



THE ARCHANGEL

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PASTORAL DIMENSIONS

Dear Parishioners,

Many people have commented on the Society of St Pius X's decision to consecrate auxiliary bishops in order to continue its apostolic work. Some welcome the decision, and others condemn it.

Those in favour are relieved that the traditional sacraments will continue to be available for generations to come, without any need to subscribe to the liturgical and doctrinal changes of recent decades, or to remain silent about them.

Those who disagree with the Society's decision speak of disobedience and schism. They are angered or saddened that the Society, they say, sees fit to withdraw from the Catholic Church and establish a church of its own, thus withdrawing souls from communion with the Vicar of Christ.

However, the Society's decision is not arbitrary or defiant, but stems from a valid concern that the Catholic Church is suffering a great liturgical and doctrinal crisis. This crisis asphyxiates souls by reducing or cutting off the flow of divine grace, which alone allows for supernatural growth and maturity.

The soul is supernaturally vivified and kept alive by the theological virtues of faith, hope and charity, infused into the soul at baptism. These, in turn, are nourished by sound doctrine and the frequent reception of the sacraments, in particular the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, the source and summit of Christian life.

The introduction of the *Novus Ordo Missae* marked the tangible beginning of wholesale change in the Church. Decades later, the Church is very much changed, unrecognisable to any time traveller from a previous century. Whereas St Peter, speaking of Jesus Christ to the Sanhedrin, declared: "Neither is there salvation in any other. For there is no other name under heaven given to men, whereby we must be saved." (Acts 4:12), his successor, Pope Francis, co-authored a document on Human Fraternity with the Grand Imam of Al Azhar which declared that "The pluralism and the diversity of religions, colour, sex, race and language are willed by God in His wisdom . . ."

In such circumstances, for one who has the cure of his own soul and those of his family, there remains space for manoeuvre. If a place can be found that is safe from doctrinal and liturgical innovation, where the soul can be nourished with sound preaching and safe access to the sacraments, then spiritual survival and growth are possible. If they are lucky and blessed, the laity can continue to take advantage of the spiritual means at their disposal to save their souls.

For pastors of souls, things are different. Holy Orders confer on the priest an urgent obligation to feed and care for Christ's flock. A priest's reaction to the crisis in the Church will, therefore, differ from that of a layman. He is under obligation to make available his sacramental powers so that the Mystical Body of Christ may flourish. He does this within a strictly defined canonical framework, which subjects him to ecclesiastical authority.

When ecclesiastical authority is deficient or abusive, allowing or promoting error, refusing or limiting the soul's divine right to the Church's liturgical heritage, a priestly society, already engaged in bringing solace to a starving flock, cannot simply turn souls away. Nor can it seek to create a safe space for itself and leave the larger portion of the flock voiceless, liturgically deprived and starving. God's charity bids us to brave the storm and launch into the deep to save souls who may otherwise drown.

Many lay commentators and onlookers struggle to understand the pastoral dimension in play when it comes to braving an interdict to carry out ordinary apostolic work. There is no schism in seeking not only to provide but also to secure the basics of Christian life to needy souls. There is, however, a realistic assessment of the calamitous state of the church and the ill will of ecclesiastical authority that allows, for example, the German synodal revolution.

The 1988 consecrations were providential in allowing souls access to healthy pastures for the past forty years. In 2026, the Society of St Pius X seeks to maintain that access for generations to come, nothing more.

Fr John Brucciani, Prior

CHILDREN OF WRATH (EPH. 2:3)

Last month, we spoke about baptism and its effects. The baby, born a child of wrath, becomes a child of God and the recipient of heavenly munificence. Of all who come to assist at the Holy Sacrifice, the newly baptised are the most worthy. When they cry out, and their parents hear not (or ignore), it helps to remember that the child's holiness covers for our sinfulness.

Whereas we happily believe that the newly baptised is a citizen of heaven, innocent, spiritually beautiful and destined for Paradise, we struggle to understand why the unbaptised baby has no hope, before baptism, of such a glorious destiny. After all, the child has done no wrong. Why then, if it were to die, can it not be invited to share in God's beatitude in company with the baptised? In times past, with high numbers of infant mortality, this was a burning question.

