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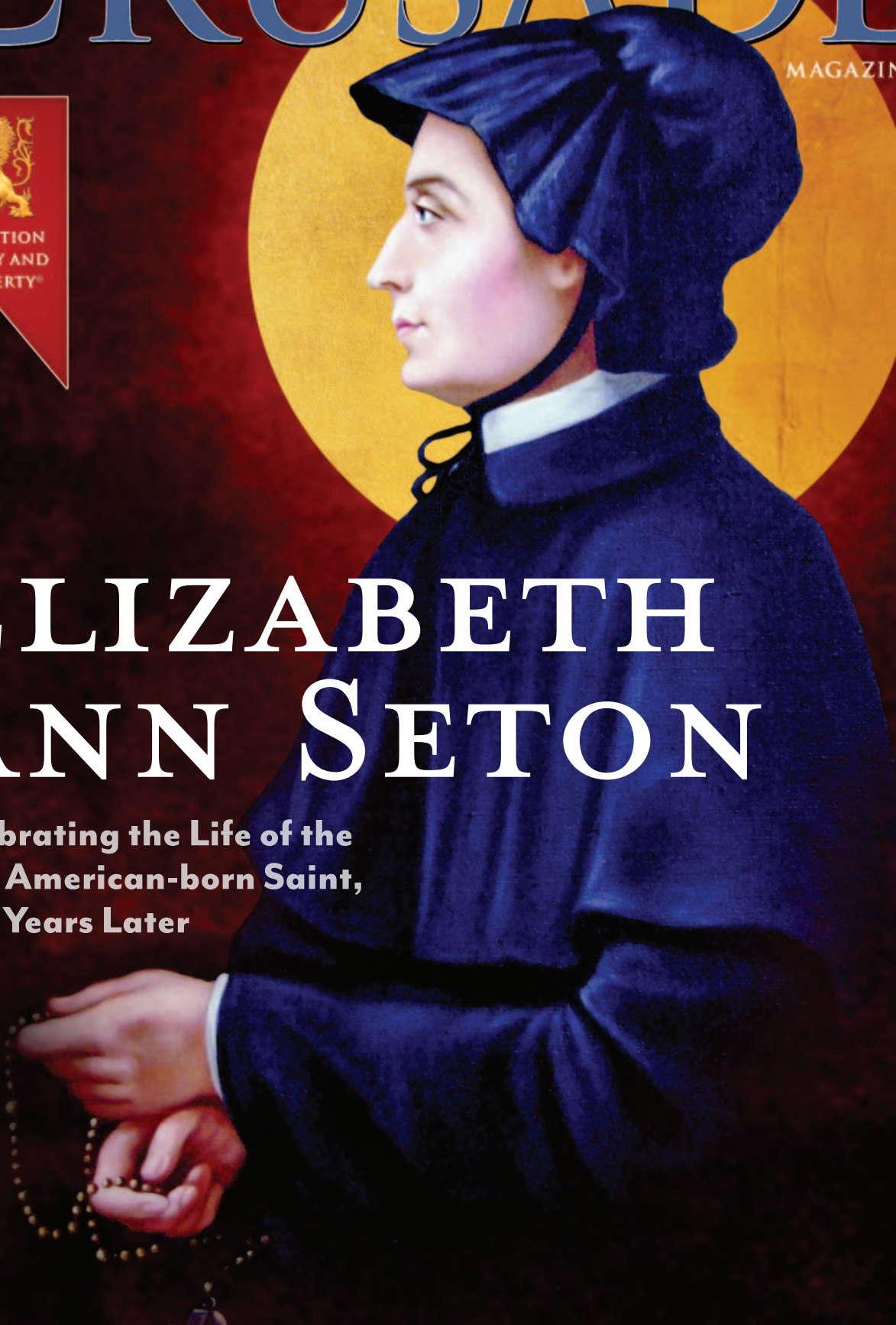
January/February 2021

MAGAZINE



ELIZABETH ANN SETON

**Celebrating the Life of the
First American-born Saint,
200 Years Later**



In *Pelusa*, nineteenth century writer Fr. Luis Coloma S.J. spins an exquisite religious “fairy” tale. A classic yet unique tale of good and evil, virtue and vice, struggle and conquest, *Pelusa* is the sprightly, devotional, moving story of a little princess who embarks on an exciting adventure to find her lost family and home.

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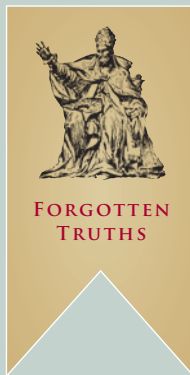
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On the Code of Canon Law, Abortion and Excommunication

The current Code of Canon Law (1983) does not give the definition of excommunication; it assumes that it is known.*

In the case of procured abortion, if excommunication applies it is given for the canonical crime of abortion, not for the mortal sin of abortion. The law punishes the crime; God punishes the sin. The penalty for mortal sin is the loss of sanctifying grace and ultimately hell, if there is no repentance and absolution from sin. Abortion is punished by the law contained in the Ccode because it constitutes a crime as established in the same Code (Canon 1398).

There are two distinct ways in which excommunication is incurred. The first is when excommunication is automatic: *latae sententiae* (“sentence (already) passed”). This means precisely that it is not the ecclesiastical authority (pope or bishop) that is excommunicating, but that it is the Church itself that is punishing someone with an excommunication through its universal law (the Code of Canon Law). The opposite of *latae sententiae* is *ferendae sententiae* (“sentence to be passed”), which means that the penalty is not automatic,



but is imposed by ecclesiastical authority.

The following individuals are affected by the *latae sententiae* excommunication of Canon 1398:

1) The woman, if she freely sought an abortion or consented to it (if she was forced, she does not incur the penalty);

2) All those without whose direct cooperation the abortion could not be practiced (doctors, nurses, other employees of the clinic necessary for the execution of the abortion (Canon 1329).

As for other people, such as parents, husbands or companions who force a woman to have an abortion and legislators who promote abortion, they commit a serious sin and a crime of cooperation for which they could be punished by the bishop with a *ferendae sententiae* penalty (Canon 1399; see definition above). Moreover, they must be denied Communion, not because they have been excommunicated, but because they have become public sinners, unworthy of receiving the Sacrament (Canon 915).

*The 1917 Code of Canon Law gives the following definition: “Excommunication is a censure by which one is excluded from the communion of the faithful...” (Canon 2257).

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A rendition of the Fellicchi portrait of Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton, originally painted in 1804 by an unknown artist

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Crusade Magazine is a publication of The American Society for the Defense of Tradition, Family and Property (TFP). Direct all requests and inquiries to: *Crusade Magazine*, P.O. Box 341, Hanover, PA 17331 or email to: crusade@TFP.org. Web: www.TFP.org. Tel.: (888) 317-5571, Fax: (570) 450-6352. © 2021 by The Foundation for a Christian Civilization, Inc. This publication may include images from iStockphoto™ and Dreamstime™ which are protected by copyright laws of the U.S. and elsewhere. ISSN 1096-3782 LCCN 98-641433

M-169 (FN2012)

CRUSADE

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THE AMERICAN TFP

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

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



IN BRIEF

Deadly Cost of Defunding Police

Paul Cassel, a former federal judge and professor of criminal law at the University of Utah, found that homicides are rising in U.S. cities where police departments suffered budget cuts or were forced to scale back their presence. On September 10, 2020, he posted his paper “Explaining the Recent Homicide Spikes in U.S. Cities: The ‘Minneapolis Effect’ and the Decline in Proactive Policing” for publication in *Federal Sentencing Reporter*, 2020. Cassel wrote: “If this

thesis is correct, it is reasonable to estimate that, as a result of de-policing during June and July 2020, approximately 710 additional victims were murdered and more than 2,800 victims were shot.” Cassel concluded that “2020 will easily be the deadliest year in America for gun-related homicides since at least 1999.” It seems many of the murders are a result of riots instigated by Black Lives Matter after the death of George Floyd in Minneapolis, where the City Council attempted to defund their police department, but numerous citizens complained, and the council conceded.

