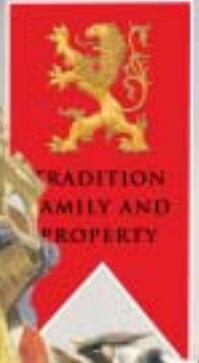


September/October 2006

CRUSADE[®]

MAGAZINE



Catholic, Crusader, Leper and King

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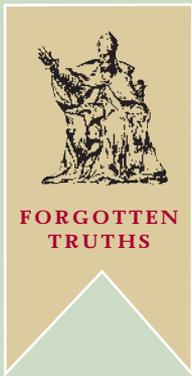
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Truth Brings With It Great Responsibilities¹

BY ARCHBISHOP FULTON J. SHEEN

Nothing is more interesting in our society than to see how often those who boast of an "open mind" end up with a closed one.

People with an infernal pride will sometimes take the lowest road in order to attract attention; so often those who boast that their minds are in a state of suspension until they find truth are often those who are most impervious to it. The open mind is commendable when it is open like a road that leads to a city, but the open mind is condemnable when it is like an abyss. Those who boast of their open-mindedness are invariably those who love to search for truth but not to find it; they love the chase but not the capture; they admire the footprints of truth, but not catching up with it. They go through

life talking about "widening the horizons of truth" without ever seeing the sun.

Truth brings with it grave responsibilities; that is why so many keep their hands open to welcome it but never close them to grasp it. The real thinker who is willing to embrace a truth at all costs generally has a double price to pay—first, isolation from popular opinion. For example, anyone who arrives at the moral conclusion that divorce prepares the way for civilization's breakdown must be prepared to be ostracized by the Herods and the Salomes of this world. Non-conformity with popular opinion can be expected to bring down upon the offender's head opposition and ridicule. Second, those who discover a truth must stand naked before the uplifted stroke of its duties or else take up the cross that it imposes. These two effects of embracing truth make many people fear-

ful. In their cowardice, they keep their minds "open" so they will never have to close on anything that would entail responsibility, duty, moral correction or altered behavior.

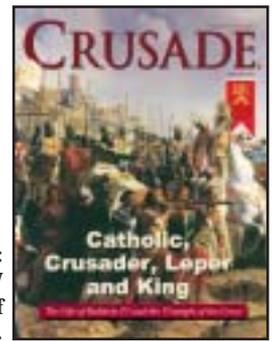
The "open mind" does not want truth for truth implies obligation, which predicates responsibility, and responsibility is the one thing the "open mind" is most eager to avoid. Avoiding responsibility only results in the abdication of one's free will to another, whether it be to an ideology or to a dictator. The only real solution is for those with "open minds" to grasp truth, even though it does involve a change in behavior, for ultimately it is truth, and only truth, which can make them free. ■

Note:

1. Adapted from Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen, *Way to Inner Peace* (New York: Alba House Publishers, 1994), 154–156.

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Montgisard.

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Page 11 Protest in front of Sony Building, New York City.



Page 15 Catholic manhood was the topic of TFP's Call to Chivalry Camp in Louisiana.



Page 16 Poles counter the European Union's amoral pressures.

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CRUSADE

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The American Society for the Defense of Tradition, Family and Property (TFP) was founded in 1973 to confront the profound crisis shaking the modern world. 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.



Catholic, Crusader, Leper and King

The Life of Baldwin IV and the Triumph of the Cross

BY MICHAEL WHITCRAFT

Modern society obsessively avoids suffering, risk and danger. It secures everything with seatbelts and safety rails, air conditions the summer heat, prints warnings on coffee cups and advises that safety glasses should be used while working with hammers.

Certainly such precautions have prevented misfortune. However, since heroism and excellence are born from confronting rather than avoiding suffering and peril, the mania for safeguards has also diminished the notion of these qualities.

This is unfortunate since only those intrepid souls who confront danger, endure suffering and overcome obstacles merit mention in the annals of history. A shining example is the leper king Baldwin IV of Jerusalem.

A Childhood Cut Short

Baldwin IV was born in Jerusalem of King Amalric and Queen Agnes of Courtney in 1161. Intellectually and physically gifted as a boy, he seemed well equipped to inherit the Crusader kingdom. This is how chronicler and royal tutor William of Tyre described his childhood:

He made good progress in his studies and as time passed he grew up full of hope and developed his natural abilities. He was a good-looking child for his age and more skilled than men who were older than himself in controlling horses and in riding them at a gallop. He had an excellent memory and he loved listening to stories.¹

One day the tutor made a frightening discovery. While roughhousing with friends, Baldwin never cried out in pain, even when the other children dug their fingernails into his arm.

Knowing how tough the nine-year-old prince was, William of Tyre first assumed Baldwin was restraining himself, but closer observation revealed that his arms were entirely numb—a telltale symptom of leprosy.

Four years later, King Amalric died suddenly. Despite his sickness, Baldwin was crowned king by the unanimous decision of the High Court of Jerusalem.² Since he was only thirteen, his closest relative, Miles of Plancy, became regent. Shortly thereafter, Miles was murdered and Raymond of Tripoli replaced him.

Raymond of Tripoli managed escalating tensions between the Crusader kingdom and its Muslim enemies through a policy of appeasement. He established

full peace with Saladin in 1175.

The treaty greatly favored the Muslim leader. Jerusalem had agreed not to support the Sicilians who were attacking Saladin's power base in Egypt and the latter had free rein to build up his forces through conquest in Syria, where his trajectory revealed plans to encircle the Crusader kingdom.

Saladin continued his quest with impunity, until governmental change in Jerusalem put a stop to his marauding joyride.

Baldwin Comes of Age

In 1176, Baldwin came of age and took charge of the kingdom at the tender age of 15. During the two years since his coronation, his condition had worsened, and was now clearly discernable as leprosy.

Nevertheless, he possessed the strength and character necessary to rule. As historian Stephen Howarth aptly put it, "Baldwin assumed full power, and soon showed that he made up for any disability with sheer nerve."³

One of Baldwin's first actions as king was to reject the peace made with Saladin and raid the lands surrounding Damascus. This forced Saladin to quit his attack in Aleppo and adopt a defensive posture. Later that year, the young king led another raid in the Beka'a valley in Lebanon and Syria, and defeated



British Library, London

Medieval painting depicting the discovery of Baldwin's leprosy by his tutor, William of Tyre, who saw that he felt no pain when scratched and hit by his playmates.



King Baldwin IV rallies his army at the Battle of Montgisard as the Bishop of Bethlehem holds up the relic of the True Cross, 1177. The leper king's small army miraculously routed Saladin's army of 26,000 strong. Painting by Charles Philippe Larivière.

an attack led by Saladin's nephew.

In the first months of his reign, Baldwin proved his capacity to rule. By countering Saladin with an attack on Damascus rather than a frontal assault at Aleppo, Baldwin demonstrated maturity and wisdom beyond his years.

The Wisdom of a King

This wisdom would guide Baldwin throughout his short life. His insistence on invading Egypt in autumn of 1176 was another example of it.

From the beginning of his reign, Baldwin planned to hit Saladin in his Egyptian power base. Lacking sufficient naval strength, he forged an alliance with the Byzantine Empire.

The stage was set for invasion. However, the king's brother-in-law, William of Montferrat, a key element to the raid, fell sick and died. Then Baldwin fell ill and the entire operation was jeopardized.

Meanwhile, Baldwin's kinsman, Philip of Flanders, arrived from Europe on Crusade, supported by Saint Hildegard's mandate: "if the time shall come when the infidels seek to destroy the fountain of faith, then fight them as hard as, with God's help, you may be able to do."⁴

Hoping that Philip would salvage the doomed mission, Baldwin offered him regency until he could recover. Philip did not like the terms of the deal and

refused. Raymond of Tripoli opposed the attack and the new Grand Master of the Knights of Saint John, young and inexperienced, hesitated.

When Byzantine ambassadors became skeptical of the mission and withdrew their support, the assault the king so desired was cancelled.

Never again would the Crusaders

*From his sick bed,
Baldwin summoned what
little strength he had and
rode out to meet his
adversary with less than
600 knights and a few
thousand infantrymen.*

have such an opportunity to wound Saladin in his power base. Only Baldwin had been wise enough to recognize the mission's importance.

A Miraculous Victory at Montgisard

More than wisdom and courage, what made Baldwin IV a great king was his indomitable faith—a virtue he demonstrated at the famous battle of Montgisard.

After the attack on Egypt was can-

celled, Philip of Flanders took his army to campaign in the northern territories of the kingdom, where Raymond of Tripoli joined him. The move left Jerusalem in a precarious situation. Very few troops had stayed behind to defend the capital and the king's condition had worsened.

Saladin was quick to seize the opportunity and directed his main army of 26,000 elite troops toward Jerusalem.

From his sick bed, Baldwin summoned what little strength he had and rode out to meet his adversary with less than 600 knights and a few thousand infantrymen.⁵ By this point Baldwin's strength was so deteriorated many thought he would die. Bernard Hamilton quotes a contemporary Christian writer who described the king's condition as "already half dead."⁶

Realizing the impotence of the king's force, Saladin ignored him and continued his march to Jerusalem until Baldwin intercepted him near the hill of Montgisard, only 45 miles from Jerusalem.

