

March/April 2007

CRUSADE

MAGAZINE



TRADITION
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**Is There Room
in Today's World
For the Fatima
Message?**



True Charity Is Not Politically Correct

BY FATHER FELIX SARDA Y SALVANY

The good of all good is the divine Good, just as God is for all men the Neighbor of all neighbors. In consequence, the love due to a man, inasmuch as he is our neighbor, ought always to be subordinated to that which is due to Our Lord. For His love and in His service we must not hesitate to offend men. The degree of our offense toward men can only be measured by the degree of our obligation to Him. *Charity is primarily the love of God, secondarily the love of our neighbor for God's sake. To sacrifice the former is to abandon the latter. [...]*

Modern liberalism reverses this order and imposes a false notion of charity: our neighbor first, and, if at all, God second. By its reiterated and trite accusations of intolerance toward us, it has succeeded in disconcerting even some staunch Catholics. But our rule is too plain and too concrete to admit of misconception: *Sovereign Catholic inflexibility is sovereign Catholic charity.* This charity is practiced in relation to our neighbor when, in his own interest, he is crossed, humiliated, and chastised. It is practiced in relation to a third party when he is defended from the unjust aggression of another, when he is protected from the contagion of error by unmasking its authors and abettors, and showing them in their true light as iniquitous and perverse by holding them up to the contempt, horror, and execration of all. It is practiced in relation to God when, for His glory and in His service, it becomes necessary to silence all human considerations, to trample underfoot all human respect, to sacrifice all human interests—even life itself—to attain this

highest of all ends. *All this is Catholic inflexibility and inflexible Catholicity in the practice of that pure love which constitutes sovereign charity.* The Saints, heroes of charity and religion, are the types of this unswerving and sovereign fidelity to God. Because in our times there are so few true inflexibles in the love of God, so also are there few uncompromisers in the order of charity. Liberal charity is condescending, affectionate, even tender in appearance, but at bottom it is an essential contempt

and disdain for the true good of men, of the supreme interests of truth and ultimately of God. It is narcissism, usurping the throne of the Most High and demanding that worship which belongs to God alone. ■

Adapted from Father Felix Sarda y Salvany, *Liberalism Is a Sin* (Rockford, IL: Tan Books & Publishers, Inc., 1993), 94–95.



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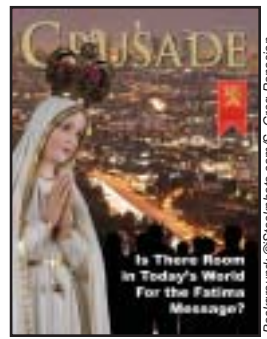
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CONTENTS

March/April 2007



Cover:
International Pilgrim
Virgin Statue of Our
Lady of Fatima looking
over a modern-day
metropolis.

INTERVIEW

Why Do We Need Natural Moral Law? 4

TFP IN ACTION

Seminar for Catholic Formation in Peru 5

COVER STORY

Is the Fatima Message Still Relevant? 6

COMMENTARY

Devotion to the Heart of Mary
Will Save the World 12

IN MEMORIAM

Jeanine Susan Blanck 14

ANF PROGRESS REPORT

- ◆ Catholics to French Quarter Mardi Gras: "Keep Blasphemy Out!" 15
- ◆ Reaching Across America in 2007 16
- ◆ You're Invited to a Rosary Rally! 17
- ◆ Finding the True Spirit of Christmas 18
- ◆ A New Year's Call to Chivalry 18
- ◆ A New Type of Dog Tag 19
- ◆ TFP Student Conference "Beyond Pro-Life: Why We Must Challenge the Whole Cultural Revolution" 19

REVOLUTION AND COUNTER- REVOLUTION IN HISTORY

Clash of Cultures — Part I 20

TFP IN ACTION

- ◆ California Counterpart to Washington, D.C.'s March for Life a Success 23
- ◆ Fighting Abortion: Time to Press Ahead Toward Victory 24



Page 12 The Immaculate Heart of Mary begs for prayer, penance and conversion in our days.



Page 17 Commemorating ninety years of Fatima with 1,000 Rosary rallies across America.



Page 15 On the front steps of New Orleans City Hall, 300 Catholics say "No!" to blasphemy at New Orleans Mardi Gras parades and revelries.

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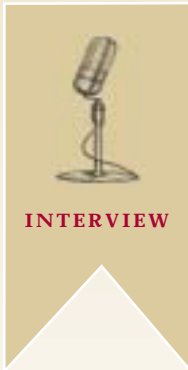
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The American TFP

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.



Why Do We Need Natural Moral Law?

*Michael Drake of Crusade interviews
The Most Rev. Robert J. McManus, D.D., S.T.D.,
Bishop of the Diocese of Worcester.*

Crusade: What is the significance of the natural moral law for a secularized country?

Bishop Robert McManus: The recognition of a natural moral law provides the common ground between believers and non-believers about the fundamental moral issues affecting the common good and our living together.

In a morally relativistic society like the United States, we have people who have reduced moral positions into personal opinions. Once my opinion differs from your opinion, the conversation breaks down. For example, if I appeal to Divine Revelation, whether Old or New Testament, a non-believer would say, "That is very nice for you, but I do not believe in that." Thus, the conversation stops.

However, when we both believe we share a common human nature that contains in itself fundamental inclinations geared toward fulfilling what it means to be human, we can talk. We can agree that it is necessary to reflect on these fundamentals, so as to encompass some type of moral position. From that disciplined reflection, we have a common language in terms of trying to work and live together in a morally acceptable way.

Crusade: So, it is an appeal to the human condition of that person?

Bishop McManus: It appeals to the fact that we have something in common, which is our human nature.

Another reason for retrieving the nat-

ural moral law tradition is that there are so many competing ideas of what it means to be human in our society. Because of our Faith, we have what we call a Christian anthropology or a Christian way to look at what it means to be human, because we look at our humanity through the light of Divine Revelation.

I think much of our moral discussion breaks down because people are working out of various anthropological visions—their understanding of what it means to be human. If we appeal to natural moral law, even before we get into that discussion, we raise the issue and put ourselves in a position to say, "Let us sit down and talk about what you think it means to be human. What do you think it means to act in a humane way?"

Crusade: What is the role of the Catholic laity in defending and promoting natural moral law? Where have the faithful been successful or helpful in a special or significant way?

Bishop McManus: First of all, we can apply this to our personal lives. Living in the midst of our religiously pluralist and morally irreligious society, we Catholics sometimes get the feeling we are very strange people who believe certain things about moral living that no one else does. However, if we become acquainted or re-acquainted with the



Bishop Robert J. McManus

natural moral law position, we would realize that the Catholic position is not sectarian or private. While our position is buttressed and supported by our faith in Divine Revelation, fundamental Catholic positions on morality are derived from human reason, reflecting on human nature, which is, in fact, natural moral law.

Secondly, if we seriously believe that the primary role of the laity is to transform society and to bring Gospel values and Church teachings to the public square, then, in a religiously and morally pluralist society, knowledge of natural law allows our Catholic laity to enter the public arena and involve themselves in public policy issues, using a language that is non-sectarian and non-theological, but is commonly shared by people, simply because it is a natural language.

Crusade: In the issues that are coming down the pike toward us—cloning, harvesting human organs, and the redefinition of death to incorporate new technologies that allow us to use the vital organs—do you have any comments on natural moral law from the perspective of bioethics?

Bishop McManus: If in the pursuit of retrieving natural moral law in terms of moral reflection, we can refocus on what it means to be human, then the way we treat the disabled, no matter how old, sick or challenged, determines

While our position is buttressed and supported by our faith in Divine Revelation, fundamental Catholic positions on morality are derived from human reason, reflecting on human nature, which is, in fact, natural moral law.

their dignity as a human person. Whether challenged, limited, or debilitated, the disabled are still human, and part of being human is that you do not destroy yourself or others. Hence, natural moral law condemns euthanasia or assisted suicide.

Crusade: It is hard to portray an image of natural moral law. Archbishop Chaput brought up civilization's problem of the image with that famous magazine cover of the zygote on the end of a needle. It does not look human, so it is not being treated as a human being. How can we overcome that image?

Bishop McManus: Again, we return to what it means to be human. Humanity is not exhausted by our ability to sense things. A fundamental part of being human is the use of intelligence. We can reflect on issues and go beyond what is immediately available by the senses. The senses, obviously, are used in the process of knowing. Sensation is fundamental. However, there is more than what meets the eye. That is certain in the case of the development of human life. Although the embryo is microscopic, it is still a real human life.

Crusade: So we appeal to the rational nature of man?

Bishop McManus: Yes, exactly. ■



Seminar for Catholic Formation in Peru

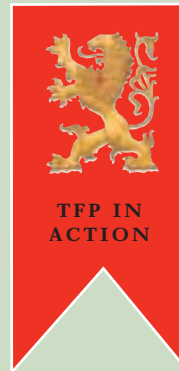
BY PETER SHIBLER

American TFP members Cesar Franco and James Bascom participated this past January 8–13, 2007 in a second annual Seminar for the Catholic formation of Latin American students. The event was held by *Tradición y Acción por un Perú Mayor*, a sister organization of the American TFP. There were participants from Argentina, Chile, Colombia and Peru.

