

CHURCH STUFF

(A newsletter for Catholic cadets)

Week of 6 October, 2002

To my Catholic brothers and sisters in the Corps:

One thing that people find difficult in maintaining a healthy spiritual life is the fact that it's easy to get discouraged with the simple tasks of daily life. They become pretty predictable and sometimes very frustrating and boring.

It's always a challenge to keep one's interest "up and running" ...and to be convinced that even in the simple daily tasks, God is fulfilling his purpose for us.

A great Catholic figure from the past - Cardinal Newman, in England (d.1890) - expressed his own convictions about this in the following prayer.

I thought it might speak to some of us:

GOD HAS CREATED ME
to do him some definite service.
He has committed some work to me
which he has not committed to another.

I HAVE MY MISSION.
I may never know it in this life,
but I shall be told it in the next.

I AM A LINK IN A CHAIN,
a bond of connection between persons.
He has not created me for naught.
I shall do good - I shall do His work.
I shall be an angel of peace,
a preacher of truth in my own place...

THEREFORE I WILL TRUST HIM.
Whatever I am, I can never be thrown away.
If I am in sickness, my sickness may serve Him;
in perplexity, my perplexity may serve Him.
If I am in sorrow, my sorrow may serve him.

HE DOES NOTHING IN VAIN.
He knows what He is about.
He may take away my friends.
He may throw me among strangers.
He may make me feel desolate,
make my spirits sink,

hide my future from me...still

HE KNOWS WHAT HE IS ABOUT.

May God grant you His peace...and the assurance and confidence of His powerful presence!!

THINGS CATHOLICS CAN DO:

RETREATS

If you'd like to make a Catholic Retreat, there are two Retreats coming up:

25-26-27 October:

Cadet Retreat at St. Basil's Academy
(across the River in Cold Spring);
it'll be a more "traditional" Retreat with Frs.
Deponai and Wood, lots of Quiet Time for
personal reflection, recreational time, topical talks
and prayer.

Donation requested: \$20.00

1-2-3 November:

UCF Retreat at Capuchin Youth Center (across
the River in Garrison);
it'll be a "community-building" weekend for the
new United Catholic Fellowship, activities
centered on building sense of Catholic
fellowship and identity among the members of
this new cadet organization.

IS MARRIAGE IN YOUR FUTURE?

If you're planning a Catholic marriage in the near future, you'll need to have marriage instruction and preparation. Consider attending the next "Engaged Encounter" (16-17 November).

Contact the Chaplain's Office for information.

DID YOU KNOW?

OCTOBER is a big month for patron-saints of military-types and branches.
Your interests might lie in one of the categories listed below.

OCTOBER 4 was the Feast of ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI.
Francis was born in the Italian town of Assisi in 1181 or 1182,

and as a youth, he served in the Army of Assisi during a period of intense feuding between Assisi and its neighbor Perugia. He spent some time as a POW and soon after, he experienced an intense conversion. He gave his belongings away and led a life of poverty, founding a religious Order of friars whose prime purpose was to care for the poor and dispossessed. FRANCIS died in 1226.

ST. FRANCIS is the patron of the QUARTERMASTER CORPS (because of his concern for the needs of people), and he's also the patron of POWs.

OCTOBER 18 is the Feast of St. LUKE.

Not much is known about LUKE. In Colossians 4:14, St. Paul called him "our most dear physician". Paul also referred to him as a "co-worker" (Philemon 24), and in II Timothy 4:11, LUKE is mentioned as Paul's "only companion" shortly before Paul's death. These are the only references to him in the New Testament. However, early Catholic traditions claim that LUKE was a Greek-speaking convert of pagan origins who accompanied Paul on various journeys; he was never married and lived to the age of 84. He is also the author of the Gospel of LUKE and of The Acts of the Apostles.

ST. LUKE is the patron of the MEDICAL CORPS.

OCTOBER 23 is the Feast of St. JOHN OF CAPISTRANO. JOHN OF CAPISTRANO was born in Italy in 1386, and during his life, he functioned as a theologian, a preacher and a papal diplomat. John came from a military family, and during his life as a Franciscan priest, he spent much of his time working to prevent warfare between many of Europe's warring parties. He also worked endlessly to recruit soldiers to defend Hungary and central Europe from Turkish (Muslim) domination. JOHN died in 1456.