Congress Called for Action to Stop Anti-Catholic Hate Crimes

On September 25, 2020, sixteen U.S. House Republicans sent a letter to Attorney General William Barr asking him to investigate the perpetrators of “anti-Catholic hate crimes” including “any organizational or ideological connections between them.” Congressman Jim Banks (R-IN) led the charge against “an unusual number of horrific and brutal attacks on Catholic and Church properties.” In July 2020,



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Steven Shields drove his van into Queen of Peace Church in Ocala, Florida and set it on fire. Also in July, the San Gabriel Mission in Los Angeles, California, was burned. It was founded by Saint Junipero Serra and the tragedy remains unsolved. Vandals

have attacked many other churches across the country, while statues of our Lord Jesus Christ and the Blessed Virgin Mary have been toppled, burned or decapitated.

Natural Resources More Abundant Than Ever

Despite the doomsday predictions by the Green movement that natural resources are rapidly depleting due to overpopulation, the Cato Institute found evidence that Earth’s resources are more abundant than ever. In their April 2020 “Simon Abundance Index,” Cato compared prices of fifty basic commodities between 1980 and 2017

such as wheat, rice, natural gas, crude oil, and beef to how long it takes to earn enough money to buy a particular good and the impact of population growth on the good’s availability. “Between 2018 and 2019, the world’s population increased from 7.594 billion to 7.677 billion or 1.1 percent,” Cato found. “Over the same period, the nominal prices of fifty commodities declined by an average of 6.65 percent and nominal gross domestic product (GDP) per



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hour worked increased by 3.8 percent.” In sum, “the Earth as a whole was 570.9 percent more abundant in 2019 than it was in 1980.” Cato credits the ability of humans, through intelligence and innovation, to find solutions to shortages through “greater efficiency, increased supply and the development of substitutes.”

The Pagan Spirits Behind Black Lives Matter

On June 13, 2020, Black Lives Matter (BLM) co-founder Patrisse Cullors and Los Angeles chapter leader Melina Abdullah held a Zoom meeting to discuss religion. At the start of the video, Cullors wearing religious robes and a shirt that says “black magic” ceremoniously shredded sheets of paper with the words “police” and “white racism” while candles burned on an altar in the background. After the ritual, Cullors and Abdullah spoke about their belief in occult African religions, and they claimed to receive power from dead spirits for their work. “In my tradition,” said Cullors, “It is important that we be in direct relationship with the dead... Hashtags for us are way more than a hashtag. It is literally almost resurrecting spirits that are going to work through us to get the work done.” Abdullah concurred: “Maybe I’m sharing too much, but we become very intimate with the spirits that we call on regularly. Right, like, each of them seems to have a different presence and personality.” She added: “This movement is much more than a racial and social justice movement... it’s a spiritual movement.” Cullors further revealed: “Our spirituality is at the center of Black Lives Matter and that is not just for us. I feel like so many leaders and so many organizers are deeply engaged in a pretty important spiritual practice.” To the contrary, paragraph 2117 in *The Catechism of the Catholic Church* condemns all practices of magic, sorcery, and attempts to tame occult powers, especially for power over others.



CHRIST IN
THE HOME

The Saint of Modern Times

BY FATHER RAOUL PLUS, S.J.

A home ruled by the spirit of Christ is a happy home. It is also a school of virtue directed to spiritual transformation in Christ.

But Christ does not force His entry into a home. He enters only by invitation. He remains only when evidently wel-

come. It is the wise bride and groom who let Him know by their spiritual preparation for marriage that they want Him to accompany them from the altar of their vows into the home they are about to establish. It is the wise husband and wife who let Him know they want Him always present by striving to put on His mind and to establish their family according to His principles.

In such a home, husband and wife and children will enjoy gladness of heart, happiness in the fulfillment of duty, and intense union of souls.

The strength and honor of the family come above all from within, from union with Christ which gives power to manifest in daily living the beautiful family virtues of patience, energy, generosity, forbearance, cheerfulness, and mutual reverence with their consequent effect of peace and contentment.

Formerly, when people dreamed of sanctity or even of the interior life, they aspired to one thing only—to get away from the world, to go off to the desert, or at least to the priesthood or the religious state. To become a saint in the world, to acquire a true and profound union with God in the world, to exercise oneself in the practice of complete abnegation, and to pursue perfection in the world seemed scarcely possible.

People are beginning to realize better that there is such a thing as sanctity in the world.

We honor those who follow a priestly vocation or a consecrated life in religion. They have chosen the better part which will not be taken from them.

But are we to conclude therefore that the laity, because they live in the world, because they have entered the married state, must be content with a cheaper view of perfection? Must they assume that the practice of the highest virtues is not for them? That they may not aspire to divine union and

the secret joys of a valiant fidelity inspired by love?

Fortunately, there are many who realize the falsity of such a conclusion. Saint Francis de Sales challenged the laity to strive for high sanctity.

The Saint's Role in the World Today

“The world of today longs to contemplate the saint of modern times who will take his place beside the ancient and venerable figures of our history,” observes Arnold Rademacher, the author of *Religion and Life*.

“It demands the saintly man of the world who unites harmoniously in his personality all the aspects of a noble humanism established on correct values, entirely impregnated with a living faith, a strong love of God, and a supple, joyous participation in the life of the Church... There ought to be even now on this earth a type of saintly employee, saintly merchant, saintly industrialist, saintly peasant, saintly wife, saintly woman of Christian culture and refinement. The saint's role in the world today is to be the pioneer of the new family, of the new State, of the new Society, of the new humanity, of the Kingdom of God which is always new.”

No profession is of itself an obstacle to holiness. No state of life is an obstacle; and marriage, if rightly understood, not only demands holiness but leads those who fulfill all its requirements to true sanctity.

In trying to picture what the saint of the next centuries should be, author Friedrich Wilhelm Foerster did not hesitate to write: “Just as in former times the saint was character-

ized by his courage to confess his faith and die a martyr, since he held faith to be his highest ideal for which he must be willing to suffer; just as the saint of the Middle Ages and even of our own day, has been characterized by virginity, since then and now, and especially in our times, it requires a struggle to conquer many temptations to persevere in personal purity; so perhaps the saint of the centuries to come will be the perfect wife or husband, since the vital ideal for which we should willingly suffer today is the sacredness of marriage.” ■



The wise bride and groom will invite Christ into their lives, their hearts and their home.

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



“There’s No 9-1-1 for You to Call”

BY TONIA LONG

It is a fundamental principle that Christian civilization is built upon order and can only exist in a world where order is upheld. As the summer of 2020 became the stage for chaos and disorder, those responsible for maintaining this invaluable order came under sharp and merciless attack—the police officers of America.

In response, during the month of September, America Needs Fatima organized nearly 2,000 Rosary Rallies across America in support of the police. In addition, Tradition, Family and Property’s Student Action also traveled throughout New York City and Pennsylvania showing their support for the men and women in blue by playing the bagpipes and distributing Saint Michael Medals to various precincts (see facing page). Each and every rally received many honks of support from passersby, confirming the notion that the majority of Americans understand the value of order and the role that law enforcement plays in maintaining it in our vast nation.

Here we share with our readers an especially poignant letter that one of our editors, John Horvat, received from a policeman named Al.

Dear Mr. Horvat,

I am a Catholic, a husband, and a father. I am also a police officer.

Police officers deal with the most vulnerable and the most depraved in society. We see the worst of what people do to their fellow human beings. As a Catholic, my work has made me acutely aware of the works of Satan and the effects of sin on humanity.

When I was a rookie, I was dispatched to the home of an old woman who lived all alone. She was terrified by the sound of someone breaking into her house in the middle of the night and called 9-1-1, fearful for her life. My colleagues and I arrived at speed and dealt with the situation. Afterward, the old woman, hugely relieved, was very grateful and thanked us profusely.

Then, she became quiet for a few moments, looking away as if to reflect on something. Turning back to us, she said something that has remained with me all these years:

“We’re so blessed that when we are afraid, we can call 9-1-1 without a second thought, and then police officers like you show up and take care of us. But standing here face-to-face with you, it occurs to me that you come to help people you don’t know, and deal with things that make us afraid. But you’re only human beings just like me, with your own fears and weaknesses. There’s no 9-1-1 for you to call. There’s no one to help you here in the dark of night. You can only look to God and His angels.”

