

# Shepherds of Christ

2006 ISSUE NO. 1 A SPIRITUALITY NEWSLETTER FOR PRIESTS BY REV. JOHN J. PASQUINI

## CHIEF SHEPHERD OF THE FLOCK

Jn. 10: 1-15

“In all truth I tell you, anyone who does not enter the sheepfold through the gate, but climbs in some other way, is a thief and a bandit. He who enters through the gate is the shepherd of the flock; the gatekeeper lets him in, the sheep hear his voice, one by one he calls his own sheep and leads them out. When he has brought out all those that are his, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow because they know his voice. They will never follow a stranger, but will run away from him because they do not recognise the voice of strangers.’ Jesus told them this parable but they failed to understand what he was saying to them. So Jesus spoke to them again: In all truth I tell you, I am the gate of the sheepfold. All who have come before me are thieves and bandits, but the sheep took no notice of them. I am the gate. Anyone who enters through me will be safe: such a one will go in and out and will find pasture. The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I have come so that they may have life and have it to the full. I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd lays down his life for his sheep. The hired man, since he is not the shepherd and the sheep do not belong to him, abandons the sheep as soon as he sees a wolf coming, and runs away, and then the wolf attacks and scatters the sheep; he runs away because he is only a hired man and has no concern for the sheep. I am the good shepherd; I know my own and my own know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for my sheep” (New Jerusalem Bible, Doubleday).

**“It is better that scandals arise than the truth be suppressed.”** —His Holiness Gregory the Great

## TO SEE THE SHEEP

By Blessed Mother Teresa

“People are hungry for God. People are hungry for love. Are you aware of that? Do you know that? Do you see that? Do you have eyes to see? Quite often we look but we don’t see. We are all passing through this world. We need to open our eyes and see” (Mother Teresa, *One Heart Full of Love*, [Ann Arbor: Servant Publications, 1984], 11).

Let us see the sheep and shepherd them, every one of them.

## PRAYER BEFORE THE HOLY SACRIFICE OF THE MASS

Let me be a holy sacrifice and unite with God in the sacrament of His greatest love. I want to be one in Him in this act of love, where He gives Himself to me and I give myself as a sacrifice to Him. Let me be a holy sacrifice as I become one with Him in this my act of greatest love to Him. Let me unite with Him more, that I may more deeply love Him. May I help make reparation to His adorable Heart and the heart of His Mother, Mary. With greatest love, I offer myself to You and pray that You will accept my sacrifice of greatest love. I give myself to You and unite in Your gift of Yourself to me. Come and possess my soul. Cleanse me, strengthen me, heal me. Dear Holy Spirit act in the heart of Mary to make me more and more like Jesus. Father, I offer this my sacrifice, myself united to Jesus in the Holy Spirit to You. Help me to love God more deeply in this act of my greatest love. Give me the grace to grow in my knowledge, love and service of You and for this to be my greatest participation in the Mass. Give me the greatest graces to love You so deeply in this Mass, You who are so worthy of my love. (*Imprimatur*, Shepherds of Christ Publications)

**“The first law of history is not to dare to utter falsehood; the second, not to fear to speak the truth.”**

—His Holiness Leo XIII

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FR. EDWARD CARTER

Founder, Shepherds of Christ

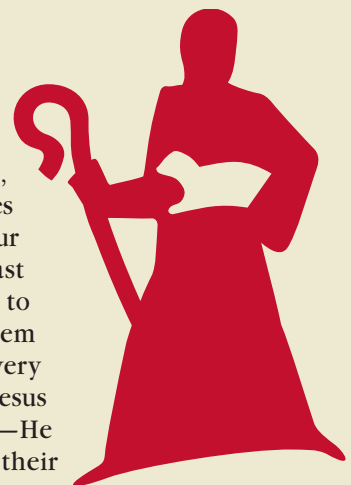
*This newsletter is for priests and those who are interested in the spiritual life.*

## PRIESTHOOD

By Charles De Foucauld

### To a Friend Preparing for Ordination

“The priest... is something transcendent: through baptism he brings souls to birth, through the sacrament of penance he purifies them, through communion he gives them our Lord’s Body as He Himself did at the Last Supper, and at their death He helps them to appear before the Beloved by giving them their final forgiveness and strength.... Every single day of his life, a priest does what Jesus did during His three years of ministry—He teaches men to know, love and serve their good Master. What a vocation!”



# JOHN PAUL II THE GREAT IN MEMORIAM

By Fr. John Pasquini

“His Holiness Pope John Paul II will assuredly be granted the title ‘the great,’ for he was truly magnificent. He showed us how to live as a Christian, to age, to suffer and to bear persecutions and illnesses as a Christian. And most beautifully he showed us how to die with dignity and serenity as a Christian.

