



Boston Catholic Journal



NIHIL NISI JESUM

DEDICATED TO MARY, MOTHER OF GOD

www.boston-catholic-journal.com
editor@boston-catholic-journal.com

Personal Sanctity ...

all that is left in a World without God



“I pray not for the world, but for them whom Thou hast given Me” (St. John 17:9)

The corruption — on every conceivable level — *of the world and in the world* (and most pernicious of all, *within the Church Herself: her cardinals, her bishops, her priests, her Feminist sisters and “nuns” ... dare we say, even her present papacy!*) — and especially in the West (often, and accurately, referred to as the “Post-Christian world”) — is nothing less than staggering. In the last 50 years (*unquestionably* since the confluence of that socio-theological miasma called Vatican II) we have encountered unprecedented levels of what can only be called malignant decadence — spiritual, moral, and social. It takes ones breath away.

WE HAVE LOST GOD

More accurately, we have *abandoned* God in favor of ourselves — and as a consequence we have lost not only ourselves, but our very *identity*, often painfully acquired over the last 2000 years. We no longer recognize *who* we are and *what* we are.

“Progress” and “the perverse” have become synonymous.

We have become — for all the wrong reasons — self-loathing: detesting ourselves and the patrimony of a Catholic culture through which our very identity both as individuals and nations had been articulated.

Many hate the Church and a significant element *within the Church* hates the Church, remaining within Her as a cancer in its host. Western Christian culture is repudiated, ridiculed, and contemned as anachronistic, imperialistic, homophobic, racist, and misogynistic.

Repudiating the true God as inimical to our passions and perversions, we have made our own gods, and they are many — in fact, as many as we are ourselves. Women are taught — indoctrinated really — to hate men and everything they deem “patriarchal”.

Everything that pertains to our loins, or more accurately, the loins of others — especially of the same gender — has supplanted, displaced, and superseded the numinous, anything authentically divine, and most especially, the holy. The very terms have been relegated to the periphery of polite discourse, when not entirely expurgated from it.

The world has fled God into the illusion of a utopian garden that is a desiccated desert. It is populated by fictions and the rim of the horizon of our desires is the pretension that there is an end called *satisfaction* instead of an endlessly recursive vanishing point.

We find few paradigms of holiness in this City of Man — sadly, not even among many of our priests, and, more tragically still, even fewer among our bishops. To what, then, shall we strive to attain in this increasingly lonely place we call life without Christ? What vision are we presented, and to what end are we called?

Mother Teresa, in an interview some years ago, explained the obvious. Rational persuasion, logical coherence, even the most impassioned homily will not bring a person to conversion, to Christ, and therefore to the Church. One thing only is capable of this monumental task: *example*; the example of holiness that we encounter in others that becomes the impetus to emulation: we want to be like them. And they are like Christ.

We are sadly lacking in *example* as Catholics. How often do we feel compelled to say to ourselves, “I want to be like her, like him!” when we observe an act, some instance, of holiness that overwhelms us in its simplicity? What examples, what paradigms, do we confront in our lives in Christ that compel us to holiness? We must not confuse the *exemplary* with the *popular*, nor must we confuse it with carefully orchestrated events intended to inspire us. The exemplary is unrehearsed and has no concomitant agendum that is concealed within it. ***It is utterly spontaneous!*** ... and therefore, we sense, utterly genuine.

The Leaven of the World

What historical figures in our lives as Catholics attain to this extraordinary state of *the exemplary* that motivates men and women to imitation? To what are we exposed that motivates us not to the common and ordinary, but to the uncommon and exemplary? What do we see before us that calls us beyond ourselves and beyond the gray and geometric sterility of the world to what lies beyond it?

