



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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FINAL AND ULTIMATE END

If man sits down and thinks of it, by his mere human mind he can see that there is a God who created him. And this God created him for an end. And this end is happiness here on earth and in the life after with Him wherever He is. This end that God has for man is commonly called Beatitude.

In all his acts, therefore, man must have this end in sight. As long as he does this he is in the right direction towards Beatitude. However there are many steps he must take before he can reach Beatitude. These steps had been laid down by God and taught to man in various ways so he does not lose his way.

But there are many things in the world, many desires of the flesh; and there is the devil who has different plans

for man, first and foremost is for man not to reach Beatitude.

When man is distracted by these alien things that do not lead him to his final goal, that is called SIN and it will definitely prevent him from reaching Beatitude. Or it can happen that man is doing something that God, Himself, had set as a means leading to his final and ultimate end but he had made this means into his ultimate end. This is also SIN because he has made a means to an end as an end. Usually when something like this happens he gets bogged down in this temporary means and becomes incapable of proceeding to his final and ultimate end. Loving our neighbor is a means to love God. When we love our neighbor as an end, then we become incapable of rising to our final and ultimate end of loving God.

THE THIRD STATE OF THE CHURCH- in the course of time.

The third state is called the age of Christ present, or the formation of the head of the Church. Why was the incarnation so delayed?

The faithful of the New Law, who marvel at being the object of such a wonderful preference, recognize in that lasting patience of God the respect of the Creator for the creature, according to which time is necessary not only on the cultural level, to deploy the never-failing resources of his spirit, but still more on the spiritual level to progress in the knowledge of the mysteries of redemption. Humanity was not able to accept the Son of God too soon.

THE WHOLE
SCIENCE OF
THE SAINTS
CONSISTS IN
KNOWING AND
FOLLOWING THE
WILL OF GOD.

St. Isidore of Seville

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

The fourth state is described as the age of the Holy Spirit, or the current regime of the Church. The Holy Spirit comes, not to abolish the age of the Son, but rather to extend its effects to the entire world. And as the goal of the age of the Son was to bring forth in Christ the fullness of grace, so the age of the spirit has for its end the dispersing of that fullness to men, who will manifest its unimaginable possibilities the more they are differentiated in space and the longer they follow one another in time.

It will be true to say that the age of the Holy Spirit will be the fitness of works greater than those of the previous age. But these works which are greater on the visible plane, are but the consequence of that mystery which is much more hidden, much more holy and much more profound. These are representations of Jesus Christ who has now ascended to the Father and entered into his heavenly existence so as to be able, in his glorious state, to aid fully the earthly expansion of his Church.

SIN

Sin is the evil in man and an offense against God. The redemption introduced by the New Adam presupposes that there was on the part of man a mysterious refusal that we call sin.

Without mentioning the terrible catastrophes into which sin casts humanity – the moral wounds of a nature henceforth inclined toward evil, death with its cortege of sorrows – it is necessary to be attentive to what sin itself is, to what is concealed in its very depths, the catastrophes of which are but consequences.

The “EXSULTET”

No song is lovier to the hearts of the baptized than the “exsultet” that is sung on Easter Vigil. It announces the superabundance of Christ’s redemption.

This satisfaction will be truly superabundant with respect to the homage that God receives from Christ alone, in whom the whole of creation is, in a sense, summed up. Christ’s love was greater than his slayers’ malice and

therefore the value of his Passion in atoning surpassed the murderous guilt of those who crucified him so that Christ’s suffering was sufficient and superabundant atonement for his murderer’s crime.

This satisfaction is superabundant by the fact that, thanks to him, God now receives from man himself more glory than opprobrium.

This satisfaction bestows on us better gifts than those we lost.

MORTAL SIN

Mortal sin appeared first of all in a stain, as an evil affecting man himself, whom it turned away from God, the infinite God, in order to fix himself a temporary creature and a finite good. Thus destroying in him the divine grace and friendship. This is totally contrary to charity, by which man effectively chooses God as his last end, that which ultimately motivates all the steps of his life. Whence, whereas charity itself is always susceptible of growth and consequently is something absolutely infinite in man, sin, considered as a stain affecting man, will always be susceptible of measurement and will be something limited or finite.

THE INFINITY OF THE OFFENCE

Each time mortal sin is committed, the infinite right God has to our adoration and love is infringed upon; the injury is infinite. Here we touch upon the paradox of the relation between God and the world. God’s sovereign domain over his creatures – unequal though they be; the atom, the angel, the human will – is equally infinite. If I give my adoration, my faith, and my charity, as well as my penance for my past sins, the gift is always finite, capable of being better; but if I refuse them, the refusal is always, in one aspect, infinite. The result is that man is more powerful in evil than in good, that it is only in the line of evil that his work can be infinite.

Whatever good is to be attained, struggle is necessary. So do not fear temptations, but rejoice in them, for they lead to achievement. God helps and protects you.

St. Barsanuphius

THE INFINITY OF THE COMPENSATION

The infinity of the offense would have remained veiled from our sight if the mystery of redemption had not come to manifest it. It is so true that, outside of this relation with the mystery, the infinity of the offense could not be clearly known.

Hence, we learn the depths of our evil only at the moment when we discover the remedy God has prepared for us. There is a certain proportion, in fact, between, on the one hand, the malice of our faults, which are finite and unequal by reason of their nature, object, and circumstance, but infinite and equal by the fact that each of them violates the forever infinite right of the Divine Majesty.

Though finite the actions of Christ because united to His infinite nature is infinite in dignity. Only because Christ had to pay for our sins can we meditate at the profundity of the offense made to God by sin. Done by someone inferior to Christ we call it deliverance. But done by Christ it is called redemption, says St. Thomas of Aquinas.

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