This week of lectures, prayers, recollection and visits to local religious and historical sites inspired the participants to Catholic militancy and greater appreciation of authentic Catholic history and Spanish South American culture.

The seminar was held near Cuzco, the capital of the ancient Inca Empire. Participants met at a sixteenth century Franciscan monastery, now a hotel, an ideal setting to discuss Catholic history, the culture of Peru, and develop a counter-revolutionary strategy to fight for their remnants.

The lectures were current, deeply insightful and formative, sparking lively discussions. Cesar Franco and James Bascom were invited to give a talk on the activities of TFP Student Action at American university campuses and shared their know-how on methods of apostolate with the



youth on campus.

In addition to the daily lectures, the students visited Catholic and historic sites. In the main square of historic Cuzco stands the cathedral flanked by two auxiliary churches, Our Lady of the Triumph and the Church of Jesus, Mary and Joseph. In the cathedral is a miraculous crucifix known as “Our Lord of the Tremors,” credited with halting a terrible earthquake in 1650.

The participants also toured the works of the famous Cuzco School of Art, founded by the Jesuits in the early sixteenth century. On arriving at a new mission, the Jesuits usually founded a university and school of painting. The Cusqueño School, made up exclusively of Inca Indians, developed such a high form of art that their work attracted Italian artists looking to exchange ideas and techniques.

At the closing banquet on the night of January 13, a representative from each country spoke of their appreciation of the conference and their plans for the future, which included firm resolutions for the battles ahead. Many expressed their gratitude to Our Lady for graces received and placed their future actions under her patronage. ■



Above: Students from four Latin American countries attended the week-long conference near Cuzco, Peru.
Left: The participants learned about TFP Student Action's campaigns from James Bascom and Cesar Franco.



COVER
STORY

Is the Fatima Message Still Relevant?

BY MICHAEL DRAKE



Is there room in today's Internet world for the Fatima message? How can this message possibly attract today's distracted youth?

Well-meaning parents who attempt to talk to their children about Fatima are all too familiar with the glassy-eyed look, the sullen slouch or the increased volume on the iPod. Such reactions can sometimes demoralize and discourage apostles of the Fatima message. We do not understand how youth can resist that which has so many benefits for their young lives—they respond that the Fatima message is “so, like, yesterday.”

All too often, the Fatima message is drowned in the torrent of undigested information swamping today's teenagers. They are catatonically bombarded by unprocessed and useless trivia. Tossed about by vivid emotional issues, they frequently suffer from identity and relationship crises. Consequently, they see no value in Fatima's story. It seems to them somewhat childish, mind-numbingly boring, and totally disconnected from any of their problems. As apostles of the Fatima message, it is up to us to change that perception.

Our first difficulty is communication. A picture of Our Lady of Fatima or even the Rosary means little to some people.

They see no reason to pray at all. We need to somehow make the Fatima message relevant in their lives. On this 90th anniversary of the Fatima apparitions, it is high time to get back to the basics. We will only communicate the importance of the Fatima message if we remember why it is so important to us.

The Veracity of the Message

Lucia, Francisco and Jacinta were ten, nine and seven years old, respectively. They were normal children with the common faults of their age and the simple aspirations of Portuguese peasants. The Mother of God suddenly disrupted this normality with difficult problems, serious requests and a message of conversion or chastisement for the world.

The children's ignorance and extreme youth were the first proofs of the authenticity of their claims. Our Lady spoke about war, politics and the pope. Jacinta was so young she did not even know who the pope was. They were oblivious to the European crisis, and had only a vague notion of the war. They knew even less about moral problems. Yet they spoke with conviction about things they had no means of knowing.

Their story did not change under persecution. They were separated and questioned aggressively. Their account never

All too often the Fatima message is drowned in the torrent of undigested information swamping today's teenagers.



The three Fatima seers. From left to right, Jacinta, Lucia, and Francisco who were seven, ten, and nine years old respectively at the time of the apparitions at Fatima, Portugal.

differed. They were jailed and threatened with a horrible death. They never wavered.

Then came the most difficult trials—the test of popularity. Indiscreet people asked them for relics, sometimes in exchange for sums of money. They remained serene, calm and unmoved.

Content and Scope of the Message

The essence of Our Lady's Fatima message is the choice between conversion or chastisement. This message is very simple. So simple, in fact, that Our Lady charged three uneducated children to spread it to the whole world.

Already in 1945, TFP founder and ardent Fatima promoter Professor Plinio Corrêa de Oliveira wrote about what was at stake:

At Fatima, Our Lady delivered revelations of a universal scope. Our Lady confided to three shepherd children the whole contemporary crisis with its deep roots in impiety and sin and its consequent cataclysms and convulsions.

This message was not only aimed at Eastern European nations in order to bring them back to Christ. This message targeted rather the remnants of old Christendom, now steeped in a form of paganism worse than that of ancient times, for neopagans lack the excuse of ignorance that ancient pagans could have had. The ferment of western paganism is apostasy, a sin against the Holy

Ghost, the deliberate and satanic pursuit of error for its own sake. It is against the heretics of today, divested of the last traces of Christianity, that we need missionaries.¹

Indeed, Fatima addresses the problems of our time. Our apostolate will bear fruit to the degree we follow the methods Our Lady used at Fatima. In this article we will look at three powerfully effective methods she used and apply them to our own apostolate today: contrast, denunciation and revival of the notion of sin.

Contrast Good with Evil

The three seers were normal, honest children but not yet saints. Francisco died two years after the apparitions, and Jacinta died one year later. In this short time, these two children scaled the heights of sanctity. Father De Marchi, one of the best authors on Fatima, describes how a great transformation took place whereby these youngsters accomplished in a week what great saints did in a year. He affirms that Our Lady herself became their spiritual director.²

To achieve such an impressive transformation in such a short time, Our Lady employed the method of contrast. First, she dazzled them with the visions of the Angel of Portugal, "more brilliant than a crystal struck by the rays of the sun." This angel strengthened them with Holy Communion and taught them the prayer "My 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."³

After the angel's three visits, Our Lady herself appeared. Lucia describes



Today's electronic games and enticements mesmerize our youth, leaving little room for spiritual considerations.

her as “a lady dressed all in white more brilliant than the sun, shedding a light that was clearer and more intense than that of a crystal goblet filled with crystalline water and struck by the rays of the most brilliant sun.”⁴

During that first apparition, on May 13, 1917, Our Lady already asked them to sacrifice for sinners. As they agreed, She said, “Well then, you will have much to suffer, but the grace of God will be your comfort.”

Lucia continues,

It was upon saying these last words, “the grace of God” that for the first time she opened her hands, which emitted a most intense light that penetrated our breasts, reaching the innermost part of our souls and making us see ourselves in God, Who was that light, more clearly than we can see ourselves in the best of mirrors. Then, driven by a deep inspiration, we knelt down and repeated inwardly: “O Most Holy Trinity, I adore Thee! My God, my God, I love Thee in the Most Blessed Sacrament.”

In this apparition Our Lady seems to have given them a glimpse of the beatific vision, which introduced into their hearts a burning desire for God and Heaven.

The Other Side of the Coin

On July 13, 1917, during the third apparition, Our Lady opened her hands again. A shaft of light issuing from them penetrated the earth and the children saw Hell. The vision was so terrible that they later said that had they not been promised Heaven they would have died of fright.

Lucia writes:

We saw as it were, a great fire; submerged in that fire were demons and souls in human shapes who resembled red-hot, black and bronze-colored embers that floated about in the blaze, borne by the flames that issued from them with clouds of smoke, falling everywhere like the showering sparks of great blazes—with neither weight nor equilibrium—amidst the shrieks and groans of sorrow and despair that horrified us and made us shudder with fear.

The devils stood out like frightful and unknown animals with horrible and disgusting shapes, but transpar-



An exhibit of knights and horses in full armor at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City. The shining armor of the knights of old reflects the lofty ideals of the height of the Age of Chivalry: service to the Church, defense of the weak and the exaltation of virtue.

ent like black coals that have become red-hot.

At this apparition, Our Lady again asked the children to sacrifice for poor sinners. The contrast between the beauty of Heaven and the horror of Hell made the moral choice easier. The intense attraction to Heaven and the profound horror of Hell became the axis around

Show the splendor of the truth, goodness and beauty of Christian culture and compare these to the harsh falsehood, evil and ugliness of Revolutionary culture.

which their souls began to revolve. The contrast filled their young lives with a compelling meaning and purpose.

The fruits were rapid and enduring. The change in these children was amazing. Given the contrast of Heaven and Hell, virtue and vice, salvation and damnation, they chose to help make a difference.

From then on, their thoughts turned to God, Our Lady and how to help save poor sinners. The children often went off alone to pray and think, gave up much fun and games and spent long hours before the Tabernacle saying their Rosaries. They were so focused on opposing sin that they felt increasingly freer and unashamed to practice good. In an ever-growing spirit of sacrifice, they cheerfully accepted the news of their early deaths, offering them for the salvation of souls. Jacinta generously embraced the revelation that she would die alone far from all her loved ones, which for a child is a very difficult thing. In a short time, they were transformed from normal children into heroic saints. Today they are beatified and we pray that they be canonized soon.

