



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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WHY HAPPINESS ELUDES ALL MEN

God created man to be happy here on earth and in the next life in heaven. And God implanted this desire in the hearts of all men. But the hearts of men must be directed by the intellect for ordinarily the heart of man, being a blind faculty, follows the dictates of the intellect.

Happiness is the goal of man's heart. But he cannot attain this immediately. There are many steps man must take to attain happiness. And God in His goodness dictates to man the many steps he must take to attain happiness. Because only God knows the way leading to that goal. If man follows God's instructions he is certain to attain happiness both here on earth and in the life after.

However, more often than not, the mind of man is misinformed, misdirected or just guided erroneously to this common goal known by all men. This occurs when he refuses the guidance of the First Cause who wants him to attain happiness. St. Thomas describes God as the per se guide; while the many instruments that lead to the final goal is described as 'per accidens.' This 'per accidens' is constantly in danger of being the wrong means to the final goal of happiness. There is where all the errors occur. And these errors are the causes for all the misery of mankind.

Misery is when man makes one of these 'per accidens' as his final goal of

happiness when it should only be a means to the goal. Or when one makes a mistake of what is the 'per accidens' that leads to the goal.

God gave man an intellect with the object of aiming at truth. And by nature man will never reject the truth unless he erroneously thinks that a certain thing is the truth. God gave man a heart with the object of aiming at happiness. And by nature man will never reject happiness. A miserable man is one who contrary to God's will has committed too many mistakes in his mind and heart.

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH is both Mysterious and Visible.

The Catholic Church is mysterious in her reality. But this mystery that animates her which is totally Divine is visible in its brilliance by which that life is announced and communicated to men.

The Holy Spirit is the invisible life of the Church. If this is so it is necessary that the men who are called to serve such lofty intentions be endowed with spiritual gifts, which are as an

outpouring of the riches of the priesthood, the sanctity, and the kingship stored up for them in the sacred humanity of Christ, the Head of the Church.

The Holy Spirit descends upon men from on high. It is incarnated in the Church. It animates the men in them, fathers them in Christ, and transforms them interiorly. The permanent virtues and hidden powers that it confers on them will be for them the principle of a new mode of being and acting. Thence, both in the measure in which they allow themselves to be animated by the Spirit of God and by the gifts that he pours upon them, a change is produced even in their exterior condition and comportment. These external manifestations, taken together, are the body of the Church, that by which she becomes visible to the world.

The man of
charity spreads
his money about
him, but the man
who claims to
possess both
charity and
money is a self-
deceived fool.

St. John Climacus

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

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THE CHURCH IS SIMILAR TO CHRIST

It is fitting that the Church, intended for men and gathering them together, is, like man, at the same time invisible and visible, composed of a spiritual soul and a visible body. However, the Church has for her model, not man, but Christ; for it is in Christ that divinity and humanity are united. And if it is true that the Church resembles man, it is because Christ himself, of whom the Church is but a prolongation in space and time, has resembled man; All of tradition, in fact, has compared the union of divinity and humanity in Christ to the union of soul and body in man.

THE VISIBLE HIERARCHICAL POWER OF THE CHURCH

It is by the visible hierarchical powers that Christ orders the hidden mysteries of his grace and his grace and his truth to be dispensed to men. Besides the reflection of evangelical sanctity in the comportment of her

authentic children, the Church is visible in the hierarchical powers from which she issues forth; in the teaching of the word of God, revealed by the prophets, Christ, and the apostles, found in the Scriptures and the early apostolic preaching transmitted and developed through the ages, like a never-changing and never-failing light; in the celebration of her worship, inaugurated by Christ and continued first of all by the unbloody sacrifice of the Mass, where the complete redemption, merited by the blood of Christ, is communicated to us, then by the dispensation and reception of the sacraments, especially the Eucharist; finally by the liturgical offices and public prayers.

THE FIRST STATE OF THE CHURCH – in the course of time.

The Church has different states in the course of time. The first is called the age of the Father, of the regime prior to the Church. And it describes the world of creation.

Revelation teaches us that our first parents, before the Fall, were established in the divine friendship. However refined may have been their human morphology, their physical

makeup, their cultural development, the gifts of grace shown forth in them and a wisdom from on high enlightened them about the things of God and the meaning of life.

This grace of innocence descended from the Trinity without any mediation of an incarnate divine person; without the mediation of any hierarchy. Grace and truth came directly from heaven into the souls of the first man without any intermediary and that which was true for Adam would have been true for his descendants as well.

The law of innocence desired that the spiritual life be communicated from God to the soul and from the soul to the body. The grace that made man a child of God was in effect transfiguring. This is not to say that it bestowed upon Adam the conditions of a life of glory; rather it flowed over the inferior realities and strengthened the triple natural domination, otherwise fragile and relative of the soul over the body, to the point of excluding death and sickness. It was paradise indeed.

Poverty was not found in heaven. It abounded on earth, but man does not know its value. The Son of God, therefore, treasured it and came down from heaven to choose it for Himself, to make it precious to us.

St. Bernard

THE SECOND STATE OF THE CHURCH – in the course of time.

The second is called the age of Christ awaited, or the first regime of the Church. Why did God permit the destruction of the state of innocence? We know the answer: God; only permits evil that he may bring about a greater good. To the regime of creation, which seemed perfect, succeeded the regime of redemption which, as a whole would be better.

The first age totally excluded a visible mediator; the second would be essentially the regime of a mediator. The first regime had given birth to the first form of the people of God; the following regimes would give birth to the Church properly so called, to a people of God marked by the image of the redemptive incarnation, called the Body of Christ, whose vocation would be to prolong in space and time the temporal life of the Savior.

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