

The Sodality of St. Edmund, King and Martyr

A Catholic Community of the Anglican Use, Diocese of Hamilton

www.stedmund.ca



August 15, 2012 - **The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary**

SEPTEMBER SCHEDULE

September 2	Sunday	The Thirteenth Sunday after Trinity
September 9	Sunday	The Fourteenth Sunday after Trinity
September 16	Sunday	The Fifteenth Sunday after Trinity
September 23	Sunday	The Sixteenth Sunday after Trinity
September 30	Sunday	The Seventeenth Sunday after Trinity

SERVICE TIMES AND LOCATION

- (1) On Sundays, an **Anglican Use Mass** is celebrated at 1:00 p.m.
- (2) All Services are held at our own altar in St. Patrick's Church, 53 Wellington Street, Cambridge, Ontario

NOTES AND COMMENTS

1) The Good News continues - this time from Edmonton!

Reception of the 'Group of Seven'

After many months of waiting, the newly appointed Auxiliary Bishop-elect, Gregory Bittman of the Archdiocese of Edmonton, welcomed the small, seven-member congregation of The Fellowship of Blessed John Henry Newman (Edmonton) into the Roman Catholic Church on Sunday July 29th at the Assumption of Our Lady Church in Edmonton. Bishop-elect Bittman baptised one of the congregation and confirmed and warmly welcomed personally each member. Father David McLeod, our mentor Roman Catholic priest, leading the little flock towards Rome also officiated, together with Father Paul Kavanagh (Parish Priest) and Father Miguel Irizar.

The service took place during the Sunday Family Mass and a large congregation, including many children extended a very kind and generous welcome to us. It was a lovely surprise to meet Mary Wells, a member of the Sodality of the Annunciation, Ottawa, together with her relatives from Edmonton, who had attended to support us. It was delightful to share our experiences with one another.

Our work now begins as new Roman Catholics in a Church setting, using the Book of Divine Worship among our new family. We thank the congregation of the parish of the Assumption of Our Lady Church, their rector, Father Paul Kavanagh and his team, and Bishop-elect Gregory Bittman, Archbishop Richard Smith and our mentor priests Father David McLeod and Father Michael Storey (Calgary) for their help and encouragement.

Thanks be to God - we are safely home.

Cynthia Cordery



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THE MASS AS SACRIFICE - 3 of 7

"The New Should be Hidden in the Old"

To understand the sacrifice of the Cross, the sacrifice of the Mass, we need to go to the Old Testament. Sacrifice is normative to human nature. Ghandi, a Hindu, said that "worship without sacrifice" is an absurdity of the modern age. Sacrifice was there from the beginning. "Cain brought to the Lord an offering of the fruit of the ground, and Abel brought of the firstlings of his flock and of their fat

portions." It is interesting that it is the sacrifice of the lamb which is acceptable to God. Again, it is a lamb which Abraham substitutes for the sacrifice of his only son, Isaac. Hebrew has no punctuation, and so it is valid to read the passage as "God will provide *Himself*, the Lamb, for a burnt offering." We are being prepared for another; more definitive sacrifice. "Behold, the Lamb of God, Who takes away the sins of the world!"

But it is not just animal sacrifice that is mentioned. Again, at the beginning, we have that mysterious figure Melchizedek, King of Salem, "priest of God Most High", with his offerings of bread and wine.

The sacrifice which concerned Israel more than any other was that of the Passover lamb the night they were freed from slavery in Egypt. The angel of death passed over the houses whose doorposts and lintels were smeared with the blood of the lamb. It wasn't a one-off sacrifice. The Jewish people were commanded to celebrate it each year for ever. God gave them very precise instructions how to do so.

