Part I
Fr. John Anthony Hardon, S.J.: will he become a canonized saint?

By David Hottinger

[Editor’s Note: This article is the first in a series promoting the Cause of the Canonization of Father John A. Hardon, S.J. (1914-2000), who was an American priest, theologian, and catechist.]

They say the best way to learn something is to teach it. For the first thirty-three years of his life, John Anthony Hardon learned the Catholic Faith; the last fifty-three years of his life, he taught it. For him, that old saying about teaching proved true. During his half-century teaching career, Fr. Hardon

Possible saint continued page 8

Dr. Jennifer Roback Morse defends institution of marriage between a man and a woman

By David Hottinger

[Editor’s Note: The following is an interview with Dr. Jennifer Roback Morse, president and founder of the Ruth Institute, an organization that promotes marriage as the bedrock of society and a key to family formation. Dr. Morse was in the Twin Cities earlier this month to speak to the Minnesota Legislature in support of the constitutional amendment defending natural marriage.]

“The Catholic Servant”: Since so many seem to have forgotten: what is marriage and what does it do for society?

Dr. Jennifer Roback Morse

Marriage continued page 10
Question and Answer

Missing Mass on Sunday—is this really seriously sinful or not?

By Bishop John M. LeVoir

Q u e s - t i o n: I just don’t see how missing Mass on a Sunday can be a mortal sin. That means I could go to Hell if I deliberately missed Mass without a good reason. How could a loving God do that?

A n s w e r: If we desire to gain the proper information on which to base our decisions, we have to ask the right questions. So, the question about Mass attendance should not be: “Will I go to Hell if I miss one Mass through my own fault?” Rather, it should be: “What should I do to be completely faithful to Christ and to His Church?” In other words, our Mass attendance and participation in the Mass should be based on our faith in Jesus Christ and our love for Him. If we believe in Christ, we are going to want to do everything possible to express our faith in Him and our love for Him. The Sunday Eucharist does both of these things in a preeminent and mysterious manner. As we come together as a Christian community on Sunday to worship the Father through the Son and in the Holy Spirit, we express our faith in the most profound way possible. We worship on the same day that Jesus rose from the dead and we fulfill the words of the Creed which state: “For our sake He was crucified under Pontius Pilate; He suffered, died, and was buried. On the third day He rose again in fulfillment of the Scriptures.” Together with the priest and the entire Christian community, we unite ourselves to the sacrifice of Christ on the Cross, and with Him, we offer everything to the Father in the Holy Spirit. Giving of ourselves in this way is an act of supernatural love. This love is expressed for Christ crucified and risen. Whose sacrifice of love is made present under the appearances of bread and wine. When we receive our Lord in Holy Communion, we express our desire to live in union with Christ forever. “Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life…” (John 6:54).

The Letter to the Hebrews states how important the Sunday Eucharist is for the one who professes faith in Jesus: “We should not stay away from our assembly, as is the custom of some, but encourage one another…” (Hebrews 10:25) “St. Justin wrote to the pagan emperor Antoninus Pius (138-161) around the year 155, explaining what Christians did: ‘On the day we call the day of the sun, all who dwell in the city or country gather in the same place…’” (Catechism of the Catholic Church, n. 1345).

As Christians, we should not look at Mass attendance as a negative exercise, as the original question implies. Rather, “Participation in the communal celebration of the Sunday Eucharist is a testimony of belonging and of being faithful to Christ and to His Church. The faithful give witness by this to their communion in faith and charity. Together they testify to God’s holiness and their hope of salvation. They strengthen one another under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.” (CCC, n. 2182)

The Most Reverend John M. LeVoir is Bishop of the Diocese of New Ulm, Minnesota.

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Sunday Mass obligation according to the Catechism of the Catholic Church

2181 The Sunday Eucharist is the foundation and confirmation of all Christian practice. For this reason the faithful are obliged to participate in the Eucharist on days of obligation, unless excused for a serious reason (for example, illness, the care of infants) or dispensed by their own pastor. Those who deliberately fail in this obligation commit a grave sin.