Pope John Paul II was a true sign of contradiction in this world. He coined the terms ‘culture of life’ and ‘culture of death,’ and made them household phrases. He showed us that for every act within the culture of death there was a holy alternative to be found in the culture of life. He explained how abortion could be eliminated in favor of adoption and loving support for those who chose life over death; He pointed out to us how palliative care was much more dignified than euthanasia; He taught us about the evils of embryonic stem cell research and showed us a holy alternative—stem cell research which focused on placentas and umbilical cords. He condemned cloning in favor of respect for the sanctity and beauty of each person’s uniqueness. He explained to us how the death penalty in a modern society must be replaced by imprisonment, for just as the thief on the cross on Good Friday repented and found eternal life in Christ, those in prison could likewise repent and find eternal salvation—for no life is worth giving up on! John Paul II combated same-sex marriages, contraception, artificial reproduction, and all forms of assault on the sanctity of the family, married life, and the structure of a healthy society. He taught us that health care was not a privilege but a basic right, that hunger and starvation were not acceptable

and that through a solidarity of nations these ills could be cured. He pointed out to the world the ills of totalitarianism and taught us about the preciousness of freedom. He emphasized the tragedy and emptiness of secularism and reminded us of the gift of religious freedom. John Paul II reminded us of Christ’s preferential option for the poor, the elderly, the handicapped, and the dying. He impelled us in a world where racism, prejudices, violence, and unjust wars often flourish that we were to recognize in our neighbor the image and likeness of God and that all attacks on the dignity of the person were nothing other than attacks on God Himself. And finally he showed us that suffering was not useless, but redemptive and holy, that suffering could be embraced with no loss of dignity; he showed us how the wisdom, power, and presence of Christ were to be seen in the weaknesses of those who suffer.

John Paul II was truly great and his greatness influenced many generations of peoples, but in a very special way, his greatness influenced my generation. As a young seminarian, I will always remember the words of encouragement he gave to those preparing for the priesthood. As he told us, ‘There are always souls to enlighten, sinners to pardon, tears to dry, disappointments to console, the sick to encourage, children and youngsters to guide. There is, there will always be, people to love and to save, in Christ’s name! This is your vocation; it ought to make you happy and courageous!’ (*Prayers and Meditations*, 204) My dear Holy Father, it has! I love you and I thank you, John Paul II. Pray for me and pray for us as you enjoy the eternal reward you so richly deserve and may you find eternal rest in the arms of your Mother, Mary, whom you so loved” (Fr. John Pasquini, *Catholic Answers, Protestant Questions*, [Xlibris Corporation, 2005], 171-172).



The following are quoted passages from the Vatican website:

## *The newness of biblical faith*

“The biblical account thus concludes with a prophecy about Adam: ‘Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and cleaves to his wife and they become one flesh’ (*Gen 2:24*).

Two aspects of this are important. First, *eros* is somehow rooted in man’s very nature; Adam is a seeker, who ‘abandons his mother and father’ in order to find woman; only together do the two represent complete humanity and become ‘one flesh’. The second aspect is equally important. From the standpoint of creation, *eros* directs man towards marriage, to a bond which is unique and definitive; thus, and only thus, does it fulfil its deepest purpose. Corresponding to the image of a monotheistic God is monogamous marriage. Marriage based on exclusive and definitive love becomes the icon of the relationship between God and his people and vice versa. God’s way of loving becomes the measure of human love. This close connection between *eros* and marriage in the Bible has practically no equivalent in extra-biblical literature” (Vatican website, Papal Archive, Benedict XVI, encyclicals, <[www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/benedict\\_xvi/encyclicals/documents/hf\\_ben-xvi\\_enc\\_2005\\_1225\\_deus-caritas-est\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/encyclicals/documents/hf_ben-xvi_enc_2005_1225_deus-caritas-est_en.html)>, no. 11).

“This newness of biblical faith is shown chiefly in two elements which deserve to be highlighted: the image of God and the image of man” (*Ibid.*, no. 8).

## *Jesus Christ, the incarnate love of God*

“The real novelty of the New Testament lies not so much in new ideas as in the figure of Christ himself, who gives flesh and blood to those concepts—an unprecedented realism. In the Old Testament, the novelty of the Bible did not consist merely in abstract notions but



## DEUS CARITAS EST

By His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI

### Part I (Key Passages)

#### *The Unity of Love in Creation and Salvation History*

Pope Benedict XVI’s first encyclical is a call to a renewed commitment directed to all in response to God’s love. The first part of the encyclical (which will be the focus of this edition) emphasizes God’s free gift of love and its implication for human love. The second part (which will be discussed in an upcoming newsletter) focuses on the Church’s exercise of love of God and neighbor.

Pope Benedict reminds the faithful that the central mystery of the Christian is that “God is love.” Christianity perfects, purifies, and elevates love into the sphere of the divine.





in God's unpredictable and in some sense unprecedented activity. This divine activity now takes on dramatic form when, in Jesus Christ, it is God himself who goes in search of the 'stray sheep', a suffering and lost humanity. When Jesus speaks in his parables of the shepherd who goes after the lost sheep, of the woman who looks for the lost coin, of the father who goes to meet and embrace his prodigal son, these are no mere words: they constitute an explanation of his very being and activity. His death on the Cross is the culmination of that turning of God against himself in which he gives himself in order to raise man up and save him. This is love in its most radical form. By contemplating the pierced side of Christ (cf. 19:37), we can understand the starting-point of this Encyclical Letter: 'God is love' (1 Jn 4:8). It is there that this truth can be contemplated. It is from there that our definition of love must begin. In this contemplation the Christian discovers the path along which his life and love must move" (*Ibid.*, no. 12).