The answer to this question helps us to better understand not only the cruciality of baptism but, more interestingly, God's initial plans for our happiness and how secure God had made them before Adam's sin.

God's first plan

The book of Genesis describes the creation of Adam: "And the Lord God formed man of the slime of the earth: and breathed into his face the breath of life, and man became a living soul." (Gen. 2:7) Theology distinguishes a double creation in Adam. The breath of life that makes him become a living soul refers both to the natural life of the body and the supernatural of the soul. Theologians teach, therefore, that Adam was created in the state of sanctifying grace. (I, 97, art.1)

Our first parents possessed grace from the very first moment of their existence. They were made children of God. The Creator illuminated and glorified our first parents with divine holiness and communicated to them a share in the nobility, dignity and excellence of the very Godhead. When God breathed created them, Adam and Eve awoke to an existence and a status which allowed them to talk and speak with God as with a friend.

In brief, divine grace raised our first parents to the rank of the divine. They were "super-naturalised", i.e. it was given to them to know, love and serve God in a manner worthy of Him in this life, and to share God's happiness in the next as a reward. They were invested with divine nobility and called to the inheritance of God's riches.

Adam's holiness, our racial heritage

Adam and Eve were to cooperate in bringing forth new children of God by fulfilling God's command: "Increase and multiply. They were to beget children in the state of grace, heirs, like them, to heaven. Eve's sanctification was personal to her and allowed her to be a worthy

helper to Adam in the transmission of grace by generation. Adam's sanctification, however, is not only personal but also *corporate*. The elevation, dignity and holiness bestowed upon him are meant for him *and also for all his descendants*.

Adam was sanctified not merely as an individual but as the firstborn and head of the human race. In and through Adam, God raised up and sanctified the whole human race. Divine revelation tells us that in creating Adam, God intended to create a race of beings whose purpose and end would be to share in the joys of heaven. Holiness was to be racial property. Human nature exists, thus, for no other reason than to enjoy God's own happiness. What a destiny!

This does not mean that grace is natural to human nature; on the contrary. Grace can never be acquired or earned, only received. It is a supernatural quality of the soul that raises it to heights attainable by God alone. It is something infinitely beyond the capabilities of human nature. Nevertheless, the human race was created for the holiness that supernatural grace bestows, *and our first father and head, Adam, was to be the means whereby God would share it with all of mankind*.

Original Justice

We call the blessed state in which humanity was created the state of *original justice*. Original justice included not only divine grace and the supernaturally infused virtues and gifts (whereby we merit heaven) but also the great privilege of integrity, whereby our passions and lower appetites were kept in perfect check and harmony to our reason and will.

Per God's plan, original justice is and remains the heritage of the human race. God willed to communicate His justice to all those who would be born of Adam, in cooperation with Eve, who was bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh.

Adam was mankind's first priest. From him we were to receive our divine inheritance. In the words of Fr Scheeben: "God associated His supernatural power of animation and generation with Adam's generative power. He overshadowed Adam's natural fecundity with His own supernatural fecundity... Was this not a new marvel of divine grace, a new, sublime outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon Adam, greater and more profuse than that by which He made Adam just and holy in his own person? Was it not a tremendous new mystery... approaching that by which the same Holy Spirit made the womb of the Virgin fruitful, so that she might give birth to the God-man?" (Scheeben, *Mysteries of Christianity*, Ch. IX).

Adam was thus the head of the human race, not only according to nature, as our first father, but also according to grace, since he was to be the principle whereby God would sanctify every one of his descendants. Our elevation to the supernatural life of grace was to be in and through Adam.

Note that Adam's great dignity and privilege, whereby he is the principle of grace in his descendants, does not mean that he could merit eternal life for us. Adam is the vehicle of grace for the human race, not by virtue of any properties or powers that he naturally possesses, but only thanks to a divine decree that established that all life generated from Adam would be elevated to supernatural status. With Jesus Christ, the new head of the human race, things will be different. Christ, as God and man, was able to merit for us because he was God by nature. But this is another story.

Original Sin

We come now to original sin. It is a concept with which many struggle. How can we inherit the sin of another and all its consequences?

The answer resides in the relationship between Adam and his descendants, his sin, the state of original justice that he destroyed, and its consequences for us.

