



August 1, 2007

Volume IX

### *The Commandments of God; Part III*

#### *“The Sixth and Ninth Commandments: Sex”*

Whatever God made is good and, in itself, knowledge of it is good. The sixth and ninth Commandments have reference to man’s instinct for self or race propagation, an instinct, which has been implanted in man by God. “Have you never read how He (God) who created them, when they first came to be, created them male and female; and how He said, a man, therefore, will leave father and mother and will cling to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh?” (Matt. 19:5). Therefore, sex and the knowledge of sex are, in themselves, good and noble. Knowledge can and ought to co-exist with perfect innocence.

Man is made to the image and likeness of God. Just as God is Intellect, Freedom, and Love, so man is an intellectual being endowed with free will and the power to love. In God, love—He is love itself—is a mighty, life-producing love. Throughout eternity, the Holy Ghost is begotten through the love of the Father and the Son. Man is so far the image of God the he, too, has the power to love with a life-producing love. By endowing man with the sex faculty, God has made it possible for him to co-operate in the very act by which the future citizens of heaven come into being. He wills that they, His own companions for eternity, should be the result of husband and wife.

So marriage is God’s plan. The use of sex in marriage is God’s plan. By it parents are privileged to share in that plan. Obviously, this means a good deal of sacrifice. For the mother, the very act of childbearing is painful, and sometimes dangerous; the subsequent education of children is a task, which calls for constant effort. For the father, the task of providing all the necessities of life for his children entails hard work and often much mental anxiety. To offset these and other hardships, God has attached intense pleasure to the use of sex.

There is a good parallel with that other important instinct of man, the instinct of self-preservation. To preserve his life a man must eat. So God



has attached to eating considerable pleasure. Otherwise what human being would spend so many hours in cooking food and making it attractive? Who would waste so much time at meals? Now, just as men and women would not readily eat if it were a painful operation, so they would with difficulty have intercourse, unless there was the inducement of sexual pleasure.

Obviously, this sexual pleasure is not so much for the individual as for the race, and hence to use it simply and solely for the purpose of self-indulgence and self-gratification is contrary to the will and designs of God, and stultifies His purpose. It makes for the ruin and wreck of society. The virtue, which checks, controls, and chastens the sexual instinct, is the virtue called chastity.

*“ O  
Virgin  
Mary,  
Mother of  
Jesus,  
make us  
Saints”*

*“ Why Be Pure?”*

Leaving aside pure reason, the revelation of Christ offers us other compelling motives for preserving holy purity. For example, the ultimate purpose of this life is eternity. Men and women are made for God, to live with God forever. Impurity means tampering with life at its very source; often, as in birth-prevention, it is the frustration of life and is responsible for empty places in heaven throughout eternity.

Catholics regard the body as the dwelling place of the soul—of an unspeakably precious, immortal soul, and the happy companion of that soul throughout eternity. It is the special dwelling place of the most Holy Trinity on earth. Just as the Church is holy because it is the special dwelling place of God, so is the human body for precisely the same reason. Moreover, St. Paul tells us that our bodies “belong to the body of Christ,” that “ we are limbs of His body, we belong to Him” (I Cor. 6:15; Eph.5:30). Impurity is the defiling of God’s temple and a member of Christ.

Perhaps you remember the story of Attila, who swore to stable his horses on the altar steps of St. Peter’s at Rome. That he intended to be the greatest possible insult to Almighty God. During the French Revolution, crowds of lewd women danced on the altars of the Churches of Paris; devout people turned sick at the sight.

The modern world looks upon sex as cheap, maudlin sentimentality; the modern romance portrays it as merely the selfish outlet for passion; the screen depicts it as pagan, pleasurable beastliness; supposedly learned men write to prove that sins against sex are not wrong at all; men and women in the street treat sex as a joke and waste, squander, spoil and soil the great and precious power God had given them. Countries, which claim to be Christian, are content to witness without protest the pagan parade of the human body, the shrine of life, the temple of the future, the dwelling place of God, as bait on stage, screen or billboard. Such ideas are revolting to one who fully understands God’s purpose in putting the sex instinct in man and ponders the supernatural truths connected with it. “Am I to take what belongs to Christ and make it one with a harlot? God forbid...any other sin,

This Issue

1. Ten Commandments part III-----pg.1.

2. Fr. Martin’s Sermon---pg.5

Ten Commandments Part IV----pg.7

Following of Christ---pg.11



which a man commits leaves the body untouched, but the fornicator is committing a crime against his own body. Surely you know that your bodies are shrines of the Holy Ghost, who dwells in you. And He is God's gift to you, so that you are no longer your own masters. A great price was paid to ransom you; glorify God by making your bodies the shrines of His Presence." (I Cor.6: 15-20). "Blessed are the pure of heart; they shall see God." (Matt. 5:8).