In a word, where is the *differentiation* between the Church and the world, the common and the extraordinary, the profane and the sacred? Let us be truthful and acknowledge the obvious: the world has permeated the Church to such an extent that we can no longer coherently differentiate the two except upon the most tenuous of distinctions. Increasingly the agenda of the Church *is* the agenda of the

world. This is not the leaven Christ spoke of. It is the leaven of the world; the leaven of infinitely deep and unimaginably hostile places that we pretend do not exist.

Personal Sanctity

First, let us understand this with complete clarity: we **cannot** attain to sanctity apart from the Church and Her Sacraments. We cannot become holy schismatics, that is to say, apart from the Church which **is** the Body of Christ. However sterile we have found it since the spurious and self-promoting euphoria of Vatican II ... however trampled the Vineyard and however littered with discarded and never-to-be-revised Roman Missals, Religious habits, Chapel Veils, Priestly collars, Roman Cassocks, kneelers ... even the centrality of the Eucharistic Presence of Christ, and an understanding of the Mass as **a Sacrifice**; however grotesquely crippled and contorted the buildings we call our “Churches” have become — more redolent of civic auditoriums than Sanctuaries, there ... **there** ... abides the Living God, hidden in Tabernacles we often do not see and only find with much difficulty. **He is there!** However much we shunt Him aside as both an ecumenical and chronological embarrassment, all the litter of what has been discarded cannot conceal Him from us. He beckons us, and even under the most humiliating circumstances, we can look upon Him Who ever looks upon us.

Apart from the *Church*, the *Most Blessed Sacrament of the Altar*, and the *Most Holy Sacrifice of the Mass* ... we can do nothing, become nothing, worthy of the Most Precious Blood poured out for us upon that Altar. **To be holy we must be part of the Church** for the Church, as we have said, is the Body of Christ, and He Who is the Head of the Body is God Himself. Christ Jesus. **God Alone is Holy** — and it is He Who participates His holiness to us that we may be, in the most clear way possible, what we were created to be; what we **essentially** are, despite the filth of sin that covers it, obscures it, and defaces it: the *imago Dei*, the image of God Himself!

In this wasteland barren of spires and empty of cloisters, ugly, squat, geometric and concrete, Bauhaus pretensions emerged from the rubble of “clustered” demolished churches (Churches without anyone left to worship in them — one of the many “successes” of Vatican II). They are no longer grand structures striving to equal the soaring Faith of men and women in heights contiguous to Heaven itself ... but stooped, square, economical structures that could as well be mortuaries (or athletic facilities, commercial structures, municipal offices —

“functional” things that could, in an instant, reflexively duplicate any of the above in need.

“Faith Communities”

Indeed, we no longer have “churches” as such — but in some paroxysm of needless novelty we now have “*Faith Communities*” — only parenthetically “Catholic” lest they offend broad ecumenical sensitivities, for are there not *other* “Faith Communities” distinct from, if often antithetical, even inimical, to the Catholic Faith? By a “Church” we immediately understand something quite different from a “Mosque”, a “Synagogue”, a “Temple”, or a “Kingdom Hall”. Understood as a “Faith Community”, a Catholic Church is no different from any of these. In an age of unbridled ecumenism are *they* any less “Faith Communities” than our own, we implicitly, even necessarily ask, not just minimizing but marginalizing the unique mission and commission of the Church established by Christ upon Saint Peter? If they were established by Muhammed, or Lao Tzu, or Martin Luther, are not such “Faith Communities” equally acceptable to God in the sweeping logic of ecumenism? If indeed they are, then the crucifixion of Christ on the Cross is emptied of all value and meaning. He died for no reason if every “Faith Community” is the way to salvation. His death was not necessary in the economy of salvation: hence He died needlessly ... even gratuitously. This, of course, is a scandal to the very Gospel He Himself proclaimed. “**I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No man cometh to the Father, but by Me.**”¹²