In the wilderness God enters a covenant with Israel: He is their God; they are His people. This covenant is ratified by a sacrifice. As the Book of Exodus recounts, Moses

"sent young men of the people of Israel, who offered burnt offerings and sacrificed peace offerings of oxen to the Lord. And Moses took half of the blood and put it in basins, and half of the blood he threw against the altar . . . [The rest he] threw upon the people, and said, 'Behold the blood of the covenant which the Lord has made with you' . . . Then Moses and . . . the elders of Israel went up . . . they beheld God, and ate and drank."

Note the words "sacrifice" and "blood of the covenant". Note, too, that the sacrifice isn't over until they eat and drink. But it is no ordinary meal - it is a heavenly banquet, a sacrificial rite.

The Temple

The Temple in Jerusalem, built initially by Solomon, by tradition on the site of the sacrifices of Melchizedek and Abraham, became the place of sacrifice for the Jewish people. Until its destruction it was served by thousands of priests. There were various types of sacrifice, public and private.

There were sin offerings and trespass offerings,

"intended to restore communion when it had been disturbed or dimmed by sin and trespass". The most solemn sin offering occurred once a year as the High Priest sprinkled blood in the Holy of Holies in atonement for the sins of the nation. Afterwards the priests ate a sacrificial meal of that flesh which had not been burnt. Burnt offerings were a sacrifice of devotion and service, symbolising an individual's, or a group's, surrender to God, and God's acceptance of that. But there were also peace or thanksgiving offerings, principally the Passover. These were joyful celebrations of communion with God. In thanksgiving God is acknowledged as the One Who delivers Israel from slavery.

We seldom mention the Bread of Presence: loaves God commanded to be kept always in His presence on a golden table in the Tabernacle, together with bowls for incense and flagons for wine. The incense confirms that this bread offering was a sacrifice. Ezekiel refers to the table as an altar. By tradition, something happened to this bread as it was offered in sacrifice. Afterwards it was held to possess miraculous qualities. Each Sabbath in the Temple the sacrifice of bread and wine was renewed by the priests, after which they ate the bread which had been replaced.

Every Jewish male had to come to Jerusalem at Passover, Pentecost and Tabernacles, as Exodus says, when they would "see the face of the Lord." On those feasts the priests raised the table so the pilgrims could see the Bread of Presence. As they did, they proclaimed, "Behold, God's love for you." Bells should be ringing for us at this point. A Sabbath sacrifice which is also a meal was being observed: the bread that was about to be consumed revealed "the face of the Lord", the sign of His love.

By **Father Mark Vickers** in the May and June 2012 issue of *faith* magazine (I have omitted the quote 'references' which are, of course, in the original. If you are not able to access the original, I will forward a copy, upon request.)

ROBERT'S RAMBLINGS

ST EDMUND

The more things change the more they stay the same.

train called St Edmund which plied between Norwich and Suffolk.

I am glad your group is still under the patronage of St Edmund (840 - 869), martyr and King of East Anglia. I am glad your newsletter is still called *Update* and that its editor is still Gary Freeman. In an earlier column I once told you that I had seen a

The Roman Catholic Church of England and Wales has a diocese called East Anglia. Its cathedral city is Norwich. Currently the see is vacant. Its bishop Michael Evans (not an East Anglian surname!) recently died of cancer. He was responsible for his

church's dialogue with the Methodist church of this country. The Church of England has two dioceses in East Anglia, in the counties of Norfolk (northern folk) and of Suffolk (southern folk). One diocese is called Norwich and the other is called St Edmundsbury & Ipswich. Its cathedral city is Bury St Edmund.

Your patron was killed by pagan Norse or Viking invaders from Scandinavia. He had declined to take up his sword (*Matthew* 26,52) in defence of his kingdom. The freebooters tied the king to a tree and used him for target practice, hence the arrows on the cover of your newsletter. There are two other Saints Edmund.

St Edmund of Abingdon near Oxford (1180 - 1240) taught logic in the famous university, became a canon of Salisbury cathedral and then Archbishop of Canterbury, where he died after only three years in office. He was known for austerity and holiness of life and for trying to modify the reigning king's mismanagement of the country. One of the medieval colleges which constitute Oxford University is named after him, popularly called Teddy Hall.