Seeing the overwhelming Muslim army, the Christians became petrified. However, such desperate situations afford great men an opportunity to show their mettle, and Baldwin rose to the challenge.

Dismounting his horse, he called for the Bishop of Bethlehem to raise up the relic of the True Cross he carried. The

king then prostrated before the sacred relic, beseeching God for success. Rising from prayer, he exhorted his men to press the attack and charged.

Historian Stephen Howarth describes the battle that ensued:

There were twenty-six thousand Saracen horsemen, only a few hundred Christians; but the Saracen were routed. Most were killed; Saladin himself only escaped because he rode a racing camel. The young king, with his hands bandaged, rode in the forefront of the Christian charge—with Saint George beside him, people said, and the True Cross shining as brightly as the sun. Whether or not that was so, it was an almost incredible victory, an echo of the days of the First Crusade. But it was also the last time such a great Moslem army was beaten by such a small force.⁷

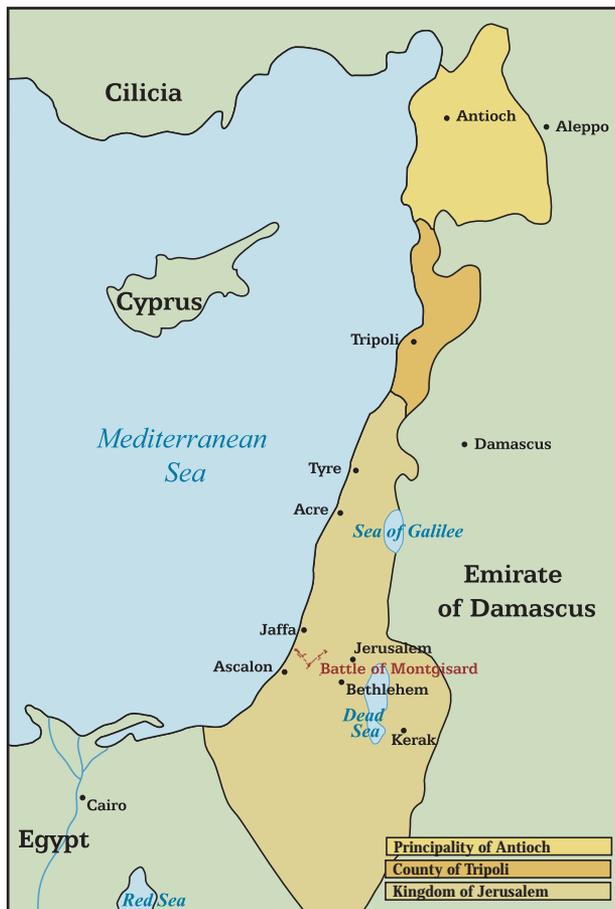
Deluged by heavy rains and suffering the loss of roughly ninety percent of his army, Saladin returned to Cairo in utter defeat. Years later, he would refer to the battle disdainfully as “so great a disaster.”⁸

Realizing that divine assistance was largely responsible for his triumph, Baldwin erected a Benedictine monastery on the site, dedicated to Saint Catherine of Alexandria, on whose feast day the victory had been won.

The Sufferings of a King

The glory of triumph did not relieve the increasing effects of Baldwin’s leprosy. As time wore on he would lose the use of his limbs and eyes. However, never once did he use his sickness as an excuse to shirk his duty.

Although he tried to abdicate several times, he immediately resumed his responsibilities when he realized there was no one suitable to replace him. Shortly after his victory at Montgisard, Baldwin wrote to King Louis VII of France:



Map of the Crusader States in Baldwin IV’s time.

It is not fitting that a hand so weak as mine should hold power when fear of Arab aggression daily presses upon the Holy City and when my sickness increases the enemy’s daring. . . I therefore beg you that, having called together the barons of the kingdom of France, you immediately choose one of them to take charge of this Holy Kingdom.⁹

When his request was ignored, the king began looking for a suitable husband for his sister Princess Sibyl. She was the oldest in the family and whoever she married would inherit the kingdom.

Baldwin hoped she would marry someone from Europe, thus securing western protection for the kingdom after his death. He made arrangements for a marriage between Sybil and Hugh of Burgundy, but the plans fell through.

To force Baldwin’s hand and control Jerusalem’s future, Raymond of Tripoli and Bohemond of Antioch then planned a coup. Their efforts failed because when they arrived at the capital, Sibyl was already married to Guy de Lusignan.

Although Baldwin had hoped to abdi-

cate to Guy after the marriage, his brother-in-law was a great disappointment. Limp-wristed and disliked by many of the Crusader barons, Guy was not suitable to reign and Baldwin was forced to remain on the throne.

Arguably, these internal struggles cost Baldwin more anguish than the leprosy that continued to devour his body.

A Warrior to the End

The years after the marriage continued to be turbulent. Baldwin secured a two-year truce with Saladin that ended prematurely, when Prince Reynald of Antioch sacked a Moorish caravan en route to Damascus and refused to return the prisoners or spoils even when the king ordered him to do so. Saladin also violat-

ed the treaty by seizing the crew and cargo of a Christian vessel that shipwrecked on his shores.

Then anti-Western sentiment broke out in Byzantium with the ascension to the throne of Andronicus Comnenus. Realizing the Crusaders lacked Byzantine support, Saladin attacked the castle of Bethsan.

Baldwin immediately marched against the Moslem aggressors and repulsed them, though he had a much smaller army and was probably too weak to fight by this point.

In 1183, the king became blind and unable to use his hands and feet. He appointed Guy de Lusignan permanent regent.

However, when the heir proved unable to unify the Crusader barons and refused to engage Saladin, while commanding the largest Christian force ever assembled in the Holy Land, Baldwin removed his regency and once again shouldered the kingdom’s responsibilities.

Later in 1183, the king's half-sister Isabel married Humphrey IV of Toron at the castle of Kerak. Although Baldwin was too sick to attend the wedding, many other influential Christian leaders were present. The opportunity to capture them was too tempting for Saladin to resist.

He surrounded the castle and besieged it in the midst of the celebration. Although utterly incapacitated, Baldwin took it upon himself to rescue the entrapped nobles. Blind and lame, he ordered that he be carried into battle on a stretcher.

Realizing that the king had arrived to succor the fortress, Saladin signaled the retreat without engaging the Christians. The same scene was repeated when Saladin again tried to take the castle of Kerak in 1184. Once again, Saladin retreated when Baldwin was brought into battle on a stretcher.

Deprived of all strength and power, Baldwin had triumphed over his lifelong enemy one last time.

Resolving Succession and Death

Later in 1184, Baldwin contracted the illness that would eventually take his life.¹⁰ The problem of succession had been somewhat resolved in the year 1183, when Baldwin crowned his five-year-old nephew, Baldwin V, co-king in order to exclude Guy de Lusignan from the throne.

While modern readers may find this harsh, Guy had openly defied the king twice, once going so far as betraying his feudal vow. Such defiance could not go unanswered.

Starved for viable options, Baldwin appointed Raymond of Tripoli temporary regent. When it became clear that the king was in fact on his deathbed, Jerusalem needed a more permanent solution until Baldwin V came of age.

The leper king deferred this all-important decision to the High Court, who chose Raymond of Tripoli. Having done his best to provide for his kingdom,



Baldwin's capacity to manage the precarious state of his kingdom resulted from his willingness to shoulder his cross in imitation of his Master.

Baldwin IV relinquished his soul to God on May 16, 1185 and was buried in the Church of the Holy Sepulcher.

Through the Cross to the Light

Suffering was the one constant in Baldwin's life. From his earliest years until his last moments, he endured a leprosy that rotted his body and represented the rottenness of his kingdom, which, owing to internal discord and corruption, fell to Saladin two years after Baldwin's death.

Baldwin's capacity to manage the precarious state of his kingdom resulted from his willingness to shoulder his cross in imitation of his Master. He never once used his sickness as an excuse to shirk his responsibilities, even when it reduced him to utter incapacitation.

In this state, he was a living representation of Christ, of whom the Psalmist states, "But I am a worm, and no man: the reproach of men, and the outcast of the people" (Ps. 21:7).

Modern society, which flees suffering like the plague, needs models such as Baldwin IV, the leper king who drank until its very last drop the chalice of bitterness that Providence put before him.

Our world needs archetypes that shatter the Revolutionary myth that suffering is an absolute evil to be avoided at all cost.

The Church has a saying that reads, "*Per Crucem ad Lucem*" ("Through the Cross to the Light"). Baldwin IV not only understood these words, he lived them. Because he did, he will forever be esteemed by those who sacrifice their personal interests for the common good. He will be admired by those willing to confront danger and suffer for a higher cause.

In a word, he will be enshrined in those souls who shun mediocrity and aspire to greatness. ■

Bibliography:

This article relied heavily on Bernard Hamilton's book, *The Leper King and His Heirs* for historic data and on three meetings given by Professor Plinio Corrêa de Oliveira for inspiration.