### *"Sins of Impurity"*

Adultery, which is specifically forbidden by the sixth Commandment, is a sin of impurity between two people, one or both of them married. It is an offense against the sanctity of married life and a crying injustice against the sanctity of the home. It violates the fidelity, which husband and wife pledge to each other. It is also a crime against society, bringing in its wake dishonor, disgrace, dissensions, poverty, and often the neglect of children.

In addition to adultery, the sixth Commandment forbids all sins of impurity. St. Paul wrote: "This you must know well enough, that nobody can claim a share in Christ's kingdom, God's kingdom, if he is debauched or impure." (Eph. 5:5). The great saints of God went to extraordinary lengths to preserve their purity. St. Benedict rolled in the briars; St. Francis of Assisi rolled in the snow; St. Bernard plunged into a pond.

Thus the sixth Commandment forbids immodesty in: a) Looks: The eyes are the windows of the soul, and immodest looks, e.g., at pictures, scantily clothed people, are dangerous and so, forbidden. b). Words: "Now it is your turn to have done with... foul-mouthed utterance." (Col. 3:8). An immodest tongue is the devil's carriage because it carries souls to hell for him. With our lips we are meant to praise God forever, for all eternity. How wrong it is to defile them now by impure talk, which often involves the souls of others in sin! c). Actions: alone or with others. It is obvious from what has been said that immodest plays, dances, songs, books, and pictures are all forbidden by the sixth Commandment.

### *"Causes of Impurity"*

The following are some of the causes of impurity against which we must be on our guard at all times: 1) Pride. 2) Idleness. "Idleness hath taught much evil." (Eccu. 33:29). 3) Bad books and bad company. "Bad company can corrupt noble minds." (I Cor.15: 33). 4). Immodesty in dress.5) Excess in eating and drinking. 6) Want of watchfulness over the senses. " Gaze not upon a maiden, lest her beauty be a stumbling block to

*"O Mary  
conceived  
without sin,  
pray for us  
who have  
recourse to  
Thee"*



thee.” (Eccu. 9:5). “Many have perished by the beauty of woman; hereby lust is enkindled as a fire.” (Eccu. 9:9).

## “Remedies”

The remedies for impurity are principally frequent Confession and Holy Communion, prayer, especially to Our Lady, mortification, occupation of mind and body, promptness in resisting the first attacks of temptation by turning away to something else.

## “Impure Thoughts”

The ninth Commandment forbids all willful consent to impure thoughts and desires and all willful pleasure in the irregular motions of the flesh. That is, it forbids interior sins of thought and desire against the sixth Commandment.

Many people find themselves tempted by bad thoughts. But temptation is not a sin. The sin occurs when the thoughts are deliberately encouraged. You may feel that the thought was in your mind for a long time, that you were taking pleasure in it, that you welcomed it and wanted it to go on. But did you recognize the thought as sinful and then, knowing it to be sinful, let it go on? Unless you did, there is no sin. No man commits a sin against purity in thought until he wants to enjoy bad thoughts.

Bad thoughts must be expected. To dilly-dally with them may be a venial sin of nasty curiosity. Deliberately to accept the thought and take pleasure in it is a sin against purity. Is every fully deliberate sin against purity a mortal sin? Here are the principles, which help us to answer this question:

1). To seek of set purpose, and full deliberation, to arouse or excite or produce within us, outside of lawful use of marriage, sexual pleasure whether complete or incomplete, is always a grave sin; or, should the pleasure come to us unsought in time of temptation, then to seek to continue to prolong or gratify it, is again always a grave sin. In this sense, and only in this sense, is it true to say that every willful sin of impurity is mortal. It does not matter what you do, but if you do it for the above purpose, then it is a grave sin. We say “complete or incomplete” because this pleasure within us is so powerful, vehement, impetuous in its operation, owing to our strong instinct and our fallen nature, that we cannot promise to be able to check any fully deliberate act to produce or prolong even the incomplete pleasure; hence it is a grave sin, because we are putting ourselves in a proximate danger of sin when we say, foolishly, “I intend to go thus far and no further.” a). The guilty person must have as his direct and immediate purpose to produce or prolong sexual pleasure. b). There must be full deliberation (i.e. advertence of the mind and consent of the will). A person

*“O Heart  
most pure  
of the  
Blessed  
Virgin  
Mary,  
obtain for  
me from  
Jesus a  
pure &  
humble  
Heart”*



could not commit grave sin when half-asleep, half-averting, or half-consenting.