St Edmund Campion (1540 - 1581) was one of the Catholic church's martyrs during the Reformation and Counter Reformation. He taught at Oxford University and was a deacon in the Church of England. He later joined the Jesuit order, studied in Europe and was sent back home to minister in secret to fellow Catholics. Like many of his contemporaries he was tortured and executed.

During those horrendous years Christians made a practice of killing each other, all for love of Jesus, and barbarously so. In England it was the Anglicans who won and so they did the persecuting. In, say, France it was another story: remember, for example, the massacre of St Bartholomew. Because it was illegal to be RC in England, men and women fled to France, not least those who had been monks and nuns. In the city of Bury St Edmund there was a Benedictine monastery dedicated inevitably to your own patron saint. But in 1536 King Henry VIII abolished monasteries and nicked their lands and monies for himself or for his cronies.

Some of the monks from East Anglia regrouped in Paris and started another house, also dedicated to your St Edmund. Its monks were able to study at Sorbonne, the famous university of Paris, and they provided a centre for English exiles. After 1689 members of the Stuart royal family, who had been replaced by William and Mary, worshipped at this St Edmund's. But "here we have no abiding city" (*Hebrews* 13,14). The French Revolution of the early nineteenth century also persecuted monks and

nuns. Some Carmelite sisters, for example, were guillotined. The monks left Paris for the obscurity of Douai in north eastern France. When things quietened down they opened another school for boys and continued ministering to English exiles.

A hundred years passed and then came a French government hostile to institutional religion. By 1903 it was no longer criminal to be RC back home in England. His Majesty's Catholic subjects now enjoyed all the civil liberties which his other subjects did. The monks of Douai returned. In lovely countryside some distance from the city of Reading they established another monastery and school for boys. They called their new abbey Douai and dedicated its church, yes, you've guessed, to St Edmund of East Anglia.

Why do I have St Edmund in mind? Well, there's your group of course. But in May this year 20 of us former Anglican clergy were preparing for ordination in the Ordinariate. In 1999 the monks had decided that school teaching was no longer their calling. They turned their abbey into a comfortable and welcoming centre for concerts, conferences, courses and retreats. To Douai we repaired for three days of silence together. Of course it turned cold and it rained so walking was out. We were well fed and housed. We enjoyed the monks' singing of the daily office. Some of them are away caring for parishes and others are studying at Oxford. We were given erudite addresses on the life of our Lord by the Dominican scholar, Father Aidan Nichols OP, who has been described as Anglicanism's best friend. He is the author of 32 books including "*The Panther & the Hind*" and "*The Realm*" and "*The Thought of Pope Benedict XVI*". The first two of these show his affection for and knowledge of Anglicanism, "Anglo Catholics are beyond doubt as to doctrine, worship and devotion a displaced portion of Catholic Christendom. It is as such I shall be appealing to some of their lay spokesmen".

Above all, we retreatants were awe struck, brought to our knees, by the beauty of St Edmund's Abbey. The choir was begun in conventional stone. Decades later the monks completed the nave with soaring stone pillars and with glass roof and walls. Light pours down into the sacred space. A description of God from a well known hymn comes to mind, "as silent as light".

If any readers of *Update* are church crawling in the UK, the obvious places are obvious, such as Durham cathedral and Llandaff cathedral, but if you have your own wheels, I heartily recommend St Edmund's Abbey, Douai, Woolhampton, Berkshire.

Msgr Robert Mercer CR

Today, I want to talk about probably the three most important interrelated problems facing Christianity: the problem of free will, the problem of evil, and the problem of Hell. These are not only the issues which drive people away from Christianity, but they're issues which have divided even Christians, with some Christians denying that free will even exists, while others deny the reality of Hell.

I. The "Problem" of Free Will

At first brush, free will may not seem like much of a problem. In fact, it's one of the most vexing problems. Why did God create us with free wills, instead of in a state of perfect obedience and love of Him?