### Love of God and neighbor

"Love of neighbor is thus shown to be possible in the way proclaimed by the Bible, by Jesus. It consists in the very fact that, in God and with God, I love even the person whom I do not like or even know. This can only take place on the basis of an intimate encounter with God, an encounter which has become a communion of will, even affecting my feelings. Then I learn to look on this other person not simply with my eyes and my feelings, but from the perspective of Jesus Christ. His friend is my friend. Going beyond exterior appearances, I perceive in others an interior desire for a sign of love, of concern. This I can offer them not only through the organizations intended for such purposes, accepting it perhaps as a political necessity. Seeing with the eyes of Christ, I can give to others

much more than their outward necessities; I can give them the look of love which they crave. Here we see the necessary interplay between love of God and love of neighbor which the *First Letter of John* speaks of with such insistence. If I have no contact whatsoever with God in my life, then I cannot see in the other anything more than the other, and I am incapable of seeing in him the image of God. But if in my life I fail completely to heed others, solely out of a desire to be 'devout' and to perform my 'religious duties', then my relationship with God will also grow arid. It becomes merely 'proper', but loveless. Only my readiness to encounter my neighbor and to show him love makes me sensitive to God as well. Only if I serve my neighbor can my eyes be opened to what God does for me and how much he loves me. The saints—consider the example of Blessed Teresa of Calcutta—constantly renewed their capacity for love of neighbor from their encounter with the Eucharistic Lord, and conversely this encounter acquired its realism and depth in their service to others. Love of God and love of neighbor are thus inseparable, they form a single commandment. But both live from the love of God who has loved us first. No longer is it a question, then, of a 'commandment' imposed from without and calling for the impossible, but rather of a freely-bestowed experience of love from within, a love which by its very nature must then be shared with others. Love grows through love. Love is 'divine' because it comes from God and unites us to God; through this unifying process it makes us a 'we' which transcends our divisions and makes us one, until in the end God is 'all in all' (1 Cor 15:28)" (*Ibid.*, no. 18).

## VATICAN GUIDELINES FOR TRAINING FUTURE PRIESTS

By the Congregation For Catholic Education

Approved and Ordered for Publication by Pope Benedict XVI on August 31, 2005.

The Church demands from its candidates to the priesthood that they have affective maturity and a sense of spiritual fatherhood towards the Church community. The priest is to represent sacramentally Christ, the head, shepherd and spouse of the Church. There are four areas of discernment and formation regarding the suitability of candidates. A candidate must have a well-developed and mature human, spiritual, intellectual and pastoral sense of being. Regarding homosexual tendencies, the congregation responds with the following (section 2 and 3):

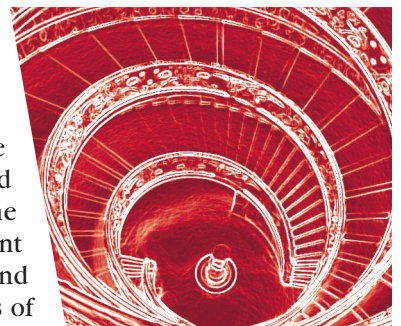
"In the light of such teaching, this Dicastery, in accord with the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments,

believes it necessary to state clearly that the Church, while profoundly respecting the persons in question<sup>1</sup>, cannot admit to the seminary or to holy orders those who practice homosexuality, present deep-seated homosexual tendencies or who support the so-called 'gay culture'.<sup>2</sup>

Such persons, in fact, find themselves in a situation that gravely hinders them from relating correctly to men and women. One must in no way overlook the negative consequences that can derive from the ordination of persons with deep-seated homosexual tendencies....

If a candidate practices homosexuality or presents deep-seated homosexual tendencies, his spiritual director, as well as his confessor, have the duty to dissuade him in conscience from proceeding to ordination....

It is understood that the candidate himself has the primary responsibility for his own formation. He must offer himself trustingly to the discernment of the Church, of the bishop who calls him to orders, of the rector of the seminary, of the spiritual director and of the other seminary educators to whom the bishop or major superior has entrusted the task of forming future priests. It would be gravely dishonest for a candidate to hide his own homosexuality in order to proceed, despite everything, towards ordination. Such a deceitful attitude does not correspond to the spirit of truth, loyalty and availability that must characterize the personality of him who believes he is called to serve Christ and His Church in the ministerial priesthood" (Vatican website, Roman Curia, Congregations, Catholic Education, November 4, 2005, <[http://www.vatican.va/romancuria/congregations/ccatheduc/documents/rc\\_con\\_ccatheduc\\_doc\\_20051104\\_istruzione\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/romancuria/congregations/ccatheduc/documents/rc_con_ccatheduc_doc_20051104_istruzione_en.html)>).



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## MYSTERY

By Henri Cardinal de Lubac

“If it is true that the first end of man, his destiny, his vocation, is ‘supernatural,’ that it transcends anything that might be attained by human efforts, or might result from mere human history, then it should surprise no one if the revelation thereof should be characterized permanently by the presence of mystery. It is and will always remain in this world ‘that which eye has not seen, ear has not heard, the heart of man has never conceived (Cf. 1 Cor. 2:9).” (His Eminence Henri Cardinal de Lubac, *A Brief Catachesis on Nature and Grace*, translated by Richard Arnandez, [San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1984] 65).

