

January/February 2024

# CRUSADE

MAGAZINE

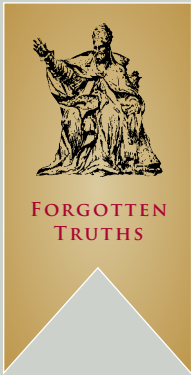


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THE CONSOLER OF JESUS:

**SAINT FRANCISCO** *of* **FATIMA**



# The Church Is a Monarchy by the Will of Our Lord

BY LUIZ SÉRGIO SOLIMEO

In his book *On the Roman Pontiff*, in the chapter titled “The Ecclesiastical Hierarchy, Monarchy of the Roman Pontiff,” Saint Robert Bellarmine chastises the Protestants who, by rejecting the primacy of Saint Peter and the Sacrament of Holy Orders, deny the Church’s hierarchical and monarchic nature.

Saint Robert Bellarmine analyzes the forms of government as such, weighing their advantages and disadvantages, and concludes that the best one in thesis is monarchy. He then goes on to ask what form of government—aristocratic, democratic, or monarchic—would be most fitting for the Church.

After careful analysis, based on the Scriptures and Doctors of the Church, he concludes that it is monarchy:

“If monarchy is the best and most excellent government, as above we have shown, and it is certain that the Church of God, instituted by the most sapient prince Christ, ought to [be] best governed, who can deny that the government of it ought to be a monarchy?”

Following Saint Robert Bellarmine, German theologian Fr. Christian Pesch, S.J. affirms the common teaching of



Pope Leo XIII who stated, “Only the Church of Jesus Christ has been able to preserve ... her form of government.”

theologians: “The society established by Christ is a monarchic society.”

## The Church’s “Full and Perfect Monarchy” Will Last Until the End of Time

This “full and perfect monarchy” of the Church cannot change.

French theologian Louis Cardinal Billot, S.J. explains that the Church’s form of government was established by God not in an *indirect* and *indistinct* manner as was the case in the civil sphere, but in a *direct* and *precise* manner. Thus, it is perfect and permanent. It cannot be modified.

On this unchangeability, Pope Leo XIII teaches: “Only the Church of Jesus Christ has been able to preserve, and surely will preserve unto the consummation of time, her form of government.”

The Church never was, is not, and never will be a democracy. Her form of government as instituted by Our Lord is that of a full and perfect monarchy. Were this to change, She would no longer be the Church.

Thus, quoting Swiss theologian Charles Cardinal Journet, “To call the Church’s government ‘democratic’ is certainly wrong.”

## Atheistic Concept of Authority: “Power Comes from the People”

While Church doctrine accepts democracy as a legitimate form of government, the popes nevertheless repeatedly condemn certain errors that have become increasingly associated with the concept, especially since the French Revolution.

In the eighteenth century, the so-called philosophers helped cause great social and political upheaval in France by spreading “new ideas.” Rousseau, for example, advanced the notion that authority originates in the people. The people then



Christ our King, Thy Kingdom come!

delegate their authority to the ruler and can revoke it whenever they so choose.

In his encyclical *Diuturnum Illud* of June 29, 1881, Pope Leo XIII rejects this theory and categorically affirms:

“Indeed, very many men of more recent times, walking in the footsteps of those who in a former age assumed to themselves the name of philosophers, say that all power comes from the people; so that those who exercise it in the State do so not as their own, but as delegated to them by the people, and that, by this rule, it can be revoked by the will of the very people by whom it was delegated. But from these, Catholics dissent, who affirm that the right to rule is from God, as from a natural and necessary principle.”

The same Pontiff also teaches that even when the people choose their ruler, they do not confer authority on him since authority comes from God: “And by this choice, in truth, the ruler is designated, but the rights of ruling are not thereby conferred. Nor is the authority delegated to him, but the person by whom it is to be exercised is determined upon.”

The Pontiff presents numerous quotations from both the Old and New Testaments and texts from the Fathers of the Church to confirm the doctrine on the divine origin of authority. ■

### Notes:

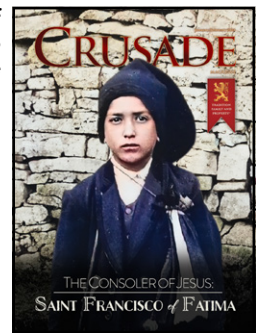
Taken from the book *I Have Weathered Other Storms: A Response to the Scandals and Democratic Reforms That Threaten the Catholic Church*.

Link for full book chapter and article footnotes: <https://www.tfp.org/the-church-cannot-change-her-hierarchical-structure-instituted-by-christ/>.

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Colorized photograph of Saint Francisco Marto taken in his home village of Aljustrel in 1917.



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## CRUSADE

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## THE AMERICAN TFP

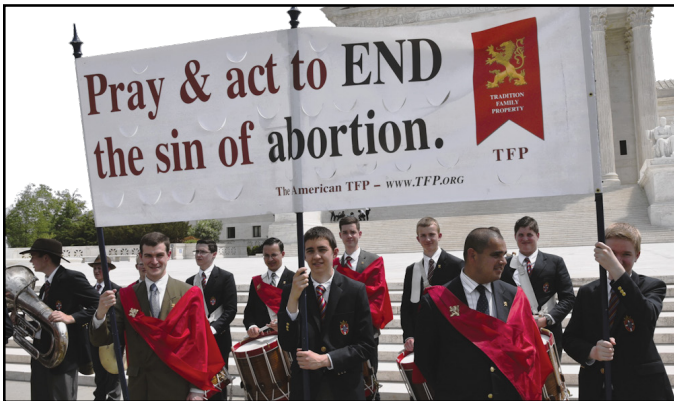
The American Society for the Defense of Tradition, Family and Property (TFP) is an organization of lay Catholic Americans concerned about the moral crisis shaking the remnants of Christian civilization. Its earliest origins date back to January 1971, when the first TFP members started to group around the publication *Crusade for a Christian Civilization*. It is a civic, cultural and nonpartisan organization which, inspired by the traditional teachings of the Supreme Magisterium of the Roman Catholic Church, works in a legal and peaceful manner in the realm of ideas to defend

and promote the principles of private ownership, family and perennial Christian values with their twofold function: individual and social. The TFP's words and efforts have always been faithfully at the service of Christian civilization. The first TFP was founded in Brazil by the famous intellectual and Catholic leader Prof. Plinio Corrêa de Oliveira in 1960. His work inspired the formation of other autonomous TFP sister organizations across the globe, thus constituting the world's largest anticommunist and antisocialist network of Catholic inspiration.



## U.S. Bishops Say Abortion Is the Pre-eminent Issue for Catholics

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) recently reaffirmed that stopping abortion is a “pre-eminent priority” of the Catholic Church. Stopping abortion is listed as the number one issue in the revised edition of the spiritual manual “Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship,” the U.S. bishops’ voting guide for Catholics. According to *The New York Times*, as of November 2023, there are only twenty-one states that totally ban or restrict abortion after the U.S. Supreme Court reversed *Roe v. Wade* in 2022. But in many of these states, pro-abortion advocates have sued to block the bans and restrictions, and some of their cases are still pending in court. The remaining twenty-nine states have set limits or totally legalized the procedure. Recognizing that powerful political, economic, and spiritual forces are aligned to maintain abortion’s hold on American culture, TFP-ANF continues its campaigns to fight for the unborn.



## Cuba Experiences Sugar Shortage

In Cuba, six decades of communist mismanagement have severely weakened the economy, making it increasingly difficult to get basic goods. The country’s sugar industry, once the largest in the world and a source of national pride, has collapsed from 8.5 million tons in 1970 to 350,000 tons in 2023. The shortage forces the government to import sugar from Brazil to meet local demands and export commitments to China. Adding to the overall misery are widespread poverty, oppression, and large-scale protests against the communist government. Even if Cuba repudiated communism, it could take decades to revive its withered economy.

## Large Survey Finds Young Priests Identify as Conservatives

An in-depth study by The Catholic University of America of 3,516 priests and 131 bishops found that the majority of them view themselves as theologically orthodox and politically conservative.

Eighty percent of the priests ordained after 2010 see themselves as theologically conservative/orthodox, while none who were ordained after 2020 identify as progressive. These findings sharply contrast with priests ordained before 1960, over 60% of whom identify as progressive. In other words, politically liberal or theologically progressive priests “have been steadily declining since the Second Vatican Council and have now vanished,” the survey reported.

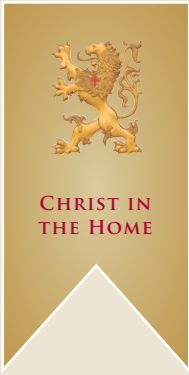


## Fatherlessness Rises to Epidemic Proportions

According to the America First Policy Institute (AFPI), 18.3 million children across America live without a father in the home, comprising about one in four children. This finding means the United States has the highest global rate of children living in single-parent households. According to Pew Research, as of 2019, 23% of children lived with one parent and no other adults, over three times the global average of 7%. Unfortunately, the absence of a father in the home has adverse effects on society. For example, children from single-parent families are twice as likely to suffer mental health and behavioral problems as those living with married parents; children with an actively engaged father perform much better in school; in a study of fifty-six school shootings, only ten of the shooters (18%) were raised in a stable home with both biological parents.