2). Deliberately to do something; not of set purpose, to produce or prolong sexual pleasure but for some other reason, yet something which the person foresees or knows from experience will or may produce it...such an action, even fully deliberate, is not always a grave sin. It may be grave, or venial, or no sin at all.

There is grave sin when what a person does, is something which, of its very nature, is very apt to excite sexual pleasure, and at the same time, has no very serious reason for so acting; or if, even granted he has such a reason, there is a real danger of his attempting (not merely feeling) the pleasure. For example, to look closely and for some length of time at one's own, or another's nakedness; to let one's thoughts dwell on matters very impure; to handle (not a passing act) one's self or another, indecently; to look fixedly at very obscene pictures or to read very obscene literature, would be grave sins.

There is venial sin when what we do is something which, of its nature, is not very likely to produce serious sexual pleasure to a notable degree, and at the same time, we act out of no good motive, but merely out of levity, imprudence, curiosity, bravado, vanity, or the like. For example, deliberate, but only passing glances at a naked body; a passing glance at immodest pictures; reading unsavory paragraphs in a newspaper out of curiosity; touching one's self deliberately, but only lightly or in a passing way; deliberately entertaining, for a moment, an immodest thought—these would be venial sins. There is no sin at all, when what we do is quite innocent or decent in itself, or even something which we have an adequate and just reason for doing it and there is no real danger of our consenting to the pleasure aroused. The following stages in temptation should be distinguished: 1). Temptation to sexual pleasure—"The knock at the door". 2). Feeling the pleasure—"The mind goes out to see who's there". 3). Taking the pleasure—" I want you; come in".

(Taken from *"This is the Faith"* by Francis J. Ripley, Published by *Catechetical Guild Educational Society*. St. Paul, Minn., *Nihil Obstat & Imprimatur* given January 25, 1951)

*Sermon from Fr. Martin Stepanich O.F.M.  
"Law and Our Response to God's Love"*

In one of his psalms in the Old Testament, King David sang to God: "To do Your will, O my God, is my delight, and Your law is within

*"Rejoice,  
O Virgin  
Mary, Thou  
hast  
trampled  
down  
all heresies  
in the  
whole  
world"*



my heart” (Ps. 39:9). And in another psalm, David exclaimed: “ How I love Your law, O Lord! It is my meditation all the day” (Ps. 118:97).

You see, my friends, it is love that makes it a pleasure to do the will of God. It is love that prompts us to obey the laws of God and of His Church, even though such laws may at times be difficult for weak and perverse human nature. He who does not love, does not want to obey.

God has, so to speak, written His law in our hearts, as St. Paul expressed it in his letter to the Romans (cf. Rom. 2:15) This is what we call the natural law of God—God’s law written in our hearts. It is, as it were, a part of human nature. The natural law of God is demanded by the very nature of things.

The best examples of the natural law of God are the Ten Commandments. These form the natural moral law of God already written in the hearts of men before being given to Moses on Mt. Sinai.

One outstanding characteristic of the natural moral law of God is that it is unchangeable and everlasting. Not even God could change this law without changing the very nature of man. And it should be obvious to anyone with understanding that the Church cannot change God’s moral law.

Neither can the Church change what we call the positive divine law, which is not demanded by the very nature of things. A good example of this is the divine law that forbids divorce and remarriage after divorce—a law that was promulgated by Jesus Christ for all times to come. The Church could allow such exceptions to this law as God Himself has allowed, such as the Pauline Privilege.

In these days there is much loose and irresponsible talk about change and laws disobeyed and disregarded in the name of change—as if the Church has cut loose all bonds and has given freedom to do as we please, or as if the Church could dispense us from God’s laws. Examples of confused thinking are: the woman who came to a rectory to ask for a dispensation from God’s law that forbids birth prevention and contraception; or the young married woman who said that what she hopes for most of all from the Ecumenical Council is that the law forbidding birth prevention will be abolished by the Council; or the young man who presumed to ask a priest for permission to commit sins of impurity. You never dream that there could be such dummies in this world, but there are.