But in the malformed logic of ecumenism, even if other “Faith Communities” despise the Triune God of Catholics and hold to other gods, are they not *equal* expressions of man’s faith and legitimate venues of salvation? In the “correct” atmosphere of post-Vatican II theology, would we dare to assert that they are not? “**All roads lead to Rome**” ... **that lead away from Rome** — and every paradigm of the holy, however contradictory, is deemed legitimate and authentic, and the end of each is the same: Heaven and salvation. Saint, heretic, infidel and atheist alike go to God. The Catholic Church has no corner on salvation. She is now simply one among many, and Christ erred in proclaiming Himself, “**the way, and the truth, and the life**”, and deceived us in insisting that, “**No man cometh to the Father, but by Me.**”

We are so damnably democratic ... We must “spread our tent pegs”, we are told, to be inclusive of all — even if God is not. The strange thing, however, about “spreading our tent pegs” is that the wider, the more inclusive, the more “horizontal”, they become, the lower the apex of the tent. We achieve the horizontal at the expense of the vertical. We sacrifice the magnificent height to accommodate the factious width. Ask any camper. Even happy ones. Eventually the fabric rips and the structure collapses. Most often in the rain. And in great ruin. The “stitching” did not, could not, hold this multiplicity of opposing forces however benevolent or brainless our intentions.

Accompanying this ecumenical impulse was, necessarily, theological ambiguity. How, otherwise, hope to bring hoped-for consensus out of conflicting doctrines? It is this ambiguity that afflicts pulpit and podium alike in nominally Catholic institutions. In matters of Faith, morals, and doctrine, it is rather like equivocating on geometric postulates or axioms; or in mathematics holding in abeyance quantitative relationships that are otherwise held to necessarily obtain between integers. Much like Dostoyevsky we reach a point where we declare,

“To me that $2+2=4$ is sheer insolence. I admit that twice two makes four is an excellent thing, but if we are to give everything its due, twice two makes five is sometimes a very charming thing too.” (*Notes from Underground*)

This is largely the state of Catholic theology, and, *eo ipso*, Catholic homiletics. We are no longer — I repeat: ***no longer*** (for once, and for a very long time we were ... prior to Vatican II) — certain of just what Holy Mother the Church teaches, given this priest or that theologian and whether it was Wednesday or Thursday. “Officially” She teaches “this”, but depending on the audience She — or better yet, and to be fair, Her *spokesman* in the person of a priest, nun, sister, bishop, pope, or theologian — proposes, or at least appears to suggest the contrary — or openly rebels against it! For the average Catholic layman or laywoman, they: the bishop, the priest, the Religious, are the consecrated symbols of utter fidelity to the Church, and for that reason it is a scandalous state of affairs.

How then do we live our lives as Catholics — not *post-Catholics* in a *post-Christian* world

How do we live our Catholic lives as they had been fervently lived for 2000 years prior to the insipid, diffident, confused and eclectic — and at times even implicitly pantheistic — impulses and subsequent teachings that emerged from Vatican II, an unnecessary Council which effectively and efficiently tore down the edifice of Catholicism as distinct, distinguishable, and unique? *As a way of life?* In other words, lacking visible paradigms of sanctity, how do we go about living lives of holiness amid the detritus of so much we once considered sacred and that now litters the ecclesiastical landscape of the *Modern Church* or the *American Church* or the *European Church* — all of which are conflatable into one ecclesiastical body that appears to articulate itself as *distinct from the Roman Catholic Church*? In practical terms it is an increasingly *autonomous* body. We see this most strikingly today in Germany.

Shall we go more frequently to Mass?

This is an obvious paradigm from another and past generation. It *once* was true, but if we are remorselessly candid, it is no longer so. How often do we go to Mass and leave no more enlightened or fervid than when we had entered? Much of what was distinctively and historically Catholic is no longer there. “*God loves you. The weather is great. You are all going to Heaven (and your dog, too). Be nice. Shalom. Go in peace.*” If we are honest we cannot leave fast enough.