## Students Walk Out in Protest of Transgender Policy

The board of education of Perkiomen Valley School District in Collegetown, Pennsylvania, recently voted down a proposal that would require students to use the bathroom corresponding to their biological sex. A concerned board member proposed the measure after a female student expressed fear and anxiety upon finding a biological boy in the girls’ bathroom. On hearing the school board’s decision, hundreds of upset high school students staged a walkout in support of biological-sex-assigned bathrooms. In light of the students’ actions and an avalanche of complaints by parents, the board reversed its previous decision and voted to pass the proposal. ■



# Finding Sanctity in the Ordinary

BY FR. RAOUL PLUS, S.J.



One can grow in holiness simply by fulfilling his daily tasks in a spirit of obedience and charity.

The author of the so-called “Precepts of Contemporary Philosophy” may have been trying to be witty when, some years before the war broke out in 1939, he wrote the following comment on sanctity:

“Sanctity: An idolistic word no longer having any more than historical interest. Civil and military society has preserved its heroes; religious society has lost its saints or, if any more of them remain, we no longer hear them mentioned. . . . The age of great Christian fervor has indeed passed away. . . . Without wanting to appear sacrilegious, I believe that the Catholic faith would have difficulty finding martyrs thoroughly convinced of their faith and ready to sacrifice themselves for it even to death.”

True, heroic virtue is rare, and where it does exist, it makes so little noise! How much real sanctity there is! Sanctity which may never be officially canonized but real just the same: the sanctity of a doctor who spends himself for the love of God and the suffering members of Christ without counting the cost; the sanctity of a servant who lives her life of obedience and continual renunciation humbly and in a supernatural spirit—multiple types of sanctity, hidden and unknown but effective and a delight to the Heart of God. We should, of course, like to see sanctity more widespread, but we must not deny what already exists.

Furthermore, opportunities for martyrdom are not of general occurrence, and sanctity adorned by the martyr’s palm is not the only kind of sanctity. As novelist René Bazin so truly wrote: “Men do not seem to recognize the sacrifice of life unless it is made all at once.” Martyrdom by the little fires of hidden fidelities constantly adhered to, of tormenting temptations courageously and perseveringly repulsed, of the exact and loving fulfillment of duties toward God and neighbor, of prayer faithfully practiced despite disgust, aridity, and the pressure of work—is it not a martyrdom? Who can estimate the value of its countless offerings which are not publicized but which cost and which count!

The amount of sanctity in the world today is not the essential problem; the important question is how much there ought to be, what the needs of the world demand, what the glory of God and Christianity well understood require. Speaking one day with a group of cardinals, the Holy Father Pius X put this question to them:

“In your opinion, what is the most vital need for the salvation of society?”

“To build schools,” answered one cardinal.

“No.”

“To build more churches,” suggested another.

“No, again.”

“To increase the number of priests,” said a third. “No, no,” replied Pius X. “All those things are important, but what is most necessary at present is to have in every parish a group of lay people who are very virtuous, very determined, enlightened in their faith, and who are true apostles.”

*Martyrdom by the little fires of hidden fidelities constantly adhered to . . . of prayer faithfully practiced despite disgust, aridity, and the pressure of work—is it not a martyrdom?*

Now, let us consider the two words “virtuous” and “determined.” The Holy Father said “virtuous”—“very virtuous,” and he was speaking of lay people. Do I belong to that number of virtuous lay people?

“What luck not to be a saint!” Doctor Vittoz of Lausanne used to say, “For then I can exert myself to become one!” Pius X had good reason to add the word “determined” to the word “virtuous.” Is my resolution to reach high sanctity resolute, determined? ■

Taken from *Christ in the Home*, by Fr. Raoul Plus, S.J., Frederick Pustet Co., Inc. Publishers, New York and Cincinnati.



# Manhood: A Catholic Look at a Much-Needed Commentary

BY JOHN HORVAT II

Plenty of men live their lives avoiding responsibility, work, and effort. Many have no idea of the purpose of their lives and where they want to go. Others recoil before a culture that interprets any movement to male character development or leadership as hateful and oppressive.

All these masculine figures are missing one vital ingredient: manhood. They need it urgently.

## Finally, Someone Speaks Out

Manhood is more than just having the right chromosomes. Senator Josh Hawley (R-MO) outlines what it entails in his new book, *Manhood: The Masculine Virtues America Needs*. Reading this book solicits a sigh of relief that finally, someone says what needs to be said: Manhood is good, needed, and achievable.

Senator Hawley's book mixes several styles to make his point. It is part memoir with tales of how his family members and ancestors lived their manhood. It is part Bible study, interweaving Scriptural stories, lessons, and passages that indicate the God-given purpose of manhood. Finally, it is a social commentary on postmodernity's desire to annihilate manhood and what needs to be done to recover it.

From a Catholic perspective, there is much to like in his presentation—and much to add. A Catholic can agree that men embrace “the calling” of being husbands and fathers. Missouri's senior senator sustains that every man must assume the duties that make him at once “warrior, builder, priest, and king” as he accepts “the mission of Adam” to expand and protect the Lord's garden. He insists that commitment and courage are non-negotiable starting points.

## A Commentary That Falls Short

Such observations form a foundation for manhood. However, the immensity of the manhood crisis calls for something more. That is not to say the book is wrong; it just falls short.

Written from a Protestant perspective, the author limits himself to evoking archetypes of strong Christian character and natural virtue in a supportive Christian culture that no longer exists for many young men.



Christian Civilization reached lofty heights in Catholic Europe thanks to the cooperation of virile men like Emperor Charlemagne with the grace of the Holy Ghost (bronze statue of Charlemagne, Roland and Olivier in front of the Cathedral of Notre Dame in Paris).

He presents excellent models of ordinary and honest virtues at times that call for extraordinary and uncommon valor. His very personal appeal to manly self-discipline is directed toward generations weakened by a culture of gratification. His proposal contains no organized counter-culture to face an overwhelmingly hostile (and organized) culture.

Thus, an added Catholic perspective is crucial to address these shortcomings and build upon the U.S. senator's foundation.

## A Needed Catholic Perspective

Calling upon the Church would allow men to access more spiritual assets and resources to fight the enemy. It would provide more insights into the workings of the soul as men confront an adversarial world. The Church's universal nature would give men the camaraderie and unity needed to put together a counter-revolution.

It can draw from masculine archetypes for extraordinary times, often found in the Church's saints, clergy, and heroes throughout history. True Catholic manhood offers “something more,” the noble ideal that will make all the difference.

## The Role of Grace

One game changer is the Catholic notion of grace in this counter-revolution. The present manhood crisis will not only be solved by self-discipline but through transformations wrought by God's grace.

The author would acknowledge this. However, he does not express grace in the traditional terms of “the created participation in the uncreated life of God,” which acts inside individuals and peoples. When grace works inside souls, it enlightens the intellect, strengthens the will, and tempers the senses. Grace allows men to do things that are beyond the reach of human nature and touch on heroism and the sublime.

Senator Hawley's understanding of grace is like the “night of fire” described by French philosopher and Jansenist Blaise Pascal (1623—1662), who held that the experience of God is through

the heart rather than reason. Such subjective happenings are limited to intense personal experiences. They are often short-lived and do not have the stability or dynamism needed to cause great social transformations.

### **A Need for Sustained Grace**

The great conversions in history have always been the fruits of overwhelming, then sustained grace. This presupposes a sacramental life whereby the soul receives sanctifying grace to remain in a habitual state of friendship with God. It calls for a liturgical life from which men can draw upon the power of the Eucharist.

This state of grace opens up an enormous range of possibilities for action and sanctification found in the cardinal virtues, the supernatural virtues, the gifts of the Holy Spirit, and other spiritual benefits. Many of these concepts are foreign to those outside the Church.

For example, this lack of sanctifying grace has practical consequences when confronting the present culture, which constantly assaults the Christian man. This is especially apparent when dealing with one masculine virtue that Senator Hawley, unfortunately, leaves unmentioned—purity. Today's hyper-sexualized world is destroying American manhood. Without constant grace to fight the attacks of impurity, loving and obeying God's Sixth and Ninth Commandments, the effort to restore manhood is doomed.

### **Manhood and the Cross**

Sustained grace would also help American men understand the concept of the Cross. The Church teaches that every Christian must carry the Cross of persecution, misfortune, and defeat. The senator recognizes the role of sacrifice, effort, and work in the life of a Christian. However, those acts have their rewards by providing a more prosperous and honest life.

Grace goes further and helps men understand the suffering caused by tragedy, injustice, and persecution that have no immediate reward. By understanding and loving the Cross, men learn to suffer as Christ did and with Him. The Church teaches the redemptive value

of these sufferings that help form character and mold men capable of great heroism.

All society benefits from embracing suffering, which imparts a willingness to sacrifice for others. When the Cross marks all society, the sublime perfume of the spirit of abnegation permeates families, communities, economy, art, and thought, thus giving value, meaning, and beauty to all things human.

### **An Individualist Framing**

The final element to restore manhood is Catholic unity. Senator Hawley's solutions concentrate on the imperative need for men to discipline themselves and thus impact the lives of others through good example. Such views reflect a theological vision based on individual salvation and justification. Each man works out his path to God, hoping others will be edified.