Notes:

1. Bernard Hamilton, *The Leper King and His Heirs: Baldwin IV and the Crusader Kingdom of Jerusalem* (New York, Cambridge University Press, 2005), p. 43.
2. At this time, Baldwin's sickness was certainly known, but the diagnosis of leprosy had probably not yet been made with certainty. During that time, if a knight or sergeant were diagnosed with leprosy, he was made to join the Order of Saint Lazarus, a religious community formed to care for leprosy nobles. Cf. Bernard Hamilton, *The Leper King and His Heirs*, p. 29.
3. Stephen Howarth, *The Knights Templar* (New York, Barnes and Noble Books, 1991), p. 132.
4. Bernard Hamilton, *The Leper King*, p. 119.
5. Cf. "Battle of Montgisard," http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Montgisard.
6. Bernard Hamilton, *The Leper King and His Heirs*, p. 133.
7. Stephen Howarth, *The Knights Templar*, p. 133.
8. Bernard Hamilton, *The Leper King and His Heirs*, p. 136.
9. *Ibid.* p. 140.
10. Despite the horrible effects of the type of leprosy Baldwin had, it rarely provokes death. The king's final illness was probably the result of infection from one of his many wounds. Cf. Piers D. Mitchell, "An evaluation of the leprosy of King Baldwin IV of Jerusalem in the context of the medieval world," as reproduced as an appendix to *The Leper King and His Heirs*.



INTERVIEW

Dispelling Myths About the Crusades

Crusade Magazine *Interviews Professor Thomas F. Madden of St. Louis University*



Professor Thomas F. Madden holds the chair of the Department of History at St. Louis University in St. Louis, Missouri. He is the author of *The New Concise History of the Crusades*, as well as *Enrico Dandolo and the Rise of Venice* and co-author of *The Fourth Crusade: The Conquest of Constantinople*.

Crusade: Some authors contend the Crusades were wars of aggression and did not stem from provocations by a supposedly peaceful Muslim world. What is your position in this matter?

Professor Thomas F. Madden: It is difficult to see how anyone familiar with history could make such a claim. The original goal of the First Crusade, as it was announced in the papal call, as well as numerous Crusader charters, was to respond to Muslim aggression against Christians in the East and to restore those lands taken by Muslims to their Christian owners.

Crusade: Although the Crusaders wore crosses and religious symbols, their only goal, according to adversaries of the Crusades, was to gain riches and territories. What is your opinion on this accusation against the essential goal of the Crusades as a whole?

Professor Madden: This is a fairly old-fashioned view now largely rejected by scholars. It was based on a Victorian experience with colonialism that has no relationship whatsoever to the medieval Crusades. We now know that crusading was never profitable. Crusaders often

impoverished themselves and their families in order to pay for their expeditions. Whatever booty they received, and the Crusades were notoriously bad for plunder, was more than offset by their expenses. The vast majority of Crusaders had no interest in remaining in the East, but rather fulfilled their vows and returned home as soon as they could.

Crusade: Some enemies accuse the Crusades of being a sort of medieval colonialism disguised in religious trappings. Is this true and could you comment on this?

Professor Madden: Colonialism, if it is to have any meaning at all, requires certain things: a mother country that

I have no doubt that had there been no Crusades at all, western Europe would have been conquered by Muslims in much the same fashion as southeastern Europe was.

funds and directs the colonial expansion, a colonial government linked to a home government, and a colonization policy or colonial exploitation. The Crusades had none of these things. No mother country supported the Crusades. Rather, they were funded and undertaken by individuals across Christendom for the benefit of their souls and their co-religionists overseas. The governments in the Crusaders' countries were independent, with no direct ties to any European countries, and the Europeans had no colonization policy or exploitation in the East. Rather, the overriding purpose of the Kingdom of Jerusalem was to safeguard the Holy Places and the lives of the Christian pilgrims visiting them.

Crusade: Is the following thesis historically defensible: Although the West lost political control over the Holy Land and the Near East after the seventh and last Crusade, the effort Christians made from the eleventh century to the thirteenth century broke the impetus of the Muslim offensive against Europe, and that it thus prevented the European continent from becoming Islamic already back in medieval times?

Professor Madden: No, on several counts. The Seventh Crusade was by no means the last Crusade. They continued well into the sixteenth century. The famous Battle of Lepanto in 1571 was a Crusade. Catholics did lose the mainland, but they held onto Cyprus and Rhodes for centuries. However, I believe it is fair to say that the Crusades did delay the advance of Muslim Empires,



“The Discovery of the True Cross” by Gustave Doré. The Crusaders of the First Crusade found the great relic in Jerusalem.

namely the Ottoman Empire, into Europe just long enough to allow Europeans to defend themselves effectively. I have no doubt that had there been no Crusades at all, western Europe would have been conquered by Muslims in much the same fashion as southeastern Europe was.

Crusade: The Fourth Crusade is one of the most maligned of the Crusades. This is the Crusade you have studied in depth. Could you comment on some of the myths about the Fourth Crusade?

Professor Madden: The biggest myth is that the Crusade was purposely diverted from its original goal, either by Pope Innocent III or Doge Enrico Dandolo, in order to conquer Constan-

tinople. In fact, on several occasions, Pope Innocent III forbade the Crusaders to go to Constantinople, and once they were there, forbade them to attack the city. It is also not true that the Crusaders were led to Constantinople by a hatred of the Greeks or an envy of their empire. Instead, the Crusaders came to Constantinople at the invitation of a Greek claimant to the throne, who promised to help them on their Crusade. The Crusaders only attacked Constantinople after their Greek friend double-crossed them, refusing to pay their reward or to join the Crusade. Even then, they only initiated hostilities when the Greeks murdered their former friend and ordered the Crusaders to leave immediately without reward, support or food. The Fourth Crusade is a tragedy, but it is

The original goal of the First Crusade, as it was announced in the papal call, as well as numerous Crusader charters, was to respond to Muslim aggression against Christians in the East and to restore those lands taken by Muslims to their Christian owners.

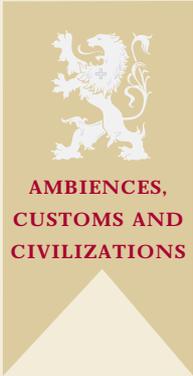
one in which the Greeks and Italians both played important parts.

Crusade: Could you comment on the effect of the Crusades on Islam today? Did the Crusades change Islam?

Professor Madden: No. Aside from slowing the advance a bit, the long-term effects of the Crusades were negligible on the Islamic world. The Crusades figure greatly in western European history, but in Muslim history the Crusades were a very minor thing and quickly forgotten. Indeed, there was not even an Arab word for Crusades until the late nineteenth century.

Crusade: One of our staff writers is writing about Baldwin IV, the leper king. He is finding that there are very few books on him in English. Why is there so little on him, and what is your opinion of him?

Professor Madden: There is a very good book on Baldwin by Bernard Hamilton. Baldwin is one of the few kings of Jerusalem to have a biography written on him, so one might argue that he has received plenty of scholarly attention. My opinion of Baldwin was that he was a man of great courage and resolve who was handicapped by a terrible disease. ■



Is the Guardian Angel Less Intelligent than the Demon?

BY PLINIO CORRÊA DE OLIVEIRA

The Church teaches that God created angels to be vastly superior to man. Pure spirits with most lucid intelligence and great power, they surpass in their nature even the most gifted of men.

As a consequence of their revolt, the fallen angels lost their virtue, but not their intelligence or their power. In accord with His Divine Providence, God restrains their activity. But in their nature they remain far superior to man.

Accordingly, the Church always approved artists' depictions of the demon as an intelligent, shrewd, astute and powerful being, albeit full of malice and deceit in all his designs. The Church even sanctions his portrayal as a creature with captivating charms, reflecting the qualities the spirit of darkness exploits to disguise himself so that he may seduce men.

Our first picture is an example of such a presentation of the demon. Diabolical, with a shrewd countenance and full of guile, the demon instills with a suave and deep manner thoughts of perdition in Dr. Faust, sleeping immersed in his dreams. This type of representation of the devil has become so frequent that one can hardly picture him save in this manner.

All of this, as we have said, is quite orthodox.

How then does contemporary popular iconography portray the image of the good angels?

They are shown as eminently well-intentioned beings, happy and innocent. This is in conformance with their eminent sanctity, blessedness and purity. Nevertheless, such depictions transgress their proper balance by emphasizing the goodness and purity of the faithful angels while failing to convey

their admirable intelligence, strength and majesty. Instead, they are often painted as weak creatures with no hint of courage.

Our second picture shows a child crossing a treacherous creek over an uncertain bridge. A guardian angel is protecting her. This picture, however popular and unpretentious, does not allow legitimate feelings to be aroused. Rather, it evokes a pacific rural panorama with the village's bell tower in the background, permeated by an innocence of life preserved in the countryside.

Naturally, the idea of a child continuing her carefree walk lovingly

guarded by a celestial Prince is quite touching. Still, if we pay closer attention to this Prince, in particular his countenance, does he not appear utterly devoid of the force, intelligence, acuteness and agility proper to angelic nature, as evidenced in every portrayal of the Prince of Darkness.

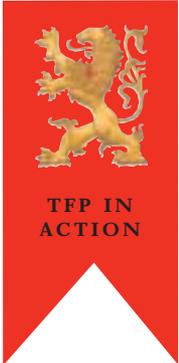
Examine the body artistically representing the good angel. Observe the soft attitude—slackened and unintelligent. Compare it to the lithe agility and alertness of the demon—could the contrast be any sharper?

All of this is most unfortunate. By representing insistently the demon as intelligent, lively and capable; and the good angel as a soft being, expressionless, almost foolish, what other impression is inspired in the public mind then that the practice of virtue results in creatures lacking in backbone and sense, while, on the contrary, vice is the practice of powerful and intelligent beings?