The big word today must not be change, but renewal. There must be a renewal of the Christian spirit and the Christian life among us—something that we should have always had. There must be a restoration of all things to Christ, as St. Paul expressed it to the people of Ephesus. (cf. Eph. 1:10).

What we need above all is the spirit of love for God that will make us prompt and willing in obeying all of God’s laws and those of His Church without exception.

*“The Holy Mother of God has been exalted above the Choirs of Angels to the Heavenly Kingdom”*



Let us make our own, the words of King David, and repeat them with our whole being: “To do Your will, O my God, is my delight, and Your law is within my heart.” (Ps. 39:9).

(given in Chicago, Ill. on July 12, 1964)

### *The Commandments of God; Part IV.*

#### *“The Seventh and the Tenth Commandments”*

The Seventh Commandment is “Thou shalt not steal”, and the Tenth Commandment is “Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor’s goods.” In the Fifth and Sixth Commandments, God protects our life and honor; in the Seventh Commandment, He places our property and wealth in security.

The right to private property is the right, which a human being may have to use, and dispose of material things for his own benefit without interference; it arises from the natural law and is sanctioned by God in this Commandment. Nature imposes on man a duty to maintain his life. To do this, he must use his intellect and free will. He is endowed with foresight, and can foresee his future needs and take steps to provide for them. To satisfy those needs, man requires material things of the kind which can be used over again as the need arises. His intelligence urges him to seek after and acquire those goods and safeguard them against loss or deprivation. Moreover, a man has a right to marry and have a family. He had the duty of maintaining that family. For this, private ownership is a necessity.

Of course, this right to own is limited by the nature and purpose of things and by the fact that man is a social being with duties to his fellow men. The State has no authority to abolish all private ownership, because that would be to abolish what is natural to man. Real Socialists and Communists want to abolish private ownership of things that are productive. That is wrong. The Church says that the system of private ownership must be reformed, but that it is neither, lawful or necessary to abolish it.

If a man has a right to own, it is certain that the right must be respected. So, the Seventh Commandment forbids all unjust taking away or keeping what belongs to another and any other way of wronging our neighbor in regard to his property. Theft is a mortal sin by its very nature, but it may become venial by reason of the smallness of what is stolen. The following are sins against the Seventh Commandment: 1) theft; 2) assisting in theft; 3) borrowing without hope or intention of repaying; 4) rash speculation, without being able to bear possible loss; 5) unfair interference with another’s success. Extravagance, especially when others are hurt by it; 7) accepting bribes; 8) receiving stolen goods, knowing them to be stolen; 9)

*“ O  
Mary,  
Virgin  
Mother of  
God, pray  
to Jesus  
for me”*



not restoring what has been unjustly taken or what has been lent to us; 10) not paying just wages within a reasonable time; 11) not taking reasonable pains to seek the owner of things found; 12) passing bad money in payment; 13) forging signatures to checks, etc.; 14) using false weights and measures; 15) adulteration of goods and any other form of cheating in business; 16) dishonest statements in insurance contracts; 17) usury or exorbitant interest; 18) willfully damaging property; 19) wasting time at work; 20) unlawful strikes; 21) refusal to pay rent; 22) not paying debts.

*“Thou art  
my Mother,  
O Virgin  
Mary: keep  
me safe lest  
I ever  
offend Thy  
dear Son,  
& get me  
the grace  
to please  
Him  
always &  
in all  
things”*

### *“Restitution”*

We are bound to restore ill-gotten goods if we are able, or else our sin will not be forgiven. When the theft was a mortal sin, neglect of restitution is also a mortal sin. The obligation is binding until it is fulfilled, and the greater the willful delay, the greater the sin. Restitution must be made to the owner, if possible, or to his heir if he is dead. If neither is possible, it should be given in alms in the name of the owner. Not only must stolen property be returned, but also the loss resulting from the theft’s actual injustice, must be made good. If it is physically or morally impossible for us to make restitution, the obligation ceases to bind us. But, apart from such cases, the sin of theft is not really repented until restitution has been made, and so it can be forgiven.

The Tenth Commandment forbids all envious and covetous thoughts and unjust desires of our neighbor’s goods and profits. By it God wants to protect us against the evil inclinations of our own hearts and to blunt the sting of the unlawful desires, which makes us yearn for things that belong to others.