2182 Participation in the communal celebration of the Sunday Eucharist is a testimony of belonging and of being faithful to Christ and to His Church. The faithful give witness by this to their communion in faith and charity. Together they testify to God’s holiness and their hope of salvation. They strengthen one another under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.
Scriptural background for the Sacraments: Part X
In the early Church, households accepted Baptism at the hands of the Apostles

By Fr. John Paul Echert

We have examined several selections from the book of the Acts of the Apostles that show that Baptism was not restricted to Jews alone but was early on extended to Samaritans and Gentiles. But what about infants and children; was Baptism restricted to adults alone? This is the erroneous view of some non-Catholic denominations that practice adult-only Baptism. Some would argue that there is no command against such Baptism restricted to adults alone. They would argue that there is no command against such Baptism to infants; we argue that there is no command against such Baptism. In fact there is more to argue in favor of the Baptism of children than against it. Jesus Himself manifested His love for children and reprimanded the disciples for keeping children at a distance: "Then children were brought to Jesus; and He laid His hands on them and prayed. The disciples rebuked the people; but Jesus said, 'Let the children come to Me and do not hinder them, for to such belongs the Kingdom of Heaven.' And He led His hands on them and went away." (Matthew 19:13-15)

Furthermore, as we demonstrated earlier in this series, the Old Testament practice of circumcision—administered eight days after birth by divine mandate—prefigured the New Testament Sacrament of Baptism. Saint Paul makes this connection explicit in his Epistle to the Colossians: "See to it that no one makes a prey of you by philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elementary spirits of the universe, and not according to Christ. For in Him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily, and you have come to fullness of life in Him, Who is the head of all rule and authority. In Him also you were circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of flesh in the circumcision of Christ; and you were buried with Him in Baptism, in which you were also raised with Him through faith in the working of God, Who raised Him from the dead." (Col. 2:8-12)

Finally, one of the strongest arguments favoring infant Baptism is the practice of entire households accepting Baptism at the hands of the Apostles. There are two instances of this recorded in the book of Acts; we can only wonder how many more of these occurred: "We remained in this city [Philippi] some days; and on the Sabbath day we went out side the gate to the riverside, where we supposed there was a place of prayer; and we sat down and spoke to the women who had come together. One who heard us was a woman named Lydia, ... a seller of purple goods, who was a worshipper of God. The Lord opened her heart to give heed to what was said by Paul. And when she was baptized, with her household, she besought us saying, 'If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come to my house and stay.' And she prevailed upon us." (Acts 16:15-12)

"About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them, and suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken; and immediately all the doors were opened and every one's [chains] were unfastened. When the jailer woke and saw that the prison doors were open, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself, supposing that the prisoners had escaped; but Paul cried out with a loud voice, 'Do not harm yourself, for we are all here!' And he called for lights and rushed in, and trembling with fear he fell down before Paul and Silas, and brought them out and said, 'Men, what must I do to be saved?' And they said, 'Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household.' And they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all that were in his house. And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their wounds, and he was baptized at once, with all his family. Then he brought them up into his house, and set food before them; and he rejoiced with all his household that he had believed in God." (Acts 16:25-34)

In addition to these instances in Acts there is a comment made by Saint Paul in his letter to the Colossians that makes reference to the Baptism of a household: "I appeal to you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree and that there be no dissensions among you, but that you be united in the same mind and the same judgment. For it has been reported to me that there is a quarreling among you, my brethren. What I mean is that each one of you says, 'I belong to Paul,' or 'I belong to Apollos,' or 'I belong to Cephas,' or 'I belong to Christ.' Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized with Paul? I am thankful that I baptized none of you except Crispus and Gaius; lest any one should say that you were baptized in my name. (I did baptize also the household of Stephanas. Beyond that, I do not know whether I baptized anyone else.)" (1 Cor. 1:10-16)

Against those who would argue that we do not have evidence that these households included children we should respond in kind: prove that these households were without children. It is more likely that there were children in these households, given that contraception and abortion were not commonly practiced by couples of this period.

