



# WINNOWING FAN

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

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## "YEAR OF FAITH" part 2

Editorial

The Apostolic Letter "Motu Proprio Data" **Porta Fidei** of the Supreme Pontiff Benedict XVI for the indiction of the Year of Faith consists of several parts.

The first part describes the Act of Faith of a Catholic that is unlike any act that is human but still human transformed by the grace of God. The second part is the instrument to be used to attain this supernatural virtue.

In the third part are the Pastoral recommendations issued by Doctrine of the Faith for the implementation of the 'Motu Proprio' in the Year 2012-2013, firstly on the level of the Universal Church, secondly on the level of the Episcopal Conference, thirdly at the Diocesan level and fourthly at the level of the parish, community, association,

movement.

And in conclusion, we must be wary of the evil one who will use his angelic powers to derail the program because he knows something only the Holy Father knows.....which all of us do not know. In which case we must be on guard lest we are caught unprepared.

To all our subscribers to whom this 'Motu proprio' is addressed, this is an invitation to make an act of faith based on the Holy Father's suspicion that most Catholics do not have faith and based on the prophecy of Christ that this age will be an age where if He comes HE will find no faith. The apostolic letter is addressed principally to priests and bishops whose responsibility is to lead all men to the door of faith and, therefore, whose very salvation is dependent on the fulfillment of their

duty. And it is also addressed for the benefit of the faithful if it first benefits the priests. No one can take this lightly.

## **BRIDGE BETWEEN O.T. AND N.T.**

Most baptized Catholics lose their baptismal garment at the age of reason for making their first free evil choice, and as a result lose the graces and virtues received at Baptism. What should they do if this happens? When they grow up they have to repent, something a child did not have to do as a child. Repentance returns them to being 'children' again. And then like all children they have to grow in the life of grace and develop their virtues of Faith, Hope and Charity. But like children, when they have repented through a life of prayer, fasting and good works, they have to add the three Moral virtues in their souls before they can receive graces and the accompanying Faith, Hope, and Charity.

These Moral virtues are what will keep them from returning to a sinful life. When a penitent confesses he will notice that he will often return to his

sins. He will commit the same sins again. To prevent this he must develop the natural moral virtues of Prudence, Justice, Fortitude and Temperance. The moral virtues are what make the man perform moral acts. He becomes a moral person. He is now able to avoid immorality. St. Francis de Sales calls him a 'gentleman' because his behavior is now naturally good. Now the soul is ready to transfer from the Old Testament and enter into the New Testament.

## **DECEIVED CATHOLICS**

Most Catholics believe they are Catholics even if they do not have the Moral virtues. In fact, most Catholics do not even know what are the moral virtues.

Unfortunately there are even priests that do not know that they have to have the four moral virtues to be able to enter the Catholic Church. No Moral virtues, no Theological Virtues.

This is the main message of 'Veritatis splendor' an encyclical addressed only to Bishops. Why addressed only to Bishops unlike all other encyclicals? Because of the

gravity of the topic.

Simply said, the encyclical states that most Catholics do not know that they have to develop the Moral virtues after the life of repentance before they can enter the Catholic Church. And because of this ignorance most Catholics are not really Catholics. But this ascetical requirement was clearly dealt with by St. Thomas Aquinas and his writings had been proposed by many Popes since Leo XIII as required reading in all seminaries.

“Veritatis splendor” narrates the defect and the solution.

## VIRTUES AND VICES

Homilies on the spirituality of the New Testament, i.e. on the Catholic Church, should concentrate of the Beatitudes and on Virtues. All sins come from vices and all good things come from virtues. If we must save our souls we must be taught the virtues and their perfection in the Beatitudes.

It had been happily noticed that there are some seminaries where a small book had been making its rounds. It was first noticed in the seminary of Tübingen. The title of the book was: “The Secret

Enemies of the Priesthood.” It was an excerpt about the virtues and vices taken from the Summa Theologica of St. Thomas of Aquinas. Indeed, Virtues are needed by all those who seek holiness while vices are the sources of evil for those who love the world. Virtues and their blossoming in the Beatitudes are the sources of happiness and joy while vices result in despair.

## MORAL VIRTUES

The moral virtues are what makes our acts moral or good or perfect human acts pleasing to God. It is not the act that is moral, it is the virtue with which the act was made that makes an act moral. If you eat with moral virtue then than act of eating is moral or good. If you eat without the moral virtues then the eating is immoral because the eating was done without a moral virtue.

When Christ condemned the Pharisees, they were praying, fasting and doing good works. But they were doing these three acts without virtues so they were immoral. The publican on the other hand was praying with virtue so his act was moral and Christ described him as pleasing to God.

So the morality of an act depends on

whether the act was done prompted by virtues and not by vices. As St. Thomas of Aquinas wrote: “people should not think so much about what they ought to do, they should think about what they ought to be. They should not think of eating but how to be a good person. And, of course, this can be explained in one word....Christ.

## WHAT IS THE CHRISTIAN IDEA OF A MAN by St. Thomas of Aquinas

1. The Christian is a person, who, in his faith, is aware of the reality of the Trinity. (Note he should have not only Faith but its pre-requisite the Moral virtues.)
2. The Christian looks forward in hope to the ultimate fulfillment of his being in eternal life.
3. The Christian with the theological virtue of love turns to God and his fellow man, affirming them with a love that is far stronger than any natural love.
4. The Christian is prudent, i.e. he does not let his view of reality be clouded by what the will dictates without reference to the truth about the real situation.
5. The Christian is just, i.e. he is able to live in truth with the other; he sees that he is one among other members of the Church, of the population, and of the all

- embracing community.
6. The Christian is brave, i.e. he is prepared to be harmed – and even to accept death, if necessary – for truth and for the realization of justice.
  7. The Christian is moderate, i.e. he does not allow his desire for possessions and enjoyment to become destructive and repugnant to his being.

Note that essentially a true Christian possesses the Moral virtues of Prudence, Justice, Fortitude and Temperance, and the theological virtues of Faith, Hope and Charity. He is a man of virtues.

**Y**ou rehearse your brother's trespasses, and forget about your own.

*When a brother assaults you:*

Do not give way to indignation lest you do something precipitate, especially in relation to a man thrown into confusion by thoughts suggested by the envious devil.... He is worthy of pity and compassion rather than anger and revenge.... Let us be tolerant to our neighbor in time of his physical and mental distress.... Pray for your brother with your whole soul and love him in Christ Jesus, our Lord.

**St. Barsanuphius**