*By understanding and loving the Cross, men learn to suffer as Christ did and with Him.*

Thus, his designations of man as warrior, builder, priest, and king tend to be framed in an individual context. Man's role as priest is to be an individual spark of the divine that illuminates the darkness. He builds as a means of avoiding dependency upon government and thus achieves freedom. The warrior is told to confront "the evils of his life," especially pride. The man's role as king is focused on personal control over the passions, a manifestation of self-rule.

This man does not unite with the actions of others but merely figures as a beacon of individual virtue in a vast sea of iniquity. Such action may give rise to personal battles but not a much-needed counter-revolution.

### **A Need for Unity**

For the Catholic, the Church is the Mystical Body of Christ, in which all members' actions become intertwined. Like a single body, every part is influenced by the virtues and vices of others. The



A man who practices masculine virtue is dignified and exhibits respect for ladies. Good manners, as displayed above, are an effective antidote to our hyper-sexualized society.

Catholic doctrine of the communion of saints holds that all Church members are bound together. The faithful on earth, the souls in purgatory, and the saints in heaven form an organic unity of the same mystical body under Christ as its head. There is a constant interchange of supernatural offices.

Thus, men can call upon the angels and saints for aid. Any act of virtue of one has a beneficial impact on all of society. There is an effort to facilitate and promote virtue everywhere because it benefits the whole, not only the individual.

When framed in this manner, life on earth takes on the character of a war against the world, the flesh, and the devil. The Church naturally tends to be an organized center of the general fight against evil, not an isolated point of resistance, thus her glorious title in this life—the Church Militant.

Senator Hawley does a great service to the nation by forcing the subject of manhood into the public arena. He hit his target. The left has reacted with vitriol and outrage that someone might dare challenge the woke narrative of toxic masculinity.

The senior senator from Missouri displayed admirable courage and sparked a crucial debate. His book took manhood to write.

However, it is only a starting point that needs to be broadened and taken to the end because the nation has a right to the full solution. The fight for manhood in America is too important a battle to come up short. ■

# Saint Francisco of Fatima Calls Us to Make Special Reparation

BY PLINIO CORRÊA DE OLIVEIRA

In the famous book, *The True Story of Fatima*, by Fr. John de Marchi, we hear a telling dialogue between the Fatima seer, now-Saint Francisco Marto, and his cousin Lucia.

During Francisco's last illness, Lucia sat beside his bed and gently whispered, "Francisco, are you suffering a great deal?"

"Yes, I am. I suffer it all for the love of Our Lord and Our Lady. I want to suffer more, and I can't." He lifted himself a little to see if the door was closed tight. He fumbled under the pillow for his rope of penance and handed it to Lucia. "You keep it for me. I'm afraid Mother will see it. If I get up again, I want it back." (Our Lady had told them that God did not want them wearing the rope in bed, but they kept it nearby just in case they got up.)

Francisco knew well that he would not recover. "Look, Lucia, I'm going to heaven soon. Jacinta is going to pray a great deal for sinners and for the Holy Father and for you. You're going to stay here on earth because Our Lady wants you to. Do whatever she wants."

"I suffer all for Our Lord and Our Lady. I want to suffer more, but I can't."

—Saint Francisco of Fatima



The Mother of God gave the three seers, Francisco, Lucia, and Jacinta, the sublime privilege of seeing her and disclosing to them the secret of Fatima.

"Jacinta seemed to be interested only in the conversion of sinners; she wanted to save people from Hell," Lucia said later, "but Francisco's only desire was to console Our Lord and Our Lady, Who seemed to him so sorrowful."

"I feel very sick," he confided to Lucia, "but I'll be in heaven soon."

"Then make sure you pray very much for sinners and for the Holy Father, Jacinta, and me."

"Yes, I'll pray. But you should rather ask Jacinta for that. I'm afraid I'll forget everything when I see Our Lord. After all, I would rather console Jesus and Mary."

## The Missions of the Three Children

Our Lady gave the three seers the sublime privilege of seeing her and disclosing the secret of Fatima. They each had a different mission. Lucia would stay on earth to preserve the message. Francisco and Jacinta would go to heaven after fulfilling their missions on earth.



*Since the number and gravity of the offenses have grown, the spirit of reparation is all the more necessary.*

Jacinta's mission was to pray for the conversion of sinners. Francisco's was to make reparation for the sins of humanity. His mission was purely reparation in the face of Our Lord and Our Lady's sadness caused by these sins. Reparation is a significant part of the Fatima message.



All are called to imitate the zeal of Saint Francisco by making acts of reparation for the many blasphemies and sins prevalent in our post-Christian culture.

### **The Importance of Reparation**

Thus, we see the importance of reparation. Despite all Our Lord's efforts to save souls, He gave a strictly reparative mission to one of the seers. Francisco's special and specific task consisted of consoling Him.

This consolation would reflect favorably on the salvation of souls. However, that is not its principal focus. Thus, we can see just how much importance Our Lord and Our Lady attached to reparation. It merits a special consideration independent of its effect upon the salvation of souls. This emphasis should inspire us to cultivate a spirit of reparation to the Immaculate Heart of Mary for the atrocious offenses committed against her.

### **Immensity of Sin**

Fatima took place long ago, in 1917. Today, the rising tide of sin grows immeasurably. We see



As prophesied by Our Lady, little Francisco died on April 4, 1919, less than two years after the historic apparitions at Fatima.

individual and public sins. We see the sins of nations and institutions. Moreover, the members of the Church's hierarchy keep silent and do not wage war on sin. Since the number and gravity of the offenses have grown, the spirit of reparation is all the more necessary.

In the face of this rising tide of sin, we must fight to have this spirit of reparation. This spirit is not the only or main objective of our struggle. Our struggle must have a higher objective. We do not only want to make reparation to God but also desire to be Our Lady's instruments to establish her reign on earth. We must want to defeat her enemies and entirely remove all obstacles to her reign.

We can desire these things while having the spirit of reparation. However, she must reign to end the outrages committed during this present reign of the devil. We must be indignant at the offenses done to her. This spirit of reparation is very much related to this work and spirit.

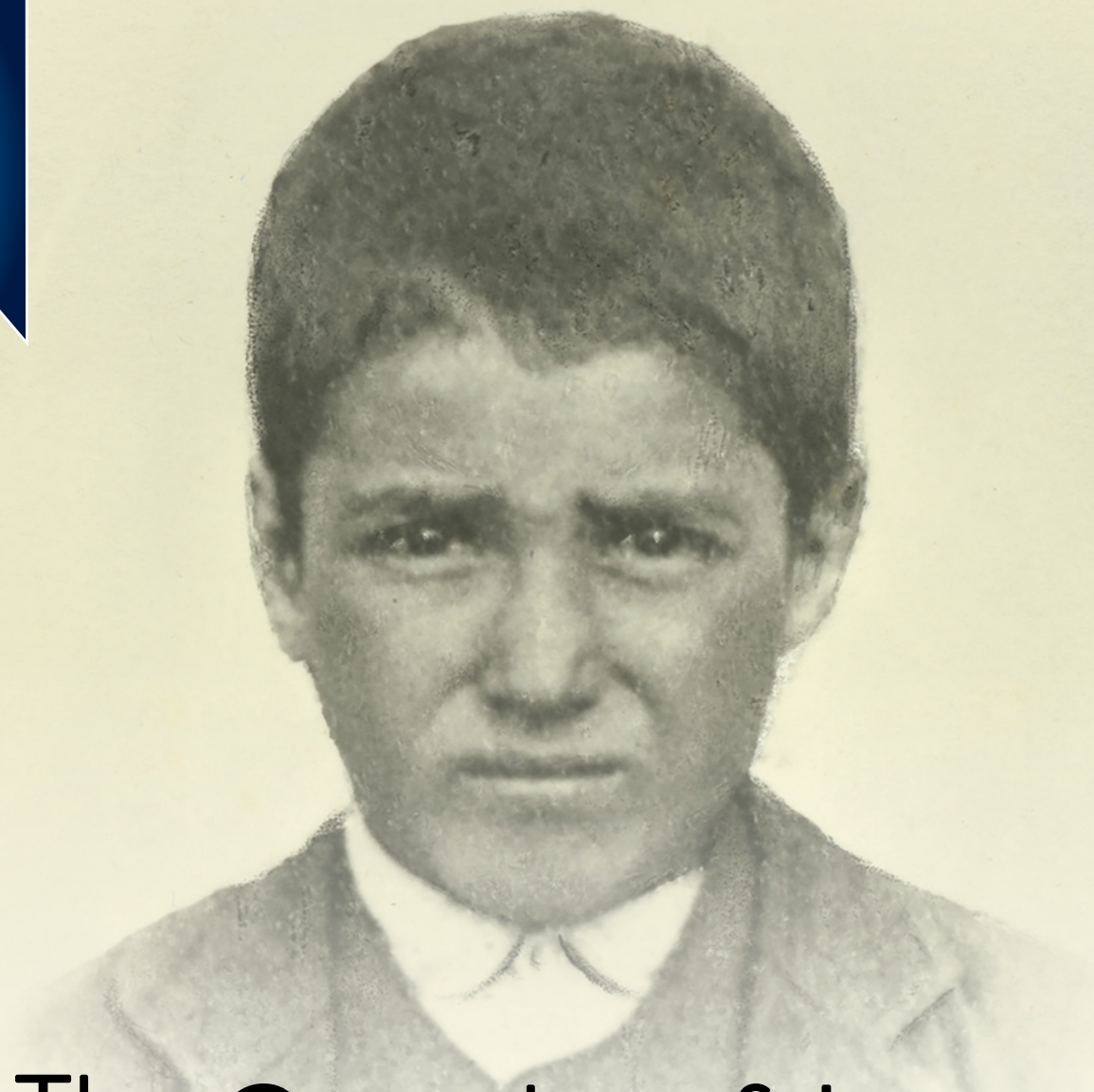
### **Asking for the Favor of Making Reparation**

Thus, we should ask Saint Francisco to obtain for us this spirit whereby we have this burning desire to make reparation to the Immaculate Heart of Mary and through her Heart to the Sacred Heart of Jesus for the unspeakable offenses of humanity.