## EVANGELIUM VITAE PRAYER

By His Holiness Pope John Paul II

“O Mary,  
Bright dawn of the new world,  
Mother of the living,  
To you do we entrust the cause of life:  
Look down, O Mother,  
Upon the vast numbers  
Of babies not allowed to be born,  
Of the poor whose lives are made difficult,  
Of men and women  
Who are victims of brutal violence,  
Of the elderly and the sick killed  
By indifference or out of misguided mercy.  
Grant that all who believe in your Son  
May proclaim the Gospel of life  
With honesty and love  
To the people of our time.  
Obtain for them the grace  
To accept the Gospel  
As a gift ever new,  
The joy of celebrating it with gratitude  
Throughout our lives  
And the courage to bear witness to it  
Resolutely, in order to build,



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Together with all people of good will,  
The civilization of truth and love,  
To the praise and glory of God,  
The Creator and lover of life” (Vatican website, Papal Archive, John Paul II, encyclicals, <[http://www.vatican.va/edocs/ENG0141/\\_P15.HTM](http://www.vatican.va/edocs/ENG0141/_P15.HTM)>, no. 105).

## MYSTICISM OF EVERYDAY LIFE

By Fr. Karl Rahner, S.J.

The mysticism of everyday life is to be found “—where one dares to pray into silent darkness and knows that one is heard, although no answer seems to come back about which one might argue and rationalize, —where one lets oneself go unconditionally and experiences this capitulation as true victory, —where falling becomes true uprightness, —where desperation is accepted and is still secretly accepted as trustworthy without cheap trust, —where a man entrusts all his knowledge and all his questions to the silent and all-inclusive mystery which is loved more than all our individual knowledge which makes us such small people, —where we rehearse our death in everyday life and try to live in such a way as we would like to die, peaceful and composed” (Fr. Karl Rahner S.J., *The Spirit in the Church*, 21-22).

## DEAREST LORD, TEACH ME

By Saint Ignatius of Loyola

“Dearest Lord, teach me to be generous. Teach me to serve You as You deserve; to give and not to count the cost; to fight and not to heed the wounds; to toil and not to seek for rest; to labor and not to ask for reward, save that of knowing that I am doing Your will. Amen.”

## RAHNER’S EXPLANATION OF SALVATION AND MYSTICISM IN PEOPLE OF OTHER FAITHS

By Fr. John J. Pasquini

### The Anonymous or Implicit Christian

“The Christian is called to believe in the triune God who through Christ established his Church, without which no salvation is possible for the world, and in particular or more specifically for the individual. Faith in Christ and faith in his Church are necessary elements for salvation as proclaimed by the Gospel<sup>4</sup>. Scripture (i.e., Mk. 16:16; Acts 2:44-47, 12; Heb. 11:6; Eph. 4: 11, 12), the Fathers of the Church (from the time of the Apostolic Fathers, i.e., St. Ignatius of Antioch, to the end of the Patristic age, i.e., St. John Damascene),<sup>5</sup> and the Church Councils (i.e., Trent, Fourth Lateran, etc.)<sup>6</sup> all point out the necessity of Christ and his Church for salvation.



But what about the people who lived before Christ? What about the people who never heard the explicit Gospel message or even heard the word Christ? What about those who believe in God yet have not grasped the explicit presentation of the Gospel message? *Are all who through no fault of their own* who profess a different belief condemned to hell? What about the person who is swayed by other philosophies? What about the person who seems ‘turned off’ by so-called ‘Christians’? Reflection and perception warn us that such a profession of condemnation is problematic: How can we condemn such a massive number of people, especially if no sign of subjective guilt can be found in them?<sup>7</sup> If Christ is who Christians claim him to be, then the Christ-event must have meaning in the living experiences of all people, whether they are aware of it or not. Otherwise, Christ would simply be a ‘nice guy’ or solely a good example as opposed to ‘the Savior.’

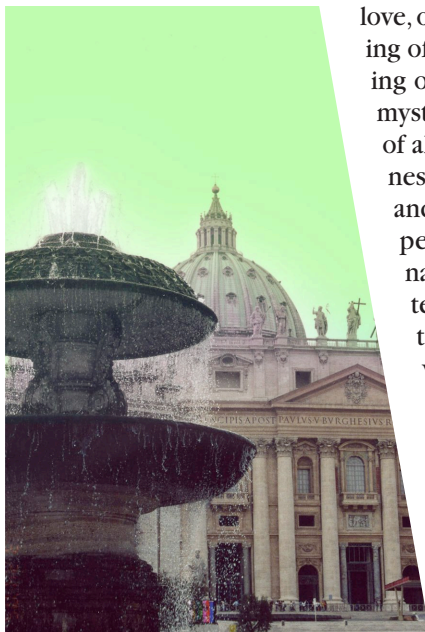
Karl Rahner’s theory of the anonymous Christian or as he later termed it, the implicit Christian, is the key to salvation for others who on the exterior appear to be non-Christians and yet appear to be people of great holiness. These people in fact can be very much great mystics, albeit with great difficulty.

Because of the possibility of an experience of God at the very core of one’s innermost being, salvation is a possibility for a vast number of non-Christians who have ‘through no fault of their own,’ never heard the explicit expression of Christianity.

