

Coast to Coast

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The Third Order of the Society of St. Pius X

A means of salvation and sanctification for faithful catholics of today!

By Father Gérard Rusak

Throughout history religious orders have provided for lay people a means by which they, who were admiring the spirit of a certain order, could participate in it and receive graces. These means were Third Orders. They were called a "Third" Orders in contrast with the "First" Order of male religious and the "Second" Order of sisters. Thus were born the great Third Orders of St. Francis, St. Dominic, St. Benedict, etc. And indeed, these were a great help for the sanctification of the laity. We can say, with little fear of error, that from the time of the formation of these Third Orders in the Middle Ages until our present day, sanctity has become more easily accessible to the laity. Saint Louis, King of France, St. Elizabeth, Queen of Hungary, St. Elizabeth, Queen of Portugal, St. Ferdinand, King of Castile, St. Thomas More, St. Catherine of Siena, all were lay persons and Third Order members. Many parents of saints, or famous persons who were also good Catholics, such as Christopher Columbus, also belonged to a Third Order. A Rule approved by the Church, through its discipline, is always a help to sanctity; the hierarchy and obedience in Third Orders are an aid to humility, without which sanctity is not possible.

It must be noted that, up until Vatican II, most of these Traditional Third Orders flourished. Third Order Franciscans, Dominicans, Carmelites, etc., were model Catholics. However, with the liberalization of the Orders themselves, the Third Orders also fell slowly into Modernism.



This, nonetheless, was providential, for it permitted the constitution of a new Third Order more adapted to our modern times and the evils of modern society: The Third Order of the Society of St. Pius X. Let us examine its history more closely.

After the catastrophe of Vatican II in the 60's, thanks to God, to Archbishop

Lefebvre and an unending list of good people, impossible to mention here, on November 1, 1970 the Priestly Society of St. Pius X was officially founded, with the approval of Rome. With time, as the Society grew, its priests began to see the need of a Third Order. (A "Second" Order of sisters had already been established.) It became only too clear that many among the laity were in a state of great confusion. They were lost, as it were, like one in a great forest without a compass. They were confused, not only doctrinally, knowing neither what to believe nor what to reject, but also in their spiritual and family life, they were lost in the maze of this deceiving modern world. The priests of the Society knew only too well that, even if the faithful were taught traditional doctrine, if they continued to live according to the spirit of the modern world, their souls would be in grave danger.

It was for this reason that, following a meeting of priests in September 1980, Archbishop Lefebvre requested suggestions and proposals to constitute a Rule for a Third Order. These were reviewed in November of the same year. Then on January 29, 1981, the Third Order of

the Society of St. Pius X was officially founded and approved by Archbishop Lefebvre. It is no mere coincidence that this took place on the Feast of St. Francis of Sales, author of "The Introduction to the Devout Life", a book which shows that sanctity is not only possible to the laity, but how to attain it. This volume would be a good complement to the Rule of the Third Order of which the entire purpose is the sanctification of the individual members and of those for whom they are responsible.

Let us now briefly consider this Rule, which indeed seems truly providential for all, but especially for young families obliged to live in the modern world. It takes into account the difficulties, for example, television, schooling, etc., that these Catholics encounter in their everyday life, and the proper



attitude to have towards them. It also takes into account the present crisis in the Church, and the means to keep our Faith: the Mass, to the exclusion of the Novus Ordo, study of the Catechism of the Council of Trent,... Finally, it retains the traditional tools of sanctification, which all previous Third Orders possessed: namely, a solid prayer life,

founded on meditation, the daily Rosary, spiritual reading, retreats, ...

In conclusion, we may say that the Third Order of the Society of St. Pius X is God's instrument in our modern times to sanctify those who, living in the world, do not wish to be of the world. They, who are faithful in all things to the Rule of this new Third Order, can be well assured that there is a mansion provided for them in heaven.