The question has a deceptively simple answer: God created us with free will, because authentic freedom is itself a good. That is, completely apart from what we choose to do with our free wills, the fact that we get to choose it is good. Perhaps we can understand this in a political context: President Obama may be a good or bad president, but it's objectively better that he was elected as president, rather than coming to power through a coup. So regardless of the results, the process is *itself* good.

As Fr. Jacques Philippe noted in his book *Interior Freedom*, "In the area of morality, freedom appears very nearly the only value about which people still agree unanimously at the beginning of the third millennium. Everyone more or less agrees that respect for other people's freedom is more or less an ethical norm." So we generally agree with this idea of free will, except when we don't like the outcome.

Someone unfamiliar with the idea of democracy might ask, "why does the US military allow free elections, instead of just forcibly installing the leader that they *know* will do a better job? Why suffer the presidents which the masses elect?" And the answer is that even if the **outcome** is worse (that is, a less-qualified person becomes president) the **process** is better. Good ends don't justify evil means.

II. Free Will Requires the Possibility of Hell

Free will requires the possibility of evil. Otherwise, the freedom of the will is illusory. Think of the ballot used by Saddam Hussein in what would be his last

re-election. As ABC News described at the time:

On Tuesday, voters were faced with a remarkably simple ballot: Should President Saddam Hussein be given another seven years in office? Yes or no. There were no alternative candidates on the ballot, and absolutely no campaigning against the entrenched Saddam.

Not surprisingly, the result was unanimous.

We can look at that, and say, that's not a free election. There was no authentic choice. Since God is **all good**, that is, since there is no good other than God, for Him to give us a more meaningful choice than the Saddam vote, He permits us to choose *other than Him*. But since there is no good apart from God, "other than God" is another way of describing evil.

It's also another way of describing Hell. When non-Christians talk about Hell, they sometimes joke like it's going to be a big party. "I may be going to Hell, but at least all my friends are going to be there," one *Facebook* group proclaims. We imagine we can take the graces of this life - including our ability to feel pleasure - and take it with us into the eternal abyss. That's tragically mistaken.

Imagine a woman being wooed by a romantically-interested man, who declines his overtures, but accepts his many gifts. One day, she eventually marries someone else, and the rejection is complete. The would-be suitor, while still in love with her, respects her decision and stops sending gifts. Given her choice, it's the appropriate thing to do. Now that she's married to someone else, her chance to choose the suitor is over once and for all.

So it is when we live and die outside of God's grace. During this lifetime, we still enjoy the graces of God even while we're rebuffing His attempts at a meaningful relationship. But upon our death, when we've made it clear once and for all that we're choosing someone or something other than Him, our rejection of God becomes final, and the gifts we're reliant upon stop coming. He loves us, but respects our decision.

From the catholicdefense.blogspot - **Shameless Popery** - August 5, 2011

RECREATIONAL SEX AND CULTURAL ENTROPY

As I glumly absorbed a news feature about elaborate measures taken by a daycare to forestall incidence and/or allegation of sexual abuse, it struck me that this unfortunate contemporary necessity is just one more installment of the terrible price we pay for our culture's affirmation of recreational sex as not only OK - but as very nearly a basic human right.

So many of the toxic symptoms our post-Christian culture manifests are traceable to the ethos that sex is a wholly satisfactory means of achieving satisfaction: extramarital pregnancy (teenage or otherwise); sexual abuse of children; various categories of rape; prostitution; pornography and "erotica"; rampant homosexuality; AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases; epidemic marriage breakdown; popular culture's prurient obsession with sex; the list goes on and on.

Yet one rarely hears the recreational sex concept being challenged - certainly not by politicians or the popular media, and depressingly seldom by religious leaders either. It is virtually taken for granted that college students will engage in an active sex life, and the same assumption is increasingly made about high school children (witness condom machines in school washrooms).

