned those who had denied this obligation. Lastly, Vatican Council I, in 1870, solemnly taught: "By divine and Catholic faith everything must be believed that is contained in the written word of God or in tradition, and that is proposed by the church as a divinely revealed object of belief either in a solemn decree **or in her ordinary, universal teaching.**" (Denzinger 1792)

Baptism of Desire has been consistently and unanimously taught by bishops and theologians for many centuries. This teaching is contained in the ordinary universal teachings of the Catholic Church. In *Fundamentals of Catholic Dogma*, by Dr. Ludwig Ott, we find: "The Bishops exercise their infallible teaching power in an ordinary manner when they, in their dioceses, in moral unity with the Pope, unanimously promulgate the same teachings on Faith and Morals. The Vatican Council expressly declared that also the truths of Revelation proposed by the ordinary and general teaching office of the Church are to be firmly held with Divine and Catholic Faith (Denzinger 1792). But the incumbents of the ordinary and general teaching office of the Church are the members of the whole episcopate scattered over the whole earth. The agreement of the Bishops in doctrine may be determined from the catechisms issued by them, from their pastoral letters, from the prayer books approved by them, and from the resolutions of Particular Synods. A morally general agreement suffices, but in this the express or tacit assent of the Pope, as the supreme head of the Episcopate, is essential."

The Origin of St. Anthony Guide S.A.G.

The custom of invoking St. Anthony's protection in regard to mail is based on a tradition which dates back to 1729.

It is related that a certain merchant left Spain for Peru. Although his wife wrote several letters to him she never received a reply, which greatly worried her. Finally she invoked St. Anthony's aid. Filled with childlike confidence she went to the Franciscan Church in Oviedo where she placed a letter in the hands of a statue of St. Anthony begging him to deliver it to her husband. Later she returned to the church and to her great joy found, in place of her letter, a reply from her husband, together with several gold pieces.

The letter, which may still be seen at Oviedo, is dated Lima, July 23, 1729, and states that the wife's letter was delivered by a Franciscan Father.

From this grew the laudable custom of writing S.A.G. on letters and of sealing mail with St. Anthony Guide stamps.



Father Connell Answers Moral Questions

by Very Rev. Francis J. Connell, C.S.S.R., S.T.D., LL.D., L.H.D.

SHARING OUR GOOD WORKS, ESPECIALLY HOLY COMMUNION, WITH OTHERS

Question: To what extent can we communicate to others the benefit of our good works? How is this realized in the offering of Holy Communion for another person?

Answer: Every good work we perform can possess three types of supernatural value—merit, satisfaction, and impetration. Merit is that phase of a good work performed by one in the state of sanctifying grace which wins for the agent an increase of grace and the title to an increase of glory in heaven. This cannot be transferred to another, because it is based on the increase of God's favor toward the person who performed the good work. The only one whose merits can benefit others is Jesus Christ, who, as moral Head of all mankind, acquired infinite merit for the members of the human race. We are speaking of merit *de condigno* (a reward due to justice), for it is held that *de congruo* (a reward granted out of benevolence)—which is merit in a wide sense, akin to impetration—one may merit for another. The satisfactory element of a good work, its value to pay the debt of temporal punishment, can be transferred to another human being, living or dead, as long as he is in the state of grace. This teaching is based on the doctrine of the communion of saints, according to which one member may pay the debt of temporal punishment for another. It is the basic reason for the treasury of the Church, the font of indulgences, in as far as it contains the superabundant satisfactions of the saints. The impetratory value of a good work, its worth as a prayer of petition, can also benefit others, since we can pray for all, both living and dead. However, the infallible efficacy of prayer promised by Our Lord (John 16:23) belongs only to prayer for oneself.

When we say that we offer a Holy Communion for another, we do not mean that we can transfer the sacramental effects of our communion to that person. These effects benefit only the recipient, just as food benefits only the one who eats it. But we can transfer the satisfactory and impetratory values of the prayers said on the occasion of Holy Communion to another. We can also offer for the souls of the faithful departed the indulgences we may gain when we receive the Blessed Eucharist.

EUCCHARISTIC FAST

Question: A priest has suffered a coronary thrombosis, but is again able to perform his sacred duties. He is assigned to say the 8 and the 10 o'clock Masses on Sunday. In view of his previous ailment may he take liquid nourishment up to the beginning of the first Mass?

Answer: It is a reasonable interpretation of the Apostolic Constitution *Christus Dominus* to hold that one who fears that he may be afflicted with sickness unless he takes some liquid nourishment or medicine before the celebration of Mass or the reception of Holy Communion is entitled to this privilege. Thus, Father John Ford, SJ, in his excellent commentary on the Constitution of 1953, says: "A person who is not sick at the moment but who foresees that he will be sick and will suffer grave inconvenience unless he takes medicine or liquid is entitled to the dispensation and may take the nourishment or medicine in order to forestall the sickness."

Certainly, a priest in the circumstances described by the questioner has reason to fear a recurrence of the ailment he has previously experienced, and hence is entitled to medicine or liquid nourishment before either of the two Masses or both. Such medicine or liquid may be taken even immediately before the Masses.

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