Thus, we see yet another example of the velvet deception, which romanticism continues to exercise profoundly over many religious ambiances. ■

As a consequence of their revolt, the fallen angels lost their virtue, but not their intelligence or their power.





Rallies Take Sony to Task for *The Da Vinci Code*

BY JOHN HORVAT II

In front of the Sony headquarters on Madison Avenue in New York City, nearly 500 Catholics braved intermittent rain and traffic to join the June 24, 2006 rally of reparation against *The Da Vinci Code* movie that was organized by the American Society for the Defense of Tradition, Family and Property (TFP) and its America Needs Fatima campaign. A similar rally with nearly 150 present was held at Sony Pictures in Los Angeles.

Somehow the New York rally was symbolic of the whole campaign against Sony's *The Da Vinci Code* movie. Protesters faced all sorts of obstacles when organizing their vigils in front of theaters. They confronted peer pressure, discour-

agement and broken promises; faced yells, screams and obscenities; and braved rain, heat and the elements. Yet the protests kept coming.

The protesters did not back down. Relying on God and His Blessed Mother, they put together 2,092 vigils of reparation and protest nationwide. Some protests gathered together nearly 200 people. Others protested alone. The important thing was that the protests were held. Protesters also organized over 1,000 Holy Hours of reparation on June 18, 2006. From coast to coast, in every state, it became very clear

that Americans rejected blasphemy.

Barely a week after the release of what was billed as the year's "most anticipated movie," no one seemed to be talking about *The Da Vinci Code* movie anymore. In the United States, media coverage shrank to nothing. Within a month, attendance plummeted by 88 percent. As conservative Catholic columnist Austin Ruse quite aptly declared, "*The Da Vinci Code* is dead!"¹

Back into the Public Square

The June 24, 2006 rallies were the culminating point of the American TFP's long fight to reject *The Da Vinci Code* in its book and film versions. Activists gathered at the two Sony headquarter locations to voice their concern and outrage to the corporate entertainment giant. The American TFP organized programs of speakers and prayers for the two-hour events.

Perhaps one of the most exciting aspects of the rallies was that Catholics were literally bringing Christ and His Blessed Mother back into the public square from where they have been so ruthlessly banished. In New York City, a solemn procession with a statue of Our Lady of Fatima, escorted by members wearing the TFP ceremonial habit, made its way through the crowd that spilled out into the street. No one was ashamed to proclaim Christ publicly.

Praying the Rosary on Madison Avenue was especially memorable. Led



Left: Wearing their ceremonial habit, TFP members inaugurated the New York City protest in front of Sony Tower in a procession with the statue of Our Lady of Fatima. After more than 2,000 protests took place across the country against *The Da Vinci Code* movie since May 19, 2006, two closing protests were held on June 24, 2006: one at Sony Pictures Entertainment offices in Culver City, Calif. (above) and the other in front of Sony Tower in New York City (below).



by the strong voice of Father Gregory Karpyn of Girardville, Penn., protesters prayed loudly and joyfully, oblivious to the secular city surrounding them. Participants also sang hymns and shouted slogans such as “¡Viva Cristo Rey!” (“Long Live Christ the King!”) that echoed off the skyscrapers.

Passersby were clearly not oblivious to the throng, and stopped to observe such a rare sight. A few Catholics joined the protests straight from the sidewalk. An English couple, upon learning of the protest, cancelled their plan to buy a laptop at a nearby Sony store.

Setting the Tone

America Needs Fatima Director Robert E. Ritchie presided over the New York City program and announced the prayer intentions for the rally. His opening words set the tone of joyfully affirming the Catholic Faith in a hostile culture.

For such a theme, there is no better speaker than Chicago’s pro-life activist Joe Scheidler. He reminded the crowd, “We are the Church Militant. We are not the Church sitting around. We are not the Church waiting to see things happen.” The fiery director of the Pro-Life Action League remarked how Catholics have not the option but the duty to come to the Church’s defense when unjustly attacked.

Also speaking was Jason Scott Jones, media director from Human Life International (HLI) in Front Royal, Va. “Our civilization was founded on the Church. Our Church was founded on the Rock—Saint Peter by the Lord Jesus Christ,” Mr. Jones remarked. “Let us pray



TFP member Philip Calder addresses the 150 protesters who sent a firm message of rejection to Sony in Culver City, Calif., for their production of the blasphemous *Da Vinci Code* movie.

for the grace to always be at the foot of the Cross—with Our Lady and Our Church: Rain or Shine.” He also read a statement from HLI president Reverend Thomas J. Euteneuer that summed up the reasons for the protest: “At our baptism, we pledge to ‘reject Satan, and all his works and all his empty promises.’ Let us reject Sony’s *Da Vinci Code*!”

Joseph A. D’Agostino, vice president of communications at the Population Research Institute, delivered a most valuable insight against the blasphemous film in a skillful manner.

The American TFP’s own Charles Preston Noell III closed the rally by qualifying *The Da Vinci Code* as unacceptable and calling on all present to boycott the company. “Attacking the divinity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, as *The Da Vinci Code* movie did, has consequences,” Mr. Noell concluded. “Send Sony a message by boycotting their products!”

In Los Angeles, TFP member Philip Calder led a similar program of prayers, hymns and addresses. Four protest organizers from different parts of the state gave accounts of their experi-

ences. They also held a solemn procession that brought the Blessed Mother to the public square.

Silence on the Cultural Left

The rallies highlighted that a lot had changed since the first protests. In the weeks leading up to the May 19, 2006 worldwide launching, *The Da Vinci Code* was heralded as the year’s most eagerly awaited and controversial film. The movie was only the tip of the iceberg to all sorts of books, documentaries and reports denying Christ’s divinity. The media discouraged opposition by repeating the myth that protests only fuel ticket sales.

Indeed, with all the publicity, the film had all the momentum and hype to make it a blockbuster even with its negative reviews at the Cannes Film Festival.

On May 19, 2006, the movie opened with plenty of fanfare and impressive opening weekend ticket sales. Many TFP protester organizers nationwide were swamped by calls from reporters all too eager to report on grassroots reactions and their seemingly failed attempt to stop the popular movie from showing.

However, after the first weekend, the climate radically changed. Box-office receipts fell astonishingly flat. The media were no longer interested in discussing so many of the “fascinating” religious issues they had long claimed the film raised. A deafening silence descended over the film.

By trying to satisfy everyone, especial-



Nearly 500 defenders of the Faith gathered at Sony Tower on Madison Avenue in New York City to pray as well as listen to speeches in protest and reparation for the blasphemous *Da Vinci Code* movie.

In the United States, where there were 2,092 protests in front of theaters, the film fell flat. However, the film did enjoy success in international markets where there were no protests.

ly offended Catholics, it appears that the film's producers satisfied no one. Sony had tried to tread carefully to deflect criticism and ended up producing a skittish film that critic Jami Bernard of *The New York Daily News* called "nervous about offending anyone."²

In the end, the final version still offended Catholics who protested outside theaters, while inside, Dan Brown's fans were afflicted by a performance described by critics as "cumbersome," "uninspired," "wishy-washy," "flat," "jumbled" and "joyless."

In other words, once the media perceived the film had no future, they abandoned the film to its own fate and moved on to other things.

Negative Publicity

In the debate as to whether protests fuel ticket sales, one fact does stand out. In the United States, where there were 2,092 protests in front of theaters, the film fell flat. However, the film did enjoy success in international markets where there were no protests.

Indeed *The Da Vinci Code* was *The Passion of the Christ* in reverse. American attendance accounted for a huge percentage of the total gross ticket sales of Mel Gibson's film. In the case of *The Da Vinci Code*, Europe and the world saved the film, accounting for over seventy percent of total receipts.

Moreover, its lackluster performance in the United States jeopardizes the chances of the film winning awards in Hollywood. Negative publicity, whether in theater protests or bad reviews, seems to have stalled *The Da Vinci Code* juggernaut that seemed so unstoppable a few short months ago.

Looking Beyond *The Da Vinci Code*

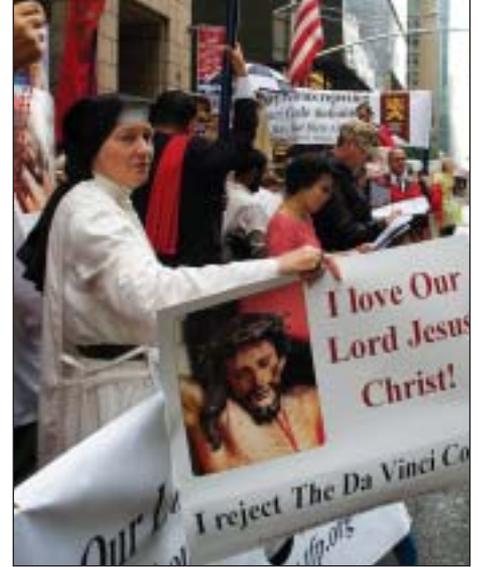
The somber silence surrounding *The Da Vinci Code* contrasted with the loud, joy-

ous prayers and the honks of support by passing cars heard at the TFP rallies in New York City and Los Angeles.