The hand-wringing and stem-winding over AIDS has been positively schizophrenic from day one, with strident emotional demands that "something be done", coupled with scornful denial of the one measure that could stop AIDS dead in its tracks: chastity outside of marriage and fidelity within it. The AIDS plague was visited on us by recreational sex; no other avenue.

That recreational sex issues are considered debatable even in Christian circles indicates how far off the straight and narrow path churches have been lured by the seductions of relativist humanism. The Bible is never clearer than in its teachings about sexual morality. Yet hordes of modern clerics and theologians try to square the circle with deliberate, systematic ignorance of the Scriptural imperative that sexual activity outside of marriage between persons of the opposite sex (how horrid that one feels obliged to make that distinction!) is wrong and sinful. No obfuscatory babble about "caring, committed, extramarital relationships", or "covenants between same-sex couples" will do.

Of course in our society, Biblical authority retains little cultural purchase. That's no reason for Christians to stop articulating it - simply a reality that

should be acknowledged. We must not be silent on this issue, and a strong case can be advanced, based in natural law (which will always be in accord with Biblical morality), against the concept of recreational sex, without incurring accusations of our bludgeoning society with sectarian values.

The "consequences argument" (AIDS, teenage pregnancy, disposable marriages and families, etc.) should be self-evident to any thinking person not addled by liberal ideology. Homosexual behaviour has no objective function in nature, but heterosexual promiscuity is unnatural for humans as well. Bruce Holbrook (an avowed non-Christian) advances a compelling natural law argument against promiscuity in his book, "The Stone Monkey". "Humans, unlike animals," writes Holbrook, "have a moral dimension to their physical health. If they follow civilized sexual mores, they do not contract venereal disease. If they do not, they sicken and die." He continues: "Sexually promiscuous monkeys, for example, do not develop venereal disease, whereas man is meant not to be promiscuous, so that his/her sexual tissues are more sensitive than those of promiscuous monkeys." There is plenty of scientific evidence corroborating this, EG: the link between cervical cancer rates and promiscuity. As Holbrook puts it: "true and false are ultimately indistinguishable from right and wrong."

Christians are commissioned to be the light of the world, and surely the recreational sex ethos casts a dark shadow that must be illumined - carefully and lovingly, as Jesus dealt with the Samaritan woman and with Mary Magdalene. We must never shrink from rebuking and condemning sin, but remember always to affirm the sinner in a Christ-like manner.

If our light fails, social leading indicators suggest a bleak future. Militant homosexuals are already storming the barricades, and breaching them with apparent ease (of course the perfidy of some nominal "Christians" has eased their ascendancy). There are organizations in North America and Europe campaigning to "normalize" adult-child sex; one of these wants the age of consent lowered to 4.

But "present dangers" are bad enough. Two decades ago, I thought Malcolm Muggeridge had gone slightly off his rocker by declaring that today's Western society was "the most horrible and degraded that ever existed on earth . . .", that we had "established a deliberate system of promiscuity . . .", and that: "The purpose of [sex] is procreation, the justification of it is love; if you separate sex from

procreation and love, very rapidly you turn it into a horror." A horror indeed. Nowadays I realize Malcolm was on the right track.

By Charles W. Moore - *written in 2001!*

NEWMAN AND LITTLEMORE - 2 of 2

The second thing Newman's move to Littlemore teaches us is that the way of faith is a strange and mysterious way. Just when we thought we knew it all and had it all, the loving father calls us on to something else - some new adventure - some new call - some new attempt to walk on the waves in the dark and stormy night.

When he calls us to take this step of faith we are reminded that we walk by faith, not by sight. Newman could not see what was next when he went to Littlemore. All he could see is that he had to leave the glittering world of Oxford and go to Littlemore where little is more.

He had to become a Catholic. Nothing else mattered. That step into the dark is costly. It is a risk. It is scary. The light only shines as far as you can see for as far as you need to go. It is a kindly light that is gentle and often dim, but it is a light that is enough for me.