Among these unspeakable offenses, the most unspeakable and unimaginable (for everything unimaginable is unspeakable) are certain sins committed within the Church by those we could never imagine doing this. Such offenses constitute the sin of sins. ■

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The preceding article is taken from an informal lecture given by Professor Plinio Corrêa de Oliveira on April 2, 1966. It has been translated and adapted for publication without his revision. – Ed. Illustrated by José R. Dias Tavares.

COVER  
STORY

# The Consoler of Jesus:

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# Saint Francisco *of* Fatima

BY FR. FERNANDO LEITE, S.J.

Saint Francisco Marto of Fatima, Portugal, was a little shepherd but a heroic soul in the face of grave dangers. He grew up as an ordinary child, concerned with playing and unconcerned with the greater world outside his own. After Our Lady appeared to him, his life was so radically transformed that his only thought was giving himself totally to Our Lady.

He became focused on the immense evil that had infected society at that time and caused the loss of so many souls on the battlefield of life. In fact, he made such rapid progress in sanctity that it was commonly agreed that in one short week, he advanced spiritually as much as many saints advanced in a year. His primary concern for the rest of his brief life on earth was that God not be offended and that He be glorified.



Francisco Marto, flanked by his cousin Lúcia Santos (left) and his sister Jacinta (right). In 1917, Our Lady revealed a three-part secret to the children in Fátima, Portugal.

### Who Was Francisco?

On June 11, 1908, in Fatima, a small village in the township of Vila Nova de Ourém, some seventy-five miles north of Lisbon, another baby came to gladden the family of Manuel Pedro Marto and his wife, Olimpia de Jesus.

Nine days later, on June 20, the bell of the rustic parish church pealed cheerfully, announcing that the new child, Francisco, had been born to God in the waters of baptism.

Francisco was a well-formed boy with a round face, regular features, and lively eyes who suffered throughout his life from a single disease that brought him to the grave young. Like other young people of the village, he dressed poorly: long trousers and a short jacket, with the typical conical cap with an elongated tail coming down over his shoulders.

He inherited his father's character. He was sweet, very humble, patient, peaceful, well-balanced, and naturally hated noise and trepidation. He had a meditative soul, was more inclined to listen than to converse, and had a greater propensity to stay put than to walk.

### Little Shepherd of the Hills

Soon, with his cousin Lucia and sister Jacinta, Francisco started to take care of the herd of his parents. In the pure mountain air, a day would pass as fast as a party when one plays innocent games.

Francisco, not too keen on large gatherings and shouting, enjoyed playing and singing while the girls danced joyfully, ran, and jumped up and down the hills. "Unlike Jacinta, he showed no passion for dancing," Lucia writes.

"What he enjoyed best when we went to the hills was to sit on the highest rock to play the pennywhistle or sing. When his little sister would come down with me for something, he would stay there absorbed in his music and songs."

The hours passed quickly as they sang, danced, and played music and games. As they kept entertained with one thing after the next, little time remained for them to pray amid so much joy.

Lucia recalls, "It had been recommended that we pray a rosary after our snack. But since time went by so quickly and there never seemed to be enough for our games, we invented a good way of praying the rosary quickly: while slipping the rosary beads through our fingers one would call out 'Hail Mary!'

and the others would reply 'Holy Mary!' When we reached the end of a mystery, we would make a long pause and simply announce 'Our Father!' And so, in the blink of an eye, we had the rosary said!"

### With the Angels of Heaven

The three little angels on earth, Lucia, Francisco, and Jacinta, spent a whole year in close conviviality with the angels of heaven, preparing for the coming visits of the Mother of God.

In the spring of 1916, an Angel appeared to them while they played on a hill called Cabeço. He seemed to be "a young man aged fourteen to fifteen; he was whiter than snow, and the sun made him as transparent as crystal, with great beauty. He came near us and said: 'Fear not! I am the Angel of Peace. Pray with me.'" And kneeling, he bowed his head to the ground and taught the children prayers of reparation.

The second apparition occurred in the summer of 1916. The same Angel appeared to them, instructing them to offer sacrifices to God in reparation for sins by which He is offended and for the conversion of sinners.

*The words of the Angel asking the children to console God, saddened by so many offenses and sins, touched his sensitive heart profoundly. From then on, his ideal was to console the Lord.*

### God in Me

In the fall of 1916, the Angel of the Eucharist appeared to the three little shepherds. To Lucia, he gave the Host and to Jacinta and Francisco the contents of the chalice, saying: "Eat and drink the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ, who is horribly insulted by ungrateful men. Make reparation for their crimes and console your God."

Francisco, who was unable to hear the Angel and later could not hear Our Lady either, asked Lucia: "The Angel gave you Holy Communion, but what did he give me and Jacinta?"

"It was also Holy Communion," Jacinta answered with indescribable happiness. "Did you not see blood dripping from the Host?"

"I felt God in me but did not know how it happened," Francisco answered.



### Prayers Taught by the Angel of Portugal to the Children of Fatima

**M**y God, I believe, I adore, I hope, and I love Thee. I beg Thee forgiveness for those who do not believe, do not adore, do not hope, and do not love Thee. *Amen.*

**M**ost Holy Trinity—Father, Son and Holy Spirit—I adore Thee profoundly. I offer Thee the most precious Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity of Jesus Christ, present in all the tabernacles of the world, in reparation for the outrages, sacrileges, and indifferences whereby He is offended. And through the infinite merits of His Most Sacred Heart and the Immaculate Heart of Mary, I beg of Thee the conversion of poor sinners. *Amen.*

He lay face down on the ground for a long time next to his sister, repeating the prayer taught to them by the Angel. Of all the apparitions with which heaven favored him, this certainly was the one that exercised the greatest influence on the good soul of Francisco. The words of the Angel asking the children to console God, saddened by so many offenses and sins, touched his sensitive heart profoundly. From then on, his ideal was to console the Lord. While Jacinta became an apostle of sinners, Francisco wanted to be “the consoler of Jesus.”

### Sacrifices and Submission

The Angel and Our Lady had asked the seers to do sacrifices “in reparation for the sins with which God is offended and for the conversion of sinners.”

The little ones responded to that appeal with heroic generosity. They would skip lunch at noon and give it to the sheep and the poor. They would not touch grapes or appetizing figs. “We had a habit of offering sacrifice to God every once in a while by spending nine days or a month without drinking. Once, we made this sacrifice in the middle of August when the heat was suffocating us.” They would wear a rope around their waist and whip their legs with nettles. They renounced worldly amusements such as dancing. And they would spend hours and hours with their faces on the ground repeating the prayer of the Angel.

However, God sent them even tougher sacrifices, as the Angel had foretold: “Accept and bear with submission the suffering that the Lord will send you.” And Our Lady had warned them: “You will have much to suffer.”

These sufferings were the taunts, jokes, punishments, imprisonment, persecution, and afterward, the long illnesses of Jacinta and Francisco.

Francisco fell ill in October 1918. After some improvement, he had a relapse on Christmas Eve and never recovered until his death on April 4, 1919.

### “He Must Pray Many Rosaries”

In her first apparition on May 13, 1917, Our Lady promised to take Lucia and Jacinta to heaven. However, to obtain the same grace, Francisco “had to pray many rosaries.”

Lucia writes, “He was manifesting his joy for the promise of going to heaven by happily crossing his hands on his chest and saying, ‘Oh my Blessed Mother, I will say as many rosaries as You wish!’”

“And from then on he took the habit of walking away from us, as if to go on a walk. If I called out to him to ask what he was doing, he would raise his arms and show me his chaplet. If I told him to come and play with us and leave prayer for later, he would answer, ‘I will pray later as well. Don’t you remember that Our Lady said that I must pray many rosaries?’”

Though he said the rosary many times while guarding the flock in the mountains, his first concern returning home at night was to ensure his family would not go to sleep before paying that homage to the Blessed Mother. When his mother complained of being unable to do it because of her many chores, he would remind her that she could also do it while walking down the street.

When Lucia visited him during his illness, he would ask her to recite the rosary together because he was having difficulty saying it by himself.