Protesters were not only praying in reparation, but were celebrating their 2,092 protests where they witnessed for Christ before man. They were engaging not a film but today's neo-pagan culture. Ironically, the film that tried to introduce doubts in dispirited Catholics had the opposite effect of energizing them with certainties. As one of the TFP banners read: "*The Da Vinci Code* Rejects the Divinity of Jesus Christ. We Reject *The Da Vinci Code!*"

"As far as I know, the magnitude of this act of public reparation is unparalleled," commented TFP President Raymond E. Drake. "The moral outrage is real and Catholics proved it by forming the largest grassroots protest against blasphemy in our history."

The Da Vinci Code may not be remembered as significant, but it will be remembered by countless American Catholics as a time when thousands of Catholics facing enormous obstacles



Sister Mary Michael MacChesney of Hazleton, Penn. holds a protest sign during the New York City protest on Madison Ave.

stood up to today's secular culture and proudly defended the honor of Our Lord and His Blessed Mother—and a time when they prepared for more battles yet to come. ■

Notes:

1. Austin Ruse, "*The Da Vinci Code* Is Dead—Consider the numbers," June 13, 2006, <http://article.nationalreview.com/?q=ZTI2YTJhNjFMDUxNzE2YmZjM2I3YWU2ZmQyMjNhNzI>.

2. Jami Bernard, "It didn't work for me—Ron Howard's 'Da Vinci' is paint-by-numbers," <http://www.nydailynews.com/entertainment/movies/moviereviews/story/418787p-353581c.html>.

Rejecting the *Da Vinci Code* Around the World

Germany



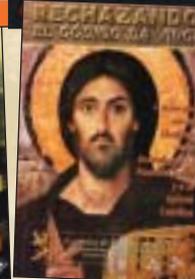
Portugal



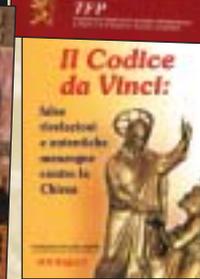
Colombia



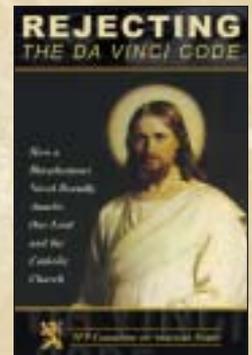
Brazil



Peru



Italy

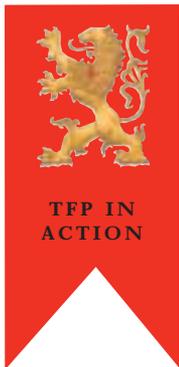


The American TFP's book, *Rejecting the Da Vinci Code*, has already been published in several countries around the world, making it available in English, German, Spanish, Portuguese and Italian.



Joining prayer to action, the American TFP promoted a one-hour Eucharistic Adoration in reparation for the blasphemous *Da Vinci Code* movie in churches nationwide.

Left: American TFP volunteers and friends make their vigil at Prince of Peace Church in Steelton, Penn.



A Father's Day Gift for Our Heavenly Father

BY JOHN HORVAT II

Great efforts and sacrifices only bear their best fruit when the faithful offer them up to God and storm heaven with their prayers. Such was the case for more than 2,000 theater protests against the blasphemous film *The Da Vinci Code*. Thousands took part in the protest vigils, and then the time came to make these protests bear their best fruit by storming heaven with prayers.

With this in mind, the American Society for the Defense of Tradition, Family and Property (TFP) announced a national hour of Eucharistic adoration in reparation for *The Da Vinci Code* on June 1, 2006. The event was held from 5 p.m. to 6 p.m., on June 18, 2006, the feast of Corpus Christi. The movement by enthusiastic protesters gained momentum as individuals and groups registered over 700 Holy Hours nationwide.

"A Father's Day gift for our Heavenly Father," wrote one satisfied Catholic upon hearing about the Holy Hour. Another added, "God our Father will be especially pleased that this is scheduled on Father's Day."

Expressions of delight and joy were very common among those who regis-

tered their comments through e-mail:

"I will be very happy to spend an hour with Jesus for such a good cause."

"We are storming Heaven before the Blessed Sacrament!"

"I applaud your efforts and join you with all my heart!"

"Our Lord has been so hurt and degraded by this book and movie, it is the least we can do."

Others included the Holy Hour in previously scheduled prayers or ceremonies:

"I have already offered my prayers and Masses in reparation for this outrage. I tell my Lord how sorry I am that He is still so gravely offended and for the infamous 'thirty pieces of silver.' Thanks for all your tremendous work."

"I lead a children's Holy Hour of Eucharistic Adoration. I'm so pleased the children can offer up their Holy Hour on June 18 at the time you have requested."

"We will be attending a Eucharistic celebration and procession in New Orleans, on June 18 and will offer reparation for *The Da Vinci Code's* book and movie blasphemies."

Americans were joined by those from

outside the continental United States:

"Guam joins all in prayer."

"As a Brazilian, I'll be praying together with you from my country. I'll have others joining me in this Holy Hour."

"It is my great pleasure to join with you [from India] in prayer for my loving Savior Jesus."

Many adorers considered it an honor to participate in this great effort:

"It's an honor and privilege to do this Holy Hour for Our Lord Jesus who has been mocked and ridiculed. It's about time to come out of our comfort zone and let our . . . brothers and sisters rally in defense of Jesus, Our Savior and Redeemer."

"Thank you for giving us something with which to combat the blasphemies put out in the world. Thank you, God, for the creative minds that were able to think of this way of reparation. I'll be happy to do it."

"I thank the Lord Jesus Christ for every brother and sister who went out to profess their faith and protest this despicable blasphemy."

Finally, one moving example of a man who offered his suffering and prayers for this great cause:

"I am dying of cancer. Might still be here June 18."

The protests and Holy Hours had the goal of offering reparation to an offended God. They were also a strong message to Hollywood that blasphemy is unacceptable and not entertaining. Finally, the two initiatives served to mobilize Catholics to defend the Faith with joy and panache.

As Saint Joan of Arc said, "The soldiers will fight and God will give the victory!" and to paraphrase her, "The protesters have protested and prayed for His honor, may God grant a great victory!" ■



Summer camp participants around the cannon at Port Hudson, La., site of a Civil War battle.

BACK IN ACTION

The TFP 2006 Call to Chivalry Camp Instills Manliness and Courage in Boys Ages 12–18

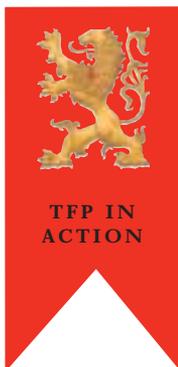
BY MICHAEL WHITCRAFT

Being mindful of a book titled *Missing From Action: Vanishing Manhood in America*,¹ which explored the causes of the diminishing role of manliness in American society, this year's American TFP Call to Chivalry Camp could aptly be titled: Back in Action. Held from June 28–July 6, 2006, at the Feliciana Retreat Center in Norwood, La., it was tailored carefully to instill the necessary qualities for the reemergence of Catholic manhood in America.

This year's camp was especially honored by the presence of His Imperial and Royal Highness, Prince Bertrand of Orleans-Braganza, a direct descendant of the Crusader King Saint Louis IX. The prince arrived on July 3 and stayed until the end.

Thirty young men ages 12–18 attended this year's camp from all across the United States, and even from Ireland. The action-packed schedule included a tour of the World War II destroyer *U.S.S. Kidd*, archery, paintball, outdoor games, skits, a trip to historic Port Hudson, La., and an anti-abortion protest outside Baton Rouge's Delta Clinic.

The boys also attended presentations



on the bad effects of rock-and-roll music, how to receive Holy Communion well, how to fulfill the first Saturday devotion, and discussions of history and society in light of the book *Revolution and Counter-revolution*, by Professor Plinio Corrêa de Oliveira.

TFP Louisiana Bureau Director Thomas Drake also spoke on the Siege of Vienna and the nineteenth century Austrian freedom fighter Andreas Hofer. These added an element of combativeness and fortitude to the camp.

Prince Bertrand gave a lecture to the boys titled, "The Virtues of Chivalry," in which he described the beauty and manliness of chastity. This was a special treat since Prince Bertrand is a living symbol and proof of the virtues of chivalry.

Monsignor Robert

An honor guard wearing the TFP ceremonial habit escorted a statue of Our Lady of Fatima in the final Rosary procession.

Berggreen of Saint Agnes Parish in Baton Rouge tended to spiritual needs by administering the sacraments.

The camp ended with the traditional medieval games and banquet. After breaking up into two teams, the boys spent the afternoon playing games such as French football, Steal the Bacon and Capture the Flag. Two knights on horseback rallied the teams. The games finished with a truly unforgettable obstacle course designed by TFP member Paul Shibler.

After freshening up, the participants then proceeded to the outdoor banquet hall while praying the Rosary. During the procession, an honor guard wearing the TFP ceremonial habit escorted a pilgrim statue of Our Lady of Fatima.

TFP supporters Rusty Lamotte and Greg Howze prepared a culinary cornucopia of pork tenderloin, smoked turkey, dirty rice and ice-chest potatoes for the boys who, after being in the Louisiana sun for three hours, were looking for a repast worthy of the Crusaders of yore.