Use Contrast in our Apostolate

Following the example of the method Our Lady used, we should use this method of contrast for our apostolate. We should show the splendor of the truth, goodness and beauty of Christian culture and compare these to the harsh falsehood, evil and ugliness of Revolutionary culture.⁵

A personal example serves as an example of contrast. As young boys participating in one TFP summer camp many years ago, we were taken to the

TFP Photo Archive / Michael Gorre

Arms and Armor Exhibit at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City. As we stepped into the grand hall, we saw a spectacular exhibit of charging horses, mounted by knights in full armor, visors down, lances ready in the full glory of manly virtue in battle array. The hours slipped away as we visited the various exhibits, our admiration growing for a civilization that could vest men in such militant splendor.

As the museum was about to close, our guides led us out through the modern-art section where we suddenly faced a hideous display of several columns of twisted books impaled on an old steel pipe and drenched in a thick varnish that formed a huge, shapeless glob at the pipe's base. With the memory of glorious, magnificent knighthood still fresh, we felt the boyish urge to topple these senseless, monstrous looking things. Fortunately, our guides, always zealous for law and order, stemmed the reaction. We went on to inspect several pieces of modern art

Unmasking the true, but hidden, goal of our culture of sin has a tremendous potential to help us, and those around us, to get a grip on our lives.

just as shapeless and senseless.

The Arms and Armor Exhibit and the Twisted Exhibit were part of the program. That contrast helped us to make one of the most serious decisions of our lives—which world would we fight for? Did we want the orderly, hierarchical, beautiful civilization we had admired all day, or the hideous insanity of the last half hour?

This method can be applied to a thousand circumstances with the necessary adaptations. But the principle stands: show the contrast and ask for a decision.⁶

There is one pitfall to avoid when using this method. Make sure the contrast is real. Never compare sin and ugliness to mediocrity. Mediocre goals, restricted horizons and mere correctness will not make the cut. This method is so powerful that, if we do not compare evil with an integral and splendid good, we actually will help the evil win. Only compare a hideous evil with an attractive good.

Providing the true, good and beautiful option takes work in our days. It takes effort to provide a beautiful ambience, an uplifting conversation, an inspiring objective or brilliant perspective. These do not just happen by themselves. These contrasts demand great and small sacrifices, but these are the sacrifices Our Lady asks to make the difference in our apostolate.

Denunciation

Evil slithers slowly, subtly, masking its final objective. A drug dealer never approaches a prospective buyer by saying, "Hey, want to be a drug addict living underneath an overpass?" Instead, he says, "Oh, are you feeling bad, unwanted and unloved? Take a tiny dose of this. It will make you feel better." Next time, when the drug dealer sees the prospective buyer again, the drug dealer asks, "Did you like that?" "It made me feel so good!" replies the unthinking prospective buyer. The drug dealer, like the snake, strikes the hapless buyer with, "Want a little more?" The answer is usually a feeble, "I guess"

How do we help this future addict? We warn him of the drug dealer's true, but hidden, goal. Denounce it. Pull off the "helper" mask. Show the end of the road: addiction, mental slavery, ruin and death.

In a filmed interview, Ted Bundy, the notorious serial killer, affirms that the common denominator of death-row inmates is an addiction to pornography, and that addiction starts with the tabloids at the supermarket checkout counters.⁷ And so it is with every type of evil. First there is a small, "harmless"

An enigmatic steel sculpture in front of a museum in Washington, D.C. Modern art often expresses a chaotic and disordered spirit consistent with sin and man's disordered passions.

TFP Photo Archive / Gary Isbell

beginning, then silent, slow decay, and finally “sudden” tragedy.

At Fatima, Our Lady denounced the true, but hidden destination of a culture of sin: Hell. Fatima unmasks the enemy by showing its final goal.

Hell is not a popular topic nowadays. During the TFP’s America Needs Fatima Home Visitation Program we show a slide presentation of Fatima’s story. The most questioned part is the section on Hell. Although a dogma of the Catholic Faith, many people no longer believe in Hell, and many of those who do, affirm no one goes there. No one is comfortable with the subject. Yet Our Lord promises that those who think of death, judgment, Heaven and Hell will not sin eternally (Ecclus. 7:40). This may be bitter medicine, but like all good medicine, truly necessary.

Unmasking the true, but hidden, goal of our culture of sin has a tremendous potential to help us, and those around us, to get a grip on our lives. We suddenly face a serious perspective that carries a powerful impetus for conversion. Exposing sin thus deals it the harshest of blows.

Reviving the Notion of Sin

Our Lady at Fatima used yet a third method, another powerful means we can use in our apostolate: reviving the notion of sin.

Referring to Professor Corrêa de Oliveira’s *Revolution and Counter-Revolution*, we quote: “One of the most significant missions of the Counter-Revolution is reestablishing or reviving the distinction between good and evil, the notion of sin in thesis, of Original Sin, and of actual sin.”

We live in a society that minimizes, hides and rejects the notion of sin. Sin is the forbidden three-letter word. Modern psychology and psychoanalysis systematically avoid the label. No one is ever “wrong.” A person evincing aggressive behavior, for example, either suffers from a complex, a syndrome, or is misunderstood or challenged. Ascribing moral culpability to acts is not an option.

If announcing at a social gathering, “homosexuality is morally wrong and sinful,” one would be mercilessly labeled “judgmental,” “unfeeling” or “homophobic.”



Family and friends gather together to say the Rosary. At Fatima, Our Lady asked us to make sacrifices for sinners. Countless opportunities present themselves daily for us to fulfill her request and fight the present culture of sin.

In the field of education, there are teachers who teach there is no wrong answer. Children must be allowed to be “creative.” Telling someone that they are wrong causes “suffering,” “hurt feelings” or “lowered self-esteem.”

Destroy the notion of sin, and the Ten Commandments are no longer needed. Without a notion of sin, there is no need for Redemption by Our Lord Jesus Christ. There is no need for the

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Sin is the forbidden
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Sacraments, and there is no need for all these “horrible” laws and morals. The decadence of any great nation is directly linked to the loss of the notion of sin.

Our culture goes to great lengths to avoid the word sin when talking about public blasphemy, abortion, artificial contraception, divorce, euthanasia, immodesty, indecency and homosexuality. The Fatima message makes clear the powerful means we have to overcome this. We need to call it what it is: sin.

Our call to repentance cannot be vague. Our call needs to be for repentance for sin.

How to Go About It?

Contrasting good with evil, denouncing evil, and reviving the notion of sin will take sacrifice. To persevere will take yet more sacrifice. At Fatima, Our Lady asked us to sacrifice for sinners. Here is our opportunity. These three methods will give us many opportunities to sacrifice for sinners.

Contrasting good with evil, as done by Our Lady, is a profoundly wise method. Indeed, if we only complain about evil without contrasting it with good, we will soon become tiresome nags spreading fear without hope. Presenting a splendidly attractive alternative to evil and forcing a choice is much more effective.

This requires not only “preaching” but real “engagement.” It requires the full and dynamic living out of our Catholic faith, morality and culture.

Pray and think about what to do. Then sacrifice to make it happen. Nothing convinces more than example. Within the flow of daily duties, there are a thousand things we can do to fight the culture of sin, thus answering Our Lady’s Fatima message. First, we must resort to the sacraments, ready fountains of grace, strength and wisdom. Then the possibili-

ties are almost endless. Perhaps join an apologetics group or start one, not only to expand knowledge of our marvelous Faith, but also to become its defender. We cannot love Catholic doctrine unless we know it. Today's youth love to challenge and to be challenged. Yet they frequently encounter no challenge in our Catholic Faith. Are we up to the task?

Get rid of the television, which ensures evil enticements are permanently lodged in the heart of the home. Among other things, boys need lots of good reading, adventure and the great outdoors. Girls tend to need more social events and good friends for conversation. Make the home their refuge, not their prison.

Join a protest against blasphemy such as the campaign against *The Da Vinci Code* movie, which produced great results. Pass out anti-blasphemy fliers and contact the pastor for permission to place them in church. Join a Rosary group. Frequently these are the most profitable long-term investments we will ever make. Perhaps you can host a First Saturday Devotion at your house. Make it an enjoyable event, with good food and games for the youngsters, then take everyone to confession and holy hour at the church.

Countering the culture of sin takes application, study, prayer, dedication, wisdom, courage and commitment. However, Our Lady elevated two youngsters to the heights of sanctity within three years by using these methods. Thus, these Fatima methods worked in 1917 and they will work in 2007. Our Lady will not fail us. We just need to get to work. Fatima is more than a story. It is a way of life that will not let us down. ■

Notes:

1. Plinio Corrêa de Oliveira, "Fatima," *O Legionario*, October 7, 1945.

2. Reverend John De Marchi, I.M.C., *Era uma Senhora mais brilhante que o sol . . .* (3d ed. Cova da Iria, Portugal: Seminario das Missoes de Nossa Senhora de Fatima).

3. Antonio A. Borelli and John R. Spann, *Our Lady of Fatima: Prophecies of Tragedy or Hope?* (The American Society for the Defense of Tradition, Family and Property, 1998), 29.

4. *Ibid.* 35.

5. *Revolution and counter-revolution* are used in the meaning within Professor Plinio Corrêa de Oliveira's *Revolution and Counter-Revolution*, which is available online at http://TFP.org/what_we_think/rcr.pdf.