How about the *Sacrament of Penance* — *Confession* —

... now called the *Rite of Reconciliation* practiced face to face in a room with well-appointed and comfortable chairs strangely reminiscent of a psychotherapist’s office? The bulletin indicates that it is only available 45 minutes *per week* or “by appointment” ... as with a “therapist”. Frankly, this is not much of an option, especially since the evisceration of the concept of Mortal Sin (a term no longer in use because no longer applicable) and the paucity of “real” sinners like you and me.

What about a Spiritual Director?

Good luck finding one at all, let alone one who *knows* and will give you *the mind of the Church* — rather than currently prevailing spiritual trends. Once again, we effectively encounter, “God loves you. The weather is great. You *are* going to

Heaven (and your dog, too). Be nice. *Shalom*. Go in peace.”

Perhaps we Should Go to Medjugorje to listen to the “Seers” of the “Gospa”?

The “Seers”, beginning June 24, 1981 — youngsters then, adults now, some 34 years later — surely have an answer somewhere in the *thousands* of appearances of the “Gospa” (Mary).¹ Make expensive travel arrangements through them to visit Medjugore (including hotels, meals, and even meeting with one of the “Seers” themselves) and watch your rosary turn into gold! You will hear much of the pronouncements of Vatican II validated by the Mother of God Herself, such as:

“Before God all the faiths are identical. God governs them like a king in his kingdom.” All sufferings are equal in hell; and Mirjana quotes the Gospa as telling her that people begin feeling comfortable in hell. ... When the Madonna is asked about the title, “Mediatrix of all graces,” she replies, “I do not dispose of all graces.”²

Perhaps the “Gospa” will reveal the way of holiness to you, although her track record over the past three decades (and *thousands* of “appearances”) has been uniformly dismal in the way of predictions and has led to open schism with the local bishop who insists (with the Church) that the “Gospa” and her six now-not-so-little-confederates are *not authentic* (yes, despite the organized parish visits, **in direct disobedience to the Church**, with your local priest you can make a “pilgrimage” to a site condemned as spurious by Rome.)

What then? What is Left?

Personal Sanctity. Apart from any *organized* approach to holiness though the Mass (and the incredibly bad music that is a perpetual distraction from it), or Confession (barely extant), or sound Spiritual Direction (almost universally absent) there is one venue, and one alone that is open to you in these sterile, confused, contradictory, and tepid times in which the Church appears as clear and distinct as a Microsoft hologram: ***the commitment to personal sanctity guided by the Lives of the Saints***, rather than disaffected theologians. **“You are surrounded by a Cloud of Witnesses”**, we are told³ who have gone before you and have arrived at genuine sanctity, at complete and indissoluble union with God in

Heaven. Let *them* — by their *words* and by their *example* — be our teachers who had taught and guided the Church for two millennia.

Personal Sanctity requires effort. You must come to know the mind of the Church and *authentic* Catholic doctrine and dogma. That is to say, you must be *catechized*. “But I went to CCD!” you protest. “And what did you learn?” I will ask. “Why did God create you?” And you will have no answer. In a word, you learned nothing despite the expensive, glossy textbooks your parents had to pay for, and which were far, far, more pictorial than substantial. They were ... trendy. Empty. Worthless. And even back then, you knew it. Indeed, your CCD or Catechism *teacher* knew as much about the Faith as you did. Catechesis has not been an important agendum to your local bishop; even while it should be the most *preeminent* as that upon which all things subsequent depend.

The Sixth Decade of the Second Millennium: the Decade of Decadence

The **Sixth Decade** (the 1960's) of the **Second Millennium** ushered in the unparalleled destruction of every value inherent in, descriptive of, and intrinsic to Western Civilization — and with a particular vehemence the violent repudiation of the Church and the profanation of all things sacred. Christ became a Flower Child, ascended our altars, assumed the Lotus Position and taught us to worship ourselves through self-gratification. Satiation replaced sacrifice. In place of Holy Scripture and the 10 Commandments, we studied the Kama Sutra and the 64 Positions. It was the decade of decadence, the apotheosis of the self — and we have never recovered from it. It was as if the maw of Hell opened its putrescent mouth and vomited forth every abomination before God, every perversion possible to man. So overwhelming the smoke, that it entered the Sanctuary of the Church itself ... and still lingers, blinds and chokes. In the way of Her sacred teachings, to use JRR Tolkien's words from the *Lord of the Ring*,

“some things that should not have been forgotten were lost. History became legend. Legend became myth.”