As a final comment that is secondary to our focus upon the Baptism of children, it should be noted that in this series on Colossians, Paul was not downplaying the essential importance of Baptism itself but only an inordinate preoccupation on the part of some Christians upon the particular minister of the Sacrament. Baptism in Christ and the Holy Trinity— is precisely what the Church, from the Apostolic Age to the present, properly offers to candidates of every age, whether infants or adults, so long as authentic Christian faith is present. In the case of infants, it is the faith of their parents that suffices, with assurance that they will raise their children in the Faith into which they have been baptized.

Fr. John Paul Echert, S.J.,... is the pastor of Holy Trinity Church and St. Augustine Church in South St. Paul, Minnesota.

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Wherever the Catholic sun doth shine, there will be humor in seminaries

By Fr. Michael Miller

We generally note anniversaries in multiples of five. I am not sure why we do; as every anniversary comemorates an equally important event in our lives. Perhaps, in addition to being an easy method of calculation, it is our way of acknowledging God’s grace. And although “there is an appointed time for everything” (Ecclesiastes 3:1), God “has put the timeless into their hearts, with out men’s ever discovering, from beginning to end, the work which God has done.” (Eccl. 3:11)

As we add year upon year to our days, we often ask ourselves, “How is God going to use me for His kingdom today?” Perhaps this is a more appropriate question to ask each day, as God has given us each day to serve Him in the way He has intended for us.

The Catholic Servant May, 2011

By John Sondag

when the late Msgr. Gerald Baskfield went on vaca- tion from The Saint Paul Seminary, where he was assigned as a professor, he told two seminarians who were going to paint his living quarters, “Wherever the Catholic sun doth shine, there will be humor in seminaries.”

Fr. Michael Miller is pastor of St. Michael’s Church and St. Mary’s Church in Stillwater, Minnesota.

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Family Life

Family and prayers welcome and bring comfort for a new Kuharski grandbaby!

By Mary Ann Kuharski

My daughter-in-law Quy is new to our family and new to America. Even after living through two Minnesota winters, she is still fascinated by snow and delighted when the ground is covered with white! She helps remind us of what we may not always appreciate!

Quy came from a strong Catholic family in Saigon, Vietnam (renamed Ho Chi Minh City after the war). In fact, one of her four brothers is a priest, and her uncle, whom they are very close to, was until recently the Archbishop of Hanoi.

Last year, Quy married our son Charlie (who was adopted by us from an orphanage in Vietnam when he was four or five, one-half years old). They have now made their home in Excelsior, Minnesota.

This year their hopes and prayers for a family were answered when Quy became pregnant. Charlie has been one of the “favorite” babysitters for his nieces and nephews and now, at last, he would become a daddy.

Also new to Quy was American medical procedures and hospitals, something most Americans take for granted. (If you need hospitalization in Vietnam, you may wait for days in long lines just to get a room, and then must be prepared to bring your own towels and bedding, and arrange for family or friends to provide your meals also.)

When Quy became pregnant she and Charlie chose a Catholic family practice group for her medical care and a Catholic hospital to deliver their baby. It was reassuring to her.

Women have babies every day without complications, but in Quy’s case, her labor and delivery did not go without problems. I was privileged to be at the hospital with Charlie and Quy during her labor. Initially, all seemed to be progressing well. After many hours, however, her physician called in a specialist, and after examination and consultation with Charlie and Quy, the decision was made for her to undergo a C-section delivery. By this time, Quy and Charlie were both more than a bit anxious and eager to “have it over.”

Before wheeling Quy into the delivery room, the surgeon asked if they would like to pray together. I was waiting in the hall at the time, when Charlie rushed out and said, “Mom, come on in; we’re going to pray before they take Quy!”