### *“The Gravity of Theft”*

Is theft a grievous sin? This depends on three things: 1) the value of the thing stolen; 2) the person suffering the injustice; 3) the time over which the theft is spread. a) By absolutely grave value, we understand an amount sufficient in itself to constitute matter for a mortal sin; regardless of the person from whom the goods are stolen. There is obviously a degree of injustice which when committed involves a grave violation of the public order. The amount of property necessary to commit such an injustice is the absolute grave value, which makes theft a mortal sin. Moral Theologians are united in fixing the sum as the equivalent of the weekly wages earned by a person of the middle class of society. So that, if that amount is stolen from, say, a large store, it would still be a grave sin, unless there is some other mitigating factor. b) By relatively grave value we understand an amount so great that it’s theft would prove a notable loss to the particular owner in



question. We think now, not of society at large, but of the individual victim. Theologians fix this amount as the average day's pay of the victim of the injustice.

The person against whom the theft is committed: If he is very wealthy, the gravity of the theft would be measured according to the absolute grave sum. To steal from one's parents is ordinarily not so grave an injustice as to take the same amount from a total stranger.

The time over which the theft is spread: If money is stolen at intervals, it does not usually harm the victim as much as if the same amount were taken all at once. Hence, in order to constitute grave matter, a sum of money stolen at intervals would have to be greater than that which to steal at one time would be gravely sinful. But, if one intends to steal a large sum of money little by little, the fact it is stolen at intervals makes no difference. The intention of doing grave injustice is there all the time.

*“O Mary,  
Mother of  
Grace &  
Mother of  
Mercy, do  
Thou  
protect us  
from our  
enemy, &  
receive us  
at the hour  
of our  
death”*

### *“The Eight Commandment”*

The Eight Commandment, “Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor”, safeguards the natural law which demands that reputation of individuals be protected and faith in human communications preserved. The right use of the power of speech is necessary for the welfare of society. Untold evils are caused by its abuse in lying propaganda, defamation of character, libel, calumnies, and so forth.

Hence, the Eight Commandment forbids: a) false testimony: i.e. giving evidence we know to be untrue. If false testimony is given under oath, it involves a three-fold guilt—falsehood, perjury, and injustice. b) Rash judgment: the assent of the will to suspicions about others, without sufficient grounds. It is obviously opposed to charity and justice. We may be guilty of it by conceiving dislikes at first sight; by imputing unworthy motives to others; by judging a person to have a habit of sin because we know him to have committed that sin once, and by pronouncing one guilty without having heard his defense. “Do not judge others, or you yourself will be judged.” (Matt. 7:1).

c) Lie or words against the truth. A lie is wrong in itself because it involves using a natural faculty in a manner directly opposed to its purpose. The intention to deceive is not necessary for a lie. Merely to employ our God-given faculty of speech, in order to manifest as the thought of one's mind, what is not the thought of one's mind, is contrary to the primary object of speech.

In itself, a lie is never more than a venial sin, but the act of telling a lie may be gravely sinful because of some other factors, for example, injury to a person's character. A jocose lie (one told merely to amuse), or an officious lie (a lie of excuse), are usually venial sins; but a malicious lie, by which someone is injured, would be a mortal sin if the injury is sufficiently



grave. Holy Scripture speaks very strongly about lies: “ Lying lips are an abomination to the Lord.” (Prov.12: 22). “ The mouth that belieth, killeth the soul.” (Wisdom 1:11).

It is never lawful to tell a lie, no matter what the object. Even mental reservations and equivocations are sinful, as they are unlawfully deceptive.

d) Calumny or slander. While sin destroys the life of grace in the soul, while murder destroys the physical life of the body, calumny destroys or injures the civil or social life of a neighbor. It means imputing crimes or faults to others unduly, exaggerating real faults and defects, or denying their good qualities or actions. Calumny is a sin against truth, charity, justice, manly courage, and religion. “If anyone deludes himself by thinking he is serving God, when he has not learned to control his tongue, the service he gives is vain.” (James 1:26). Calumny is always sinful because it is always a lie, but its guilt varies according to the nature of the imputation made, the injury intended or affected, and the number of persons who hear it.

e) Detraction, or libel, means making known the secret faults of another without just cause. It is commonly done by imparting uncharitable gossip, especially as a secret, hinting that there are things others don't know of a person, praising a person coldly so as to insinuate that he does not deserve that praise, seeking to lessen the merits of another's good acts, and so on. It is a sin against charity and justice. “Thou shalt not be a detractor nor a whisperer among the people.” (Lev.19: 16). “Hast thou heard a word against thy neighbor? Let it die within thee.” (Eccu.19: 10). “Brethren, do not disparage one another...who art thou to sit in judgment on thy neighbor?” (James 4:11).