ST. JOHN OF CAPISTRANO is the patron of the CHAPLAIN CORPS.

OCTOBER 28 is the Feast of ST. JUDE.

JUDE was one of the Twelve Apostles of Jesus. He's mentioned in Luke 6:16 and in Acts 1:13; he's also mentioned in Matthew 10:3 and Mark 3:18 (where he's referred to as "Thaddeus" rather than Jude - so people wouldn't confuse him with Judas). He and

Jesus also have a brief conversation in John 14:22-3. An early Christian story considers him a relative of Jesus. Unreliable legends claim that he preached in Persia and Mesopotamia and that he died a martyr's death. An early Christian history says that his grand-children were arrested for the Christian faith during the time of the Emperor Domitian (AD 90 or so) and that they actually governed the Church in Palestine during Trajan's time (AD 110). JUDE THADDEUS has always been considered the patron-saint of the impossible.

ST. JUDE is the patron of MILITARY INTELLIGENCE.

PLEASE REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS

...for a cadet who's battling depression.

...for all cadets in the hospital.

...for anyone carrying a heavy burden.

...for all our military brothers and sisters throughout the world - and their families - and especially those in areas of risk.

GOT A QUESTION?

Q: Father, I often hear about how Eastern Orthodox and Roman Catholic churches are closely related (ie, same sacraments, follow teachings of the Apostles, etc.) yet have a few differences in their beliefs. Could you discuss the major differences between the two Churches and how they came about?

A: Historically, this can cover a lot of ground, but I'll try and keep the complication down to a minimum.

As Christianity spread throughout the Roman Empire, it took two distinct but similar forms: Eastern and Western. The "Western" form was centered at Rome, and the "Eastern" was centered in the principal cities of the eastern part of the old Empire: Constantinople, Antioch, Alexandria and Jerusalem.

Both forms developed their own ways of worship, their own church-structure and their own theological language.

In terms of "belief", they were all "Catholic" and believed most of the same things.

As time went on, friction grew between them over the role of the Pope in Rome. The "Eastern" Catholics believed that the Pope was not superior to their own leaders (whom they called "patriarchs"), while the "Western" Church considered the Pope to be the "Vicar of Christ", the ONLY earthly leader of the Church.

By 1100, the two parts of the Church split apart formally: the "Western" part called itself the Roman Catholic Church, while the "eastern" called itself "The Holy Orthodox Church".

That division still exists today. You can find the Orthodox Church all over the world, and usually the word "orthodox" is prefaced by a nationality, denoting the specific

"eastern" tradition that it has inherited: Russian Orthodox, Greek Orthodox, Bulgarian Orthodox, etc. - all those parts of eastern Europe that used to be the "eastern" Roman Empire.

To confuse things, there are groups within most of these that are united with the Roman Catholic Church. So you can sometimes find a Russian Orthodox Church not too far from a Russian Catholic Church, and you can sometimes find a Greek Orthodox Church just down the street from a Greek Catholic Church.

They would be just about identical in everything: worship, liturgy, belief...except for their ideas about the role of the Pope. One group accepts the Pope's authority, and the other one doesn't (there are a couple of other theological points of disagreement, too, but the role of the Pope is the original one).

The Roman Catholic Church recognizes the validity of Orthodox sacraments (same as ours), Orthodox priests and the Orthodox monastic system. In fact, the Orthodox and Catholic beliefs are pretty much the same, except for the role of the Pope, but in spite of the similarity, there has been a lot of bad feeling over the last thousand years (some of it stemming from the Crusades), so any attempt at re-uniting the two have some pretty big obstacles to overcome.

Hope that answers your question.

THEOLOGY EVERY CATHOLIC SHOULD KNOW:

(Note: over the next several weeks, this space will be devoted to a discussion of one of the Ten Commandments.)