6. This method is also encouraged by Saint Ignatius in his meditation on the two standards. We recommend *The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius: Based on Studies in the Language of the Autograph* by Louis J. Puhl, S.J. (Loyola University Press, Chicago).

7. *Fatal Addiction: Ted Bundy's Final Interview* (Focus on the Family, Colorado Springs, CO, 1989).

The Five First Saturdays

THE FORGOTTEN PART OF THE FATIMA MESSAGE

The Promise

On December 10, 1925, Our Lady promised Sister Lucia she would "assist at the hour of death, with the graces necessary for salvation, all those who on the first Saturday of five consecutive months confess, receive Holy Communion, pray a Rosary, and keep me company for a quarter of an hour meditating on the fifteen mysteries with the intention of offering me reparation."

How to Do the Five First Saturdays

There are four requirements to faithfully fulfill the Five First Saturdays.

1. Go to confession.
2. Receive Holy Communion.
3. Say five decades of the Holy Rosary.
4. Meditate for fifteen minutes on the mysteries of the Holy Rosary. (Separate from saying the Rosary.)

During the apparition of February 15, 1926, Sister Lucia presented Our Lord the problem some people had in confessing on Saturdays. She asked Our Lord if the confession would be valid if done within a period of eight days before or eight days after the first Saturday. Our Lord answered, "Yes, it can even be within many more days, provided they are in the state of grace when they receive Me, and have the intention of offering reparation to the Immaculate Heart of Mary."

The Intention

To console the Immaculate Heart of Mary, offer reparation for the blasphemies and ingratitude of unrepentant sinners, and for peace in the world.

The Reasons for this Devotion

On May 29, 1930, Our Lord explained to Sister Lucia why the Five First Saturdays.

"My daughter, the reason is simple. Against the Immaculate Heart of Mary, five kinds of offenses and blasphemies are committed:

- Those committed against the Immaculate Conception;
- Those committed against the virginity of Our Lady;
- Those committed against the Divine maternity, refusing at the same time, to accept her as the mother of men;
- Those committed by men who publicly attempt to instill indifference, scorn and even hatred for this Immaculate Mother in the hearts of children;
- Those committed by men who insult her directly in her statues."



COMMENTARY

Devotion to the Heart of Mary Will Save the World

BY PLÍNIO CORRÊA DE OLIVEIRA

Our Lady appeared to Lucia, Jacinta and Francisco, and gave them messages for the world. The seers affirmed these apparitions were to be made known to the Holy Father, the Sacred Hierarchy, and to all Christendom. Thus, either the proofs are clear, certain, and conclusive, rendering the apparitions worthy of credit, or the proofs are doubtful, confusing, debatable, and the messages false. If Our Lady wanted to make her message known to the world, she would not fail to arrange the events so as to supply mankind with reasonable motives to believe the message's authenticity—and she did.

Therefore, if the proofs are certain and the messages are authentic, we cannot fail to attach the greatest importance to what they contain. If



Plínio Corrêa de Oliveira

The Gravity of the World Situation According to the Fatima Message

Our Lady spoke to the world. She described the situation as extremely grave, pointed out mankind's frightening moral decadence as the cause of this situation, and threatened us with terrible earthly punishments—a new war, the spread

of the errors of Communism, persecutions of the Church, and what is a thousand times worse, eternal punishment if we fail to amend, and prescribed the necessary means for us to avoid all these punishments.

Despite some happy-go-lucky optimists who close their eyes to reality and say that our world of doubt, naturalism, moral laxity and worship of earthly pleasures is in accordance with God, we

must believe the contrary—because the contrary is what Our Lady tells us.

Some evolutionist sociologists delight in saying today is better than yesterday and tomorrow will necessarily be better than today. However, Our Lady affirms that reality is altogether different: Tomorrow will be better than today only if we amend our lives and do penance. Otherwise, no matter how much material progress is made in the realms of medi-

cine, finance, entertainment and personal comfort, we are marching toward a huge universal collapse.

Unfortunately, many optimistic theologians also try to create a nice atmosphere by claiming that hardly anyone is ever condemned to Hell. However, Our Lady teaches the opposite, not only with words but with an invincible, concrete argument: She showed Hell to the terrified little shepherds so they can tell the world what they have seen. And we should rather believe Our Lady than a wishy-washy theologian.

Supernatural Life is the True Solution

Our Lady points out prayer, penance and amendment of one's life as fundamental remedies for the contemporary world. According to her, on these three spiritual measures hinge the maintenance of world peace, the preservation of the West against Communist propaganda, and the very survival of civilization.

This could shock many incautious Catholics who place all their hopes in human resources such as seminaries, universities, newspapers, magazines, bookstores, movie theaters, works of charity and social assistance. Through this concept, everything is reduced to the material realm. De-Christianization is caused by a lack of resources and means of action to promote the Faith. The day we remedy this insufficiency we will have overcome de-Christianization. However, Our Lady appears in Fatima and does not utter a word about all these means of action. How to explain this mystery? And how to explain that the

Our Lady points out prayer, penance and amendment of one's life as fundamental remedies for the contemporary world.

Our Lady really spoke to us through the seers, we must attach the highest regard to her words, meditate on them, and through diligent analysis, draw the utmost from their meaning. On the other hand, if the proofs are uncertain, we had better not waste a second on the subject. Just as one cannot "somewhat believe" the messages, so also one cannot merely attribute "some importance" to their contents.

popes have recommended unceasingly that which Our Lady silenced? Are the Fatima messages in contradiction with papal guidelines?

The popes untiringly recommend using all natural and legitimate means to promote the social kingship of Our Lord Jesus Christ. However, in countless documents the popes also show that natural means would be useless without a continuous life of piety, mortification, and sacrifice. The soldiers of Christ must constantly bear in mind that the natural means must be channels for the grace of God; and that an apostle, whether a cleric or a lay person, must himself be a reservoir of the graces that must vivify his works.

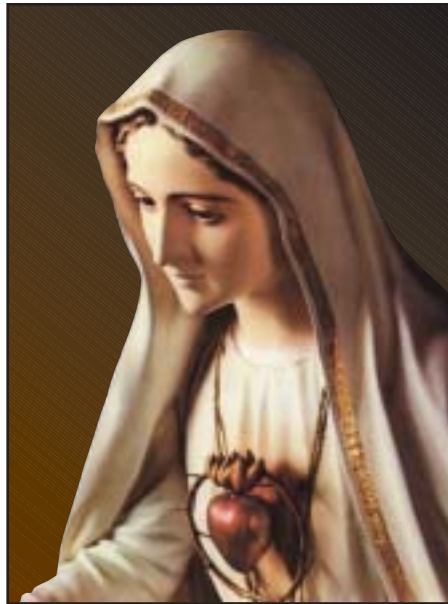
In other words, the popes have unceasingly promoted the essential theses in Dom Jean-Baptiste Chautard's book, *The Soul of the Apostolate*, and these are the same principles that Our Lady teaches us at Fatima. Far from discouraging us from dedicating ourselves entirely to apostolic works, the Holy Virgin nevertheless repeats the teaching of Our Lord in Bethany: One must live in close union with God, because everything emanates from this union, and without it even the best and most useful and opportune works remain sterile.

A Nation's Guardian Angel

Let us now quickly review other aspects of the Fatima messages. The apparition of the Angel of Portugal reminds us of Church doctrine, that each nation has its own Guardian Angel. There was a time when nations had a special devotion to their Guardian Angels, invoking him in their tribulations and especially in the struggle to maintain their people within the fold of the Church. Have we thought about this? Do we honor our own country's Guardian Angel?

Love and Fear of God

The Angel prayed in the presence of the shepherds who were bowed to the ground. It is an example we should imitate. In our prayers, we must be confid-



Our Lady of Fatima showed her Immaculate Heart crowned with thorns because of our sins.

*To people in antiquity,
God sent the prophets.
In our days, He spoke to
us through the Queen of
Prophets herself.*



The apparition of the Angel of Portugal reminds us of the Church doctrine that each nation has its own Guardian Angel.

ing, intimate, and filial. We should not forget that true filial piety does not exclude the most profound respect. This is another point in which the Fatima revelations contain precious teachings for modern man. By dint of talking constantly about democracy, at times we tend to introduce an egalitarian "tone" even in our relations with God.

A Devotion that Liturgists Combat

A certain liturgist mindset inside the Church for years turned Catholics against certain devotions, including worshipping the Most Blessed Sacrament outside of Mass and reciting the Holy Rosary. Still, these two devotions are strongly recommended at Fatima. To God, nothing is impossible, and had He so pleased, the three little shepherds could have been transported to some place where the Holy Sacrifice was being celebrated so they could receive Holy Communion. Yet Providence determined that an angel give them Holy Communion. If worshipping the Blessed Sacrament "*extra Missam*" was in any way opposed to the true manner of understanding the Real Presence, Divine Providence would not have decided that the Angel's Eucharistic adoration and the first communion of the little shepherds take place the way it actually did.

As for recitation of the Holy Rosary, it could hardly have been recommended with greater insistence. "I am the Lady of the Rosary," revealed the Blessed Virgin at the last apparition. And in nearly all apparitions she insisted on that devotion with the little shepherds.

Fortunately, both devotions are returning today by popular demand.