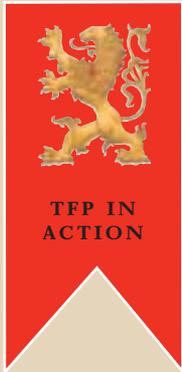
Toward the end of the meal, Prince Bertrand addressed the crowd of boys, parents and TFP supporters on the privilege of being Catholic.

After the banquet, the boys packed up and returned home better prepared to bring true Catholic manhood back in action in America. ■

Note:

1. M. Weldon Hardenbrook, *Missing from Action: Vanishing Manhood in America* (Nashville, Tenn: Thomas Nelson Inc., 1987).





Poland's First National **March for Life and Family** *Draws Over 2,000*

BY GARY ISBELL

Over 2,000 pro-family Poles marched through Warsaw on June 4, 2006 for Poland's First National March for Life and Family. The event was organized by the Fundacja Pro and the TFP-inspired Stowarzyszenie Kultury Chrzescijanskiej im. Ks. Piotra Skargi (Father Peter Skarga Association for Christian Culture). The crowd included numerous young people and families with children, and represented a new generation of pro-life and pro-family Poles affirming their Catholic moral values. A marching band, imaginative signs and lively slogans gave a festive tone to the rally. The American TFP also sent a delegation to participate in this cultural battle that transcends national boundaries.

The event was especially timely considering the European Union's enormous pressure to force its member nations to accept practices contrary to Catholic teachings. Thus the march served to show Polish opposition to abortion, homosexual "marriage" and so many other modern-day threats to the family. Polish officials and politicians, including the Minister of Education, were also present at the march.



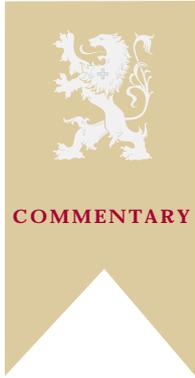
Counting on a large contingent of youth, more than 2,000 Poles marched down the streets of Warsaw on June 4, 2006 in defense of the sacredness of life and against homosexual "marriage," which is currently part of the agenda promoted by the European Union.

This wonderful gathering of more than 2,000 Poles was curiously ignored by the European mainstream media. Contrast this with the immoderate publicity given to last year's failed attempt at a Gay Pride parade, attended by approximately 50 participants and 200 observers. This year, radical homosexual activists and leftist politicians from all over Europe descended upon Warsaw to stage a larger "gay pride" march that does not reflect Polish values.

Catholic Poland is overwhelmingly against abortion and homosexual "marriage," taking to heart recent Vatican

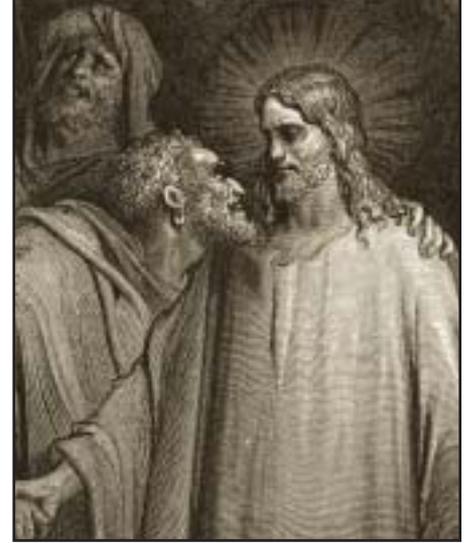
statements against the practice of abortion and homosexuality. It sees these practices as an attack upon its very culture and national identity. For this reason, Poland revoked its communist-era liberal abortion laws after the fall of the Iron Curtain. Sadly, abortion is still legal under very restricted circumstances, such as when the pregnancy is a result of a crime, when the baby is diagnosed with a genetic imperfection, or when the mother's life or health is in danger. About 150 to 200 such abortions are performed each year. Homosexual "unions" are also not legal but leftist radicals, feminists and those in the homosexual movement are trying hard to impose their "lifestyle" on society and even target young children with pro-homosexual textbooks.

It is no wonder the organizing committee is planning on making the March for Life and Family an annual event. The committee hopes tens of thousands of Poles will join this march to affirm an authentic Poland and not an artificial Poland imposed upon the nation from outside. ■



“Gospel” of Judas: The Great New Fraud

BY LUIS SÉRGIO SOLIMEO



“The Judas Kiss” by Gustave Doré.

On the coattails of the Gnostic wave set in motion by *The Da Vinci Code*, and using the same media ploys of sensationalism, psychological effect and moral-emotional shock, the National Geographic Society launched: *The Gospel of Judas*.

The tone of its marketing is the same as Dan Brown’s novel. It promises to unveil a mystery, disclose something “hidden” that can change the history of mankind.

While the fraud in Dan Brown’s novel consists in employing a fictional work to spread Gnostic doctrine, calling the Gnostic writings the “earliest Christian records” and the “unaltered gospels,”¹ the new fraud now attributes to Judas a “Gospel” written by unknown persons at least one hundred years after his suicide.

While *The Da Vinci Code*’s message is that “almost everything our fathers taught us about Christ is false,”² the National Geographic Society is spreading the word that “far from being a villain, the Judas that emerges in [*The Gospel of Judas*] is a hero.”³

“An Authentic Fabrication Produced by a Group of Gnostics”

Liberal scholar Bruce Chilton describes the fraud in the *Gospel of Judas*. He argues that during its release, National Geographic repeatedly stated that it has “authenticated” the document, a claim

simply repeated by many press agencies. However, “authentic” can be a slippery turn. Mr. Chilton notes no scholar associated with the find argues this is a first-century document, or that it derives from Judas. He notes:

The release says the document was “copied down in Coptic probably around A.D. 300,” although later that is changed to “let’s say around the year 400.” This amounts to saying that “The Gospel of Judas” is an authentic fabrication produced by a group of Gnostics in Egypt. Gnostics believed that their direct knowledge of heaven permitted them to understand what no one else knew, or could know by historical knowledge. For ancient Gnostics to believe in their own powers of divination is charming; for their flights of imagination to be passed off as historical knowledge in our time is dishonest or self-deceived.⁴

Old Hat Presented as Novelty

The present Gnostic attack takes advantage of the fact that Gnostics misappropriate the word “gospel” in many of their writings to convey the impression that apocryphal and canonical writings have equal value and that the whole problem is an internal division in Christianity.⁵

J.P. Arendzen, a specialist in Gnosticism, describes this maneuver:

When Gnosticism came in touch with Christianity, which must have

happened almost immediately on its appearance, Gnosticism threw herself with strange rapidity into Christian forms of thought, borrowed its nomenclature, acknowledged Jesus as [Savior] of the world, simulated its sacraments, pretended to be an esoteric revelation of Christ and His Apostles, flooded the world with apocryphal Gospels, and Acts, and Apocalypses, to substantiate its claim. . . .

The Cainites possessed a “Gospel of Judas,” an “Ascension of Paul” (*anabatikon Paulou*) and some other book, of which we do not know the title, but which, according to Epiphanius, was full of wickedness.⁶

The existence of the “Gospel” of Judas and its contents is nothing new; it was known to the Fathers of the Church and other authors such as Saint Ireneus, Saint Epiphanius and Tertulian in the beginnings of Christianity.⁷

Gnostic “Saints”: Cain and Judas

The apocryphal “Gospel” of Judas was written by Cainite Gnostics around the middle of the second century, long after the traitor’s suicide. It merely presents that sect’s fanciful doctrine. In short, the Cainites maintained that the God of the Bible is a secondary and bad God, a Demiurge called Hystera, who created the world and the moral law:

- In order to combat this God, men must reject the moral law and commit all kinds of sinful aberrations;
- The true God is called Sophia and is superior to the God of the Bible;
- Eve conceived Cain from Sophia, while Abel was conceived from Hystera;⁸

The apocryphal “Gospel” of Judas was written by Cainite Gnostics around the middle of the second century, long after the traitor’s suicide.

- By killing Abel, Cain showed the superiority of Sophia over Hystera;
- Hystera tried to take revenge upon Cam, Dathan, Kore, Abiron and the Sodomites, but they were protected by the good God who called them to himself and sent the Savior;
- Hystera tried to prevent the Savior from executing his work of Redemption; but Judas Iscariot, who was from the race of Sophia and possessed the early Gnosis communicated to Cain, frustrated the plans of the Demiurge by delivering Jesus to death.⁹

“The Cainites,” G. Bareille notes, attacked the Bible and rejected the Gospel but replaced them with apocryphal writings such as *The Gospel of Judas*. . . . Such a doctrine served to unite unbalanced minds and perverted hearts, but they always remained a small group. Already in the beginnings of the [third] century, the author of *Philosophumena* treats the Cainites as a group without importance.¹⁰

Jesus: “In Secret I Have Spoken Nothing”

The tactic Gnostics employ to defend their irrational doctrines is that they are based on secret, initiatory knowledge. When they call themselves “Christians,” they claim to follow secret communication they say Jesus had with some apostle, Mary Magdalene, or in this case, Judas.

Thus, the Savior allegedly taught two doctrines: one that commanded disciples to observe chastity, love one’s neighbor and practice works of mercy. The other was a secret doctrine that contradicted

these precepts. Thus, the way of salvation for common people, and even for happiness on this earth, would be the arduous way of the cross, mortification and humility, while a minority of “chosen ones” would be allowed to indulge in the unbridled passions of pride and of the flesh.