I had always been a devout Catholic, but standing on her porch in the middle of the night, I was edified and humbled by the words of that old woman. In the darkness that has befallen our society today, I see more clearly the hand of Satan, and I am reminded more strongly of the words of that old woman. Policing has always been a dangerous profession at the best of times. Now, it is downright deadly. Most of my colleagues are jaded, weary and demoralized. In the past, my wife would worry for my safety when I went off to work. Now, with the violence being called for by the left, she worries not only for my life, but for hers and those of our children as well.

This is why I am writing to say thank you for your open calls for supporting police officers, and especially for your prayers. We rarely hear anything positive from anyone these days, so your actions give us hope, and are truly gratifying. I realize that it is not easy being a conservative these days, especially a Catholic one. I pray that God continues to bless you, your family and your work.

St. Michael the Archangel, defend us in battle!

Yours in Christ, Al



Men and women in blue and a man in black; together they protect us both physically and spiritually, when acting with honor and according to their calling.

New Yorkers Welcome TFP Rallies for Police

BY JOHN WAGNER

TFP Student Action volunteers are taking a series of campaigns to the streets of America in support of our law enforcement officers. Nearly 2,000 Rosary Rallies for the police were held across the country on Saturday, September 26, 2020.

One memorable campaign took place on Monday, September 14, 2020, when we paid a surprise visit to the New York City Police Department.

After three-and-a-half hours on the road, five bagpipers got ready to play outside the 45th Precinct of the New York City Police Department in the Bronx. Our young men played patriotic music and held signs saying “God bless our brave police” and “God bless those who serve with honor.”

After TFP played “God Bless America” on the street, an officer appeared at the second-floor window. TFP’s John Ritchie, leader of the campaign, told the officer about our undertaking.

“We brought Saint Michael Medals for you,” he said.

“You got one for me?” asked the officer. “I’m coming down!”

More officers poured out through the building’s double doors to receive Saint Michael the Archangel Medals and hear about the TFP’s nationwide campaign to support the police.

Visibly encouraged by the outpouring of support, one policeman invited TFP volunteers inside the station. “This place is your home,” he said in his strong New York accent.

TFP “Chased” the Police

As TFP volunteers pulled away from the curbside, they met an officer who was searching for them. “I want to give you some NYPD patches,” he said. “I just gave



Above: Standing shoulder to shoulder in the fight for Christian Civilization, these men and women deserve our respect and our prayers. Right: TFP Student Action director, Mr. John Ritchie, speaks with a member of the Bronx Police Department.



them to the police cruiser.” Although the police patrol car had already traveled down the street in fast-moving city traffic, the officer insisted to “go track them down.”

Off went the TFP van, chasing the police. In a few minutes, the TFP van pulled up side-by-side with the police cruiser.

“Are you the ones who played the bagpipes?” asked the officer inside.

“Yes.”

“We have patches for you.”

Traffic on the street came to a brief standstill as the officer flipped on his lights, got out of his car, and exchanged NYPD patches for a supply of Saint Michael Medals. Both parties drove off happily.

TFP Honored Our Own Fallen Heroes

Taking advantage of the trip to New York, TFP Student Action went to the gravesites of two of our deceased volunteers, Mr. Fred Porfilio and Mr. Daryl Huang. In 1990, they were serving Our Lady on a campaign for the freedom of Lithuania from Soviet occupation when they tragically died in a car accident.

After praying for the repose of their souls and in their memory, TFP held a honk contest for the police at a busy intersection.

Many honks later, a man walked up and said, “Do you know what NYPD stands for? ‘Need Your Prayers Daily.’” He expressed his appreciation for the police and our military troops. “I pray for them daily. I’ve had a lot of interaction with the police in my lifetime, and their role is irreplaceable,” he said. “I tell people that if they don’t support the police, if they don’t want to stand behind our troops, then stand in front of them.”

Our young men gave the last Saint Michael Medal to a police officer who had responded to a car accident at the intersection. “I appreciate it!” he said, and he took photos of the TFP campaigners with his phone.

Thank God, many Americans are stepping forward and saying: “We support our police. Down with anarchy. Down with disorder.” We are heartened by and grateful for faithful Catholic Americans and their growing support for officers who put their lives on the line.

May Saint Michael, patron and protector of the police force, keep our brave officers safe and give them the courage to continue protecting the moral fabric of the red, white and blue. ■



Devotion to the Heart of Mary Will Save the World

BY PLINIO CORRÊA DE OLIVEIRA

Editor's Note: This article was originally published in *Catolicismo*, No. 30, in June, 1953. It has been translated from Portuguese and adapted for publication without the author's revision.



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, Pope Benedict XV, the Sacred Hierarchy, and to all of 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 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.

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 she then 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 medicine, 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, they would argue, 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. Yet Our Lady appeared at Fatima and did not utter a word about all these means of action. How should we explain this mystery? How do we explain that the popes have recommended unceasingly that which Our Lady was silent about? Are the Fatima messages in contradiction with papal guidelines?

The popes untiringly recommend using all natural and legitimate means to promote the social

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

kingship of Our Lord Jesus Christ. 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 with her message 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 them 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 confiding, 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



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 confiding, intimate, and filial.

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, such as 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, at Fatima 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

The apparitions at Fatima also teach with great insistence devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, which also has been cast aside by a certain style of spirituality. All [good] theologians have considered devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus one of the most precious graces comforting the Church over the 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 nineteenth

century, the Apostolate of Prayer produced an admirable re-flourishing 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). ■

Luiz Sérgio Solimeo, "Devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary Is So Crucial for Our Days," TFP.org, July 14, 2009, <https://www.tfp.org/devotion-to-the-immaculate-heart-of-mary-is-so-crucial-for-our-days/>.

ELIZABETH ANN SETON

Celebrating the Life of the First American-born Saint, 200 Years Later



BY BEN BROUSSARD



May the most just, the most high and most amiable will of God be in all things fulfilled, praised and exalted above all forever.

—Pope Pius VII

On the fourth of January, 1821, Elizabeth Ann Seton breathed her last breath. Her favorite prayer, quoted above, was ever on her lips as she lay dying at the age of forty-six. In a last heroic effort, she whispered the name Jesus as she entered into eternity.¹

“Be true children of the Church!” This was her final exhortation to the Sisters of Charity of Saint Joseph, the religious order that she founded, and family members gathered at her bedside. It will always be good advice for her brother and sister Americans and people all over the world.

At first, the Church in the United States of America was small. Mother Seton had exhausted her last bit of strength to help lay the foundations. From her first entrance into the one and only Church built by Christ until she drew her dying breath, Elizabeth Ann Seton had one mission in mind: to see God’s glory manifest in America.

Let us look at the life of the first American whom Holy Mother Church acclaimed a citizen of Heaven.

Growing Up with the New Nation

Elizabeth Ann Bayley was born the twenty-eighth of August 1774, just two years before the Declaration of Independence was signed. Her father, Dr. William Bayley, was a surgeon in the British army. After the war ended, he was the first American doctor to make house calls. Her mother, Catherine Charlton Bayley, was related to several of the elite New York families, including the famous Roosevelts.²

From her earliest days, Elizabeth faced many

sufferings, yet she lived a life of love and holy joy. When Elizabeth was just three years old, her mother passed away, and a short time later, her sister Catherine died. After her sister Catherine passed away, Elizabeth said, “Kitty has gone to Heaven, how I wish I could go with her too.”³

In keeping with the times, Elizabeth’s father gave her a very feminine education. She was taught literature, French, music, drawing, dancing, sewing, and housekeeping. While still young, she began keeping a diary and sending letters, a practice she maintained until her final years.

Early on, Elizabeth’s young mind was drawn to the things of God. Baptized and raised in the Episcopal Church, she would spend long hours contemplating sacred scripture and writing about Heaven.

When Elizabeth came of age, she was among the most beautiful young ladies of New York society, and many men vied for her hand in marriage. William Magee Seton, a merchant from a prominent family, won her affections. Due to business obligations, William made frequent trips to trading partners in Livorno, Italy, where Elizabeth’s faith eventually increased.

William and Elizabeth married in 1794, and in the following years God blessed them with five children: Anna, William Jr., Richard, Catherine, and Rebecca.

Motherhood and housekeeping soon consumed Elizabeth from morning until night. She cared for her beloved husband during his bouts with tuberculosis, and had to manage his business affairs.