In many, many ways the Church lost the authenticity of its evangel as it clamored for relevancy in an opiated, lost, and dystopian world. We see it in contemporary theological writings, *nominally* Catholic literature, and tepid teachings that lack

the clarity, conviction, and passion of a Church absolutely clear in its mission and resolute in its tenacity. Such unambiguous literature is now rarely found, and such utter conviction is rarely encountered in the post-Conciliar Church, and most painfully, in the present papacy of Francis.

What are we to do? Very clearly, the following:

Immerse yourself in *authentic* Catholic doctrine — and assiduously avoid anything, even with (or without) an *Imprimatur* and/or *Nihil Obstat* that post-dates 1950. The *Imprimatur* and/or *Nihil Obstat* are no longer any guarantee that what you read is consistent with the mind and historical teachings of the Church. Once they were legitimate stamps of approval as consistent with the Magisterium of the Church, but they have long ceased to be so. Open the first few pages of any ostensibly Catholic book and look for the date of the first printing. This will tell you much in the way of their authenticity and reliability as instruments appropriate for the formation of a *Catholic Conscience*. If it has been printed following 1950, politely put it down despite the rave reviews of any nominally Catholic source, to say nothing of any secular review.

In a famous line from the movie “*The Exorcist*” (based on fact) by William Peter Blatty, the elderly Father Merrin warns the much younger Father Karras who is suffering a crisis of Faith that, “*He is a liar, the demon is a liar. He will lie to confuse us. But he will also mix lies with the truth to attack us. The attack is psychological, Damien. And powerful. So don't listen, remember that, do not listen.*”

By and large, Catholic literature dealing with matters of Faith, Morals, Doctrine, and Dogma — either as pamphlets or scholarly tomes had, prior to 1950, been carefully vetted by competent Catholic theologians, priests, or bishops. They are credible sources and remain so, although many have fallen out of print — not from desuetude but as inconsistent with present and “popular” Catholic thought, often percolated through Rogerian psychology.

The famous library at Alexandria⁴ in classical antiquity was burned by the Muslims in 642 in an effort to destroy any book incompatible with the Quran.” Modern” Catholic theology and literature has engaged in a similar enterprise. Many of the greatest books in Catholic literature are now only available on-line or through small publishing houses committed to preserving genuine Catholic teaching.

Apart from this treasury of 2000 years of Catholic teaching we are left with incomplete, contradictory, and confusing doctrines, not of the Church, but of dissident and disaffected theologians, priests, and would-be “priestesses” who, in today's “inclusive” seminaries are the instructors of what few candidates to the priesthood we have left following their decimation by homosexual clerics.

Richard McBrien, Daniel Maguire, Hans Kung, and Teilhard de Chardin — all voluble and nominally Catholic writers — two were collarless priests — are among the most eminent examples of this theological dissidence, confusion, fiction, and heresy. In their writings we are presented with a mixture of some truth (to entice us) and many lies (to confuse us) reminiscent of the stratagems of the demon in Blatty's, *The Exorcist*. Where is a Catholic to go to re-acquire an authentic Catholic identity consistent with the Church and the Saints for 2000 years?