There we were, gathered around Quy’s bedside, as the surgeon prayed, “Heavenly Father, we ask you to be with us now and to guide my hands during the surgery and keep them steady…” It was a tender and prayerful moment—reassuring to all of us!

“After the doctor prayed, I completely relaxed,” Quy later said. “I knew God was in control and no longer felt worried or scared.”

Once Quy and baby were home, they e-mailed her mother and family in Vietnam, to tell them of the new baby and the surgeon’s prayer before delivery.

Not bad publicity for America in my mind!

My daughters Angie and Kari were the ones who had recommended the Catholic family practice group, as well as the hospital. Both had delivered their babies in the same setting.

“What could be better than to be at a Catholic hospital and be offered prayer and Holy Communion while you’re recuperating?” Angie asked Quy.

This meant a thirty-mile drive, one way, for Charlie and Quy every time they made a doctor visit, or toured the hospital, yet today they are so happy they made that choice.

These newest grandbabies are God’s reminders of His love. Baby Addie, who was born in January, is the third daughter for Angie and Adam, and resembles her big sister Gianna (age 5) who dreams of being a princess or a dancer, while her sister Lucia is an impish two and resembles her mother in looks and behavior. And now, our newest grandchild, a first for son Charlie and Quy.

So, who is this new little someone who joins the Kuharski clan? Her name is Isabella Marie and she weighed in at a bouncing six pounds, thirteen ounces, with beautiful features that blend her mother’s Asian eyes and sweet lips and her father’s darker complexion and pug nose.

When the news went out over the Internet to friends and family, Charlie’s brother Tony, who is in the military and recently returned to the States after suffering injuries in Iraq, yet is never without a quick report, sent back this message: “Congrats, beautiful name, a half black, half Vietnamese baby with an Italian first name and a Polish last name; gotta love that. Be well, Tony.”

We are so grateful for the expert prenatal and hospital care our daughters and now daughter-in-law received from the physicians and staff at the Catholic hospitals. Undergoing a last-minute C-section after a day in labor was not easy; yet the simple prayer by the surgeon offered comfort and reassurance at just the right time.

Charlie and Quy’s recent hospital experience was a fresh and up-close reminder of the great blessings we have as Catholics to choose a Catholic hospital to deliver our babies, and to be at a Catholic hospital and be offered prayer and Holy Communion while you’re recuperating.”

What a gift we have in dedicated Catholic nurses, doctors, and hospital staff. These are the people who will be on the “front lines” in opposition to ObamaCare or any abortion mandates or end of life directives (Heaven forbid “death panels”). They deserve our gratitude, our support, and most especially our prayers. Thank you for helping assure the safe delivery of Baby Addie and Baby Isabella Marie!

Mary Ann Kuharski is a homemaker and mother of 13 (ages 20-40), six of whom came by adoption and are of mixed races, some with special needs. She is the author of Raising Catholic Children and Parenting with Prayer (OSV Press), and Building a Legacy of Love (Faith Publishing).

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The Catholic Servant

By John Sondag

The translations of the Mass will be changing on the first Sunday of Advent 2011, as opposed to just going through the routine of standing there doing what we're supposed to be doing.

Mr. Carstens: I think if Catholics are going to take the time to come to Mass, they may as well know what's going on there: "Can I get something out of it?" as we say. And so the concern is, the opportunity is, to see the meaning in the words that we speak. And the liturgy's a whole complex of signs and symbols, but if we don't know their origins or meaning, then we don't benefit by it. So that's the opportunity that forces us to become re-engaged with the meaning of our Faith and of the Mass.

"The Catholic Servant": Do you see that the new changes are going to be helpful in giving us the opportunity to grow spiritually and deepen our understanding of the Church?