For more information to the Third Order of the Society of St. Pius X in Canada, or a copy of the Rule of the Third Order and an application form please write to the author at:

St. Raphael's Priory, 480 McKenzie Street, Winnipeg MB, R2W 5B9, raphael1@sspx.ca

Double Header at Nanaimo Church

Double events at Nanaimo, British Columbia's church on Palm Sunday, April 5th and Monday left parishioners well fed, both spiritually and physically.

The visit of two important Society of Saint Pius X priests included Holy Mass, a talk and a pot luck supper each day. Fr. Jürgen Wegner spoke after Mass on Palm Sunday and Fr. Alain-Marc Nély on Monday evening.

Fr. Jürgen Wegner expressed happiness at being with Fr. Greuter, pastor of Our Lady of Good Counsel Church in Nanaimo, since they've known each other for 17 years, and both hail from Holland. The new Superior of the Society in Canada said he was touched by the efforts that the faithful in Canada make for their faith. While Canadians might drive many hours to go to Holy Mass, Europeans happen to complain if they have to go 30 kilometers, he said.

Fr. Wegner's humour was evident during the social as he mixed with the group, taking photographs of children in attendance. When pressed for a short written comment, he jokingly wrote, "I'm the boss."

His serious message was an appeal to the faithful to be examples in everyday life. "I wear a cassock and people see

me and ask me questions, but what are you doing?" he said. "People are searching for the faith and for tradition. We must help them; we must think of the souls of the people living



in sin and what will happen to them when they go to Our Lord." By good example, people preach - not only with their mouths. In addition to good example, he said, people must continue to pray and to accept crosses and sufferings in their lives as a means of salvation. "When we are patient to accept the situation we are in, to pray and to wait for the moment of Our Lord, then our family, our neighbours, will come to the church," he said. "We need to do our best to bring them in, when we do our best, we will get them there."

Father Nély, Second Assistant to Bishop Fellay, addressed the group on Monday evening with a review of the historical position of the Society of Saint Pius X, Archbishop Lefebvre and the Vatican. (See article on page 4) "Even with the latest developments, nothing has really changed," he said, "as long

as novelties are still allowed in the Novus Ordo Mass."

Liberty, equality and fraternity, doctrines of the French Revolution and also the hand of Martin Luther, can be found in Novus Ordo Mass. "The new theology leads to atheism," he said. Thus, the Society must stand its ground when dealing with the Vatican.

The Society's battle is to maintain fidelity to the traditional Holy Mass and to continue the propagation of the Faith, by labouring in the church, and for the church. "This is our last chance to save the church and our souls," he said.

Parishioners expressed their gratitude for the visit of the two dignitaries, although it was heard to be said that two pot luck dinners in a row were a little difficult on the waistline.

By Margo Linder

Legion of Mary, Toronto - Acies, March 22nd

Bearing in mind the importance of devotion to Mary in the Legion system, each year there shall be a consecration of legionaries to Our Lady.

The consecration - which shall comprise both an individual and a collective consecration will take place on the 25 March or on a day close thereto, and will be known as the Acies.

This Latin word, meaning as it does an army ranged in battle array, is appropriate to a ceremony in which the legionaries as a body assemble to renew their fealty to Mary, Queen of the Legion, and from her to receive strength and blessing for yet another year's battle with the forces of evil. Moreover, the word is in effective contrast with praesidium, which contemplates the Legion, no longer drawn up



in united array, but split up into its various sections, each engaged in its own particular sphere of duty.

The Acies is the great central annual function of the Legion, so that it is necessary to stress the importance of attendance on the part of every member. The essential idea of the Legion, upon which all else is built, is that of working in union with and in dependence on Mary, its Queen. The Acies is the solemn expression of that union and dependence, the renewal-individual and collective-of the legionary declaration of fealty. Hence it is manifest that any legionaries who can attend, and yet fail to do so, have little or none of the spirit of the Legion in them. The membership of such persons is not an asset to the Legion.

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