Grayscale Memories

Many of us have them. We cleave to them as to invaluable possessions, for they introduced us to an awareness of the *holy* and of places other than Earth; to a belief in things more profound than venal democratic institutions and more enduring than perverse social issues. They opened the vista to things eternal and resplendent in glory, to things holy that the world could not possibly sully and debase because of the ontological distance that separated them, a distance as great as sanctity from sin. They are in carefully kept albums from a time of innocence, and inscribed in the Family Bible placed beside a statue of Mary the Mother of God. They are indelibly impressed in our memories; our First Holy Communions, May Processions, the Baptisms of our children, and on the memorial cards of those we love and who now live, please God, in a place called Paradise, forever beyond this jaded Earth.

So How do We Get Back?

A soul at a time, beginning with our own.

Let us look at a few fundamental concepts with which we ought to familiarize ourselves if we are committed to persevere to Personal Sanctity. Once we have acquired these we have the tools through which to articulate our own lives,

whatever our vocation in life, to accord with the mind of Christ and the mind of the Church in matters dealing with the Faith, the Faith that has been faithfully transmitted to us through the Deposit of Faith, for what we are striving toward is nothing less than *Exemplary Holiness* which itself is nothing more than *Personal Sanctity*.

- **Devotion to Jesus Christ in the Most Blessed Sacrament of the Altar.**

We recognize that HE is there, REALLY and TRULY, in His Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity. This the character of exemplary Catholicism: the recognition of God Himself in the Second Person of the Most Holy Trinity really and truly present to us in the Tabernacle. Without His Presence, without Him, the building we call a Church is nothing but a meaningless and empty edifice. *He is there!* And He awaits you. Anytime of the day or night. For the most part He is left alone and unrecognized. We do not kneel before Him, but have the hubris to stand as before an equal! Is that how you will approach Him in the Last Judgment? We do not have the humility to genuflect when we pass before Him, acknowledging Him ... and yet we would not dare pass a mere man we know without greeting him with some gesture of recognition ...

- **Frequent, but *Discerning* Reception of Holy Communion:**

You are familiar with the spectacle of *everyone* going to Holy Communion as though there were no sinners in the pews. This indiscriminate partaking of the *Bread of Angels* with no *Examination of Conscience* prior to approaching Christ in Holy Communion is itself a Mortal Sin if one is aware of an unconfessed Mortal sin that has not been absolved in the Tribunal of Penance (Holy Confession). In the state of Mortal Sin and not sufficiently cognizant of the true and real Presence of Christ in the sacred species of Holy Communion, it is an act of blasphemy and therefore the death of the soul *in conspectu Dei* (in the sight of God), for Saint Paul is very clear: “**For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh judgment to himself, not discerning the body of the Lord.**”⁵ Most often, apart from ignorance, the source of this sin is the Capital Sin of Pride which refuses to constrain us to *conspicuously* remain in the pews in recognition of our unworthiness, through Mortal Sin, to receive Holy Communion — when everyone else is. Even if Pope Francis in his *Joy of Love (Amoris Laetitia)*

deems it acceptable in second, third, or fourth ... “unions” ... of those “living in God’s grace”, adultery notwithstanding.

- **Recognition of the real Distinction between Venial Sins and Mortal Sins:**

This is not the venue of a discussion of the distinction between Mortal and Venial Sin. Suffice it to say that a *Mortal Sin* must contain *all three* of the following: (1) the matter of the sin must be serious, (2) one *wills* to commit the sin, and (3) one *commits* the Mortal Sin. A Venial Sin is not serious in nature, is committed without a full understanding of the detrimental nature of the sin, and/or is not committed with the total consent of the will. Venial sins do not preclude participation in Holy Communion. Mortal Sins do.