Rahner explains that Scripture shows us that God wills all to be saved and reach the summit of truth (1 Tim. 2:4). Christ came for all, to save all.

We are faced with two realities when dealing with the Church’s infallible teaching. On the one hand the Christian faith as expressed by Christ and his Church is





necessary for salvation, and on the other hand, one recognizes that God desires all to be saved. From these two realities one must come to the conclusion that somehow all people are able to become members, in some sense, of the Church if all are to have the opportunity to be saved. If all people are capable of becoming members of the Church, this implies that there are degrees of becoming members of the Church, degrees of membership. In becoming a Christian one is baptized, accepts the fullness of the faith, and embraces the liturgical life in holiness. Even before the presentation of the explicit Church's preaching of the Gospel message by a missionary effort, one must recognize the movement of grace that allows the person to accept and embrace the message and give it life and light. Likewise, in the case of someone who has never been presented with the Church's preaching, that grace—which is the grace of Christ—is active in the individual and is seeking the fulfillment of its nature to become Christian in all its dimensions even though the preaching of the message may not be present explicitly.<sup>8</sup>

*'If it be true that the man who is the object of the Church's missionary endeavor is or can be already prior to it a man who is on the way toward his salvation and finds it in certain circumstances without being reached by the Church's preaching, and if it be true at the same time that the salvation which he achieves is the salvation of Christ, because there is no other, then it must be possible to be not only an anonymous 'theist,' but also an anonymous Christian and this (since the Church of Christ is not a purely interior reality) not in any merely intangible way, but also with a certain making visible and tangible of the anonymous relationship.'*<sup>9</sup>

Karl Rahner

Grace is a gratuitous gift of God's self-communicating love to humanity. This grace offered to humanity presupposes an ability to accept and respond to this free gift of

love, of presence. The grace presupposes a 'being of unlimited openness for the limitless being of God....'<sup>10</sup> It is an openness to a God of mystery who is beyond the limits of all reality, of all that is comprehensible, yet it is an openness to a providential God who is the source and sustainer of all existence, of all reality. The person in his or her whole being has an innate attraction or tendency toward God. This tendency is capable of being open to hearing the absolute, mysterious, often hidden God who transcends all of reality.<sup>11</sup>

Failure to be open to God's gratuitous gift of self leads one to self-contradiction. One inevitably contradicts what one was meant to be. By being radically open, by experiencing transcendence, one is experiencing grace's content. The revelation of the Word, of the Christ, is the expression and explication of what one already is by virtue of grace, by virtue of one's radical openness, one's transcendence.<sup>12</sup> It is a revelation that speaks to a person's being whenever the person completely accepts himself or herself.<sup>13</sup>

When one accepts one's being for what one truly is or was intended to be, one is accepting the reality of Christ as the perfection and guarantee of one's grace-filled movement toward God, a grace-filled movement of the permanent and visible presence of Christ's Body, the Church.<sup>14</sup>

The anonymous or implicit Christian is one who accepts one's being ordered to God, and who is in harmony—possibly even confusedly—with one's own being giving glory to God. From here the person's being seeks to be actualized, fulfilled. The person seeks to move from an implicit Christian reality to an explicit Christian reality. Given historical circumstances, the explicitness of the Christian expression may not be able to be actualized without the explicit presentation of Christianity; hence, the person's nature will seek its fulfillment, *in grace*, in an authentically loving and humane spirit. If, however, a higher state of explicitness is offered or presented to an individual, a person's nature will most likely embrace this explicit expression of the faith—an explicit, conscious profession of Church membership. It is in this actualization in God, in grace, that happiness, peace, contentment, and the mystical experience can be found. It is in this mystery-experience of the triune God that one finds the fulfillment of what one is intended to be.<sup>15</sup>

For the Christian, salvation and mysticism are inescapably linked to Christ the sanctifier and redeemer. In Christianity, the precondition for salvation and holiness, there is an entrance into the life, death and resurrection of Christ and his body the Church. For the Christian, one's salvation, one's holiness, one's mysticism is *in Christ, through Christ, and with Christ.*

Therefore, one may argue that the theory of the anonymous Christian or implicit Christian is the only plausible way to express the reality of Christ as the *way*, the *truth*, and the *life* in people of other *explicit* faiths. It is the only way to express the reality of mysticism outside the sphere of *explicit* Christianity.<sup>16</sup> (Fr. John J. Pasquini, *Light, Happiness and Peace: Journeying Through Traditional Catholic Spirituality*, [Alba House: New York, 2004], 159-163).

## GIFT OF HOLY ORDERS

By: Clement of Rome, Pope and Martyr

"The Apostles preached to us the Gospel received from Jesus Christ, and Jesus Christ was God's Ambassador. Christ, in other words, comes with a message from God, and the Apostles with a message from Christ. Both these orderly arrangements, therefore, originate from the will of God. And so, after receiving their instructions and being fully assured through the Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, as well as confirmed in faith by the word of God, they went forth, equipped with the fullness of the Holy Spirit, to preach the good news that the Kingdom of God was close at hand. From land to land, accordingly, and from city to city they preached, and from among their earliest converts appointed men whom they had tested by the Spirit to act as bishops and deacons for future believers. And this was no innovation, for, a long time before the Scriptures had spoken about bishops and deacons; for somewhere it says: I will establish overseers in observance of the law and their ministers in fidelity" (Clement of Rome, *Epistle to the Corinthians*, 42, quoted in *The Companion to the Catechism* [San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1995], 376).