*Lead, Kindly Light, amidst th'encircling gloom,
Lead Thou me on!
The night is dark, and I am far from home,
Lead Thou me on!
Keep Thou my feet; I do not ask to see
The distant scene; one step enough for me.*

The third point of Newman's going to Littlemore is that in that single act of obedience he could never see what fruit would come. When I left the Anglican Church I could never see what would come. I never knew I was going to write books and articles and be ordained as a Catholic priest and move to the United States. I just did what I could do and responded to God's call and took a little step. I couldn't see the distant scene. One step enough for me.

And one step enough for you. You, and the other little band of pilgrims here and in England and around the world who are pioneers of the Ordinariate - you who have stepped from the worldly apostasy of the Episcopal Church and the petty quarreling of the continuing church - you have taken a small step. The Ordinariate is small. We don't know what its future will be. It may be that you will be poor. You will be misunderstood. Like Newman you will be vilified by the Anglicans and suspected and misunderstood by your fellow Catholics.

fruit will come from your obedience. He simply went to Littlemore where little was more.

We can't see what God is doing with our little act of obedience, but he will do much, much more than we can ever ask or think. This is because our obedience aligns our will with his will, and when that happens all things are possible.

Remember that God's work is not done until the end of time. Then the judgment will also weigh up, not just our choices, but all the results, for both good and ill of all our choices. Then the reckoning will be taken.

Now as you come into the church do you see? I wept this morning, for here I saw some of the fruit of the seeming foolishness of little Blessed Barbieri and now Blessed John Henry Newman. (Do you think they sit together in heaven at the same table? All the Blesseds over here please.)

On that dark night in Littlemore they had no idea what great things would come from their act of obedience. Who knows what results will come from your own obedience - your own step to Littlemore - as you move into the Ordinariate of the Chair of Peter?

Perhaps through the little obedience of you and me in coming into full communion with Christ's One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church Barbieri's dream will one day come true. Perhaps through more sacrifice and suffering and joy and sorrow Mary's dowry - dear England and all the parts of the world affected by her religion will also one day come back to the true faith.

We can't see what God will do. We have no idea. All there is for us is to obey. The rest is silence. All there is for us to do is to kneel and pray here where prayer has been valid.

We can't see what God is doing, but we know that he will take our obedience and make something great and beautiful and eternal out of it. He knows what he's about.

And finally we are reminded of these words of John Henry Newman . . .

But, like Newman at Littlemore, you cannot see what *"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, while not intending it if I do but keep His commandments. 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."

Welcome to the Catholic Church. Welcome to Littlemore. Welcome home.

Fr Dwight Longenecker - Sermon at **Solemn Choral Evensong**, Mount Calvary Church, Baltimore, January 22, 2012

FROM HERE AND THERE

1) Nuncio to Bishops: Express Church teaching in a clear and outspoken way

On St George's day, the Apostolic Nuncio, Archbishop Mennini addressed the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales at their Plenary meeting in Leeds. He began by speaking of the *Ordinariate of Our Lady of Walsingham* and asking for generosity in support of it. He spoke of the Bishops' pastoral letter on marriage as "a good start." On the question of marriage, he raised another issue, quoting Pope Benedict:

On the practical level, marriage preparation programmes must be carefully reviewed to ensure that there is greater concentration on their catechetical component and their presentation of the social and ecclesial responsibilities entailed by Christian marriage. In this context we cannot overlook the serious pastoral problem presented by the widespread practice of cohabitation, often by couples who seem unaware that it is gravely sinful, not to mention damaging to the stability of society.

A little further on, he said:

We all know how difficult it is to live in an increasingly secularised society but, that is why we need to express the teaching of the Church in a clear and outspoken way. This testimony in public life will affect the future of the young and will, God willing, also touch the hearts of all persons of goodwill who are seeking meaning in their lives and, often without realising it, are in fact, searching for God.