- **Devotion to Mary:**

One preeminent hallmark of Catholic piety is the love of Mary, Mother of God. Devotion to Mary is the *sine qua non* of the fully lived Catholic life. Her place in the economy of salvation is absolutely singular: she alone gave flesh (her flesh) to the Word Incarnate. Hence “every generation shall call me blessed”⁶ She is our Mother.⁷

- **Recognition of the Reality of Heaven and Hell**

It is the *Sin of Presumption* to assume that, as a matter of course, we will go to Heaven and stand before the Beatific Vision of God eternally. Even Saint Paul exhorted us to work out our salvation “with fear and trembling.”⁸ Despite the total absence and silence at the pulpit of any mention of Hell, it is quite real and many go there.⁹

- **The Four Final Things: Death, Judgment, Heaven or Hell**

In many old graveyards you will find the following inscribed upon many humble markers: “*Sum quod eris, fui quod sis*” — essentially, “*As you are I once was, as I am you will one day be.*” Understand your mortality, recognize the inevitable, and act accordingly. Remember the distinction between “life” and “life everlasting” ... however it will be lived ... in Heaven or Hell. Have always before you *the Last Four Things* that will surely come to pass instead of the present “popular” things in vogue with a Church that has become heavily feminized in every aspect of its “Liturgy” and *social teachings*.

- **Never Pass a Church without recognizing Christ within:**

“*Gloria tibi, Domine!*” (Glory to You, Lord!), or “*Laus (or Gloria) tibi, Domine!*” (Praise to You, Lord!). A devout Catholic always makes some sign of recognition of Christ in the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar when he passes a Church. This is accompanied by tracing the Sign of the Cross on our forehead or over our heart. When this becomes instinctual (as it had been prior to Vatican II) it will assist us in recognizing Who abides there and for what reason. It is the instinctive call to holiness.

- **Receive Holy Communion on your Knees**

Remarkably, this is no longer the norm in modern *Novus Ordo* Masses. Saint Francis himself, it is said, refused Holy Orders (becoming a priest) because he did not think himself worthy to *hold* the Sacred Body of Christ in his *hands*. You *may* be reproached by the priest in your parish for not following the “approved posture” adopted by the diocese or the USCCB. As Saint Peter responded to those who discouraged his preaching the Gospel, “**Is it better to obey God, or men?**”¹⁰ For 2000 years Holy Communion was received this way, and nowhere in the documents of Vatican II does it suggest otherwise. **Would you approach Christ in less an attitude of humility and adoration?** Do not fear being scorned for what others may ridicule as your “sanctimony”. ***It is Christ Himself you kneel before!*** What thought of *anyone else* should occupy your mind? **For God’s sake get on your knees!**

- **Honor the Saints and Martyrs**

They, not your Parish Council are your faithful and eternal friends. If they are no longer honored in the present Martyrology, honor them still, and invoke their aid and protection. Remain in *their* company, who behold the face of God in Heaven. It is the Company to which you are called!

Christ Himself promised us that the very Gates of Hell will not prevail against the Church. And yes, the Church, as we limply excuse ourselves, is “made up of sinners.” But it is also made up of saints. That is our universal vocation: to be nothing less than saints, whatever our earthly vocation. But we are not saints yet. As Saint Francis famously said, “Let us begin. For up to now we have done

nothing.” Do not be afraid of sanctity. It is the very character of the image in which you have been created.

Whatever the Church now suffers on earth it has suffered before, if not on so vast a scale. And that is precisely why your call to sanctity is so vital. You must pursue the sanctity that the Church at present appears to have lost, or spurns as too onerous ... too “otherworldly” in this Age of Man. You must be the sign of contradiction that is the Sign of the Cross, and Him Who was crucified upon it for you. You must be in the world but not of the world, for Saint John warns us,

“Love not the world, nor the things which are in the world. If any man love the world, the charity of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world is the concupiscence of the flesh, and the concupiscence of the eyes, and the pride of life, which is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the concupiscence thereof: but he that doth the will of God, abideth for ever.”¹¹

Spurn the world — and the empty love and praise of the world! Keep all that is *holy* before you and this day begin to dwell already in the Mansion prepared for you by Christ before the foundation of the world.

Editor
Boston Catholic Journal
May 21, 2017



PO Box 80171 Stoneham, MA 02180 US

Copyright © 2004 - 2016 Boston Catholic Journal. All rights reserved.