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In Chapter 44 we read:

“Our apostles, too, were given to understand by our Lord Jesus Christ that the office of bishop would give rise to intrigues. For this reason, equipped as they were with perfect foreknowledge, they appointed the men mentioned before, and afterwards laid down a rule once for all to this effect: when these men die, other approved men shall succeed to their sacred ministry.... Happy the presbyters [priests] who have before now completed life’s journey and taken their departure in mature age and laden with fruit” (*Ibid.*, 4)!

## DIVINE MERCY IN MY SOUL

By Saint Faustina Kowalska

“In the evening, when I was in my cell, I saw the Lord Jesus clothed in a white garment. One hand [was] raised in the gesture of blessing, the other was touching the garment at the breast. From beneath the garment, slightly drawn aside at the breast, there were emanating two large rays, one red, the other pale. In silence, I kept my gaze fixed on the Lord; my soul was struck with awe but also with great joy. After a while, Jesus said to me, ‘Paint me an image according to the pattern you see, with the signature: Jesus, I trust in You.... I desire that this image be venerated, first in your chapel, and [then] throughout the world. I promise that the soul that will venerate this image



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will not perish. I also promise victory over [its] enemies already here on earth, especially at the hour of death. I Myself will defend it as My own glory” (Saint Faustina Kowalska, *Divine Mercy in My Soul* [Massachusetts: Martin Press, 1987], 25f.).

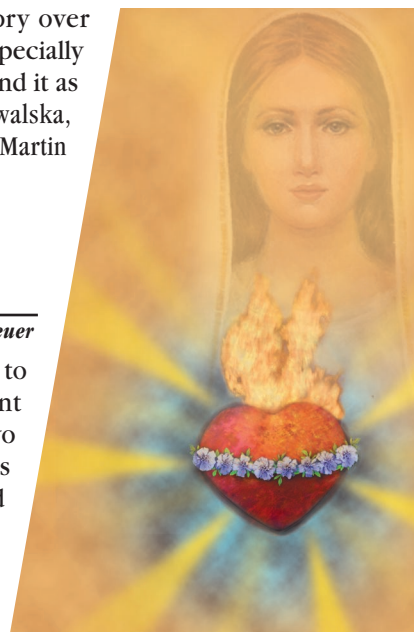
## THE TRIUMPH OF MARY’S IMMACULATE HEART

By Fr. Thomas Euteneuer

People sometimes ask me what they can do to counter the negative effects of our decadent society. My answer always comes down to two things: be truly Catholic and be Marian. This is the formula for transforming our world, and when these commitments are fully in place, everything else follows. There are many ways to be a good foot soldier of Mary and the Church, but let me give you one excellent example.

On the morning of May 13th of 1981 the world waited with baited breath to see if Pope John Paul II would survive the assassination attempt on his life by a crazed Turkish gunman operating under orders from Communists. It was the feast of Our Lady of Fatima, and in gratitude for saving his life, the Holy Father went to Fatima the following year on her feast day to re-consecrate himself and his papacy to her Immaculate Heart. Something in John Paul’s experience of being targeted by a murderer, surviving miraculously and re-consecrating his life to Mary is paradigmatic for all of us: it symbolizes the triumph of Mary’s Immaculate Heart over the culture of death. John Paul will be known in history for his brilliant defense of the sanctity of human life and for his immense love of Mary. In fact, he showed us that consecration to Mary and dedication to life are synonymous realities.

This was borne out by what happened just hours before the assassination attempt. On the morning of the day that he was felled by Ali Agca’s bullet, Pope John Paul signed two documents formalizing the Virgin Mary’s counter-attack on the culture of death. That morning he established both the Pontifical Council for the Family and the John Paul II Institutes for Marriage and the Family worldwide. It is hard to imagine two works of the Church that have done more to strengthen the divine institutions of marriage and the family than these. The Council has been a bastion of pastoral defense of the family like no other for the past twenty-five years, and the JP2 Institutes have literally transformed the Church’s theology of marriage by propagating and deepening John Paul’s “theology of the body” throughout the entire world. Many Catholics may not be aware of the work of these institutions, but certainly the Church as a whole has benefited immensely by their apostolates.



Consecration to Mary and defense of these sacred realities are intimately connected in the Church’s fight against modern errors. I can think of no other period in history where Mary’s messages have been so urgent in defense of life, marriage and family. Her Immaculate Heart cannot be neutral to the devil’s shock and awe campaign against God’s plan for us which, as John Paul said so often, passes through the family in a very tangible way. Mary has chosen to meet us there at the crossroads of the modern conflict with the prince of evil. Her battle plan is to involve us in a heroic effort to protect life, marriage and the family at a time when it is most under attack.

In practical terms, everyone who rejects the cultural poisons...and the myriad attacks on everything sacred is engaging in Mary’s battle. Some do battle by coming out of the murky cultural darkness and producing the fruits of conversion for all to see. Others engage the enemy by deliberately teaching the abundance of Catholic truth on these subjects to the young. Many more will infuriate the devil simply by living their marriages and family lives according to Catholic teachings. There are many ways to be Mary’s foot soldiers.