Portrait of Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton from *Appletons’ Cyclopaedia*, a six-volume collection of biographies of notable people involved in the history of the New World.



Amid all of that, somehow Elizabeth also made herself available as the faithful friend and confidant to growing numbers of New Yorkers.

With the death of her father-in-law in 1798, William and Elizabeth had to raise his younger children. Her own father passed away in 1801, which impacted her greatly because economic downturn and foreign wars reduced the family fortunes. Nevertheless, undaunted by these hardships, Elizabeth wrote: "At all events this life is worth possessing only because, while we have it, we are candidates for a better one."⁴

So, clearly she saw life's sufferings with a supernatural eye.

Quarantine in Italy

When William's health didn't improve, his doctors recommended a trip abroad for recovery in 1803. Given William's contacts in Italy, he and Elizabeth soon arranged passage on board the *Shepherdess* and they took only their eldest daughter Anna.



Republic Square in Livorno, a city in the Tuscan region of Italy. It was in this city that the conversion of Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton was begun through the charity and instruction she received from Antonio and Amabilia Filicchi.

Meanwhile, family and friends in New York cared for their other children.

Sadly, the journey to Livorno was extremely difficult. A yellow fever epidemic had broken out in New York and all passengers disembarking had to quarantine for thirty days before entering Italy. On an island offering little shelter, the Setons spent the next month in privation.

As a result, William's health rapidly declined in the drafty seaside environment. Most of the time Elizabeth cared for him, and somehow she gave care and comfort to other passengers as well. Their Italian friends Antonio and Amabilia Filicchi, along with Antonio's brother Philip and wife Mary Filicchi, did whatever they could to visit and send provisions. However, at the end of the Setons' quarantine, William's body was so wasted that he could scarcely move.

The generous Fellichis brought William, Elizabeth, and Anna to Pisa, where they spent Christmas.

Two days later, William died with Elizabeth and their daughter at his side.

Light from the Altar

With the loss of her husband and her daughter Anna taken ill with scarlet fever, Elizabeth put her trust in God's providence. The Fellichi family saw to all of her needs, and their example of Catholic charity profoundly moved her.

When they made a trip to Florence, Elizabeth noted that many Catholics knelt before the altars in churches, where they implored God for every need. The Catholic Mass was so different from the Episcopalian services she had known in New York, and she wondered whether Christ was really present in the Eucharist.⁵

She began to ask questions of her hosts, who answered with patience and clarity. More impressive to Elizabeth than the arguments for Catholic truth was how the Italian family who adopted her lived their devotion. Every morning the family attended Mass in their chapel, and every day they prayed the rosary.

When Antonio Fellichi taught her to make the sign of the Cross, Elizabeth was filled with sacred awe. Contrary to what her fellow Protestants had told her, she found devotion to the Blessed Mother a sure way in growing closer to Jesus.⁶ In a letter to a relative, Elizabeth wrote:

A little prayer book of Mr. Filicchi was on the table, and I opened it to a little prayer of St. Bernard to the Blessed Virgin begging her to be our Mother. I said it to her with such a certainty that God would surely refuse nothing to His Mother; that she could not help loving and pitying the poor souls He died for; that I felt I really had a mother whom you know my foolish heart so often lamented to have lost in early days.

Before returning to America, she and her daughter visited the tomb of her husband one last time. Elizabeth knelt and prayed for his soul because Catholic practices had already taken deep root in her life.

Embracing the Cross in America

After long delays, in April of 1804 Elizabeth and Anna boarded the *Flamingo* for their return to America, and Antonio Fellichi joined them on the journey. Upon arriving in New York, at long last she could embrace her other four children. But with her husband departed, Elizabeth needed help arranging the family's affairs from relatives and friends.

When word spread of her interest in Catholicism, friends and strangers from almost every Protestant religion attempted to talk her out of converting. Her own Episcopalian ministers and friends gave her tracts on the alleged errors of Rome. Methodists,

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Anabaptists, and Presbyterians approached to convince her to join their congregations.

Antonio was ever insistent that she join the one and only Church that Christ built upon Pope Saint Peter (Matthew 16).

So Elizabeth begged God for certitude, referring to the words of Alexander Pope, English essayist and poet (1688-1744): "If I am right, Thy grace impart, still in the right to stay. If I am wrong, oh teach my heart to find the better way."⁷

Going Home

At Antonio's request, Archbishop John Carroll wrote to Elizabeth, answering objections to Catholic truth. Elizabeth was greatly consoled by his intervention, but heartbroken to leave the goodness she remembered from the Episcopalian religion of her youth.

In 1789, Pope Pius VII had named Fr. John Carroll, S.J. the first bishop in the USA, then the first archbishop of the first U.S. Diocese of Baltimore. He was a phenomenal builder of Catholic institutions in America, and so he was a great teacher to Elizabeth.

The seed of wonder about Catholic truth was growing in Elizabeth's soul. From her letters during this time, Elizabeth wrote about Blessed Mother Mary:

If anyone is in heaven, His Mother must be there.

Are the angels, then, who are so often represented as being so interested for us on earth, more compassionate or more exalted than she is? Oh! no, no, Mary our Mother, that cannot be! So I beseech her, with the confidence and tenderness of her child, to pity us and guide us to the true faith if we are not in it.⁸

The New Year of 1805 still found Elizabeth uncertain. On the sixth of January, the Feast of the Epiphany, Elizabeth opened a book of sermons by Fr. Louis Bortaloue, S.J. and had her own epiphany:

It is necessary that our faith be tried, and how? By those abandonments and those privations so common to the souls of the just; and if we are not strong enough to say to God with the Royal Psalmist: "Try me, O Lord!" we must, after the example of the Magi, be so disposed as to persevere in the midst of trials which it may please Him to send us. We must be mindful of the lights with which we have been favored when it shall please God to deprive us of them.

"We have seen His star!" I no longer experience what formerly impressed me and drew me to God. But I have seen it and have known its truth and its necessity, and I have been persuaded by it...⁹

When Elizabeth closed the book, her mind was made up. Nothing would stop her from converting, as she made known in a letter: "I will go peaceably and firmly to the Catholic Church: for if Faith is so

important to our salvation, I will seek it where true Faith first began, seek it among those who received it from God Himself.”¹⁰

On Ash Wednesday, she knelt in St. Peter’s Church on Barclay Street in Manhattan to make her formal abjuration of heresy. After a general confession, she received her First Holy Communion on the Feast of the Annunciation.

In her journal, Elizabeth rejoiced: “The first thought I remember was: let God arise, let His enemies be scattered—for it seemed my King had come to take His throne and instead of the humble tender welcome I had expected to give Him, it was a triumph of joy and gladness.”¹¹

Some Doors Slammed and Others Opened

Word of Elizabeth’s conversion spread quickly in New York society. Long friendships abruptly ended. Neighbors with whom she had long associated abandoned her. Her children, quick to embrace the Catholic faith, were scorned with anti-Catholic insults.

But Elizabeth’s children didn’t shrink away. Instead, they took up their mother’s newfound Catholic faith with great enthusiasm. Through Antonio Fellichi, Elizabeth arranged to have her boys enrolled in Georgetown College.

She then began assisting Mr. and Mrs. Patrick White in running a school in New York City. After just three months, however, the school closed because Protestants refused to let the notorious convert Mrs. Seton teach their children.

When this failed, others arranged for her to board students attending another school run by a Mr. William Harris. The arrangement lasted three years.

Her devoted sister-in-law, fifteen-year-old Cecilia Seton, was struck by an acute illness and insisted on Elizabeth’s continual presence and support. Upon Cecilia’s recovery, she told her family that she decided to become Catholic. Despite their strong objections, Cecilia formally entered the Church on the twentieth of June 1807. Cecilia joined Elizabeth in the Seton household until the unrest over her conversion died down.

Faced with opposition and hostility, Elizabeth knew she had to leave New York. At the invitation of Archbishop Carroll, she made arrangements to travel to Baltimore to start a school for girls. On the ninth of June 1808, Elizabeth Ann Seton and her family left, never to return.

Sisters of Charity

Father Louis William DuBourg, S.S. was president of Saint Mary’s Seminary in Baltimore. He had corresponded with Elizabeth, and welcomed the Seton family. He secured them a rental house on Paca Street where the school for girls soon opened.