From the *Hermeneutic of Continuity* blog

2) Catholic Women who changed the world

St. Hildegard of Bingen

St Hildegard was born in 1098, the 10th child of a knight.

A precocious child, Hildegard experienced visions from the age of five. Later in her life Pope Eugene III ordered a study of her visions. On finding them to be true, he recognised Hildegard as a seer.

There was seemingly no end to Hildegard's talents, and nearly 1,000 years after her birth she is celebrated as a feisty Benedictine abbess, mystic, physician, musician and polymath. Hildegard founded two abbeys in Rupertsberg and Eibingen in the Rhineland. And she composed the liturgical drama *Ordo Virtutum*, which is thought to be the oldest surviving morality play.

During her lifetime medieval society believed that sickness was a punishment from God. But Hildegard held a remarkably bright view of humanity. She made detailed studies of how to treat the sick. Her work *Physica*, a medical textbook, was controversial, because it described methods of healing women. She also supervised works of art. Hundreds of years after her death, Dante and Leonardo di Vinci listed her as an inspiration. In 2009, *Vision*, a dramatic account of her life, was released. It is a gripping piece of cinema, but it focuses more on the conflicts between Hildegard and Church authorities than on the gifts she gave to humanity.

Mary O'Regan - May 31, 2012 - *Catholic Herald*

3) Invoking the Gift of Unity among Christians

The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, which begins today [January 18, 2012], was the theme of Benedict XVI's general audience celebrated this morning in

the Paul VI Hall. The Holy Father explained how this initiative has been held annually for more than a century and brings together Christians from Churches and ecclesial communities, who "invoke that extraordinary gift for which the Lord Jesus prayed during the Last Supper: . . . 'That they may all be one' ".

The Week of Prayer - established in 1908 by Paul Wattson, founder of an Anglican religious community [Franciscan Friars of the Atonement] who later entered the Catholic Church - "is one of the most effective annual expressions . . . of the impetus which Vatican Council II gave to the search for full union among all Christ's disciples", said the Pope. "This spiritual event, which unites Christians from all traditions, increases our awareness of the fact that the unity we strive for cannot result merely from our own efforts; rather, it is a gift we receive and must constantly invoke from on high".

The texts for this year's Week of Prayer have been prepared by a group of representatives from the Catholic Church, and from the Polish Ecumenical Council which proposed the theme of "We will all be changed by the victory of our Lord Jesus Christ". The history of Poland - marked by defeats and victories, by the struggle to end oppression and achieve freedom - led the ecumenical group to reflect more deeply upon what it means to "win" and to "lose".

In this context the Pope pointed out that, "in contrast to 'victory' understood in triumphal terms, Christ shows us a very different way. His victory does not involve power and might. . . . Christ speaks of victory through love, mutual assistance and boosting the self-esteem of those who are 'last', forgotten, excluded. For all Christians, the best expression of such humble service is Jesus Christ Himself, His total gift of self, the victory of His love over death. . . . We can share in this 'victory' only if we allow ourselves to be transformed by God".

Likewise, "the unity for which we pray requires inner conversion, both shared and individual. But this must not be limited to cordiality and cooperation; we must reinforce our faith in God; . . . we must enter into the new life in Christ, Who is our true and definitive victory; we must open to one another, accepting all the elements of unity which God has conserved for us; . . . we must feel the pressing need to bear witness, before the men and women of our time, to the living God Who made Himself known in Christ".

Ecumenism, as defined by Vatican Council II and Blessed John Paul II, is "the responsibility of the

entire Church and of all the baptised, who must augment the partial communion that already exists among Christians until achieving full communion in truth and charity. Praying for unity . . . must then be an integral part of the prayer life of all Christians, in all times and places, especially when people from different traditions come together to work for victory in Christ over sin, evil, injustice and the violation of human dignity".