### The Consoler of Jesus

The words of the Angel in the third apparition, “Console your God,” had made a profound impression on Francisco. “While Jacinta seemed concerned with only one thought, to convert sinners and rescue souls from hell, Francisco apparently wanted above all to console Our Lord and Our Lady, whom he found very sad.” Compenetrated with a sense of God’s presence, he used to exclaim: “I love God so much! But He is very sad because of so many sins! We must sin no more.”

When asked if he suffered a lot during his illness, he admitted: “I am in very bad shape, but I suffer to console Our Lord.” Shortly before his death, he said: “In a little while I will go to heaven. There I will console Our Lord and Our Lady very much!”

### Praying Alone

“Francisco,” Lucia comments, “was ‘a man of few words’ and would hide from me and Jacinta to offer his prayers and sacrifices. We would often look for him behind a low wall or hedge where he would take refuge to get on his knees and think or pray, as he put it, to Our Lord, who was saddened by so many sins. If I asked him, ‘Francisco, why didn’t you let me know so I could pray with you and Jacinta?’ He would answer, ‘I prefer to pray by myself in order to console Our Lord who is so sad.’”

Once, the little boy went away to pray. As the sun was setting, Lucia and Jacinta went to look for him but couldn’t find him. They finally found him prostrated on the ground behind a low stone wall. His cousin touched his shoulder and then shook him, asking, “What are you doing?”

As if waking from a deep sleep, Francisco answered, “I began to pray the Angelus and then got thinking.”

“So you haven’t heard Jacinta calling out for you?”

“No, I heard nothing.” Immersed in ecstatic contemplation, he was oblivious to the things of this world.

“The Hidden Jesus” was the colorful expression the little shepherds used to designate Our Lord in the Most Holy Sacrament of the Eucharist. Francisco spent many hours before the Tabernacle in tender and extensive conversations with Him.

When Lucia was leaving to go to school, he would say: “Look, you go to school while I stay here in the church with the Hidden Jesus. It is not worth it for me to learn how to read because I will soon go to heaven. Come and get me on the way back.” On her return, his cousin would find him devoutly recollected in prayer.

*“I love God so much! But He is very sad because of so many sins! We must sin no more.”* — Saint Francisco Marto

### The Last Confession

Two days before his death, Francisco told Lucia, “I want to go to confession and receive Communion before I die. I want you to tell me if you saw me commit a sin and ask Jacinta if she saw me commit any.”

“Sometimes you disobeyed your mother,” Lucia told him, “when she told you to stay home and you would rush near me to hide.”

“It is true. Now go ask Jacinta if she remembers anything else.”

“I went and, after thinking a bit, Jacinta replied: ‘Listen, tell him that before Our Lady appeared, he stole a dime from daddy to buy a little organ for José Marto from Casa Velha and that he gave some rocks to the boys from Aljustrel when they threw them at other boys from Boleiros.’

“When I gave him this message from his sister, he told me: ‘Those I have already confessed but will confess them again. It is because of these sins I have committed that Our Lord is so sad! But even if I did not die, I would never commit them again. I am sorry.’

“And clasping his hands, he recited the prayer: ‘O my Jesus, forgive us, save us from the fire of hell; lead all souls to heaven, especially those in most need.’”

### United with “The Hidden Jesus”

With much trepidation, Francisco waited for the happy moment when his heart would be united with the Hidden Jesus! To receive Him with the greatest reverence, Francisco would not take anything after midnight, which, in those days, he



Saint Francisco’s preference for solitude drew him away from even his sister and cousin in order to pray his rosary more devoutly.



At about 10:00 in the morning, on April 4, 1919, ten-year-old Francisco's pure soul went to heaven to see and console Jesus forever.

was allowed to do because of his serious health condition. When Jesus came to his home that spring morning, just as the sun began to rise, he tried to sit up in bed out of respect but collapsed on the pillow because of his weakness.

"You can lie down to receive Our Lord," Teresa, his godmother, told him.

A few moments later, Jesus came into his pure and innocent soul. Francisco remained consoling Our Lord in ecstatic contemplation. As he awoke from that sweet rapture, his first words were to his mother:

"Will the pastor bring me the Hidden Jesus one more time?"

"I don't know," Mrs. Olimpia replied.

After receiving Communion the next day, he told his sister: "Today I am happier than you because I have Jesus hidden in my chest."

### In the Arms of the Heavenly Mother

Referring to the eve of Francisco's death, Lucia writes: "I spent almost the entire day next to his bed with Jacinta. As he was no longer able to pray, he asked us to say the rosary for him. Afterward, he said, 'I will surely miss you in heaven! How much wouldn't I give the Blessed Mother to take you soon to heaven, too!'"

"As night fell, I said goodbye to Francisco: 'Farewell, Francisco! Listen, if you go to heaven tonight, do not forget about me when you're up there.'"

"No, I won't, you can be at ease.' And seizing my right hand, he held it firmly for a little while, looking at me with his eyes wet with tears.

"Do you want anything?" I asked him as tears ran down my face.

"No," he said faintly.

"Since the scene was becoming too emotional, my aunt told me to leave the room.

"Farewell, Francisco, see you in heaven."

"Goodbye, see you in heaven!"

"Heaven was drawing near . . . and he flew there, into the arms of the Heavenly Mother."

### Dying with a Smile

On the morning of April 4, 1919, Francisco said: "Oh my goodness, what a beautiful light I see next to our window!" And after a moment of sweet rapture, "Now I no longer see it."

After a while, his face lit up with an angelic smile. It was about ten in the morning when he gently passed away with no agony, spasms, or even a groan. His little soul, pure as a lily and white as a dove, went to heaven to see and console Jesus forever. He was ten years and almost ten months old. The

sweetness of little Francisco's death profoundly impressed those present, especially his parents.

Later, during the parish investigation, his mother said, "He took on a smiling air and stayed that way. Then he breathed no more."

His father testified just as matter-of-factly: "He died smiling."

On April 5, 1919, a modest funeral procession went to the Fatima parish cemetery. Francisco lived humbly and died almost ignored. His funeral did not have any splendor. Only a few people walked behind his coffin alongside Lucia, who was crying for her dear friend. Jacinta stayed in bed, weeping for her little brother.

*[T]he two children, aged only ten and nine, were able to reach the highest peaks of holiness in only two years.*

### A Path to Imitate

The process for the beatification of Francisco and Jacinta was set in motion in Rome in 1979. On May 13, 1989, Pope John Paul II issued a decree proclaiming the heroism of the virtues of the little seers Francisco and Jacinta. Then, in the Jubilee Year, on May 13, 2000, Pope John Paul II elevated the two little shepherds to the honor of the altars.

Pope Francis solemnly canonized the two Marto children at the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Fatima in Portugal on May 13, 2017, the centennial of the first Apparition of Our Lady of Fatima.

So, what teachings can we draw from the lives of Jacinta and Francisco?

The lesson is that by abandoning ourselves to the virginal hands of the Mother of God, the path to Christian perfection, to which all are called, becomes much simpler and easier to follow. In fact, the two children, aged only ten and nine, were able to reach the highest peaks of holiness in only two years.

If humanity were to accept this heavenly pedagogy—as did the two little shepherds—could this not be the beginning of the triumph of the Immaculate Heart of Mary promised at Fatima on July 13, 1917? The answer is up to each one of us.

By generously responding to Our Lady's invitation—"Do you want to sacrifice for the salvation of the world?"—Francisco and Jacinta have shown us the way. Why not follow them? ■

This article is an abridged version of the book *Francisco of Fatima*, by Fr. Fernando Leite, S.J. Illustrated by José R. Dias Tavares.



# AMERICA NEEDS FATIMA<sup>®</sup>

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2024 **PROGRESS REPORT**

## From the Desk of Robert Ritchie

Dear Soldier of Our Lady,

Our prayers were answered! Thanks to the blessings of God and Our Lady, the erroneous decision made in *Roe v. Wade* was finally overturned in 2022 on the feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. However, that does not mean that our fight for the legal protection of unborn children is over.

We continue to pray for an end to abortion and will not rest until every unborn child is safe in every state in the nation! Our dedicated rosary rally warriors remain committed to holding peaceful and legal rosary rallies of reparation against abortion clinics in cities across the country.

It's important that we continue to raise awareness of pro-life causes in local communities throughout America. You, too, can make a difference in your community!

Please pray for the protection of the unborn by signing up to send a rose to Our Lady of Guadalupe in reparation for the sin of abortion. The last date for offering roses will be February 24, 2024. Simply visit [anf.org/roses-of-reparation](https://anf.org/roses-of-reparation) or scan the QR code on this page with your mobile device.

I know you agree with me that the power of prayer can do great things! I pray that you will join me and lift up your voice in support of the unborn.

With the help of God and His Blessed Mother, all is possible!



Sincerely,  
In Jesus and Mary,

Robert E. Ritchie  
Executive Director





# BATTLELINES

TAKEN FROM ANF'S PUBLICATION, *BATTLELINES*



## Blasphemy Is Not Free Speech: Rosary Warriors Protest Satanic Rock Band

Rosary rally warriors gathered in The Woodlands, Texas, to protest a performance by the overtly Satanic rock band, Ghost.

Although many concertgoers dressed in black mocked the rally participants and hailed the devil, the seventy prayer warriors remained steadfast. They prayed the rosary, had a solemn crowning of Our Lady, and sang hymns accompanied by the bagpipes.