Filled in the first year, Elizabeth soon had young women asking to join her in the work, and Archbishop Carroll made plans to unite the small group of women in a religious community. He served as witness to their simple vows of binding for a year, and thus named Elizabeth directress of the budding order. So, from then on, she was called Mother Seton.

The school work continued and grew. Soon Cecilia Seton and her sister Harriet arrived and joined as postulants. The new order quickly outgrew the house on Paca Street. At that time, Samuel Cooper, a wealthy convert from Virginia was entering a seminary to become a priest and he bought Mother Seton a property in Emmitsburg, fifty miles northwest of Baltimore.

Despite Cooper’s generosity, the first year in Emmitsburg was one continual Calvary for the Sisters. Their sparse hovel with dirt floors provided little relief from winter’s cold.

Then 1810 brought needed relief with a large log house for their use. On the twenty-second of February, the new school opened with girls enrolled.

At Emmitsburg, plans for the new order were finalized. They would adopt the rule of the Sisters of Charity founded by Saint Vincent de Paul. Mother Seton hoped they would one day have formal ties; the order achieved this in 1850. The Sisters of Charity at Emmitsburg took Saint Joseph as their patron because Mother entrusted the daily needs of the whole community to the Head of the Holy Family.¹²

Mother Embraced the Cross

The Cross was at the center of Mother Seton’s life at Emmitsburg. As Christ commands us in Luke 9:23, she and her children took up their crosses daily without complaint.

Her eldest daughter Anna, then a novice, suffered immensely in the winter of 1811. She continued her tasks with heroic zeal, until she could no longer hide the fatal signs of tuberculosis. On the thirtieth of January 1812, she was given last rites. The next day she was received as a fully professed sister, fulfilling her heartfelt desire of dying as a Sister of Charity. On the twelfth of March, she passed into eternity.

The following winter, her sister Rebecca was crippled by a fall. Her health drastically broke down over the next four years, until on the third of November 1816, Rebecca gave up her soul to God



at the young age of fourteen.

With the loss of these two daughters, Mother Seton's longings for Heaven only increased.

Her daily tasks multiplied with the growth of the order, taxing her strength and her health. Fevers and illness confined her to bed for weeks at a time.

Despite suffering and isolation, Mother Seton continued to write and receive letters. Her interest in every aspect of the Church in America kept her in contact with Catholics throughout the country. She also kept in touch with non-Catholic friends, guiding them as she knew best to follow her into the Church. And thus her own sufferings united her ever closer to Christ Crucified.

With gratitude, she wrote: "O Lord Jesus, how great is the merit of the blood which redeems the whole world—and would redeem a million more—and would redeem the demons themselves were they capable of penitence and salvation as I am—Yes, Lord, though your thunders should crush me and a deluge overwhelm me I will hope that while you destroy my body you will save my soul."¹³

By 1820, tuberculosis was taking its toll like it had taxed so many others in her family. Placed in a small room adjacent to the convent chapel, Mother Seton remarked, "I try to make my very breathing a thanksgiving."¹⁴

Through the fall of that year, she gained improvement, only to relapse. Through it all, Mother continually lived the virtues of the sick: meekness, patience, resignation, and gratitude for every help received.¹⁵

Father Gabriel Bruté, her French confessor and confidante, visited often to administer the sacraments. After giving her *Viaticum*, he wrote: "Will



The Sisters of Charity could be found serving whoever was in the greatest need, with their angel-like habit providing an image of hope and security to all who beheld it.

I ever forget that face, fired with love, melted in tears at His approach in Communion? To the last, exhausted death on that face, as He came—it was still inflamed, and blushed in ardent love, desire inexpressible of eternal union in Him."

After Christmas, Mother Seton's death was obviously and painfully near. Her petite body was reduced to almost a skeleton. With her remaining strength, she gave final counsel to her Sisters: "Be true children of the Church! Be true children of the Church!"¹⁶

In the early morning hours of the fourth of January 1821, everyone at her bedside heard her final word: "Jesus!"



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Bronze statue of Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton at the Seton National Shrine in Emmitsburg, Maryland.

The Sisters Blessed America Far and Wide

With Mother Seton's passing, the work of the Sisters of Charity multiplied.

Foundations grew and spread to all corners of the Republic. In 1850, the dream of Mother Seton was realized when the Sisters in America joined the congregation of the Sisters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul.

In addition to their work as parochial school owners, the sisters became pioneers in Catholic health care.

When the American Civil War broke out, Mother Seton's spiritual daughters ministered to wounded on both sides, and they were nicknamed Angels of the Battlefield.¹⁷

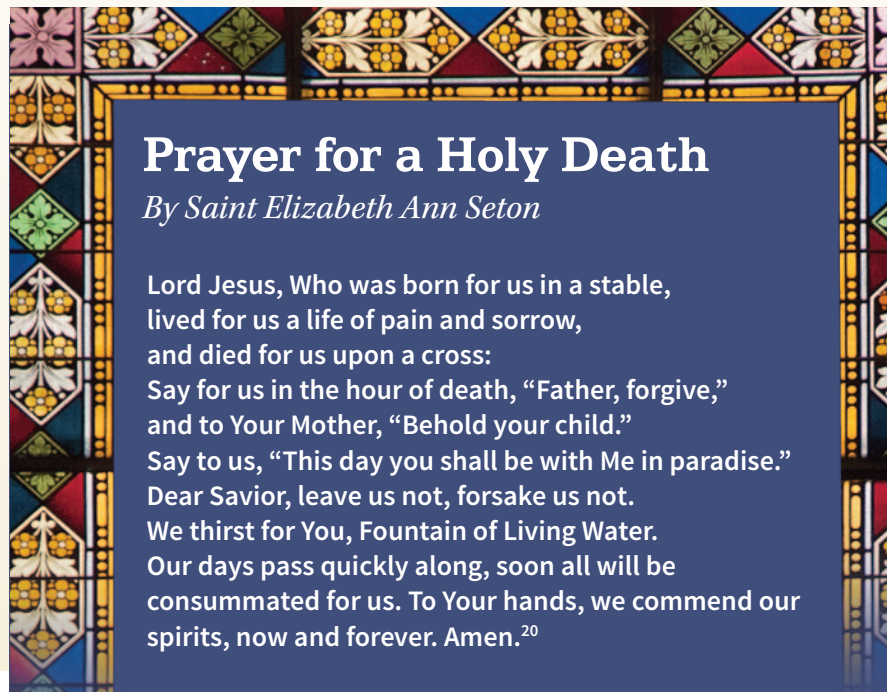
One of the most noticeable effects of the Sisters' work for God's glory was the change that came over American society. Anti-Catholic bigotry slowly gave way to great numbers embracing the true faith. Schools and hospitals operated by the Sisters achieved a high reputation even among non-Catholics. Lies about Christ's Church could not compete with the example of Mother Seton's spiritual daughters.¹⁸

With the growth of the Sisters of Charity, Mother Seton's memory never faded.

Throughout the twentieth century, the renown of the Sisters of Charity helped to spread devotion to their beloved Mother. On the seventeenth of March 1963, she was beatified by Pope John XXIII. Showing her concern from Heaven for her fellow Americans, miracles due to her intercession were soon reported. With Vatican recognition of three miraculous cures of desperately ill individuals, the time had come at last.

On the fourteenth of September 1975, Pope Paul VI proclaimed Elizabeth Ann Seton a saint. In fact, he exclaimed it: "Yes, Venerable Brothers and beloved sons and daughters! Elizabeth Ann Seton is a Saint!"¹⁹ Furthermore, the Holy Father canonized Mother Seton on the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross.