Devotions that Liturgists Seek to Erase from People's Hearts

Fatima also teaches with great insistence, devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, which also has been cast aside by a certain style of spirituality. All theologians have considered devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus one of the most precious graces comforting the Church over the

Divine Providence, so to speak, wanted to outdo itself by pointing out to men the devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

last few centuries. It was destined to rekindle in men the love of God, numbed by the naturalism of the Renaissance and the errors of Protestants, Jansenists, deists and rationalists. It was through this devotion that, in the 19th century, the Apostolate of Prayer produced an admirable reflowering of religious life around the world, and since the evils from which the Sacred Heart of Jesus must preserve us grow daily, obviously the need for this incomparable devotion grows accordingly.

Nevertheless, one must add that in the present aggravation of contemporary evils, Divine Providence, so to speak, wanted to outdo itself by pointing out to men the devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, which in a certain way refines the devotion to the

Sacred Heart of Jesus and takes it to its fullness. Studies about, and devotion to, the Heart of Mary are not new. However, a simple reading of the Fatima messages shows how insistently Our Lady wants this devotion for our days. The mission she entrusted to Sister Lucia was especially to remain on earth to attract men's hearts to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. During the visions, this devotion is often commended. At the second apparition, this Most Holy Heart appears crowned with thorns by our sins and asking for prayers of reparation on the part of mankind. It seems to us that this point, as it were, contains in itself all the treasures of the Fatima messages.

* * *

Thus, on the whole, the Fatima apparitions on the one hand instruct us

about the terrible gravity of the world situation and about the true causes of our evils, and on the other hand, they teach us the means by which we must avoid the earthly and eternal punishments that await us. To people in antiquity, God sent the prophets. In our days, He spoke to us through the Queen of Prophets herself. Having thus studied what Our Lady said, what can we say? The only suitable words are those of Our Lord in the Gospel: If any man has ears to hear, let him hear (Mark 4:23). ■

Note:

Owing to the first publication of this article in 1953, slight adaptations were made to the original. Originally published in *Catolicismo*, number 30, June 1953.



In Memoriam

*Jeanine Susan
Blanck*



*October 10, 1941–
January 7, 2007*

Jeanine Susan Blanck, cherished supporter of the American Society for the Defense of Tradition, Family and Property (TFP), died in her home on January 7, 2007, at the age of 65.

Mrs. Blanck was born October 10, 1941, in Kansas City, Kan. She was a supporter of the American TFP for 17 years. Her enthusiasm for Our Lady's Fatima message compelled her to dedicate the last six years of her life to the TFP's America Needs Fatima (ANF) Campaign. Working out of her home or in the ANF Rossville office, Mrs. Blanck spent long hours on the phone scheduling visits for the TFP custodians traveling around the country with Pilgrim Virgin statues spreading the Fatima message.

When not making phone calls, she traveled extensively in America and participated in TFP activities designed to restore Catholic values in society. One

such trip took her to Louisiana where she helped with a puppet show for families and a mother-daughter tea party.

She was also an active participant in the numerous anti-blasphemy campaigns carried out by the ANF Campaign of which ANF Rossville Office Director Francis Slobodnik said, "She was always the first to arrive and the last to leave."

It was during the recent campaign against the blasphemous movie *The Da Vinci Code* that Mrs. Blanck was diagnosed with the cancer that would take her life. However, this did not deter her from participating in protests, despite the nausea she was already enduring.

This list of her activities in no way illustrates all the good she did in this life. Her kindness to everyone she met made a lasting impression. Those that knew her will grievously mourn her death, but also thank God that such a person as Mrs. Blanck lived. ■



America Needs Fatima®

March/April 2007

PROGRESS REPORT

Catholics to French Quarter Mardi Gras:

“Keep Blasphemy Out!”

BY CESAR FRANCO

Three hundred Catholics gathered in front of New Orleans City Hall to pray and express their outrage for the blasphemous anti-Catholic floats in the French Quarter Mardi Gras promoted by the Krewe du Vieux parade organizers. The peaceful protest specifically responded to attacks on the honor and purity of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and Our Lady of Prompt Succor in a past Mardi Gras parade.

The American Society for the Defense of Tradition, Family and Property (TFP) and its America Needs Fatima campaign were joined by local organizations such as Prayer Warriors of Saint Joan of Arc, the Crusade for the Conversion of Greater New Orleans and Tradition, Family, Property—Louisiana in promoting the two-hour rally that started at 1:30 p.m. on Saturday, February 3.

Many claim shamelessly that a return

to the debauchery and blasphemy seen at past Mardi Gras celebrations is part of the “recovery process” for the city. But the rally participants registered their complete rejection of such a “recovery process” and asked city authorities to put a stop to such lewd and blasphemous displays against Jesus and Mary in the future.

The act of reparation was launched based on the documented accounts of lewd and perverse displays especially targeting the Sacred Heart and the Blessed Mother at the 2005 New Orleans Mardi Gras parades and revelries some six months before Katrina.

“In light of the tragedy and devastation that is so widespread in New Orleans,” said Rally Coordinator Robert Ritchie, “the last thing Mardi Gras revelers should be thinking about is



Above: Carried on the shoulders of TFP volunteers wearing the TFP ceremonial habit, a statue of Our Lady of Fatima presided over the act of reparation in front of New Orleans City Hall on February 3, 2007.



Right: Protest participants venerated the statue of Our Lady during the two-hour rally.

offending God with new blasphemies.”

Rally attendees heard inspiring addresses from leaders such as Nancy Albert, head of the The Prayer Warriors of Saint Joan of Arc for the Conversion of Greater New Orleans, and Thomas Drake, president of Tradition, Family, Property—Louisiana. Naomi Farve, former state representative, and Catholics who traveled from Kansas, Texas, and Florida for the event also addressed the crowd. Excerpts from the letter of Archbishop Alfred Hughes of New Orleans to Robert Ritchie of America Needs Fatima were read. The crowd also heard a special message from



Three hundred Catholics, some from as far away as Kansas and Florida, gathered to pray and to protest the blasphemies against Our Lord and Our Lady in the floats displayed by Krewe du Vieux at the French Quarter Mardi Gras in New Orleans, Louisiana.



Prince Bertrand of Orleans-Braganza, a direct descendant of Philippe, Duke of Orleans, after whom the city was named.



Above: Between the recitation of the Rosary and many other prayers, participants were addressed by Catholic leaders such as former Louisiana state representative Naomi Farve, Thomas Drake of TFP—Louisiana and Robert E. Ritchie of America Needs Fatima. **Left:** Nancy Albert, head of Prayer Warriors of Saint Joan of Arc for the Conversion of Greater New Orleans, speaks to the crowd on the steps of New Orleans City Hall.

The Rosary, litany to Our Lady of Prompt Succor, Saints Joan of Arc and Louis IX, and many other prayers marked the act of reparation with deep devotion.

Public outcry had been growing since the blasphemous floats appeared in the 2005 French Quarter Mardi Gras parades. The America Needs Fatima campaign had already asked its supporters nationwide to send tens of thousands of postcards addressed to the mayor and city council asking them to bring such public displays of blasphemy and lewdness to a halt.

In addition, TFP and America Needs Fatima supporters have been sending e-mail protests to the New Orleans City Hall and to members of the City Council. Besides the thousands of protest e-mails,

the Mayor has received an estimated 47,000 protest postcards.

Chris Rose, the king of the Mardi Gras parade this year, has complained of those who are starting to associate the parade with blasphemy and pornography. He reports on receiving a letter from the Archdiocesan director of pastoral service asking him to take measures against such displays (“King of the Damned?” *The Times Picayune*, Feb. 6, 2007).

“I am appalled at the insensitivity of the Mayor of New Orleans and the City Council in face of the countless Catholics who are offended by these insults to Jesus

and Mary,” said Campaign Director Robert E. Ritchie. “This rally is living proof that Our Lord and Our Lady have those who honor and defend them.”

The New Orleans protest is one of many such protests that seek to stem the epidemic of blasphemy that threatens to sweep the nation. For instance, thousands of Catholics appeared at 2,092 peaceful protests and prayer vigils against the blasphemous movie *The Da Vinci Code* in 2006.

To be involved in future prayer vigils and acts of reparation, please visit www.TFP.org or call 1-888-317-5571. ■

Reaching Across America *in 2007*

BY GARY J. ISBELL

It is that time again—time to renew the commitment to promote Fatima’s message. As the year 2007 started, America Needs Fatima proudly mailed 120,000 membership cards to the faithful supporters of its nationwide program.

Each official card, picturing a beautiful image of Our Lady of Fatima on a stunning autumnal background, is personalized and made to slide into a wallet as a reminder to ANF members of their link to this important apostolate.

On this 90th anniversary of the Fatima apparitions, America Needs Fatima is deeply grateful to its supporters who make it possible for this action to continue across America.

We plan to mark this 90th celebra-

tion with the largest expansion of America Needs Fatima in our history, thereby bringing Our Lady’s message to thousands of souls.

In February 2007, continuing its Mary in Every Home program, ANF will be mailing out 405,000 eight-by-ten-inch pictures of Our Lady of Fatima, with more to be sent in May and July; 20,000 additional Miraculous Medals will also be shipped; as will 80,000 fliers offering the book *Meet the Witnesses*.

In April, 82,000 90th Anniversary Fatima Rosaries will be mailed.

