



WINNOWING FAN

The Spiritual Life according to the Fathers and Saints of the Catholic Church in preparation for Christ's Second Coming.

Vol. XXVIII No. 2 ENGLISH EDITION Feb. 2011

THE MIND OF POPE BENEDICT XVI BEHIND THE YEAR OF THE PRIEST.

When the Holy Father was still a young seminarian he made a thesis entitled; "The theology of History according to St. Bonaventure." It was not a choice taken from out of nowhere. It was a deliberate choice. It interested him in spite of the fact that the faculty was not in favor of it. He insisted on it and got his way.

Before the conclave he had preferred to retire and continue writing theological treatises rather than become Pope. He planned to study further his thesis and see where it would lead to. But he was elected Pope and lost the leisure of studying further his thesis. As Holy Father he continues to dream of studying further this thesis and he mentioned it not a few times. Why are we putting emphasis on this thesis in the Year of the Priest. Because everything he is doing, including calling the year of the priest is based on his findings in this thesis.

Remember that St. Bonaventure wrote his theology of history at the eve of two great crises. First, at a time

before the Council of Lyon when the Church was in great crisis and secondly, at a time when the Franciscans had lost their taste for poverty, their charisma. Father Joseph was in exactly the same situation. First, the World Wars had just finished and had devastated the Church and secondly, he saw the seminarians turning into Communists.

St. Bonaventure put forward a solution. He said that the Church must return and become contemplative. Pope Benedict in his letter for the Year of the Priest said exactly the same thing: we must contemplate the truths of the Church. The insinuation in both cases is world wrenching. Both are saying that most members of the Church, whether bishops, priests and as a consequence the laity, are outside the Catholic Church. Contemplation of the Truth can only be done by perfect Catholics, i.e. Catholics who have repented, have received Sanctifying Grace and its accompanying theological virtues of Faith, Hope and Charity, perfected by the 7 gifts of the Holy Spirit.

As the Holy Father mentioned it means for priests to re-study the whole course of theology but this time in the right way. And to study these truths of Divine Revelation in an atmosphere of secularism and materialism which makes study nearly impossible.

The impossibility of studying is aggravated by how much time is left to study. Pope Benedict studied the 6-7 days of creation in the Haexameron to find out in what day we are, especially in what day of the history of the Church is he Pope. Is he Pope of the 5th or 6th day? The rules of engagement would be different. It is for the same reason that the Holy Father wants all priests to know the answer to this Bonaventuran question.

assent & consent in the ACT OF FAITH PART ONE

Unless the elements of water are known we cannot produce water, though fortunately we have water from nature abundantly. But in the case of Faith, if we do not know the elements of Faith we will not be able to make an Act of Faith. And the crisis of Faith today, in

that very few have true faith, is because of this. Faith has two elements: assent and consent. Assent is an act of the intellect while consent is an act of the free will. And both work co-ordinating itself one with the other: sort of the intellect first working and the free will reacting. Then the free will working and the intellect reacting until both reach a level when the free will is ready to make the free act of consent that decides whether the act is moral or immoral.

A soul does not make an act of Faith in his first act. Not even in his first 100 acts. It takes a long time to develop from perception of the presence of God, to simple Faith, to judgment that this is the true God, to making an intention to worship this God, to deliberation to seek the means to know God, to consent and finally to make the final choice of seeking the God that one had known. This process could take years. It is only when the person had made the final choice that a soul reaches Faith. By this time the soul's activity had been an interplay between the intellect and free will until it reaches Faith.

But this is not the end of the story. It is not enough for the interplay of intellect and free will to reach Faith. It must continue its interplay and continue to rise and apply what has been known. This application of known doctrines has to be gradually perfected for the soul to reach the perfection of Charity wherein the soul becomes perfect as the heavenly Father is perfect.

.....

Owned and copyrighted by
S of G Foundation, Inc.

The *Winnowing Fan* hopes "...to do what little it
could to solve the evils that beset the Church."
St. Teresa of Avila



Entered as Second Class Mail at the Makati Central Post Office on March 14, 1984
Permit # 2nd-07-15-NCR

HOW ST PAUL ADDRESSES HIS LETTERS.

St. Paul is very specific in addressing his letters. For instance in writing to the Colossians, he addressed his letter to the saints and to the faithful. Is there a difference? Yes, there is a great difference in the state of their souls. In fact this is St. Paul's way of reminding the souls in his care the state of their souls.

Those who have grown mature and perfect in their theological virtues of Faith, Hope and Charity are referred to as Saints. As St. Luke would describe them, they are serving God in holiness and righteousness.

The lesser are referred to as 'faithful.' These are the ones who have kept the faith. As St. Paul described them in his letter to the Hebrews, 'they have faith because without faith it is impossible to please God.'

The lesser to the above are referred to as catechumens by St. Augustine.

How happy should we be, did we but take as much pain to gain heaven and please God as worldlings do to heap up riches. . . . They venture among thieves and robbers. At sea they expose themselves to the fury of winds and waves; they suffer shipwrecks and all perils; they attempt all, dare all, hazard all; but we in serving so great a Master for so immense a good, are afraid of every contradiction.

St. Syncletia

OUR BLESSINGS

What are our true blessings? Many are grateful to God for their blessings. But when they enumerate them they are mostly worldly blessings like a car or a house. Of course we can thank God for these worldly blessings too. But this shows our wrong concept of what are truly 'true blessings' from God.

St. Paul enumerates our blessings or goods as consisting especially in Faith, Hope and Charity.

Faith is a blessing because by it we have a knowledge of God. "For whoever draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him."

Hope is a blessing because by it we are raised up to Him.

Charity is a blessing because by it we are united to Him. But Faith is dead without an active love and so an active love must also be present.

DUTIES OF BISHOPS IN THE CHURCH MILITANT

St. Thomas Aquinas in his commentary on Colossians described the three ways the Camp of God is attacked and the three ways by which the leaders of the camp, the Bishops, should defend the camp.

Against sin, the Bishops should tell the people their transgressions and sins as Isaiah reminds them. Against heretics the Bishop should give the people sound doctrine and also refute those who contradict the teachings of God.

Against persecutors the Bishops should give an example of patient suffering.

This is the way St. Paul protected the Church with his spiritual sword. To the first he writes: "But immorality and all impurity or covetousness must not even be named among you as is fitting among saints." To the second he writes: "As for a man that is factious, after admonishing him once or twice, have nothing more to do with him."

As to the third he writes the whole eleventh chapter of his second letter to the Corinthians.

What, then, does God look upon with pleasure and delight? It is the man who is fighting for Him against riches, against the world, hell, and himself, the man who is cheerfully carrying his cross.

St. Louis Marie de Montfort

KINDS OF LOVE

There is a kind of love that springs from Charity. This is the love that saves a soul. And there is another kind of love that is worldly. This is the kind everyone knows and has, but does not lead to heaven.

In worldly love not everyone is included. It is directed only to those with whom there is some communication or sharing or relation ...which is the cause of love. But these causes are not present in everyone but is only found in one's relatives, friends or a few other people in the world.

The love that comes from Charity extends to all, even sinners. And generous souls try to love all in order to be holy. "We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brethren."

The fruits of worldly love is obtained in this world; but the fruit of the love of charity is in eternal life in heaven. This made St. Paul write that this is why love from Charity gives us the hope that is laid up for us in heaven.which does not go with worldly love.