Now, 200 years since she entered into eternal life, Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton's witness calls every American to a life of zeal and sacrifice. May she guide us in our trying times to be true children of the Church. ■



Prayer for a Holy Death

By Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton

Lord Jesus, Who was born for us in a stable,
lived for us a life of pain and sorrow,
and died for us upon a cross:
Say for us in the hour of death, "Father, forgive,"
and to Your Mother, "Behold your child."
Say to us, "This day you shall be with Me in paradise."
Dear Savior, leave us not, forsake us not.
We thirst for You, Fountain of Living Water.
Our days pass quickly along, soon all will be
consummated for us. To Your hands, we commend our
spirits, now and forever. Amen.²⁰

Notes:

1. Annabelle M. Melville, *Elizabeth Bayley Seton 1774-1821* (The Daughters of Charity, St. Louise Province, 2009. This edition was edited by Betty Ann McNeil, D.C. and is available with the express permission of educational or research use only), p. 401. Available pro bono online at https://via.library.depaul.edu/seton_bio/

2. Ibid., p. 3.

3. Agnes Sadlier, *Elizabeth Seton: Foundress of the American Sisters of Charity; Her Life and Work* (Philadelphia, H.L. Kilner, 1905) p. 3. Available online pro bono from Vincentian Digital Books at https://via.library.depaul.edu/vincentian_ebooks/15

4. Melville, p. 53.

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6. *A Daughter of Charity, The Soul of Elizabeth Seton*, (New York, Cincinnati, Chicago, San Francisco, Benziger Brothers, 1936) p. 40.

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9. Rev. John Reville, S.J., *The First American Sister of Charity, Elizabeth Bayley Seton*, (The American Press, New York, N.Y., 1921) p. 24.

10. Melville, p. 124.

11. Ibid., p. 131.

12. Vincentian Encyclopedia, "Sisters of Charity of Saint Joseph," https://famvin.org/wiki/Sisters_of_Charity_of_Saint_Joseph.

13. Melville, p. 392.

14. Melville, page 397.

15. Ibid., p. 401.

16. Ibid., p. 415.

17. George Barton, *Angels of the Battlefield: A History of the Labors of Catholic Sisterhoods in the Late Civil War* (Philadelphia, The Catholic Art Publishing Company, 1898). Available online pro bono at <https://www.gutenberg.org/files/57933/57933h/57933-h.htm>.

18. Aubrey De Vere, *Preface of Heroines of Charity*, (HardPress, Miami, Florida, 2017)

19. Canonization of Elisabeth Ann Seton: Homily of the Holy Father Paul VI, 14 September 1975 (*Libreria Editrice Vaticana*). http://www.vatican.va/content/paul-vi/en/homilies/1975/documents/hf_p-vi_hom_19750914.html.

20. Melville, p. 328.



AMERICA NEEDS FATIMA[®]

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2021

PROGRESS REPORT

A Seasoned Captain Shares His Story

As the fourteenth anniversary of America Needs Fatima's Public Square Rosary Rally Crusade has passed, we contacted one of our more seasoned Rally Captains, Mr. Pat Ashcraft, for an account of his experiences over the years. Whereas every rally—big or small—holds a special place in Our Lady's Immaculate Heart, one cannot help but be impressed with the story below. When Pat speaks of "we," he is talking about himself and his wife and Rosary Rally partner, Mary Ashcraft.

Crusade: When did you lead your first rally?

Pat Ashcraft: It was back in 2006–2007 when we first learned of the TFP's incredible initiative to sponsor a series of Rosary Rallies in honor and recognition of the upcoming 100th anniversary of the Marian apparitions at Fatima, Portugal. While we did not know exactly what these rallies would entail or where we would be going with this concept, we decided to simply take the first step, and then let Our Lady take it from there.



Fr. Sean Kopczynski, M.S.J.B., assistant pastor at Our Lady of Lourdes Parish, Park Hills, Kentucky, delivers an inspiring talk to participants of the Public Square Rosary Rally in Fountain Square.

Crusade: How many people attend your rallies?

Mr. Ashcraft: One thing that I would like to make clear is that we prefer the terminology "Rosary Crusades" as it portrays the image of the more robust fighting spirit of the Church Militant and so we tweaked our events just a bit to adopt that crusader spirit for Our Lady and the Church. As for general numbers for attendance at the Crusades, they ranged from a high of just over 600 to a more modest range of around 150–175, depending on the weather, our success with advertising and crafting well-worded e-mail messages soliciting attendance, and other unforeseen challenges such as football games.

Crusade: What do you do for your participants to enrich their experience of the Rosary Rally?

Mr. Ashcraft: We give participants a handout packet for the Crusades each year that not only includes our programs, but also other literature and blessed sacramentals, such as rosaries, scapulars, and miraculous medals, etc. The packets further include either brochures that we developed ourselves or secured from a number of sources, especially the TFP, so as to serve as a teaching moment for Catholics who so seldom receive this information from the pulpit these days. We particularly brought into our programs not only information on Fatima, but also on the Marian apparitions at Quito, Ecuador; Lourdes and La Salette, France; and Akita, Japan. All these apparitions worked together to provide an ongoing message from Heaven requiring prayer and repentance, with keen warnings of chastisements, such as what we are undergoing today, as we have failed to repent and to turn back to God. That said, one year we gave out the book *Return to Order* by John Horvat, TFP's vice president.



Crusade: Would you say that the clergy has been supportive of your efforts?

Mr. Ashcraft: Yes, they have. We began with a great mentor, Sister Eleanor Colgan, retired from the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur. She helped us navigate through some of the finer details of Catholic protocol. She found an absolutely superb priest, Fr. Cyril Whitaker, S.J., who, through the past 14 years, gave expert presentations on Fatima and talks on a number of the Marian dogmas and concepts. Our pastor, Father Shannon Collins from Our Lady of Lourdes Church, participated in our Rosary Crusades as well. Many good priests led us in prayer and gave presentations at our Crusades. We are especially grateful that Cincinnati's Archbishop Dennis Schnurr and our auxiliary bishop, Bishop Joseph Binzer, participated in the Marian Crusades as well.

Crusade: Have you found that members of your local community are willing to lend a hand?

Mr. Ashcraft: Absolutely! First of all, we found a local Catholic printer who not only did an outstanding job, but also understood Catholicism so that we did not have to start at the beginning and coax him through what we were trying to achieve. We were blessed to come across a Franciscan friar who also had incredible artistic and computer skills that he used to significantly enhance our advertising, raising it to a truly professional level.

A friend of ours had a metal fabrication business and so that was the inspiration for us to tap into his expertise in developing a carrier for the statue of Our Lady of Fatima that we used in a procession with the Knights of Columbus and the clergy at the start of each of the Crusades. Fortunately, we also had a group of loyal supporters that performed so many diverse tasks for us, tasks that were absolutely critical to keeping everything running smoothly year after year.

Crusade: What advertising technique has given you the best results for attendance at your Crusades?

Mr. Ashcraft: Initially, we were just about the only Rosary Crusade in the metro area, so we contacted all of the parishes in the archdiocese, inviting them to attend, as well as providing them with electronic copies of our flyers for their bulletins. We found that while advertising in the local Catholic newspapers

...we decided to simply take the first step, and then let Our Lady take it from there.



Left: In order to accommodate crowds in the hundreds, Mr. Ashcraft chose to hold his Crusades at Fountain Square, downtown Cincinnati, Ohio.
Top: Mr. Pat Ashcraft (far right) found the local clergy very willing to attend the Rosary Crusades.

in Southern Ohio and Northern Kentucky was helpful, our best source for advertising and encouraging people to attend the Crusades over the years was through our own database of e-mails and personal contacts that we had collected over time. These folks, in turn, contacted like-minded family and friends who also attended the Crusades and spread the news to others.

Our main promotional initiative through the years has more and more become our e-mails to attendees, setting out the particulars of the current year's Crusade while also tying in events that have taken place in recent months so as to strike a chord of interest with participants and set the stage for the Crusade itself.

We quickly found that most other Catholics were hungering for truth and our guest speakers satisfied this appetite. And speaking of appetites, we always tried to have a luncheon at our home for supporters and participants in the Crusade after everything was said and done. Following Christ's lead, we never wanted to send a crowd away hungry.

Crusade: If you had just one bit of advice to give to other Rally Captains, what would that be?

Mr. Ashcraft: Over time, we began to realize more and more that Our Lady was always there, always in the background, constantly and faithfully connecting the dots that we would never have thought of, giving us just what we needed when we needed it. Our Lady used even totally unrelated experiences from our past lives, while still in the workforce, connecting us with just the right people at just the right moment. For some examples, she provided spectacular singers to augment the Crusades, including a professional opera singer. She gave us guest speakers who kept participants on the edge of their seats and she always provided the inspiration for a timely theme and a message that kept on giving long after the Crusade had ended.