Besides these activities ANF is set to send a new mailing of Sacred Heart Badges, send one million pictures of the Sacred Heart to homes across America, expand our apostolate with college stu-



Through the support of its members, ANF continues to spread hundreds of thousands of devotional materials and literature promoting Fatima’s message.

dents to 950 campuses, expand the circulation of our *Crusade Magazine* to 100,000 families, and hold public Rosary rallies in honor of the 90th anniversary of the Fatima apparitions.

Our work is certainly cut out. *We thank our supporters for their generous part in it!* ■



You're invited...



America Needs Fatima

From the Desk of Francis Slobodnik

Dear Friend of Our Lady,

As you know, ninety years ago, the Blessed Mother appeared six times to three small children at Fatima, Portugal, asking for prayer and penance. During the third apparition, on July 13, 1917, she showed a vision of Hell and asked for prayers and penance to save the souls of poor sinners.

After that frightening vision, you probably remember that Our Lady went on to say that if men did not convert, Russia would spread its errors across the world, causing wars and persecutions of the Church, many would be martyred, the Holy Father would suffer terribly and eventually a terrible chastisement would come and annihilate several nations. Will America be among them? I don't know, but I do know there's so much you and I can do right now to commemorate the ninetieth anniversary of Our Lady's message.

On October 13, 2007, I'm pleased to invite you to join one of the 1,000 Rosary rallies across America, where devout Catholics will stand in public places and pray for our country's conversion and the triumph of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Your participation at a Rosary rally nearest you is very important. You see, mankind has ignored Our Lady's message and today we see a growing tide of moral corruption that threatens to swallow us up. For example, abortion, contraception, homosexual "marriage," pedophilia and pornography are tearing the family to shreds; and impure TV shows, movies and Internet are corrupting our youth. Even worse—terrible sins, insults and blasphemies constantly wound the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

Time is running out. To stop these sins and save America from annihilation, we urgently need to do penance and pray the Rosary as Our Lady requested at Fatima. That's why we're holding 1,000 Rosary rallies for the triumph of the Immaculate Heart in public places all across America on October 13, 2007, at noon local time—the day and time the Fatima miracle of the sun took place ninety years ago before 70,000 people.

It's important to hold the Rosary rallies in the public square because Our Lady's call to conversion is for everyone, public sins need public reparation, and the Catholic Faith is openly persecuted in our schools and in our culture.

You can help this network of 1,000 Rosary rallies across America. It's your way to say *YES!* to Our Lady's requests ninety years ago—*YES!* to requests that were largely ignored, neglected and even ridiculed.

To prepare for the triumph of the Immaculate Heart, I hope you will set aside a few hours on October 13, 2007, to offer public prayer and penance to the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Time is running out. Please call me *today* at (866) 584-6012 to let me know how you can help the 1,000 Rosary rallies. May God bless you!

Sincerely,

Francis Slobodnik
Coordinator



Finding the True Spirit of Christmas

BY MICHAEL WHITCRAFT

On December 17, 2006, around 300 local supporters, friends and neighbors of the American Society for the Defense of Tradition, Family and Property (TFP) met at the group's national headquarters in Spring Grove, Pa., for its annual Christmas Open House.

The open house was especially favored by the presence of His Highness Prince Bertrand of Orleans-Braganza, who spent Christmas with the American TFP.

Visitors who hoped the event would provide an ambience imbued with the true spirit of Christmas that puts Christ in the center had their expectations fulfilled. Highlights of the program included Christmas carols performed by the brass section of the TFP's Holy Choirs of Angels marching band, eggnog, hot cider, Christmas stories told by TFP volunteers dressed up as the three Magi, an assortment of holiday foods and hourly tours of the property. Statues of the Child Jesus, gift baskets, fruitcakes and compact discs of Christmas stories were raffled off every hour.

Most of the program was at the TFP headquarters' historic main house that was specially decorated for the event with a nine-foot Christmas tree, evergreen garlands and an intricately decorated Nativity crèche with European pieces.

Lively conversation was everywhere. It was an opportunity for old friends and new to find the true Christmas spirit, which is to wait with joyful expectation for the coming of the Christ Child, Who finds so many souls closed to Him in today's world. ■



Accompanied by TFP's Holy Choirs of Angels Band, visitors filled the air with sung praises for the Christ Child at the TFP's headquarters in Spring Grove, Pa.



Camp participant Zach Petrone receives a memento from Prince Bertrand, an autographed picture of King Saint Louis of France.

A New Year's Call to Chivalry

BY CESAR FRANCO

The year ended well for the participants of the 2006 TFP Call to Chivalry winter camp, which was held from December 28, 2006 to January 1, 2007 at the TFP-staffed St. Louis de Montfort Academy. Although shorter than TFP summer camps, it was a good opportunity for participants to meet together and refresh the ideals that unite those struggling to be Catholic young men. This year's camp was privileged to receive a visit by His Imperial Highness Prince Bertrand of Orleans-Braganza.

With the camp's theme being the struggle against Communism, John Drake shed light on its atrocities by focusing on what happens when an evil political system is applied to society. That same afternoon, TFP Vice President John Horvat denounced Communism for its brutal collectivist, centralized structure and for substituting the Leviathan for God.

In another lecture, Byron Whitcraft explained how the "errors of Russia" Our Lady warned about at Fatima include more than just hard-line Communism and how these errors have spread throughout the world.

The next days' lectures had Benjamin Hiegert telling the story of the persecution of the Hungarian Cardinal Jozsef Mindszenty, and Michael Whitcraft giving the biographies of two Catholic American heroes, Colonel John W. Ripley and Captain Guy Gruters, who fought against Communism.

On New Year's Eve, the participants went to the TFP headquarters in Spring Grove, Pa., where they had an evening chat with Prince Bertrand.

At the camp's conclusion, the participants joined American TFP members in praying to Our Lady for protection and guidance throughout 2007. Happy and ready to face all the struggles of the new year, camp participants then turned in for their final night before returning to their respective homes. ■



ANF Director Robert Ritchie and Gary Isbell prepare to send 10,000 Sacred Heart Badges to American troops.

A New Type of Dog Tag

BY JOSÉ FERRAZ

A few of these promises are:

- I will give them all the graces necessary for their state of life.
- I will bless every place in which a picture of My Heart shall be exposed and honored.
- I will console them in all their difficulties.
- I will be their refuge in life and especially at the hour of death.
- I will shed abundant blessings upon all their undertakings.

In 2006, the TFP and its America Needs Fatima Campaign sent 440,000



free Sacred Heart Badges to homes across America, with the goal of distributing a total of 1,500,000.

After that remittance, ANF sent over 10,000 Sacred Heart Badges/Dog Tags to our troops at home and abroad, accompanied by a brochure and well-wishing cards signed by

donors. ANF also sent our troops 10,000 pictures of Our Lady of Fatima.

Additional requests for badges for our troops continue to arrive. If you or someone you know would like to send a Sacred Heart Badge to a soldier, call 1-888-317-5571. ■

TFP Student Conference 'Beyond Pro-Life: Why We Must Challenge the Whole Cultural Revolution'

BY JOHN RITCHIE

The national headquarters of the American TFP bustled with life during the weekend of the annual March for Life, January 19 to 22, where participants gathered for informative lectures, lively discussions and camaraderie, and renewed their desire and enthusiasm to struggle for the restoration of Catholic culture and principles.

The conference, "Beyond Pro-Life: Why We Must Challenge the Whole Cultural Revolution," addressed the root causes of abortion, tracing the origin of today's crisis back to the humanism born of the Renaissance.

Sparking great interest was a talk delivered by Prince Bertrand of Orleans-Braganza titled, "Chastity: An Ideal of Catholic Chivalry." To illustrate how puri-

ty is a virtue worthy of true manhood, Prince Bertrand recounted an incredible deed of Godfrey of Bouillon, leader of the First Crusade, who possessed amazing physical strength. A sultan once challenged Godfrey's strength and asked him to cut off a camel's head, which Godfrey did with a single stroke. The astonished Muslim asked what the secret of his strength was. The crusader replied that his secret was "never to have sinned against the virtue of chastity."

Other riveting lectures expounded upon topics such as innocence, knighthood, confidence and the role of temporal society according to the



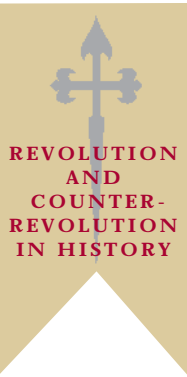
Above: Conference participants had the opportunity to meet Bishop Eugenijus Bartulis of Šiauliai, Lithuania, who also attended the March for Life. **Right:** The lectures provided the students with much food for thought and fuel for action as they face the challenge of fighting the Cultural Revolution.



social teaching of the Catholic Church.

At Holy Mass on Monday morning prior to the March for Life, participants spiritually prepared themselves not only to march against the sin of abortion, but to vigorously oppose the whole Cultural Revolution and thus go beyond pro-life.