The guilt of detraction depends on the character and position of the person who speaks; on the quality and position of the person spoken of; on the nature of the faults revealed; on the number of persons to whom it is made known; and on the injury done or foreseen.

Sometimes, of course, it is lawful to reveal the faults of others when it is for their good; when it is necessary in order to prevent greater evil; when one's motive is pure; when there is no exaggeration; and when the revelation is made only to those who can remedy the evil.

f) Tale-bearing; repeating to anyone what others have said about him. “The tale-bearer shall defile his own soul.” (Eccu.21: 31). Because it is the source of quarrels and animosities and the cause of misunderstandings and the loss of friendship, tale-bearing is against charity and its guilt will depend on the intention of the speaker and the injury done or foreseen.

g) Back-biting: i.e., speaking of a person's faults, even though they be known to all. It is opposed to Christian charity. “If a serpent bite in silence, he is nothing better than back-biting secretly.”(Eccu.10: 11). Honest

*“Remember, O Virgin Mother of God, when Thou shalt stand before the face of the Lord, that thou speak favorable things in our behalf & that He may turn away His indignation from us”*



criticism may be perfectly lawful, but only too often it degenerates into back-biting and uncharitableness.

h) Contumely: i.e., insults, raillery and words of reproach offered a person in his presence. It may be a grievous sin. “Any man who says to his brother, ‘thou fool’, must answer for it in hell fire.” (Matt. 5:22).

i) Betraying secrets. The guilt of this depends upon the importance of the secret, and the injury likely to follow the revelation. It may sometimes be lawful when the matter is trifling and no injury is feared, or when there is good reasonable cause.

One who has injured another by misuse of speech is strictly bound to make satisfaction as far as possible, and without delay. This is a positive obligation, which binds gravely if the injury done has been grave. Listening to all these sinful uses of the power of speech is also forbidden unless there is a just cause for doing so. (like in a catechism lesson).

*“ We fly to  
Thy  
patronage, O  
Holy Mother  
of God!  
Despise not  
our petitions  
in our  
necessities,  
but deliver  
us always  
from all  
dangers, O  
Glorious &  
Blessed  
Virgin”*

(Taken from “*This is Our Faith*”, by Francis J. Ripley; Published by *Catechetical Guild Educational Society*, St. Paul, Minn. *Nihil Obstat & Imprimatur* given January 25, 1951)

*The Following of Christ: Book: II; Chapter XII  
“Of the Royal Road of the Holy Cross”*

To many this seems a hard saying: “*Deny yourself, take up your cross, and follow Jesus*” But it will be much harder to hear that last word: “*Depart from Me, you cursed, into everlasting fire.*” For they who now love to hear and follow the word of the cross shall not then fear the sentence of eternal condemnation. This sign of the cross shall be in heaven when the Lord shall come to judge. Then all the servants of the cross, who in their lifetime have conformed themselves to Him that was crucified, shall come to Christ their Judge with great confidence.

Why then are you afraid to take up your cross, which leads to the kingdom? In the cross is salvation; in the cross is life; in the cross is protection from enemies. In the cross is infusion of heavenly sweetness; in the cross is strength of mind; in the cross is joy of spirit. In the cross is height of virtue; in the cross is perfection of sanctity. There is no health of soul, nor hope of eternal life, but in the cross. Take up, therefore, your cross, and follow Jesus, and you shall go into life everlasting. He is gone before you, carrying His cross, and He died for you upon the cross, that you may bear your cross, and love to die on the cross. Because if you die with Him, you shall also live with Him; and if you are His companion in suffering, you shall also be His companion in glory.



Behold in the cross all does consist, and all lies in our dying; and there is no other way to life and to true interior peace, but the way of the holy cross, and of daily mortification. Go where you will, seek what you will, and you will not find a higher way above, nor a safer way below, than the way of the holy cross. Dispose and order all things according as you will, and as seems best to you, and you will still find something to suffer, either willingly or unwillingly; and so you shall always find the cross. For either you shall feel pain in the body, or sustain in your soul tribulation of spirit.