Obviously, the men-symbols for these chosen ones are none other than Cain and Judas: the murderer of his own brother and the traitor of the Redeemer, respectively.

However, Our Lord Jesus Christ Himself declares this aberrant and illogical concept of two doctrines to be false. After Judas’ kiss of treason and Jesus’ arrest, answering the Jewish high priest, Jesus clearly said, “I have spoken openly to the world: I have always taught in the synagogue, and in the temple, whither all the Jews resort: and in secret I have spoken nothing.”¹¹

*When people flee from
the truth, they accept
any absurdity that seeks
to replace it.*

“And Satan Entered into Judas, Who Was Surnamed Iscariot”

It would be blasphemy to suppose that Jesus Christ picked Judas to betray Him. He picked Judas as an apostle because that was his vocation. At the time he was chosen, Judas was properly disposed to follow that vocation.

It is true that Our Lord, being God,

knew all things and therefore was aware that Judas would not persevere in the good, but would fall away from virtue and finally would even betray Him.¹² But while God knows what will happen, this knowledge is not what determines what happens, particularly in the case of a free and rational creature. Having created man with free will, God does not remove this freedom even when man uses it for evil.

That is what happened with Judas. Our Lord tried to do good to him until the end by washing his feet before the Last Supper and calling him “my friend” when receiving the kiss of treason. However, He did not prevent Judas from consummating his treason. The Evangelists report that Judas was instigated by the devil to betray Our Lord:

And Satan entered into Judas, who was surnamed Iscariot, one of the twelve. And he went, and discoursed with the chief priests, and the magistrates, how he might betray him to them. [T]he devil having now put into the heart of Judas, the son of Simon, the Iscariot, to betray him.¹³

When Our Lord said to Judas “[t]hat which thou dost, do quickly,”¹⁴ it was not a command, but permission. At the same time, it was a final appeal to Judas’ conscience as if to say: Have you really resolved to betray Me?

However, given the hardness of the traitor’s heart, Our Lord said of him, “It were better for that man if he had not been born.”¹⁵

This is the man they are now trying to make into a hero? When people flee from the truth, they accept any absurdity that seeks to replace it. ■

Notes:

1. Dan Brown, *The Da Vinci Code* (New York: Doubleday; 2003). For a refutation of Dan Brown’s fantasies, see TFP Committee on American Issues, *Rejecting The Da Vinci Code* (TFP: Spring Grove, Penn., 2005).

2. Dan Brown, *The Da Vinci Code*.

3. National Geographic Online Store, <http://shop.nationalgeographic.com/jump.jsp?itemID=3051&itemType=PRODUCT&path=1%2C2%2C105%2C114%2C214%2C330>.

4. Bruce Chilton, “Gospel of Judas’ Called An Authentic Fabrication,” *The New York Sun*, April 7, 2006, <http://www.nysun.com/article/30588>.

5. Cf. Stefan Lovgren, “Lost Gospel Revealed: Says Jesus Asked Judas to Betray Him,” *National Geographic News*, April 6, 2006, http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2006/04/0406_060406_judas.html.

6. “Gnosticism,” *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/06592a.htm>.

7. “Judas Iscariot,” *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/08539a.htm>.

8. For Gnostics, Sophia is an androgynous being.

9. Cf. G. Bareille, “Cainites,” in A. Vacant-E. Mangenot-E. Amann, *Dictionnaire de Théologie Catholique* (Paris: Letouzey et Ané, 1932), Vol. 2, cols. 1307–1309.

10. *Ibid.*, col. 1308.

11. John 18:20.

12. Speaking to the Apostles, Jesus said: “one of you is a devil” (John 6:71).

13. Luke 22:3–6; John 13:2.

14. John 13:27.

15. Matthew 26:24.



BACK TO
MANNERS

At the Table of Life

BY MICHELLE TAYLOR

A few Sundays ago, I was surprised at hearing my Pastor address the subject of table manners. "By the way a person sits at the table for meals," he said, "one can often tell how that person sits at the table of life." He then went on to develop the subject and, ultimately, linked it to many sociological, moral, and religious aspects of life.

I was surprised because I had heard this topic addressed only in secular circles, first of all by my mother at home. I certainly never expected to hear it from the pulpit. Mother always insisted that

how hard you try? Or how well you can master yourself when that ominous enemy of most of mankind, liver, is served and you are the guest and must give every impression that it is your very favorite until the last bit is swallowed and the last goose-pump has gone down your spine?

But to hear the same thing affirmed from the pulpit... This suddenly became serious food for thought. Between my mother's admonitions and Father's exhortation, I settled down to a meditation.

What does the way you hold a fork or a knife have to do with the rest of life?



much is revealed about a person's upbringing, character, and even morals just by the way he or she sits and behaves at table.

I must confess this always sounded a little far-fetched to me.

What does the way you hold a fork or a knife have to do with the rest of life? Or how fast or slowly you eat? Or how patiently you can wait for everyone to be served before you appease your ravenous appetite? Or how much you learn to like and accept all that is placed on your plate, or still dislike intensely no matter

I began by delving into the past. I remembered those days when threatening green vegetables called snow-peas would periodically appear on my plate. They would appear but certainly not disappear. Mother would look over and say: "Who is going to be stronger, you or the snow-peas? Are you going to let yourself be conquered by a snow-pea? If you can't overcome a snow-pea, how are you going to overcome bigger things later in life?"

I certainly didn't want to be beaten by a snow pea, so I pinched it, looked at it one more time, and bravely placed it in

my mouth. Chewed... and swallowed... Then another... and another. Victory, complete. Today I love them.

There was certainly a lesson in fortitude in that.

Then there were those times when I was so hungry that I was seeing not only stars but the entire solar system. I remember practicing what to me seemed heroic self-discipline until everyone was served so that I could begin eating. That was certainly a lesson in temperance.

I also remembered the large table at grandmother's house, where everyone sat not only to eat but to enjoy each other's company. And how she insisted that we all talk. At times she would address one of the shy ones: "Why are you so quiet, little one?"

"I have nothing to say, Grandmother."

"Well, my child, then you must think of something to say. When you are among company you must learn to keep good company by being interested in others and making yourself interesting."

Yes, if we think a bit, we easily realize that at the table we learn fortitude, temperance, selflessness, appreciation for what is served to us, and gratitude for all the effort that went into the making of those dishes. We learn to conceal our dislikes so as not to disappoint the hostess and the cook; we learn charity and self-sacrifice.

"That's not the way you hold your fork. Don't stab your steak, pinch it" or, "Don't grab your knife as if you were holding a chain-saw," or, "Slow down! Don't attack your food, it's not going to run away."

How many times these orders felt like taut, unyielding reins! But that is exactly

what they were, reins. Reins to contain the wild, impatient, uncontrolled, intemperate, inconsiderate, selfish race horse in us. Orders that aimed to transform the animal instinct into a pleasure for both body and spirit.

My parish priest was right when he launched what seemed like a terribly secular affirmation from the pulpit. He was right because every learning stage and circumstance of life is temporary. Elementary school is over in eight years; high school, in four; college, in another four, six, or ten. But the lessons learned around the table are ongoing. There we learn and maintain, day in and day out, many a virtue, many a good habit, have many a good conversation, many a good counseling session as everyone relates the day's successes and failures while enjoying good food and good company. There we learn manners, which are nothing but virtue in disguise.

Even God showed us how He values manners. In Judges 7:3-7 we readily see how much God prizes manners when He had Gideon choose the best from among the best of his warriors to fight against the Midianites by the way they approached a stream to drink when dying of thirst. Those who lunged at the water and lapped it up like dogs were sent home. Those who knelt and cupped the water in their hands and brought it to their parched lips were deemed worthy to fight for the Lord of Hosts. Behind that small action was a world of self-discipline, a world of fortitude, of temperance, of virtue—of manners.

The day our modern world allows us to go back to sitting around the table every day as a family we may find that many a problem will disappear. For the family table is truly a university. We can learn in the most positive way while doing one of the things we like best: enjoying a good meal. My Pastor was right and my mother, too: the family table does make us better people all around. ■



FAMILY
SERIES

Brother Wolf

TAKEN FROM "THE LITTLE
FLOWERS OF SAINT FRANCIS"

At the time when Saint Francis was living in the city of Gubbio, a large wolf appeared in the neighborhood, so terrible and so fierce that he not only devoured other animals but made prey of men as well. And since he often approached the town, all the people were in great alarm and used to go about armed as if going to battle.

Notwithstanding these precautions, if any of the inhabitants ever met him alone, he was sure to be devoured, as all defense was useless: and, through fear of the wolf, they dared not go beyond the city walls.

Saint Francis, feeling great compassion for the people of Gubbio, resolved to go and meet the wolf, though all



advised him not to do so.

Making the sign of the holy cross, and putting all his confidence in God, he went forth from the city, taking his brethren with him; but these fearing to go any farther, Saint Francis alone turned his steps toward the spot where the wolf was known to be, while many people followed at a distance.

The wolf, seeing all this multitude, ran towards the saint with his jaws wide open. As he approached, the saint, making the sign of the cross, cried out: "Come hither, brother wolf; I command thee, in the name of Christ, neither to harm me nor anybody else." Marvelous to tell, no sooner had Saint Francis made the sign of the cross than the terrible wolf, closing his jaws, stopped running and, coming up to Saint Francis, lay down at his feet as meekly as a lamb.