Just as the Crusaders of old said the most beautiful adventure in the world was theirs, those now engaged in the cultural war for Christian civilization can say their adventure is equally beautiful and even more critical. ■



Chapter XXII

Clash of Cultures

Part I

BY JEREMIAS WELLS

In 1519, the Spaniard Hernan Cortes landed on the Mesoamerican coast with 553 men and 16 horses, and prepared to confront a bloody, pagan empire of 11 million Aztecs. We know that Cortes had a sense of destiny and, like Abraham of Ur and Haran, he was going from the known to the unknown in order to fulfill a vision. He was inspired by several motives, not the least of which was his devotion to God and his King, the recently crowned Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire, Charles V. But what do we know of the Aztecs and the Mesoamericans in general who the civilized world until a few decades earlier had not known even existed? That will be the subject of the first part of this chapter. Here we will examine the political and cultural conditions of the Indians at the arrival of the first Europeans and trace the Indians' historical development back to the incontrovertible evidence supplied by archeology (and not the radiometric dating of a scattering of animal bones). Our attention in the second part of this chapter will be focused on the confrontation between the Aztecs and the Spanish under Cortes.

Mesoamericans

The first question most people would like answered is when and from where did the so-called Native Americans arrive, for they certainly were not indigenous to this continent. The answer to that is, frankly, we do not know, and given the limited material available, probably never will. Hardly a year goes by without a wild hypothesis being floated by some paleontologist with an advanced degree only to be shot down by some proponent of the previous one.

Working mostly from animal bones and projectile points (arrow and spearheads), a wide array of investigators with a pre-conceived evolutionary bias is beginning to concoct extravagant dating systems that cannot be empirically maintained. Yet their own words indicate a difficulty in adjusting their conclusions to the inconclusive evidence they uncover. In a recent issue of *National Geographic*¹, the author of the text, in a set-up paragraph admits, "A flood of new data has thrown the study of early Americans into exciting disarray." Three pages later he goes on to say, "This is a bad time if you want certainty about the first Americans, but a good time if you like informed mystery." As always these displays are accompanied by stunning artwork and impressive, multicolored maps. Superimposed on one of the maps are six spear points that they date from 9,000 to 20,000 years ago and then go on to concede that stone cannot be dated by the usual methods. In one two-page painting they acknowledge in the caption, "Fact and imagination mingle in art to re-create life 14,000 years ago . . ." Yet for all this frenzied activity, the only indisputable archeological evidence of human activity, the domestication of plant crops, only goes back to 3,000 B.C., to be followed by the growth of agricultural villages between 2,000 and 1,000 B.C.

Comparison with Early Mesopotamia

Many parallels have been noted between the emerging high culture of the Amerindians and that of the Mesopotamian River Valley, for only with agriculture and the resulting settled communities, is civilization possible. Excavations at numerous sites along



Quetzalcoatl, the serpent god to whom the Aztecs offered human sacrifice.

the Tigris-Euphrates River Valley indicate that crop raising began there and spread to the rest of the world in ever-widening circles (with the possible exception of this hemisphere).² For the dates we have to rely on the studies of Father Patrick O'Connell³ for we are treading on controversial ground—the intellectual battlefield between Modernism (evolutionists and multiculturalists) and those who see a divine plan for the universe.

He had studied the reports of the archeologists of several sites and noted at many of them they discovered an eight to ten feet thick, water-laid silt deposit between several layers of occupation, which indicated Noah's great flood. In order to deflect the obvious conclusion of a massive flood, the followers of the evolutionist paradigm try to juggle the dates to give the absurd appearance of only local floods. Furthermore, Father O'Connell also noted that the pre-flood strata indicated a superior culture to that which followed the flood, thus indicating a break in the continuity of history. The lower levels also gave evidence of crop cultivation, domesticated cattle and the use of the loom. We can place that culture somewhere around 10,000 B.C. and the Deluge at 7,000 B.C.

Another piece in the picture of civilization was added with the birth of writing around 3,300 B.C. by the Sumerians. They first used pictures on clay slabs to represent objects or ideas (a stage beyond which the Mesoamericans never advanced). The key step came when the pictograph no longer represented the

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object but simply the sound of its name, thus each symbol stood for a syllable. All alphabets in the world today descend from a single writing system devised in the Syrian-Palestine region shortly before 1,500 B.C. And so we will see that the development of the major centers of high culture in the Americas in the tropical forest of the Mexican-Guatemalan area and in the uplands of Peru resembled ancient Sumer and Egypt in going from farming to settled villages to religious cult centers dominated by temples and pyramids.

The Olmecs

The Olmecs, the first identifiable Mesoamericans with a name, emerged along Mexico's Gulf lowlands around 1,200 B.C. Their homeland, a small swath of land approximately 250 miles along the coast and no more than fifty miles inland, presented a rather uncomfortable, hot and humid climate accompanied by numerous swamps, lakes and rivers, but it did provide an abundant source of food. Where they came from or what language they spoke is not known even after extensive investigation.

Increased food production had the effect of multiplying the number of villages, which in turn looked to a larger city for religious and political guidance. Animist in nature, the Olmecs worshiped the jaguar or, judging by their elaborate jade work, a half-human, half-animal creature.

Two features distinguish this emerging culture: Their fascination for sculpturing colossal, disembodied heads and the

growth of the first cities on the continent. Huge heads with fleshy lips and flat, broad noses, some as much as ten feet high and weighing twenty tons, had been hauled dozens of miles to one of the two major cities, San Lorenzo or La Venta. This required political or religious leaders with sufficient authority to control a large labor pool of workers and craftsmen. The two main cities were not for residential use (except for priests and elite managers) but for religious ceremonies. Eventually the population of both centers mysteriously vanished, be it through revolt, conquest, socio-cultural factors or all the above, thus adding another precedent in Mesoamerica to be repeated many times. The inhabitants of San Lorenzo and the surrounding villages abandoned the area sometime during the tenth century B.C. The same demise affected La Venta five centuries later, causing the entire Olmec society to disappear and fall beneath the encroaching jungle.

The Maya

The flowering of the Mesoamerican culture occurred among the Maya between A.D. 250 and 900, the Classic Period, and has received extraordinary praise by all the scientists who have acquainted themselves with it. Their territory covered a quadrangular area that ran from the Yucatan Peninsula through the central tropical rain forest to the Guatemalan highlands along the Pacific Ocean.

When the Olmec societies began to degenerate around 400 B.C., they had already passed their achievements on to the Maya, especially the use of the calendar. Emerging higher cultures must develop some system of recording time in order to guide activities in the agricultural and ceremonial year. This led to remarkable advances in astronomy, for both combined to chart celestial motions.

As we have already noted, cities began to develop and grow along with increased food production to serve as centers for religious worship and government but not for general residential use. Huge, stately pyramids up to 200 feet high rose from the jungle floor, surrounded by elaborate palaces where the city's royal family and the managerial class lived alongside the priest-astronomers

who officiated at the pagan rites. The peasants who supplied the labor and food lived in huts with thatched roofs in villages that surrounded the ceremonial centers. Once artisans and merchants moved into these centers, they reached a population that averaged approximately 25,000 and represented the most culturally advanced society in the pre-Columbian New World.

Decline

Western civilization had its roots in the simple discoveries and inventions in the river valleys of the Tigris, Euphrates and the Nile and then spread to the lands watered by the Mediterranean, especially Greece and Rome. Conversely, Mayan culture reached its zenith during its Classic Period, but instead of climbing to new heights it declined because of severe limitations. They never discovered the use of the wheel, metal tools or the plow, and moreover lacked large domesticated animals to pull one. The lack of draught animals and sailboats presented transportation problems, especially an inability to feed large armies in the field. Consequently, the Mayan territory was never unified and remained a bunch of loosely related, squabbling cities and villages, which left them vulnerable to a host of problems that hastened their demise. One other area of stunted growth was their writing system that never advanced beyond pictograph stage (glyphs). The Sumerians invented phonetics before 3,000 B.C., and the Phoenicians invented the alphabet less than 2,000 years later.

Each city-state certainly had its own characteristics, but a study of Copan can give some clue as to why the inhabitants of the Mayan cities simply walked away, back into the jungle, never to return. Copan, near the border between Guatemala and Honduras, saw its population with a bloated hierarchy reach 27,000 in A.D. 750 when the food supply became inadequate owing to drought and overproduction. A reduction in available land led to fighting among the farmers. In the city, the health of the people deteriorated as disease and malnutrition increased. The source of the king's power and authority came from



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Mayan ruins at El Caracol. Severe cultural limitations and the practice of human sacrifice may have been responsible for the evacuation of the Mayan cities before the arrival of Hernan Cortes.

his ability to intercede with the gods to provide rain and prosperity. When that failed, so did the monarchy. No king in Copan is mentioned in their hieroglyphic slabs after A.D. 822 and the royal palace was burned down in A.D. 850. Most of the other cities that experienced adverse conditions and dissatisfaction with their overbearing and impotent monarchs were abandoned by A.D. 900. Some lingered on for a few years or were re-inhabited by more militant tribesmen from the western highlands. By the time Cortes arrived, all of them were covered by vegetation.

Pagan Superstition

But there is another unsettling factor that must be considered: a religion and social system whereby the gods must be appeased by the letting of blood. This flowing of blood came to dominate not only the ritual life of the Mesoamericans but also their cultural side, for that is what impelled them to construct such remarkable structures all across Central America. Initially during the middle of the Classic Period of the Maya, evidence indicates that the blood came from kings and their families. They would pierce various parts of their bodies with sharp instruments, collect the flowing blood on paper, and then burn them to propitiate their insatiable gods. The women punctured their tongues and then ran a thorn-studded rope through the hole. The gods, according to the images on slabs and murals, embodied the vilest creatures with characteristics of something expelled from the depths of the underworld. As time passed, murals showed captives dripping blood from crushed fingers. Toward the end, sacrificed children and adolescents were placed in the burial vaults with the deceased kings. We apologize for relating such gruesome facts—other offensive details have been left out—but we felt it necessary to give some indication of the circumstances that might have contributed to the Mayan collapse.