We all want to make this world better, indeed to transform it into the Kingdom of God. The way to do it is to be a faithful Marian Catholic. That is the Triumph of Her Immaculate Heart—one heart at a time (Vol. 1, #17, 2006).

## HOW TO BECOME A SHEPHERD OF CHRIST ASSOCIATE

The Shepherds of Christ has prayer chapters all over the world praying for the priests, the Church and the world. These prayers that Father Carter compiled in the summer





## PRAYER MANUAL

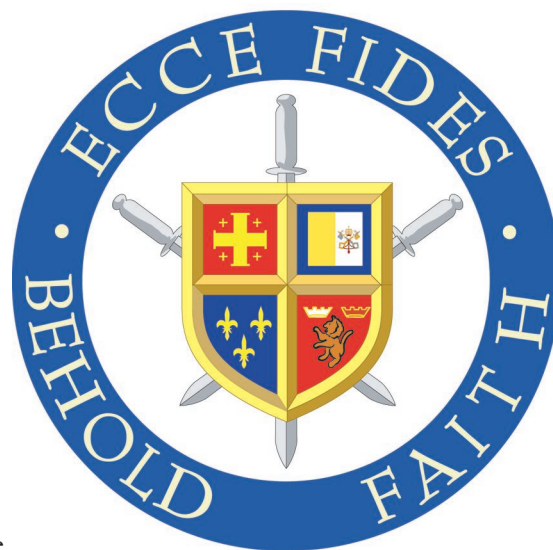
## ENDNOTES

The following notes are from Vatican website, Roman Curia, Congregations, Catholic Education, November 4, 2005:

1. Cf. *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (editio typica, 1997), n. 2358; cf. also CIC, can. 208 and CCEO, can. 11.
2. Cf. Congregation for Catholic Education, A memorandum to Bishops seeking advice in matters concerning homosexuality and candidates for admission to Seminary (9 July 1985); Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, Letter (16 May 2002): *Notitiae* 38 (2002), 586.
3. Cf. *Pastores Dabo Vobis*, n. 69: AAS 84 (1992), 778.

The following notes are from Fr. John J. Pasquini, *Light, Happiness and Peace: Journeying Through Traditional Catholic Spirituality*, [Alba House: New York, 2004], 159-163.

4. See Karl Rahner, *Theological Investigations*, vol. 6, Concerning Vatican II, trans. Karl and Boniface Kruger (Baltimore: Helicon Press, 1969), 391 for a detailed analysis of this.
5. William A. Jurgens, ed., *The Faith of the Early Fathers* (Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 1979), vols. 1-3.
6. See *The Christian Faith*, ed. Josef Neuner, S.J. and Jacques Dupuis, S.J. (Staten Island: Alba House, 2001).
7. Rahner, *Theological Invest.*, vol. 6, 391.
8. Rahner, *Theological Investigations*, vol. 6, 391-392. Also cf. CCC 847 citing LG 16: "Those who, through no fault of their own, do not know the Gospel of Christ or his Church, but who nevertheless seek God with a sincere heart, and, moved by grace, try in their actions to do his will as they know it through the dictates of their conscience — those too may achieve eternal salvation."
9. Rahner, *Theological Investigations*, vol. 6, 392.
10. Ibid.
11. Ibid.
12. Rahner, *Theological Investigations*, vol. 14, Ecclesiology, Questions in the Church: the Church in the World, trans. David Bourke [New York: The Seabury Press, 1976], 394.
13. Ibid., 395.
14. Ibid., 394.
15. Ibid.



## ECCE FIDES BEHOLD THE FAITH

By Fr. John Pasquini

The Shepherds of Christ encourage Bishops, Pastors, and Parochial Vicars as well as lay individuals to foster the mission of Ecce Fides. Please check the website for instructions on building Catechism-based faith communities: [www.eccefides.com](http://www.eccefides.com).

## FR. JOHN PASQUINI



*Authenticity*, the Yellow Book of prayers by Fr. John Pasquini, can lead the soul into deeper intimacy with the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, can lead to greater love of Mary which leads to the unitive life and greater holiness. It is available through SofC as a special offer to priests for \$5 plus postage.



of 1994 began this worldwide network of prayer. Currently the prayers are in six languages with the Church's *Imprimatur*. Fr. Carter had the approval of his Jesuit provincial for this movement, writing the Newsletter every 2 months for 6 1/2 years. After his death, and with his direction, we in the Shepherds of Christ circulated the *Priestly Newsletter Book II* to 95,000 priests with other writings. We have prayed daily for the priests, the Church, and the world since 1994. Associates are called to join prayer Chapters and help us circulate this newsletter centered on spreading devotion to the Sacred Heart and Immaculate Heart and helping to renew the Church through greater holiness. Fr. John J. Pasquini is a tremendous gift on this 12th anniversary of the first newsletter. Form a Prayer Chapter & order a Prayer Manual:  
~Shepherds of Christ Ministries