Sometimes, you shall be deserted by God; at other times you will be afflicted by your neighbor; and what is more, you shall often be troubled by yourself. Neither can you be delivered or eased by any remedy or comfort; but as long as it shall please God, you must bear it. For God wills that you learn to suffer tribulation without comfort, and wholly submit yourself to Him, and become more humble by tribulation. No man has so heartfelt a sense of the Passion of Christ as he whose lot it has been to suffer like things. The cross, therefore, is always ready, and everywhere awaits you. You cannot escape it. No matter where you run, for wherever you go, you carry yourself with you, and shall always find yourself. Turn yourself upwards or turn yourself downwards; turn yourself inwards or turn yourself outwards; everywhere you shall find the cross. And everywhere you must, of necessity, hold fast patience, if you desire inward peace, and would merit an eternal crown.

If you carry the cross willingly, it will carry you, and bring you to your desired end, namely, to that place where there will be an end of suffering, though here there will be no end. If you carry it unwillingly, you make it a burden to yourself, and load yourself all the more, and nevertheless you must bear it. If you fling away one cross, without doubt you will find another one, and perhaps, a heavier one.

Do you think to escape that which no mortal could ever avoid? What Saint ever was in the world without his cross and tribulation? For even Our Lord Jesus Christ Himself was not for one hour of His life without the anguish of His Passion. *“It behooved,”* said He, *“that Christ should suffer, and rise from the dead, and so enter into His glory.”* And how do you seek another way than this royal way, which is the way of the holy cross?

The whole life of Christ was a cross and a martyrdom; and do you seek for yourself rest and joy? You err, you err, if you seek anything else than to suffer tribulation; for this whole mortal life is full of miseries, and everywhere marked with crosses. And the higher a person is advanced in spirit, the heavier crosses shall he often meet with; because the pain of his banishment increases in proportion to his love.

Yet such a one, thus many ways afflicted, is not without some relief of consolation; because he is sensible of the very great profit he reaps by bearing the cross. For while he willingly resigns himself to it, all the burden of tribulation is converted into an assured hope of comfort from God. And

*“Most High  
Queen of the  
universe,  
Mary ever  
Virgin, make  
intercession  
for our peace  
& salvation,  
Thou who  
didst bear  
Christ the  
Lord, the  
Savior of all  
mankind”*



the more the flesh is brought down by affliction, the more is the spirit strengthened by interior grace. And sometimes he gains such strength through affliction to tribulation and adversity, by his love of conformity to the cross of Christ, as not to be willing to be without suffering and affliction; because such a one believes himself to be so much the more acceptable to God, the more and more grievous things he shall have endured for His sake. This is not man's power, but the grace of Christ; which does and can affect such great things in frail flesh, and that what it naturally abhors and flies, even this, through fervor of spirit, it now embraces and loves.

To bear the cross to love the cross, to chastise the body and bring it under subjection; to fly honors, to love to suffer insults. To despise one's self, and wish to be despised; to bear all adversities and losses, and to desire no prosperity in this world---all this is not according to man's natural inclination. If you look unto yourself, you can do nothing of this sort by yourself. But if you confide in the Lord, strength will be given to you from heaven, and the world and the flesh shall be made subject to you. Neither shall you fear your enemy, the devil, if you are armed with faith, and signed with the cross of Christ.

*“O Mary!  
My Queen!  
My  
Mother!  
remember  
I am Thine  
own.  
Keep me,  
guard me,  
As Thy  
Property  
&  
Possession*

Set yourself, then, like a good and faithful servant of Christ, to bear manfully the cross of your Lord, for the love of Him Who was crucified for you. Prepare yourself to suffer many adversities and divers evils, in this miserable life; for so it will be with you, wherever you are, and so indeed will you find it, wheresoever you hide yourself. It must be so, and there is no remedy against tribulation and sorrow, but to bear them patiently. Drink of the chalice of your Lord lovingly, if you desire to be His friend, and to have part with Him. Leave consolations to God, to do with as best pleases Him. But be ready on your part to bear tribulations, and account them the greatest consolations; for the sufferings of this life are not worthy to be compared with the glory to come, although you alone could suffer them all.

When you shall arrived thus far, that tribulation shall be sweet to you, and you shall relish it for the love of Christ, then think that it is well with you, for you have found a paradise upon earth. As long as suffering is grievous to you, and you seek to fly from it, so long shall it be ill with you; and the (desire of) flying from tribulation shall pursue you everywhere.