Crusade: Do you have an anecdote from your years of experience to share with our readers?



Mr. Ashcraft: Perhaps one of our more expansive Crusades took place on Fountain Square several years ago. Our Crusade just happened to occur on the same weekend that a big football playoff was taking place just a few blocks away at the Cincinnati Bengals' Paul Brown Stadium. Parking was scarce, so many of the out-of-town visitors, as well as the locals, parked in and around Fountain Square, with the game starting shortly after the Rosary Crusade began. We were on the Square, with the sound of Schubert's *Ave Maria* reverberating amongst the downtown skyscrapers, while a series of 180 historic Marian images were displayed on the screen

just above Macy's Department Store, across from the Square. That was beyond a doubt our biggest crowd, probably numbering well over a thousand passersby. The football fans had no choice but to walk past our Crusade to get to the stadium, to the background music of *Ave Maria*. Not planned on our part, but it worked out beautifully.

We always tried to do the best that we could with the resources that we had, as we were doing this for our Blessed Mother, and who doesn't do the best that they can do for our Mother, who is also our Queen? ■

A Different Fatima Experience



An impressive display of love for Our Lady of Fatima, from 20,163 American hearts to her Immaculate Heart.

Our envoy to Fatima, Felipe Barandian, noticed the difference right away. What was once in pre-Covid times a lively square packed with pilgrims from all over the world was now an open asphalt lot with circles drawn all over it, indicating where one must stand to maintain social distance. Police and guards could be seen everywhere vigilantly enforcing government regulations put in place to halt the spread of the disease.

The whole situation was very challenging, but Felipe continued in his mission. Despite the almost disconcerting ambience, as the representative of America Needs Fatima, he carried the name banner in the candlelight procession,

which was reduced to one-tenth of its usual size. All of the intentions of those listed on the banner were also offered and prayed for in Fatima.

The following day, he and his associates delivered over 20,000 beautiful long-stemmed red and white roses to Our Lady of Fatima in thanksgiving for her continued protection and guidance in these difficult times.

The red roses represent our 20,613 dedicated rosary rally captains, while the white roses represent the many generous rosary rally sponsors who made the 2020 Rosary Rally Crusade possible. The names of all our white rose sponsors and rally captains were printed on our banners.



These beautiful white roses (and four more baskets full) were presented to Our Lady of Fatima on behalf of the generous sponsors who made the 2020 Public Square Rosary Rallies possible.

The placement of the roses added a reverent beauty to the square, ensuring that, despite the present difficulties, her children would do what they could to "rise up and call her blessed." (Proverbs 31:28) ■



Bangor, Maine

Ballinger, Texas



Phoenix, Arizona



Escondido, California

20,613 Rally Captains March into Battle Across America

From sea to shining sea, on October 10, 2020, Our Lady of Fatima was honored in the public square. Rally captains and participants unfurled banners and drew their rosaries out of their pockets. And at precisely noon, local time, their voices rose as one to the Queen of Heaven in response to her requests at Fatima to “pray the rosary.” In so doing, a spiritual battle was fought and won on American soil.

In states where they were banned by the government from attending the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, Catholics bravely gathered in parks, outside of abortion clinics and in front of city halls to pray to Our Lady.

Though many had to wear masks and stand six feet apart from one another, these small sacrifices only served to increase the graces Our Lady would dispense on our wounded nation. May those graces penetrate the hearts of those hardened against the one true Faith and begin the process of conversion necessary for the triumph of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. ■



Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania



Des Moines, Iowa



Kamiah, Idaho



Raleigh, North Carolina



Orlando, Florida



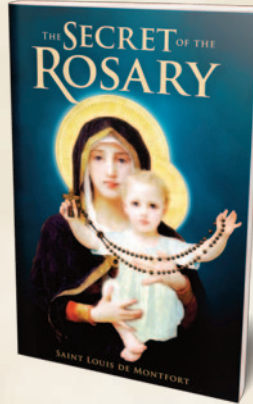
Our Readers Write



Thanks for *The Secret of the Rosary*

"Thank you so much for propagating Saint Louis de Montfort's book *The Secret of the Rosary*! Since I joined ANF, I have prayed you would one day offer this classic book. How very important this is for the dark times in which we live! I pray that everyone who receives it will take it to heart and be strengthened in fighting the good fight. Also, I do love the ease of reading this ANF book version: the printing and fonts are all very clear and large enough for older people to read, and the cover art is so beautiful!"

E. A., Fayetteville, Arkansas



"God bless you for all the beautiful work you do. I don't have much but I am happy to share what little I have with you. Two things make me happy; going to church every day and praying the rosary every day. When I said yes on the phone the other day when your representative called up to ask if I would lead a Rosary Rally I was so happy and will try to do the best I can with it. The newsletter you send to me, I show my friends to let them know what is going on. To listen to the news today would make a soul cry. I will never stop doing the Rosary Rallies for America. I have friends who will take over if anything happens to me."

N. B., Bennington, Vermont

"I have been given or had access to this book numerous times in my life. This is the first time I have been inspired to read it. Thank you!!"

J. V., Drexel Hill, Pennsylvania

"It is a beautiful book—it is a book that can be read often."

W. R., Burlington, Massachusetts

"I am acknowledging the reception of the beautiful book entitled *The Secret of the Rosary*. I thank you for it because I am a devotee of the rosary. One of my friends is not, so I offered it to her and she accepted it gratefully. I greatly appreciate the ministry you are engaged in for Our Lady. I can only assure you of my prayers for her constant blessings upon you and your beautiful work."

Sr. C. P., Manchester, New Hampshire

ANF Apostolate

"I cannot thank you enough for your commitment to spreading the Faith and helping to strengthen so many believers. I deeply regret not being able to donate any money out of pocket because I am 16 years old. But be assured I will say a decade of the rosary for you tonight."

P. D., Carlsbad, Florida

"Thank you for getting me to pray the complete rosary daily!"

T. G., Gainesville, Florida

"The rosary is very powerful and necessary if our country is to remain Christian."

R. H., Cincinnati, Ohio

"Dear Mr. Ritchie and all your wonderful helpers! Thank you for one of your most beautiful pictures of Our Lady of Fatima. Our family is truly grateful. It only took me five minutes after receiving it to place her in our dining room. Everyone asks how I got her. 'Through a faithful man who works for Our Lady,' I tell them. Could you please send another picture to give to our neighbors? They would be so grateful."

A. N., Whitestone, Queens, New York

Fatima Home Visitation

"Twelve years ago a dear friend had cancer and invited me to her house to say the rosary along with other women. A nice man from your organization came with a statue of Our Lady of Fatima and we all said the rosary together in her home. I have a statue of Our Lady of Fatima and I pray the rosary every day. I read your *Crusade Magazine* and enjoy it very much. I have been a proud member of your Child of Mary program for 12 years now, glad to support you on a monthly basis. I read the news about blasphemies and it makes me sad. We must keep praying, not only to our Blessed Mother, but also to Saint Michael. Keep up the good work."

E. T., East Meadow, New York

"My friends and some fellow parishioners were at my home when the statue of Our Lady of Fatima was brought there by America Needs Fatima. We all seem to talk about little else other than her visit afterwards!"

J. T., Greene, New York



Send us your feedback by writing to Crusade@TFP.org

Luiz Antonio Fragelli—

Faithful Disciple of Plinio Corrêa de Oliveira

BY ROBERT RITCHIE



With great sorrow, the American Society for the Defense of Tradition, Family, and Property (TFP) mourns the passing into eternity of Luiz Antonio Fragelli on October 26, 2020. He will be sorely missed. His love for Holy Mother Church and fidelity to Prof. Plinio Corrêa de Oliveira were the lights of his life. He served the TFP and America Needs Fatima with generosity and courage for almost sixty years.

Born in the state of Mato Grosso, Brazil, on June 10, 1935, Mr. Fragelli grew up in Rio de Janeiro. He attended the Jesuit high school there and went on to earn an engineering degree. In 1960, he married Sandra Azevedo and settled down to a very comfortable home in Petropolis, amid Rio de Janeiro's magnificent scenery. Unfortunately, he drifted away from the practice of the Catholic Faith in the first years of his married life.