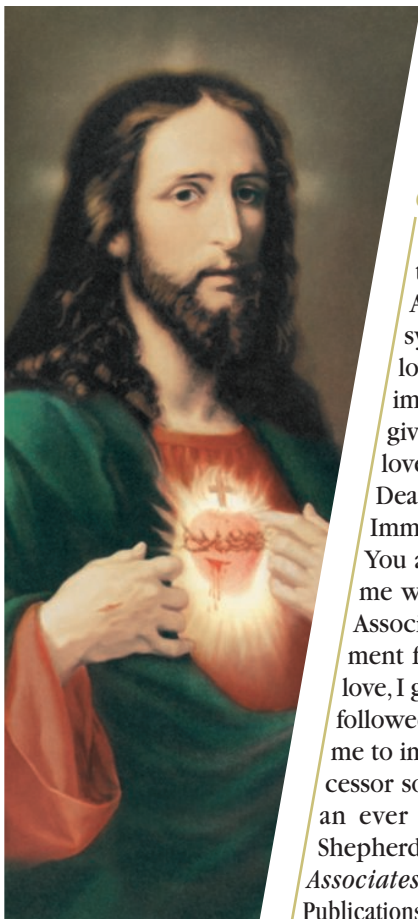
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## EDITOR'S CORNER

Fr. John J. Pasquini is a columnist, author of more than a dozen books, guest speaker, lecturer on topics of systematic, moral and spiritual theology, a retreat leader, and a parish priest in the Diocese of Palm Beach, Florida. He feels blessed to serve the Shepherds of Christ as the editor of their newsletter. The newsletter is dedicated to renewal, fraternity, and the building of the Kingdom of God. It is a spirituality newsletter particularly dedicated to priests, religious, and all interested in the spiritual life.

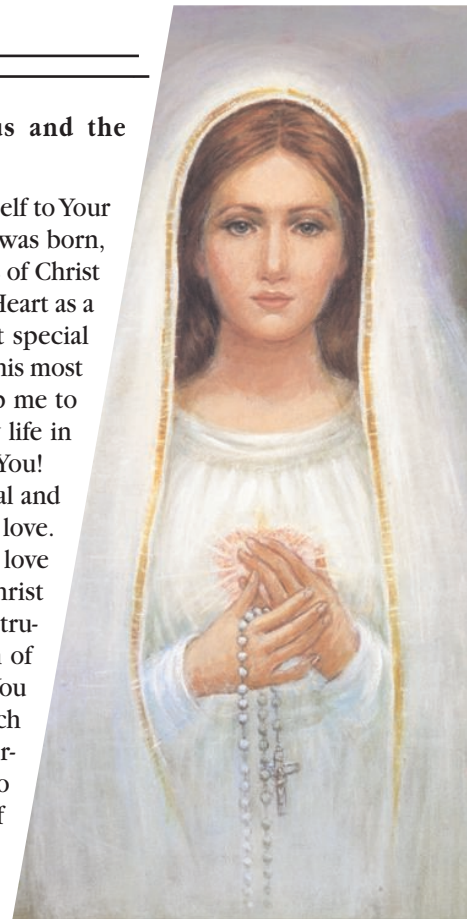
Comments and insights are always welcome.

## ACT OF CONSECRATION



### Act of Consecration to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Immaculate Heart of Mary

“Lord Jesus, Chief Shepherd of the flock, I consecrate myself to Your most Sacred Heart. From Your pierced Heart the Church was born, the Church You have called me, as a member of Shepherds of Christ Associates, to serve in a most special way. You reveal Your Heart as a symbol of Your love in all its aspects, including Your most special love for me, whom You have chosen as Your companion in this most important work. Help me to always love You in return. Help me to give myself entirely to You. Help me always to pour out my life in love of God and neighbor! Heart of Jesus, I place my trust in You! Dear Blessed Virgin Mary, I consecrate myself to your maternal and Immaculate Heart, this heart which is a symbol of your life of love. You are the Mother of my Savior. You are also my Mother. You love me with a most special love as a member of Shepherds of Christ Associates, a movement created by your Son as a powerful instrument for the renewal of the Church and the world. In a return of love, I give myself entirely to your motherly love and protection. You followed Jesus perfectly. You are His first and perfect disciple. Teach me to imitate you in the putting on of Christ. Be my motherly intercessor so that, through your Immaculate Heart, I may be guided to an ever closer union with the pierced Heart of Jesus, Chief Shepherd of the flock” (Fr. Edward J. Carter S.J., *Shepherds of Christ Associates Prayer Manual*, China, Indiana: [Shepherds of Christ Publications, 1994]).



2006 Issue I

Shepherds of Christ: A Spirituality Newsletter for priests is published four to six times a year by Shepherds of Christ Ministries. Shepherds of Christ Ministries was founded by Fr. Edward J. Carter, S.J. While distribution is free of charge, donations are still very much appreciated for printing and postage. Inquiries and comments are welcome, as are address changes and addresses of the newly ordained. Permission to reproduce intact is granted for non-commercial use. Permissions have been granted for the publication of the excerpted materials. The editor is Rev. John J. Pasquini, Founder of Ecce Fides. John Weickert is President. The Good Shepherd illustration is by Brother Jerome Pryor, S.J. Also dedicated to the spiritual advancement of priests is a worldwide network of lay/religious prayer chapters, Shepherds of Christ Associates. You may contact them with the above address, telephone, or fax.

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