If you set yourself to what you ought to, that is, to suffer and to die, it will quickly be better with you, and you shall find peace. Although you should have been rapt to the third heaven with St. Paul, you are not thereby secured that you shall have no adversity: “I,” said Jesus, “*will show him how great things he must suffer for My Name.*” To suffer, therefore, is what awaits you, if you are resolved to love Jesus, and constantly serve Him. Would to God that you were worthy to suffer something for the Name of Jesus! How great glory would remain unto yourself! How great joy would be to all the Saints of God! And how great an edification to your neighbor! All



recommend patience, but, alas, how few are there that desire to suffer! With good reason ought you willingly to suffer for Christ, since many suffer greater things for the world.

Know for certain that you must lead a dying life; and the more a man dies to himself, the more does he begin to live unto God. No man is fit to comprehend heavenly things if he has not resigned himself to suffer adversities for Christ. Nothing is more acceptable to God, nothing more salutary for you in this world, than to suffer willingly for Christ. And if you could make the choice, you ought to prefer to suffer adversities for Christ, than to be delighted with much consolation; because thus you would more resemble Christ, and be more likened to all the Saints. For our merit, and the advancement of our state, consists not in having much sweetness and many consolations; but rather in bearing great afflictions and tribulations. If indeed, there had been anything better, and more beneficial to man's salvation, than suffering, Christ certainly would have showed it by word and example. For He manifestly exhorts both His disciples that follow Him, and all that desire to follow Him, to bear the cross, saying: *"If anyone will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me."* So that when we have read and searched all, let this be the final conclusion, that, *"through many tribulations we must enter into the kingdom of God."*

### *Practical Reflections*

*"Sweet  
Heart of  
Mary, be  
my  
Salvation"*

Can we read, believe, and ponder seriously the wonderful advantages of the cross, and the great merit of suffering, as here described, and not to suffer, to receive crosses from the hands of Jesus Christ? and to submit to endure whatever He pleases, and as much as He pleases? Since to suffer much, and in a proper manner, is absolutely requisite for salvation, and is the most tender and efficacious effect of the goodness of God towards us. Who will not spare us those of eternity. It is to bear the visible character of the predestinate, which according to St. Paul, consists in our resemblance to Jesus Christ, an humble, suffering, and persecuted God; it is to render ourselves worthy of His life of glory by participating in His life of suffering; it is to efface the punishment due to our sins by perfect repentance; it is to gain the heart of Jesus Christ, merit His love, avenge Him, and punish ourselves, honor Him by our destruction, and prefer His good pleasure before our own satisfaction. Shall not all say, then, in the time of suffering, in order not to fail: *"Hell, which I have deserved, is something more horrible than anything I can now endure; my Savior has suffered much more for me; and heaven is worth infinitely more than I can undergo."*

Fr. James Kosek  
439 Thoria Ct.  
Batavia, Ill. 60510  
[jkkosek3@Juno.com](mailto:jkkosek3@Juno.com)



## Prayer

Penetrate my heart O Jesus, with these sentiments when You send me pain, and support me in all my afflictions; for alas! You know how naturally I hate and fly from the cross, although I am persuaded that it was by the cross You did save me, and that I cannot gain salvation, nor enter heaven, but by way of the Calvary. Inspire me with that patience, that strength, and that courage which You did impart to Your Martyrs: and since I cannot better evince my love and gratitude towards You than by suffering for You, nor render myself more worthy of Your grace and glory than by carrying the cross, vouchsafe to support me when sinking under its burden by the desire of pleasing You, and the hope of eternal happiness. Amen.

### *The Explanation of Our Mission and of Our Logo.*

*Since this is the first year of the “Mystical Rose”, it would seem only prudent that we explain why we call our newsletter, “Mystical Rose”, and why we have designed this Logo at the top of the first page.*

*The title, “Mystical Rose”, is taken from the Litany of the Blessed Virgin Mary.*

*The Logo of the crown of thorns, with the roses attached, symbolizes Our Lady’s suffering during Our Lord’s Passion and Death. It also symbolizes Her suffering for us, her spiritual children. The seven roses affixed to the crown of thorns represents the Seven Sorrows of Our Lady.*

*We dedicate this work to Our Blessed Mother and we ask Her to help and guide us, so that we may be able to serve God’s people by printing material that will be spiritually edifying: bringing those who read it to a better knowledge of their faith; a better understanding of what God requires of them in order to achieve salvation; and a more sincere desire to serve the Living God to the best of their ability.*

*Information about Catholicism is so very necessary in order to live a good life. The world in which we live today is in dire need of that information, in order to save mankind from its own self-imposed ignorance. We hope, by the grace of God, that our newsletter will help to inform.*