We must always keep in mind that Adam, as a human being, is unique. He is the head of humanity according to nature and, formerly, according to grace. When he acts, he acts not only in his own name, but also in the name of all those to whom he will pass on human nature. It is as if, before the birth of his first child, Adam *was* the human race. The human race was blessed in him (hence the state of original justice) but could also be cursed in him (if it were lost). Adam is responsible for himself and for all who will be born of him, for good and for evil.

Adam's sin was, therefore, not only personal to him but also common to all who would descend from him. *It was a sin of nature.* We inherit Adam's loss of the state of original justice, which he received and was to pass down to us through carnal generation. Having lost the state of original justice, Adam can no longer fulfil his leadership as agent of sanctification for the whole human race.

Man is born, therefore, bereft of that for which his nature was originally created. Human nature's normal state was to be (and remains) one of integrity, holiness and kinship with God, and Adam was to be the efficient cause of that kinship by passing on to us a nature supernaturally endowed. Now this is no longer possible. Adam can only pass on a human nature that is deformed, handicapped, twisted and afflicted. The gift of integrity is lost, and the lower appetites are no longer held in check. Concupiscence, called the *fomes peccati*, places the flesh in opposition to the spirit.

Henceforth, every inheritor of human nature lacks the essential credentials that alone justify its existence: the divine life of grace or charity. Herein lies the essence of original sin. Created to inherit divine life, we inherit instead what is left of its loss: a black hole, a scar, an emptiness, a deformity. Tragically, the soul, made for the light and splendour of supernatural grace, is dark. It is supernaturally lifeless. Thus, we can say that original sin is a veritable curse.

Shared Guilt

The responsibility for original sin is shared by all who inherit human nature. St Paul tells us: "Wherefore as by one man sin entered into this world, and by sin death; and so death passed upon all men, in whom all have sinned." (Rom 5:12) This is not a divine injustice. It is the consequence of God's initial plan that Adam, and we in Adam, thwarted. As Fr Sheeben writes: "The whole race stands before God as one moral body, which in Adam, its head, rejected and lost supernatural justice for all its members, and expelled it from all its members. Every individual human being, by the mere fact that he becomes a member of the race stemming from Adam, that is, by being generated from Adam, forfeits the justice which he was to receive from Adam. He stands in the sight of God as one who, not indeed by his personal act and culpability, but by reason of an offense common to all the members of the race, is destitute of the justice he ought to have; as one who, through racial guilt, has lost his supernatural attachment to God and is turned in the direction of creatures in a manner opposed to God's original plan. He stands before God as a sinner, not indeed as one who has sinned personally, but as one who is a sinner by heredity." (Scheeben. *Mysteries of Christianity*, Ch. XI)

In brief: although innocent of Adam's personal sin, we are not innocent of its consequence which constitutes our guilt before God and our need for redemption.

The plan of redemption will follow the same lines as the plan of original justice. Christ's holiness will be something that is His and that he will share with all those who will make up His Mystical Body. It will be a sanctity that we inherit, no longer from Adam but from Christ, Who is the new head of the human race, acting for us and *in Whom we act also*, for the restoration of the world.

Thus, every child born, although innocent of personal sin, inherits the sin of our race and thus carries a spiritual deformity that hinders it from any company or communion with God, for all eternity. We should never delay bringing it to the baptismal font where our supernaturally deformed soul is restored to the divine beauty it once possessed in Adam.



LENTEN RECOLLECTION

SAT. 28TH MARCH - 9:30 TO 14:30

9:30 *Veni Creator* and conference

10:30 Exposition of the Bl. Sacrament, silent meditation, confessions

11:30 Rosary and Benediction

12:00 Holy Mass, followed by lunch in the refectory with spiritual reading (Bring packed lunch)

13:30 Conference followed by Stations of the Cross. End.

Fr David Sherry, district superior, will deliver both conferences

LENTEN REMINDERS

- **Fasting + abstinence:** *Ash Wed & Good Friday, under pain of mortal sin.*
- **Abstinence every Friday,** *under pain of mortal sin. (As per Episcopal Conf. 2011).*
- **Fasting** = *one meal and two collations*
- **Abstinence** = *no meat, but small quantities of condiments, broth, etc. allowed.*
- *Fasting binds from 18-59 inclusive. Abstinence from 14 onwards*
The mentally/physically sick, pregnant women, nursing mothers are dispensed from these obligations.