Rally participant Cesar said, "It was a beautiful, solemn act leaving all filled with reassurance and great hope. We had a surprising amount of support from the cars passing by. When we chanted the Divine Praises, there was non-stop honking from the cars."

Rally participant Shelley said, "We prayed reparations to the Holy Eucharist and testified to our faith in Jesus and His Church. Some concertgoers mocked us, but several paused and reflected. We pray that some of these lost sheep will return to God's flock."

## Dedicated Group Holds Two Rallies in Kansas and Missouri

Rally Captain Francis and TFP-ANF friends and supporters held a rosary rally honoring a police officer killed in the line of duty and another rally supporting a school district that prevented a biological male from using the girls' restroom.

The group held the police rally prior to a procession honoring Jonah Oswald of the Fairway (Kansas) Police Department. Francis said they brought a police banner, signs, and Saint Michael medals to the rally and handed out the medals to

grateful mourners. "It was a good opportunity to encourage public opinion whenever they have a good reaction," he said.

The second rally supported the Platte City (Missouri) School District, which told the male he needed to use a private restroom. Although the male protested, the school administration wouldn't reverse their decision. Francis said, "Needless to say, the ACLU is suing the district. The purpose of our rally was to encourage the school district to remain firm in the face of the lawsuit."

## TFP-ANF Supporters Vote "NO" Against LGBTQ History Month

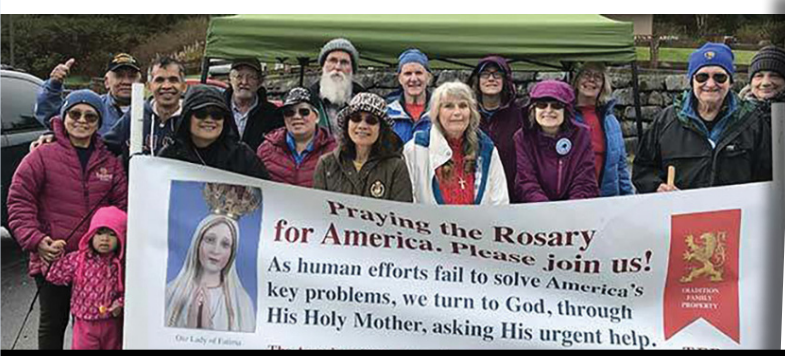
Miami-Dade School Board members rejected a proclamation that would have recognized October as "LGBTQ history month" in the latest example of Florida's parental rights laws influencing public education. The decision illustrates how local education policy has changed since 2021, when the school board last acknowledged LGBTQ history month.

Sergio and Frank were among the many TFP-ANF friends and supporters who attended the meeting, and both got to speak. Frank said, "I dedicated all my life to defending the moral values of Christian civilization, especially the family. I am here to defend the institution of the family: The family is a sacred institution. We must make a U-turn and go back to the values we lost, including the Natural Law. We must return to order."

Others speaking out in protest said LGBTQ history month would go against their religious beliefs and indoctrinate students by speaking about topics inappropriate for young people. They also emphasized that God and Jesus should be brought back into classrooms. ■







**22,045 Groups Participate in Historic Public Square Rosary Crusade**

On October 14, enthusiastic TFP-ANF members and supporters held 22,045 rosary rallies as part of our annual Public Square Rosary Crusade! This continues to be the world's largest rosary crusade.

Armed with the rosary and displaying banners and signs saying, "Praying the Rosary for America," more than half a million people assembled across the country in public view, praying for the intercession of the Mother of God for our country and our families.

Saint Louis de Montfort said, "Public prayer is far more powerful than private prayer to appease the anger of God. . . Holy Mother Church, guided by the Holy Ghost, has always advocated public prayer in times of public tragedy and suffering." This mission would not be a success without your support. We are truly grateful to you for participating in this urgent apostolate. May God bless and reward you!





# Our Readers and Viewers Write

## Rally Captains Report

“Our 2023 rosary rally crusade at Saint Eloi Parish in Theriot, Louisiana, was a beautiful event. I’m sure Our Lady was most pleased! We were blessed with a beautiful cool day! We are a very small parish, so I was very pleased with the turnout! Someone even asked when we could do it again! Thanks for allowing me the privilege to be the rally captain.”

*Rally Captain, Theriot, Louisiana*

“It was a great success with over thirty people in attendance and good weather. We were blessed to have one of our parish priests join us and lead us in prayer. Thank you for the opportunity to honor Our Lady of Fatima by praying the rosary publicly. Our banner was prominently displayed on the front lawn of our parish, Saint Aloysius Church in Caldwell, New Jersey, which is located on the busiest road in town.”

*Rally Captain, Caldwell, New Jersey*

“I prayed the rosary in the parking lot of Misión San Andres Church in Wheaton, Maryland, at noon... Right before we started, a young lady and her baby girl Kayla passed by and started praying with me. Thank you for the opportunity to pray the Holy Rosary.”

*Rally Captain, Wheaton, Maryland*

“Once again, we had the opportunity to do a rosary rally here in McAllen, Texas. This time, I partnered with a friend, Raquel, who said yes to the call to be a rosary rally captain for the first time. We felt our Blessed Mother’s presence as we prayed. Public prayer is powerful. The world is in great need of public prayer, repentance, and conversion.”

*Rally Captain, McAllen, Texas*

## ANF Apostolate

“It’s important to me that ANF succeed in its mission because America is losing its faith, while Our Lady can certainly change if we pray and spread our faith.”

*H. H., Great Falls, Montana*

## Sacred Heart Rosary

“I, Katherine, am of the Jewish faith, but I know how to pray the rosary as I have family that are Catholic. I will take good care of the rosary. Thank you.”

*K.S., Portland, Maine*

“I pray this rosary three or more times a day—it helps me to cope with things. Thank you for sending it.”

*L.W., Saint Mary’s, Ohio*

“I sleep with this rosary and I pray it every time I wake up—which is many times a night.”

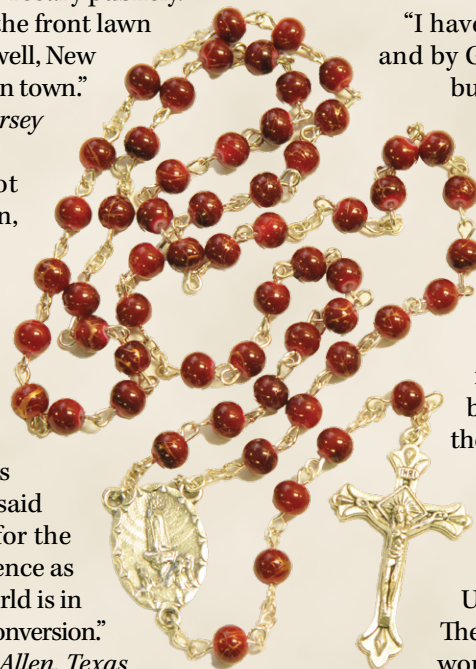
*I.T., West Palm Beach, Florida*

“I am not a Catholic, but my housekeeper is. She was SO HAPPY with the rosary!”

*J.C., Yukon, Oklahoma*

“I have been recovering from a heart attack, and by God’s will, I’ve been recovering slowly, but I confess when I received this rosary, I felt tears in my eyes. The thought of receiving a Sacred HEART rosary from you after having a heart attack fills me with love.”

*A.A., Kyle, Texas*



## Free Catholic Books Campaign

“Please send me four more copies for friends who are so lost. Great book—couldn’t put it down! Never knew these things.”

*S.H., Forest Lake, Minnesota*

“Please send me another book. It will be a gift for a family. They are from Ukraine, and moved to the United States. They love the Blessed Mother. This will be a wonderful gift for them.”

*J.R., McKees Rocks, Pennsylvania*

“For the rest of my life, I will be grateful for this book re-affirming that there is a heaven and a hell. I read it cover to cover. Can America stop offending the Father??”

*R.T., Cornelius, Oregon*

“Would it be possible to get a copy of your book on Fatima? I have a niece and nephew who are not familiar with Fatima. My nephew is Catholic and his wife joined the Church. I am surprised by their ignorance, and so want them to know about Fatima.”

*R.R., Laguna Woods, California*

# The Rosary: Not Just Our Own Secret

BY BEN BROUSSARD

Our Lady asked us to pray the rosary daily when she appeared at Fatima. America Needs Fatima's home visits are good opportunities to remind people that the rosary isn't a secret just for ourselves—we must also be rosary promoters.

While bringing this up at a home this past summer in Arlington, Texas, a lady named Rose spoke up to share a recent experience:

"I know exactly what you mean. Earlier this year, I carried an extra rosary when coming to work. One of my coworkers, a young man named David in his twenties, arrived a short time later. David had some bad friends leading him astray, and he had gotten involved in many sins.

"I walked up to him and offered him my extra rosary. He took one look at the rosary and said, 'Get that away from me; I don't need any of that religion nonsense.' I took the rosary back but started praying my daily rosary for him.

"A few weeks later, David came into work, and I could tell his day was off to a bad start.

He walked right up to me, put out his hand, and said, 'Where is that rosary? I need it today.'

"I handed him the rosary and taught him how to pray it on our lunch break. We started praying together every day at lunch. Over time, David was able to cut off bad friendships and turn his life around. We're still praying the rosary together, and he asked me for more rosaries to give away."