Then the saint addressed him saying: "Brother wolf, thou hast done much evil in this land, destroying and killing the creatures of God without permission; yea, not animals only hast thou destroyed, but thou hast even dared to devour men, made after the image of God; for which thing thou art worthy of being hanged like a robber and a murderer. All men cry out against thee, the dogs pursue thee, and all the inhabitants of this city are thy enemies; but I will make peace between them and thee, O brother wolf. If thou no more offend them, they shall forgive thee all thy past offenses, and neither men nor dogs shall pursue thee any more."

Having listened to these words, the wolf bowed his head, and, by the movements of his body, his tail, and his eyes, indicated that he agreed to what Saint Francis had said.

At this, Francis confirmed: "As thou art willing to make this peace, I promise thee that thou shalt be fed everyday by the inhabitants of this land so long as thou shalt live among them; thou shalt no longer suffer hunger, as it is hunger which has made thee do so much evil; but if I obtain all this for thee, thou must promise, on thy side, never again to attack any animal or any human being. Dost thou make this promise?"

Then the wolf, bowing his head, made a sign that he consented. Saint Francis

continued: "Brother wolf, wilt thou pledge thy faith that I may trust in this thy promise?" Putting out his hand, he received the pledge of the wolf, for the latter lifted up his paw and placed it familiarly in the hand of Francis, giving him thereby the only pledge which was in his power.

Then said Saint Francis, addressing him again: "Brother wolf, I command thee, in the name of Christ, to follow me immediately, without hesitation or doubting, that we may go together to ratify this peace which we have concluded in the name of God." And the wolf, obeying him, walked by his side as meekly as a lamb, to the great astonishment of all the people.

Now, the news of this most wonderful miracle spread quickly through the town, so all the inhabitants, both men and women, small and great, young and old, flocked to the market place to see Saint Francis and the wolf. All the people being assembled, the saint got up to preach, saying, amongst other things, how for our sins God permits such calamities, and how much greater and more dangerous are the flames of hell, which last forever, than the rage of a wolf, which can kill the body only; and how much we ought to dread the jaws of hell if the jaws of so small an animal as a wolf can make a whole city tremble through fear.

The sermon being ended, Saint Francis added these words: "Listen, my brethren, the wolf who is here before you has promised and pledged his faith that he consents to make peace with you all and no longer offend you, and you must promise to give him each day his necessary food; to which, if you consent, I promise in his name that he will most faithfully observe the contract."

Then all the people promised with

one voice to feed the wolf to the end of his days; and Saint Francis, addressing the latter, said again: "And thou, brother wolf, dost thou promise to keep the contract, and never again to offend either man or beast, or any other creature?" And the wolf knelt down, bowing his head, and, by the motions of his tail and ears, endeavored to show that he was willing, as far as was in his power, to hold to the contract.

Francis continued: "Brother wolf, as thou gavest me a pledge of this thy promise when we were outside the town, so now I will that thou renew it in the sight of all these people and assure me that I have done well to promise in thy name;" and the wolf lifting up his paw placed it in Saint Francis' hand.

Now this event caused great joy in all the people and a great devotion towards Saint Francis, both because of the novelty of the miracle and because of the peace which had been concluded with the wolf; and they lifted up their voices to heaven, praising and blessing God, who had sent them Saint Francis, through whose merits they had been delivered from such a savage beast.

* * *

The wolf lived two years in Gubbio; he went in a friendly manner from door to door without harming anyone, and all the people received him courteously, feeding him with great pleasure, and no dog barked at him as he went about.

At last, after two years, the wolf died of old age, and the people of Gubbio mourned his loss greatly; for when they saw him going about so gently amongst them all, he reminded them of the virtue and sanctity of Saint Francis. ■





Arturo Mari, L'Osservatore Romano

A new recruit of the Swiss Guard raises his right hand while grasping the Guards' standard with his left. Calling upon the Holy Trinity as his witness, the guard swears to serve and defend the successor of Saint Peter to the point of sacrificing his own life if necessary.

... continued from back cover:

to the Sacred College of Cardinals whenever the See is vacant.

Furthermore I promise the Commanding Captain and my other superiors, respect, fidelity and obedience.

This I swear! May God and our Holy Patrons assist me!

Three Fingers Toward Heaven

The new recruit is called to break ranks and to make his oath holding the standard with his left hand while with his right hand he shows his raised three fingers as a sign of his faith in the Holy Trinity. All of this takes place in a beautiful civic and religious ceremonial setting in the presence of a large contingent of ecclesiastical authorities and a numerous public that has for weeks striven to obtain the highly coveted invitations.

During the sacking of Rome by Charles V's

The Swiss Guards play a brilliant role in showing and bringing out the sacrality of Vatican City and the importance of the Petrine ministry.

troops on May 6, 1527, 147 out of 189 Swiss Guards fulfilled this commitment to its ultimate resolution by laying down their lives in Pope Clement VII's defense. Aware of the danger, the Council of Zurich invited them to return to their homeland. But the Swiss Guards felt obliged in conscience not to abandon the Pope in a difficult moment and went on to meet their death. For this reason, and since then, May 6 was chosen for the swearing-in ceremony of new recruits.

A Modern and Efficient Corps

Those now in charge of the Pontiff's security, called the "close custody of the Holy Father," are aware that they are exposing themselves to risk, as shown, unfortunately not only by Ali Agca's attempt on the life of John Paul II but by many other incidents as well. In other words, their service goes far beyond being a mere ornament of great ceremonies. Their service also includes controlling the entrance to Vatican City and watching over the Apostolic Palace. To carry out these tasks, the Swiss Guard absolutely must have the highest professionalism of modern security services, which supposes a formal training that includes the famous Swiss military formation. In fact, the Guard is not only an authentic institution of the Church—it can only take as members 110 Catholic males—but it is also a product of Switzerland's military history, a political reality that for centuries has shown great balance in dealing with peace and war. Pope Julius II in 1506 confided the protection of his person and the Apostolic Palace to them because as a soldier he had greatly appreciated the warlike qualities of Swiss mercenary soldiers.

At the Church's Service

Pope Benedict XVI recently exhorted the Swiss Guard to continue living up to its own soul, which "draws nourishment from the glorious, nearly five-centuries-old tradition of being a small army with great ideals," ideals that are "solidity in the Catholic faith, leading one's Christian life with conviction and in a convincing manner, unshaken



Cardinal Matthaus Schiner leading the first contingent of Swiss Guards, hired on behalf of Pope Julius II, across the Alps on their way to Rome. Painted by Swiss Guard Robert Schiess (1896–1956), this painting covers a wall in the Mess Hall for guests in the Swiss Guards' Vatican City barracks.

fidelity and profound love for the Church and the Vicar of Christ, conscientiousness and perseverance in daily tasks great and small, courage and humility, a concern for others and humaneness.”

Undoubtedly, these young men at the same time so similar to and so different from their peers around the world, are called to live, in the apparent normalcy of their youth, an altogether extraordinary vocation. Enveloped in light and

color in the midst of contemporary bland grayness, they prolong a history full of merits, render the Church an authentic and outstanding service, and symbolize loyalty in a world where abiding by one's word is becoming increasingly passé. And all this takes place in the world's most secured and watched podium that is the See of Peter. ■



The Swiss Guards have been serving the Pope for 500 years and on occasion have sacrificed their lives in his defense. Besides protecting the Supreme Pontiff, they perform various functions in the Vatican.



Courtesy of Kenneth Drake

A contingent of Swiss Guards parades on the Vatican grounds during a May 6 swearing-in ceremony. This year the Swiss Guard celebrates five centuries of service and sacrifice defending the Pope.

'A TINY ARMY WITH GREAT IDEALS'

BY GIACOMO MONTI

When the sun's rays bathe the white stones of Saint Peter's Basilica, the unusual combination of blue, orange and red of the Papal Swiss Guards standing watch at the Arco delle Campane catches the tourist's eye. Children scramble to have their picture taken with imposing soldiers holding the halberd. A prestigious aura of force and liveliness seems to surround the bands of Guards who, to the bystanders' admiration, march proudly from the arm of Charlemagne to that of Constantine and back. The glamour of the Michelangelo-styled uniforms increases even more when the Guards don on solemn occasions red plumes, white ruffs, helmets, armor, and carry halberds of sharpened steel. Seeing them so adorned, one could perhaps imagine the celestial hosts in battle array.

A Complete Giving of Self

Time has not lessened the prestige surrounding the Papal Swiss Guard. In fact, one could say that they do not add anything essential. And yet the Swiss Guards play a brilliant role in showing and bringing out the sacrality of Vatican City and the

"Youth was not made for pleasure but for heroism."

— Paul Claudel

importance of the Petrine ministry. They add a note of color, light and dedication that calls to mind Paul Claudel's celebrated phrase, "Youth was not made for pleasure but for heroism."

Indeed, on every May 6 for 500 hundred years now, young voices proclaim enthusiastically a solemn oath:

I swear I will faithfully, loyally and honorably serve the reigning Supreme Pontiff and his legitimate successors, and also dedicate myself to them with all my strength, sacrificing if necessary also my life to defend them.

I assume this same commitment with regard

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COMMENTARY



Courtesy of Kenneth Drake