Benedict XVI also pointed out that "lack of unity among Christians hinders the effective announcement of the Gospel and endangers our credibility", but noted that, "as far as the fundamental truths of the faith are concerned, there is far more that unites us than divides us. . . . This is a great challenge for the new evangelisation, which will be more fruitful if all Christians together announce the truth of the Gospel and Jesus Christ, and give a joint response to the spiritual thirst of our times".

In conclusion, the Pope exhorted the faithful to unite more intensely in prayer during the course of the coming Week, "to increase shared witness, solidarity and collaboration among Christians, in expectation of that glorious day when together we will all be able to celebrate the Sacraments and profess the faith transmitted by the Apostles".

Vatican Information Service - January 18, 2012

4) We are bombarded with the message that we are to be **tolerant** of the beliefs and practices of others. "Tolerant," however, has come to mean "accept and condone without question or reservation"; failure to practice this form of tolerance makes one intolerant and a *hater*. These assertions are addressed especially to those from traditional Christian backgrounds who acknowledge that the truths of Scripture are absolute, not relative, as secular and liberal society views them. It must be noted, too, that when entirely secularized people refuse to be tolerant of "traditional values," they are called *progressive, open-minded* and *enlightened*, anything but intolerant; while traditional Christians are considered *deluded, superstitious, brain-washed*, and *ignorant*. (This is so despite the fact that - in all ages - living a Christian life requires a concerted effort and personal dedication - a clear choice. Just ask the Virgin Mother and the Martyrs.)

From an article entitled **An Orthodox Perspective on Tolerance** by **Danial Manzuk** in the June 2012 issue of *The Word* magazine

5) "Our job is to spread the Gospel. Where did we lose this, as a culture? When did we become afraid? We have to live our faith. We have to speak

our faith, and not get a damn pat on the back for it." From a speech by **Damian Goddard** (on-air sports announcer) shortly after he was fired by *Rogers Sportsnet* for having 'tweeted' his support of 'traditional marriage'.

6) Not just for Knights!

Pontiff calls Catholic men to Defence of Religious Freedom

A papal message to the Knights of Columbus lauds the men's group for their work in helping the Catholic community to respond at this time "when concerted efforts are being made to redefine and restrict the exercise of the right to religious freedom."

This was part of the encouragement sent to the Knights by Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone, the Pope's secretary of state, on the Holy Father's behalf. The message, dated July 19, is on the occasion of the Knights' 130th Supreme Convention, which will be held next week.

"The theme of this year's Supreme Convention - Proclaim Liberty Throughout All the Land - evokes not only the great biblical ideals of freedom and justice which shaped the founding of the United States of America, but also the responsibility of each new generation to preserve, defend and advance those great ideals in its own day," the papal message stated. "At a time when concerted efforts are being made to redefine and restrict the exercise of the right to religious freedom, the Knights of Columbus have worked tirelessly to help the Catholic community recognize and respond to the **unprecedented gravity of these new threats** to the Church's liberty and public moral witness.

"By defending the right of all religious believers, as individual citizens and in their institutions, to work responsibly in shaping a democratic society inspired by their deepest beliefs, values and aspirations, your Order has proudly lived up to the high religious and patriotic principles which inspired its founding."

The Pope suggested that the current challenges are proof of "the decisive importance of the Catholic laity for the advancement of the Church's mission in today's rapidly changing social context."

The message cited what the Holy Father told a group of US bishops in Rome earlier this year, that "the demands of the new evangelization and the defence of the Church's freedom in our day call for 'an engaged, articulate and well-formed Catholic laity endowed with a strong critical sense vis-a-vis the dominant culture and with the courage to counter a reductive secularism which would delegitimize the Church's participation in public debate about the issues which are determining the future of American society.'"

In this context, the Pontiff called on the Knights of Columbus to "reinforce the praiseworthy programs of continuing catechetical and spiritual formation which have long been a hallmark of your Order."

"Each Knight," he said, "in fidelity to his baptismal promises, is pledged to bear daily witness, however quiet and unassuming, to his faith in Christ, his love of the Church and his commitment to the spread of God's Kingdom in this world."

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