PRECEPTS OF THE CHURCH *(binding under mortal sin)*

1. *You shall attend Mass on Sundays and on holy days and rest from servile labour.*
2. *You shall confess your sins at least once a year.*
3. ***You shall receive the sacrament of the Eucharist at least during the Easter season.***
4. *You shall observe the days of fasting and abstinence established by the Church.*
5. *You shall help to provide for the needs of the Church.*

MARRIAGE BANNES: **MARK SEEBER** of Burghclere, & **ROSALINA M KUYPERS** of Walton, Kentucky, USA plan to be married on **25th April 2026.**

Any persons knowing of any impediment to this union are obliged in conscience to notify a priest as soon as possible.

MARCH		II Sunday of Lent	7:30, 10:00
		<i>2nd Collection Seminary Fund Adult Catechism after 10:00 mass "Spiritual reading"</i>	17:00 Benediction
2	Feria of Lent		7:15
3	Feria of Lent		7:15
4	Feria of Lent		7:15
5	Feria of Lent		7:15
6	Feria of Lent	1st Fri. Holy Hr 6pm	7:15 / 19:00
7	Feria of Lent	1st Sat	7:30 / 12:00
8		III Sunday of Lent	7:30, 10:00
			17:00 Benediction
9	Feria of Lent		7:15
10	Feria of Lent		7:15
11	Feria of Lent		7:15
12	Feria of Lent		7:15
13	Feria of Lent	- Stations @ 19:00	7:15
14	Feria of Lent		7:30 / 12:00
15		IV Sunday of Lent (Lætare)	7:30, 10:00
			17:00 Benediction
16	Feria of Lent		7:15
17	Feria of Lent		7:15
18	Feria of Lent		7:15
19		St. Joseph, Spouse of the BVM	7:15 / 19:00 (sung)
20	Feria of Lent	- Stations @ 19:00	7:15
21	Feria of Lent		7:30 / 12:00
22		Passion Sunday	<u>6:00</u> , 10:00
			17:00 Benediction
23	Feria of Passiontide		7:15
24	Feria (St Gabriel Archangel)		7:15
25		The Annunciation of the BVM	7:15 / 19:00 (sung)
26	Feria of Passiontide		7:15
27		Our Lady of Compassion, 1st cl. Rosary & Benediction 18:30	7:15 / 19:00 (sung)
28	Feria of Passiontide	- (RECOLLECTION)	7:30 / 12:00
29		Palm Sunday	7:30, 10:00
			17:00 Benediction
30		Monday of Holy Week	7:15
31		Tuesday of Holy Week	<u>7:00</u>
1		Wednesday of Holy Week	<u>7:00</u>
2		Maundy Thursday (Tenebrae 9:00)	19:00 + Adoration
3		Good Friday (Day of Fasting) 9:00 Tenebrae, 13:00 Confessions, 14:00 Stations	15:00 Mass of Pre-Sanctified
4		Holy Saturday 09:00 Tenebrae, 20:00 Confessions	21:00 Vigil
5		Easter Sunday	7:30, 10:00
		<i>NB - Vigil Mass does not cover Sunday obligation</i>	17:00 Benediction

Sanctuary Lamp in Memory

Request that a sanctuary lamp burn in memory of a loved one or in thanksgiving for graces received.
Holy Mass is celebrated for those remembered and their donors each first Wednesday of the month.

	Main Altar	Our Lady	Sacred Heart	St Joseph	St Philomena
Mar 1	Veronica Brucciani RIP	Paul Brossard & family	Suffering Souls	Therese Farrell	Lost + forgotten Holy Souls
Mar 8	Ralph Blatchford, Alfred Williams	Private intention	Albert West RIP	In thanksgiving	Private intention
Mar 15	Private intention	Private intention	Patricia Crocker RIP	In thanksgiving	St Michael's School
Mar 22	Penny Brady		Private Intention	Private intention	St Michael's School
Mar 29			Private intention	Derek Turner	St Michael's School

£10 for one 7 day lamp (Sun. - Sat.) | Cheques to the order of SSPX, Burghclere Priory | Or pay with card (machine in narthex)