A few weeks after hearing Rose's story, I learned that David started classes to become Catholic. If all goes well, he will be received into the Church at the Easter vigil in 2024.

The simple act of offering a rosary worked real miracles in this young man's life. May Our Lady work many more miracles like these as we spread the rosary around America. ■



## Why I Decided to Make a Lasting Gift to America Needs Fatima

I've known America Needs Fatima for more than fifteen years. It's an amazing group of men and women, totally committed to spreading Our Lady's message. We all need the rosary. This country needs Our Lady

of Fatima's message. We need to find balance and order from the chaos that surrounds us every day. My husband Patrick and I pray the rosary every day. We've personally experienced the power and the calm which comes over us.

In 2019, Patrick and I went to Fatima in Portugal and attended Mass near the tree where Our Lady appeared to Lucia, Jacinta, and Francisco. I'm a planner, so after my dad passed away, I wanted to make sure we had all our affairs in order. I know it's difficult to think about these things, but it's also a reality.

It was time to update my will and consider which organizations to include, and I didn't hesitate. I included a bequest to America Needs Fatima so they can continue their work even after I'm gone. I just told ANF about this bequest recently and they were so grateful. We need America Needs Fatima! We need them to spread the rosary and Blessed Mother's message. Considering the pandemic and chaos we are in, our country needs Our Lady of Fatima and her Son Jesus more than ever before! I hope you'll consider a gift in your will like I did. It's very easy and it will make a lasting difference!

*Erica W., Marstons Mills, Massachusetts*

## Interested in leaving a legacy for Our Lady?

Just go to [www.ANF.org/leave-a-legacy](http://www.ANF.org/leave-a-legacy) or call Connie at (888) 661-0272.



# Four Things to Remember as the Pro-life Movement Is Put to the Test

As we approach this 2024 March for Life, the pro-life movement is being put to the test. The post-*Dobbs* climate of euphoria has subsided. The American Society for the Defense of Tradition, Family and Property (TFP) joins with all who oppose the slaughter of innocent human beings as we prepare for the battle ahead.

With the overturning of *Roe v. Wade*, some might have thought that the issue of life would be enough to carry the day. Once out of *Roe's* straitjacket, people assumed that the plight of the tiny unborn baby would melt the hearts of all. States would be free to repeal their abortion laws or enact new restrictions.

The cruel reality proved otherwise. Portions of the population still put their self-interest above that of the innocent unborn and society in general. The pro-abortionists are fighting with even greater ferocity.

In times like these, our mettle is tested. The pro-abortion side, which was driven to despair by the *Dobbs* decision, now seeks to discourage pro-lifers by pointing to election results and polls, which sympathetic media have exaggerated to create an atmosphere of doubt within pro-life ranks.

Many are discouraged despite solid showings by pro-life candidates and

the election of pro-life majorities (many veto-proof) in fifty-seven houses of the state legislatures (Democrats hold forty). Some “pro-life” politicians have panicked and proposed a way of compromise and surrender. Others call for abandoning what they call the “abortion liability” as the path to easy political power.

In the fight ahead, the pro-life movement will prevail if it remembers four things leading to victory.

## 1. Never Forget the *Dobbs* Victory

We must always remember the great victory in overturning *Roe v. Wade*. It shocked the world and achieved the impossible. We must not forget that the “abortion liability” has often been the path to many victories, not defeats. Even today, the issue dominates the election cycle. The matter has defied all the naysayers who considered it “settled law.”

To the *Dobbs* victory, we can add the efforts of sidewalk protesters who have closed thousands of abortion clinics nationwide with their insistent prayers, presence, and perseverance. The movement counts on hundreds of thousands of pro-lifers, many of them young, who are energized every year at the March for Life in Washington, D.C. and in an increasing number of American

state capitals and cities, to affirm the pro-life cause has a future.

Through the media, the other side is skilled at trying to give an overwhelming impression that most people are for abortion. The current campaign centered on election results is no different from the others. We must resist the temptation to accept the narrative of the other side.

We must not lose courage but rather redouble our prayers and efforts to defeat procured abortion and make it unthinkable. The defeat of *Roe* only serves to prove that unlikely victory is possible.

## 2. Always Remember that Abortion Is a Moral Issue, Not a Question of Women's Rights

When *Roe v. Wade* made the sin of procured abortion legal nationwide in 1973, the issue was presented as a matter of women's rights and liberation. Indeed, abortion made possible the destruction of Christian morals. It advanced the sexual revolution because it allowed women to be sexually active without the consequence of pregnancy.

However, the pro-life movement dared to change the debate by affirming that every procured abortion is a moral evil. Procured abortion is always premeditated

murder since it stops the beating heart of an innocent unborn baby.

Thus, the movement reaffirmed a notion of right and wrong that the other side tried to stifle. It proclaimed that God's law must be obeyed. For this reason, many pro-lifers became involved in other issues in the brutal culture war that still rages across America.

Thus, we must resist the temptation to turn the debate into an effort only to save lives, vital though it may be. The entire moral order must be defended and fostered if procured abortion is to be defeated.

### 3. Remember That This Battle Is a Clash of Mindsets

Let us remember that the battle over procured abortion represents a violent clash of two mindsets. It cannot be reduced to a simple cultural or political dimension.

One mentality springs from America's origins in Enlightenment thought, particularly as expressed by nineteenth-century liberalism. Its central premise is focused on the gratification of the will over the intellect, from which comes its distorted notions of individualism, liberty, and equality. Indeed, David Hume (1711–1776) famously wrote, "Reason is, and ought only to be, the slave of the passions and can never pretend to any other office than to serve and obey them."

The essence of this liberalism is the right to think, feel, do, and sin in everything the unrestrained passions demand as long as no one is hurt in the process. This liberal worldview holds that high ideals, religion, morals, universals, and traditions are unnecessary because they restrain people's wills. It is the individuals' choice if they want to have these restraints. However, coercion is seen as the greatest of sins.

The liberal mentality is opposed by a Christian one that consists of reason proposing to the will the object of its love found in the good, true, and beautiful that reflect God's adorable majesty. Within the well-ordered soul, grace enlightens the intellect, strengthens the will, and tempers



Saint Michael the Archangel,  
Patron Saint of Spiritual Warfare.

the unruly passions. This quest for truth and, ultimately, for God is exponentially augmented by the practice of charity and the action of supernatural grace. The result of this mentality is a Christian order that makes abortion unthinkable.

Today's clash of mentalities reflects two ways of being and thinking. To eradicate procured abortion, the liberal mindset of absolute, unshackled license must be overthrown, and we must seek a Christian worldview founded on the ordered liberty that virtue and nature require.

### 4. Never Forget That This Is a Religious Battle

The religious element has always been a crucial part of the struggle to eliminate procured abortion. The pro-life movement is sustained more by the prayers of its followers than the generous donations of its major benefactors. Sidewalk rosaries have done more to close abortion clinics than mere protests or legal challenges.

We must resist the temptation to limit the debate to a secular discussion over the value of human life. The most important reason why procured abortion is wrong

is that it offends an infinitely just and merciful God. Each unborn child sacrificed to today's postmodern idols eliminates one plan of God that will never be realized. Violating God's Law is an act of revolt against His Goodness.

As the murder of an innocent human being, procured abortion is listed as a sin that cries to heaven for vengeance. The proliferation of this sin does not bring God's blessings upon the land but His wrath. Those who oppose this national sin must see their struggle as an act of love of God and the order He created, which includes the unborn.

Thus, the pro-life movement must use every opportunity to call upon God's aid, both in public and private. The fight must be put in the context of a religious battle. We should not be afraid to invoke God's Holy Name out of fear of offending those who hate Him or have no faith and whom we hope to attract to the good cause.

Let us boldly invoke Our Divine Lord. The other side already makes frequent reference to its satanic influences. Indeed, the evil of procured abortion is so great that it must be seen in the context of a fight between good and evil, angels and demons.

### God Will Never Fail Us

Only by having recourse to this Divine assistance can pro-lifers prevail in this battle. We must practice that unshakeable faith that moves mountains.

Confidence is a fortified hope that admits no hesitation or anxiety. It cannot be shaken by anything in the world. To the confident soul, as human help becomes more improbable, Divine intervention becomes all the more certain.

Let us remember these four things as we are put to the test. Armed with confidence, let us courageously march forward against the evil spirits of these dark and depraved times, changing the debate with the supernatural reality of God's aid. We must adapt our tactics with all eyes fixed upon a moral and abortion-free America, one nation under God. ■



# TFP Conference: Full of Promise, Full of Blessings

BY EDWIN BENSON

Many members, supporters, and friends of the American Society for the Defense of Tradition, Family and Property (TFP) approach the TFP National Conference in Spring Grove, Pennsylvania, with great anticipation. The most recent event was held on the October 27–29 weekend and provided a chance to catch up with old friends and discover new faces. The theme was “A Milestone Year: The American TFP’s Half-Century Battling for the Church and Christian Civilization.”

dual role continues today, as seen in the activities of the left and the resistance of counter-revolutionaries today.