A remarkable occurrence, however, brought him back. In 1963, through the intercession of Saint Thérèse of the Child Jesus, his eldest son Antonio, only five months old, was miraculously cured of encephalitis.

Shortly after that, a colleague introduced him to Prof. Plinio Corrêa de Oliveira and the Brazilian TFP. After several

conversations with the TFP founder, Mr. Fragelli resolved to join him in the sacred fight for Holy Mother Church and Christian civilization, as outlined in the book *Revolution and Counter-revolution*.

International TFP Apostolate and Missions

In 1970, after years of apostolate in Rio, Mr. Fragelli approached Prof. Plinio and offered to sell his house, end his career, and move with his family anywhere in the world to help the TFP full time. This act of generosity of a married man willing to uproot his family and live in a foreign land is unique in the TFP's history.

In the fall of 1972, inexperience and personal frictions threatened the young American TFP then just coming together. One of the members wrote to Prof. Plinio, asking if he might send someone with experience to help guide their formation.

The Brazilian TFP founder asked Mr. Fragelli to leave South America and provide this help to the American TFP. He accepted the challenge immediately.

A Father to the TFP

In 1973, Mr. Fragelli flew to New York. The TFP members were immediately thrilled with the stocky, powerful man, the kind of man Americans like.

With amazing energy and dedication, he put into practice Prof. Corrêa de Oliveira's principle of action: "When faced with a challenge, don't wait until all is perfect, but with some understanding, confide in Our Lady, jump into the river and swim!" Mr. Fragelli often reminded the TFP men, "When you're given a mission, carry that standard surmounting all difficulties, and plant it on the distant mountain ... achieving the goal." He always backed up those under him, inspiring each person with his loyalty and support. He knew how to bring out the best in each one. Thus, the American TFP developed into an organic, cohesive, and well-knit organization, multiplying its effectiveness.

Mr. Fragelli's zeal sparked the first TFP "caravans" in the United States, traveling groups of TFP members who do street campaigns in cities throughout the country. He organized cross-country fund-raising trips and founded TFP centers in numerous cities. Following the suggestion of Prof. Plinio, Mr. Fragelli also started holding regular seminars for university

students and directed campaigns on university campuses nationwide. This apostolate later developed into TFP Student Action, which is today famous for its many epic campaigns and videos.

Mr. Fragelli also doggedly pursued the founding of a boys' school, staffed and run by TFP members. After long years of challenges, St. Louis de Montfort Academy opened its doors in 1995. In 2002, Mr. Fragelli reached another milestone: the establishment of the Sedes Sapientiae Institute, a three-year college-level course to train young men aspiring to the TFP vocation in counter-revolutionary principles.

From Sublime Ideals to Everyday Tasks

From the onset, he was the heart of every TFP activity. A natural leader, he inspired all by word and example to strive for perfection and do difficult tasks. He could be found doing the most menial jobs, cooking meals in the kitchen or sweeping the floor. He made beds for arriving TFP members and personally accompanied them to their rooms. He planned and participated enthusiastically in street campaigns. He helped with accounting, book publishing, lectures, and martial arts classes.

Extremely accessible and full of genuine affection, Mr. Fragelli's door was always open to anyone who knocked. He was ever ready to sit down and listen to a TFP member's problems or complaints with a father's care. His keen psychological sense helped him solve very hard cases. If unable to offer immediate help, he would inspire hope in Our Lady's assistance. He never gave up hope. If the person were unusually troubled, Mr. Fragelli would say, "Let's pray to Our Lady." He would say, "Call me any time, day or night, if you need help." True to his word, he slept with the phone by his bed.

From the beginning, Mr. Fragelli emphasized the need for Catholics to live sacral lives imbued with the spirit of the Faith, even in daily activities. Thus, he encouraged TFP members to chant the Little Office of Our Lady and put emphasis on as much ceremonial in everyday life as possible. When the TFP headquarters moved to a large estate in Bedford, New York, Mr. Fragelli helped establish a regular schedule of prayer, study, and recollection that continues to this day.

The First Trumpet Blast

Mr. Fragelli and his faithful following of Prof. Corrèa de Oliveira's counsels led to many campaigns in defense of Christian civilization. For example, in 1978, Planned Parenthood of New York distributed a comic book called "Abortion Eve," promoting abortion. On the back cover was a cartoon which mocked Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception, a distorted portrayal of her in an advanced state of pregnancy, with the face of the character from *Mad Magazine* and the caption: "What? Me Worry?"

Without delay Mr. Fragelli mobilized outraged Catholics to hold a massive street protest on May 13 at Planned Parenthood's headquarters on Seventh Avenue in New York City. That day, some 1,500 Catholics gathered to pray and demand an apology for the blasphemy. Eventually, Planned Parent-

hood started to distribute leaflets to the crowd that said: "We offer an unqualified apology and restate our public repudiation of the cartoon itself and the philosophies underlying it." Planned Parenthood was defeated and bowed before the power of Our Lady. Hearing of this TFP protest and public reparation, Prof. Plinio referred to it as "the first trumpet blast of the Reign of Mary."

Mr. Fragelli's Love for the True America

Mr. Fragelli's love for the American people was deep and genuine, and he eventually became a U.S. citizen. He prayed, sacrificed, and fought so that the United States would shine in accomplishing its providential mission: to fight and defeat the gnostic and egalitarian Revolution, becoming a crusading nation around the world in the service of the true Catholic faith.

He shared the Brazilian TFP founder's admiration for the good sides of the American soul: generosity, love for the marvelous, candor, and the crusading spirit. He saw that the Revolution worked for the victory of a false America, one of Hollywood and blind optimism, over the true one.

Mr. Fragelli's Way of the Cross

In 2006, Mr. Fragelli showed the first signs of Parkinson's disease. He had always been so robust and healthy that many were shocked at the news. Even at 70, Mr. Fragelli had uncommon strength. However, the many years of carrying the burdens of TFP leadership were starting to take their toll. One veteran TFP member remarked: "Mr. Fragelli got sick because he carried everyone's problems on his shoulders all the way to the end as if they were his own."

In the early stages of the illness, Mr. Fragelli could still walk and join TFP activities. Although suffering, he always had a kind word, a tap on the shoulder, or other encouragement for those around him. As the disease advanced, he found it difficult to communicate. This pained him immensely, as he was an outgoing person with a real thirst for souls. He was eventually confined to a wheelchair, and every day a TFP member would pray the rosary with him.

In April 2016, Mr. Fragelli had a bad fall and broke his arm. From that time on, he, the formerly vigorous man who had experienced little sickness before, was confined to bed. During his final years, he could not swallow and thus could not receive Holy Communion. This, too, brought him great sorrow since he had been a daily communicant for decades.

During his final days, one could perceive in his eyes the great effort he made to thank and encourage those who came to visit him. He was heroically generous to the end. In his vigorous years, he carried everyone forward by his courage. In his years with Parkinson's disease, he carried them by his immense sufferings.

No words could sufficiently express the American TFP's gratitude, love, and respect for Mr. Luiz Antonio Fragelli. He did so much to ensure that the American TFP would help prepare the United States for the great chastisement foretold by Our Lady at Fatima and the triumph of her Immaculate Heart. We pray for the eternal rest of his crusader soul. ■

SALVE REGINA

at the

Grotto

BY FELIPE BARANDIARÁN PORTA

Pilgrims have come from all over to prostrate themselves before the humble and rustic throne that the Virgin has chosen, on the banks of the Gave in Hautes-Pyrénées in France. The intense glow of innumerable candles illuminates the rock, from which the Virgin smiles, as she did with the little seer we know as Saint Bernadette Soubirous—the saint whom the Blessed Mother told that she is the Immaculate Conception.

To the left in front of us stands a robust, middle-aged man and I wonder if he is the painter. He has a small crutch in his hands and a crippled child in his arms, who looks at us with serenity.

I can hear the pilgrims saying: “The children of Eve cry out to you!”

The Queen of Heaven has dispensed countless healings since she appeared to little Bernadette on February 11, 1858. Hanging from the rock are piled up crutches of the grateful who testify to it. Seventy cases are medically certified as miraculous. Probably many more are spiritual cures that are kept in the silence of confessionals. ■

Oil painting by José Garnelo y Alda,
Valencia, Spain (1866-1944)