The Aztecs

During the Classic Period, the Mexican highlands also witnessed colossal



Map showing the spheres of influence of the Mesoamericans.

achievements and mysterious failures. Teotihuacán, an architectural wonder that influenced the entire area, grew into one of the largest cities in the world with a population of over 150,000. The human sacrifice of at least 200 young men accompanied the construction of the Temple of Quetzalcoatl (feathered serpent). Like so many other sites, it was inexplicably abandoned around A.D. 750, surviving only as a pagan shrine for Aztec rulers who also worshiped the serpent god.

After the fall of Teotihuacán, control of the central highlands came from successive waves of nomadic barbarians that kept the hills bathed in turmoil and violence. Uncultured and despised by all who came in contact with them, the Aztecs, the last arrivals who eventually called themselves the Mexica, entered the lake system known as the Valley of Mexico. Possessing no land and few skills, they utilized their disposition for ferocity by entering the service of a leading city-state as mercenaries. Success in their chosen trade incurred the wrath of a more powerful neighbor who swept down upon their camp and hauled them off into slavery. This close contact with successful farmers, painful as it may have been, worked to their advantage when they fled into the marshlands of Lake Texcoco a couple of generations later.

By A.D. 1375, the Aztecs had

reclaimed large tracts of land sufficient to build a thriving metropolis that they named Tenochtitlán (modern Mexico City). With grim determination, much like their Assyrian counterparts in the ancient Middle East, they conquered all the neighboring city-states through the use of terror and savage human sacrifice, which on some occasions numbered thousands of brutally murdered victims. Just about the time that Columbus was cruising off the Honduran coast in A.D. 1502 on his fourth voyage, the Aztecs had reached the height of their imperial ambitions by developing a highly organized and efficient state the details of which we will study in the second half of this chapter. ■

Bibliographical Note:

Two recent editions of scholarly works were exceptionally helpful: Richard A. Diehl, *The Olmecs* (New York, 2004) and Michael D. Coe, *The Maya* (New York, 2005, 7th ed.). The analysis of flood data along with the traditional Catholic view of the Deluge in general appears in Father Patrick O'Connell, *Science of Today and the Problems of Genesis, The Deluge and the Antiquity of Man* (Hawthorne, Cal. 1959).

Notes:

1. December 2000.
2. For a more complete treatment of this material, see two articles in our magazine, *Tradition, Family, Property*, May-June 1994, pp. 33–38 and July-August 1994, pp. 28–32.
3. O'Connell, op. cit., Book II, Chap. IV, pp. 103–109.

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This shifting of the debate has forced the pro-abortionists to abandon their false rhetoric of sexual liberation, feminism and the plight of poor women. It has forced their enthusiastic supporters to become embarrassed apologists who must repackage abortion "rights" as a privacy issue, a libertarian freedom, a regrettable yet necessary evil, or even a pro-family initiative. It has caused the pro-abortion movement to stray from its feminist and sexual liberation roots, disillusion its militants and thus jeopardize its future.

Indeed, the more pro-abortion advocates try to moderate their extremist message, the worse it becomes for their cause since the ugliness of abortion only highlights the hollowness of their cosmetic changes. The more compassionate they try to appear, the more indefensible becomes their support for partial birth abortion. The more concern they express for young girls, the more horrific becomes their defense of the deliberate hiding of the abusers of minors who force abortions upon their victims and abuse them yet more. The more they begrudgingly acknowledge the humanity of the unborn, the more tragic is the picture of the fully formed child in the mother's womb now seen through three-dimensional ultrasound images.

The pro-life movement's greatest victory is that it has made abortion a great moral battle. On these grounds, huge sectors of the American public now reject abortion. Those in the middle have major reservations and doubts. A radical pro-death minority is left unmasked and exposed by the increasingly clear moral hideousness of the practice.

No electoral victory can erase these gains. Politicians ignore this issue to their own peril. In fact, the pro-life cause has recruited and secured the support of bishops and priests who have begun to speak out against these shameless pro-abortion politicians receiving Holy Communion.

Now is not the time to give up or stay the course. It is the time to press ahead toward victory!

If We Fight on, God Will Give the Victory

How is victory possible with so many obstacles yet remaining?

We forget that the pro-life fight has never been a human battle. We have always fought against seemingly overwhelming odds, and we have always called upon Providence, knowing that those who defend God's law can expect His aid.

With God's grace, all is possible. If He gave us so many successes to date, He will take us to the end. If we trust and keep praying and fighting, He will not fail to lead us to the final victory!

Fatima's Ninetieth Anniversary

Speaking about victory, Catholics commemorate this year the ninetieth anniversary of the Blessed Mother's apparitions at Fatima. This great event has implications for all those who defend God's law. When the Mother of God said, "Finally, my Immaculate Heart will triumph," we know that this triumph includes a great moral victory as well. Hence, does this not mean a promise of total victory for the pro-life cause?

On this ninetieth anniversary, we



The pro-life movement has made abortion a moral battle in America, a great victory that increases the number of those who reject it and decreases and unmask those who support it.

must thus redouble our efforts, Rosary in hand, focusing on this moral issue and confident that if we continue to make every effort, we will see not just an end to abortion but the triumph of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. ■

Notes:

1. American Life League, "Planned Parenthood Closes Clinic After Clinic," December 13, 2006, <http://www.all.org/?article.php?id=10890>.

2. Elizabeth Becker, "Head of Group Backing Right to Abortion to Step Down," *New York Times*, September 22, 2003.

California Counterpart to Washington, D.C.'s March for Life a Success

BY PHILIP CALDER

An estimated 25,000 turned out on January 20, 2007 at the Third Annual Walk for Life in San Francisco, Calif., more than triple the number of participants who marched the first time.

Several speakers, including National Director of Priests for Life Father Frank Pavone, opened the four-mile walk down scenic Embarcadero. Overhead, a plane towed a streamer with the words, "Stop Abortion Now!"

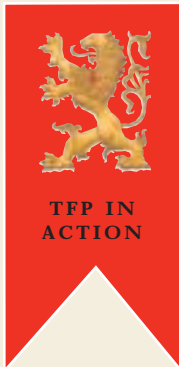
A contingent of friends and supporters of TFP America Needs Fatima hoisted along its red standard and banner that read, "If we trust and keep praying and fighting, God will not fail to give us the final victory!"

While scattered groups of counter-protesters spat out their vitriolic slogans, a continuous flow of passersby often applauded or raised their Rosaries in solidarity. ■



Third Annual Walk for Life in San Francisco, Calif. TFP banner in background.

This year's March for Life in Washington, D.C. drew an estimated 150,000 enthusiastic marchers, signaling a "New Spring" for the Pro-Life cause.



FIGHTING ABORTION: *Time to Press Ahead Toward Victory*

BY JOHN HORVAT II

Since the infamous *Roe v. Wade* decision, the unthinkable has happened for the pro-abortion movement. What should have been a simple matter riding on the coattails of the Sexual Revolution of the sixties has become a moral and political quagmire. Pro-abortion advocates have lost their vision with no exit strategy in sight.

Examining the records, pro-life advocates have pummeled pro-abortion radicals. The facts are there for all who want to see. Several states are reduced to having only one abortion clinic; some abortion clinics are open just once a week. Pro-life activists have ensured that abortion clinics are not found in ninety percent of American counties.

Yet more startling is that abortion clinics are closing right and left. Since 1995, Planned Parenthood has closed clinics at a net rate of one clinic per month. The number of total clinics now stands at the lowest level since 1987.¹ Doctors and nurses to staff these death clinics are becoming increasingly hard to find and retain. Some facilities resort to flying in out-of-state doctors because local practitioners are loath to associate themselves with the deadly trade.

State legislatures have enacted hundreds of abortion restrictions based on parental rights, preventing the abuse of minors, informed consent or even health code violations.

Indeed, on every field, the pro-abortion movement is losing ground. Many even question its future. "Americans have become complacent in the belief that this right will never be taken away, and they are wrong," said Kate



TFP message at the 34th annual March for Life in Washington, D.C.

Michelman when stepping down as president of NARAL Pro-Choice America in 2003.²

In his 2004 book, *Bearing Right: How Conservatives Won the Abortion War*, William Saletan writes: "Many people think that the political struggle over abortion has been resolved and that feminists have won. They are mistaken."

The pro-abortion lobby is losing not through any lack of resources. Millions of dollars flow into their coffers. It is not for lack of media sympathy or pro-abortion politicians who now hold majorities on state or federal levels. It is not just restrictive laws that explain the clinic closings.

No, the reason abortion has so polarized the nation is that it has become a moral issue that gnaws at the heart of mainstream America. The pro-life movement has succeeded in focusing the debate where it belongs: the breaking of God's law by the taking of innocent human life.

TFP volunteer hands out fliers at the March for Life in Washington, D.C.



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