THE FOURTH COMMANDMENT: "Honor your father and your mother,
as the Lord your God has commanded you,
that you may have a long life and
prosperity in the land which the Lord your
God is giving you."

Deuteronomy 5:16

Exodus 20:12

Our first tendency is to simply take this commandment at face-value and interpret it to apply only to parents and children.

But for years, Roman Catholic interpretation has seen in this Commandment the foundation for SOCIETY and reads into it an admonition to construct a whole SOCIAL DOCTRINE. Parents and children are specifically addressed because the FAMILY UNIT is the most universal SOCIAL unit, but Catholic tradition also sees in this Commandment a statement of duties toward elders and ancestors, teachers, employers, leaders, one's country and those who govern one's country. It also addresses the duties which all of those mentioned have toward the INDIVIDUAL.

It can be seen in layers:

First of all, the FAMILY. In the words of "The Catechism of the Catholic Church":

A man and woman, united in marriage, together with

their children, form a FAMILY. This institution is prior to any recognized by public authority...In creating man and woman, God instituted the human FAMILY and endowed it with its fundamental constitution. Its members are persons equal in dignity...

#2202

Then, the CHRISTIAN family:

The CHRISTIAN family...can and should be called a domestic CHURCH...(It) is a communion of persons, a sign and image of the communion of the Father and the Son in the Holy Spirit...(It) has a missionary and evangelizing task.

#2204, 2205

The FAMILY is the original cell of social life, and from childhood, one can learn moral values, begin to honor God and make good use of Christian freedom in the CHRISTIAN family. The FAMILY should live in such a way that its members learn to care and take responsibility for the young, the old, the sick, the handicapped and the poor.

The Church sees the FAMILY to be so important that Catholic tradition has always believed that political authority has a duty

- a) to honor the FAMILY;
- b) to assist FAMILY life when necessary;
- c) to ensure that people have the freedom to establish the FAMILY;
- d) to protect the stability of the marriage bond;
- e) to ensure that FAMILIES have the freedom to profess their faith and to pass it on;
- f) to guarantee the right to private property, to free enterprise, to obtain work and housing and the right to emigrate;
- g) to guarantee the right to medical care, assistance for the aged and family benefits;
- h) to protect the FAMILY with security and health, especially with respect to threats such as drugs, pornography, alcoholism, etc.;
- i) to guarantee the freedom to form associations with other families and to have representation before civil authority.

#2211

Within the FAMILY, there is a division of rights and duties. Children owe their parents respect, gratitude, rational obedience and assistance. On the other end of the spectrum, parents owe their children the first education in the Faith and in moral life.

The FOURTH COMMANDMENT also commands us to honor all those who have received authority in society. Societies exist to guarantee the freedom and responsibility of all the members. Therefore, those in authority should

- a) practice justice;
- b) attend to the needs of all of society's members;
- c) establish harmony and peace;

d) respect the human rights of everyone.

#2234ff

And individual members of every society have their own responsibilities, too:

a) to contribute to the good of society;

b) to serve the common good;

c) to offer support - eg, just taxes - to vote and to defend the society;

d) to welcome foreigners;

e) to NOT follow the direction of civil authorities if they violate

the moral order OR denigrate the basic rights of society's members.

#2238ff

The basic thought of this "society" side of the FOURTH COMMANDMENT is that every society's judgements and conduct reflect a vision of humanity and the destiny of men and women. The Christian Church exists to provide the light of Gospel values for society's vision; without this vision, societies can easily become totalitarian (see #2257).

And when this "social" facet in the FOURTH COMMANDMENT is added to the "familial" facet, what you have is God's blueprint for relations between humans on the human level...to be further developed in the remainder of the Commandments, which deal specifically with "social" health (eg, "Thou shalt not kill", etc.).

More next week.

UNSOLICITED SPIRITUAL THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK:

"How much good
is left **UNDONE**
because of our fear
of the opinions of others."

Peter van Breeman

And that's the way it is, a day like all days, filled with those events that alter and illuminate our time...

and **YOU ARE THERE!!**

May the weekend give you some time to

CATCH UP

and may God's Presence make the

DIFFERENCE!!

Woodie