After a Saturday lunch, in which attendees rekindled many old friendships, Preston Noell spoke about the strong bond between Professor Plinio Corrêa de Oliveira, and the American TFP. From his vantage point in Brazil, the TFP founder saw the United States as a land of great potential where the TFP’s counter-revolutionary message could spread and gain strength.

## A Fifty-Year Fight Against Liberalism

The conference then partook of the wisdom of John Horvat II, the author of *Return to Order* and the vice president of the American TFP. Mr. Horvat said that *Return to Order* is “a pole of thought for the road ahead.” He contrasted this Catholic-based philosophy with the liberal mindset that has prevailed since the mid-nineteenth century, which is showing strong signs of a coming collapse.

Michael Gorre rounded out the day by looking at highlights from the fifty years of the American TFP. He recalled the American TFP’s pre-incorporation beginnings with the tabloid *Crusade for a Christian Civilization*. Mr. Gorre reminded the conference attendees of campaigns to help free Lithuania and defeat Soviet communism. He narrated the events surrounding protests against blasphemous films, then traced the history behind current campaigns, like those opposing Satanism, “Drag Queen Story Hours,” and “transsexual” tyranny.

The night ended with a magnificent candlelight rosary procession carrying a life-size statue of Our Lady of Hope of Macarena, which ended in a fireworks display.

Mr. Jose A. Ureta, co-author of the TFP’s recent book, *The Synodal Process Is a Pandora’s Box*.

## The Fatima Message

As the Sunday session dawned, Rex Teodosio spoke about the TFP’s vital connection to the events in Fatima in 1917. He shared the many ways the TFP promotes Fatima in conversation, formal talks, and in America Needs Fatima’s many mailings.

The second Sunday session featured a film presentation assembled by John Ritchie and Matthew Miller. It encapsulated the impressive work of TFP Student Action over the past twenty years.

## A Real Threat—and a Sure Refuge

Perhaps the most dire counterpoint to this weekend of triumph came from Michael Chad Shibler, a teacher at the TFP-staffed Saint Louis de Montfort Academy. He spoke of the need to confront a modern threat that is all too real in his talk, “The American TFP Confronts a Cyber Future.” He spoke at great length of the “transhumanists” who exercise significant influence in a world that is increasingly dominated by computers. Mr. Shibler explained that this mindset is a new kind of Gnostic heresy that threatens the future of humanity.

The concluding session was Mr. Michael Whitcraft’s discourse on the importance of confidence. In it, he spoke much of the role of Our Lady as Mediatrix. He reminded his listeners that, on occasion, everyone feels unworthy. He also reminded them that this impulse is correct, that only grace raises men above the sins of all humanity.

This brief look at the content of an essential conference is only a taste of the delights in which the attendees could participate. The conference concluded with a magnificent Mass and an impressive medieval banquet. The weekend was a truly brilliant display of God’s grace toward the American TFP for a half-century. ■



Catholics from across the country learn how to apply the Fatima message to their lives and the lives of those in their social circles back home.

## The Milestones on a Fifty-Year-Long Road

Nelson Fragelli, who has helped the American TFP since its earliest years, opened the conference. He stated the reasons why the work of the fifty-year-old organization is “full of promise, full of blessings.”

Following Mr. Fragelli’s inspirational talk, Jose A. Ureta, co-author of the TFP’s most recent book, *The Synodal Process Is a Pandora’s Box*, spoke on the topic, “The American TFP, Resistance and the Crisis in the Church,” regarding how the United States has long represented two philosophical extremes. Indeed, this



# What It's Like to Challenge Both Abortion and Socialism in Downtown Boston

BY DOMENICK GALATOLO

What can be more contentious in a woke city: Opposing the sin of abortion or fighting against socialism? How about addressing both issues?

As part of a one-week caravan, eighteen members of TFP Student Action held campaigns in Boston against abortion and socialism. On October 24, 2023, they conducted a peaceful prayer vigil against abortion outside Planned Parenthood and then went to Boston University to challenge socialism and its errors.

## Fighting for Life

Before sunrise, TFP volunteers drove to Planned Parenthood on Commonwealth Avenue, near Boston University, to support local pro-life prayer warriors. At this location, TFP volunteers prayed three rosaries, sang hymns, and played music.

The bagpipes and the recitation of the Holy Rosary grabbed the attention of early-morning pedestrians. Some received the TFP flyer “10 Reasons to Protect the Unborn” warmly, while others tore up the leaflet, yelled, or made vulgar gestures.

To shut down the TFP campaign, Planned Parenthood called the police, complaining about the bagpipes. Two officers arrived and told the

volunteers to stop the music because it was “running through the clinic.” TFP volunteers complied but reminded the police that no permit was required at other public events. After making a phone call, the officers said the music could resume, which it promptly did. Perhaps “Amazing Grace” on the bagpipes caused the abortion practitioners to reflect on the gravity of their sins that day.

## Truth Challenges Woke Students

After leaving Planned Parenthood, TFP volunteers went to Boston University. Their large banner, “May God Protect America from Socialism,” and leaflets titled “10 Reasons to Reject Socialism” prompted lively conversations and debates.

The discussions centered on private property rights and the advantages of an organic Christian society. However, leftists peddled lies and outright anarchy.

Student: “Eat the rich!”

TFP: “Are you in favor of cannibalism?”

Student: “Yes! I want cannibalism.”

Another student stated that socialism and anarchy are too orderly. He said, “I want chaos!”

## Healthcare: A Catholic Invention

Discussing healthcare is always a go-to topic for socialists who live in a non-socialist country. The subject came up in several debates at Boston University. The following interchange demonstrates the difference between socialized healthcare and Christian charity.

Leftist: “What do you think about free health care?”

TFP: “Healthcare is a Catholic institution. Doctors need more than just a fair wage. They need virtue and a true love for their patient. That is why monks and nuns cared so much for their patients because they saw the image of God in each one. When society was Catholic, healthcare was free. The Catholic Church invented healthcare.”

The Church also invented universities, public schooling, and hospitals,



Dedicated members of TFP Student Action provide an “education” to university students that they won’t get in the classroom.

institutions that socialism seeks to control and destroy under the guise of making them “free” and “equal” for all.

## Waves of Support

One student expressed his delight with the TFP campaign. “When I saw you at a distance, I thought, ‘Uh, oh! Another crazy leftist protest.’ But now I see you are against socialism. All your signs are correct.”

A short time later, the TFP volunteers shouted a slogan: “What is the solution to poverty? Christian charity and private property!”

Several students from Cambodia and China told TFP volunteers how communism had destroyed their countries.

## The Best Weapon

One Catholic student decided to help TFP volunteers by joining them with a five-foot cross. “We have to show [the campus] that we stand by the Cross.” In a conversation with this young man, TFP volunteers discussed the best weapon against socialism: the rosary.

Using this spiritual weapon, the TFP caravan is dedicated to Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception.

Why? Because socialism attacks harmonic inequality. Our Lady—especially under the title Immaculate Conception—demonstrates the beauty of harmonic inequality. God raised Our Lady to the highest position among all men as Queen of Heaven and Earth. He also gave her the unique privilege of being immaculately conceived, an honor no other man received. Can a greater inequality among men exist?

Thus, the best weapon against socialism is devotion to Our Lady, Queen of Heaven and Earth. From this love stems the wherewithal to combat socialism. ■



A twenty-first century brand of heroism being displayed as young conservative Catholics bring a pro-life, pro-God message to Boston University.



# A Miracle in Glass

BY REX TEODOSIO

The stained glass of this rose window\* modulates the raw strength of the sun's light, making it easier and pleasing to look at. Yet the bands of light projected by the stained glass are not always vividly visible. There must be enough particulate matter for light to refract from, as when there is incense for Mass or when the air is very humid. Allison Girone of G Photography and Films captured this moment, as seen in this picture.

The concept of the architecture is stunning. The designers measured the sun's position every September 29 at the precise time of day the Norbertine canons would sing the Vesper's "Magnificat," and built the abbey, the church, the window, and the altar in reference to that one detail. So it is that on every feast day of Saint Michael the Archangel since the abbey's dedication, over fifty Norbertine fathers and thirty seminarians sing the "Magnificat" in honor of Our Lady as the light of the stained glass window casts its marvelous colors on the main altar.

It is magnificent proof that architecture does not have to be brutal, naturalistic, and exclusively practical. It can elevate the mind and the soul. It

can show that the supernatural can be expressed admirably by the natural. The spiritual can be expressed in a material way. The invisible creation of God can be made visible with the intervention of man's creativity.

When Solomon finished building his temple for God, and the Ark of the Covenant was placed there, a cloud "filled the house of the Lord." Solomon said, "The glory of the Lord had filled the house of the Lord."

The glory of the Lord is made visible in these modern-day miracles in glass.

*Post Scriptum:* The Californian Norbertines carry on a nine-hundred-year-old tradition. The original Abbey of Saint Michael was in Csorna, Hungary. The night before the occupation of Csorna and the imprisonment of the Norbertines, the abbot sent out seven young Norbertine canons in two groups. They fled over minefields, made it to Austria, then to De Pere, Wisconsin, then to Santa Ana, California. Over sixty years later, there are over seventy Norbertine fathers and over fifty seminarians nationwide. ■

\*The rose window of Saint Michael's Abbey in Silverado, California, dedicated on May 4, 2021.