Mr. Carstens: Well, they have that potential. The meaning of the Mass is the same today as it will be a year from today. What the new translation gives us is a more direct access to the meaning of the Mass. So part of what is required of us, as we say, forming kind of a sacramental way of hearing and looking for the sources of the meaning in the different origins of the Church's language.

"The Catholic Servant": Why not? Why are we going through all of this now? Some people would say, we were doing just fine, so why upset the apple cart?

Mr. Carstens: Well, there's John Paul II in his famous line about do not be satisfied with mediocrity. I don't want to accuse anybody except myself of being mediocre, but we can always do better. Until the coming of the Kingdom and the sanctification of the entire world, we can always be doing better. So, yes, we have been doing fine, but this is an occasion for greater holiness, greater spirituality, for greater opportunity to encounter Christ through the Mass.

"The Catholic Servant": Weren't the old translations good?

Mr. Carstens: Yes. But, as we've said before, after 1,700 years of saying Mass in Latin, learning how to translate for the sake of liturgical purposes was not something that the Church was familiar with. And so it's been done with the word that John Paul uses: maturation. It's taken 50 years of pastoral practice, scholarship, reflection, trial, error—all of these things—it's taken awhile for the Church to come to an understanding of how to translate adequately. And not just adequately, but beautifully, clearly, and precisely, the words of the Mass to convey the meaning. So this isn't a rejection. The third edition is not a rejection of the second edition; it was wrong, this is right. It's kind of a natural movement of the living organism, that with experience and time you get better.

Translations of the Mass continued page 11

Now Is The Time To Visit La Crosse's Shrine Of Our Lady Of Guadalupe

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Pope John Paul II Catholic Servant of the Third Millennium Award to be given posthumously to Dr. Raymond Bonnabeau

By John Sondag

This is a first. “The Catholic Servant” has never given its “Pope John Paul II Catholic Servant of the Third Millennium Award” posthumously to anyone, but this year it’s appropriate that we honor the life of Raymond C. Bonnabeau, M.D., Ph.D., who died on February 26, 2011. He was a man who lived out the values (of spreading, teaching, and defending the Faith) promoted by “The Catholic Servant.” He knew his faith and he was not afraid to talk about his beliefs or to help others live their faith.

He was a great supporter of the paper, not only with the gifts that he and his wife, Mary, gave the paper (they were sponsors of a chair of writing), but also by his talents. He would monthly take the feature picture of a stained glass window or religious statue for the front page.

Dr. Bonnabeau was a Knight of the Holy Sepulcher, a third order Franciscan, and a member of the Cathedral parish where he would serve Mass on Saturday evenings. He was also a frequent altar server at the VA Hospital where he practiced medicine as a cardiologist.

On the natural level, he had worked his way up to the rank of a major general (that’s two stars), and he was not only a cardiologist but also had a doctorate in surgery which enabled him to be a clinical professor.

The father of four children, Dr. Bonnabeau was married to his wife, Mary, who will receive the award on Tuesday, May 24, at “The Catholic Servant” Fundraising Dinner.
learned something about the Faith that made all the theology of his younger days so much more conceivable. In a sense, he taught himself something that at once the greatest evidence of truth of the Catholic religion and the greatest obstacle to accepting it. This process is best introduced by analogy. Imagine a self-help guru who starts his spiel by promising his energized audience, "Tell you what, gals, if you put this into practice and are faithful to my teaching, I guarantee ... (be prepared to change your mind near- tine, Aquinas, and Bellarmine) you, that you’ll suffer for it your entire life, and the more faithful you are to my words, the more you can expect to suf- fer!" Here the guru takes a drink of water. He clears his throat and continues, half his audience is already out the door, the other half lined up to leave, “And you will be truly happy.”

Such was the lesson Fr. John Hardon, S.J., learned about remaining faithful to the teachings of Christ. Such was the lesson he regularly passed on to his listeners, in person and on the radio. At the time, there was nothing particularly remarkable about a young Jesuit teaching to a large audience. And the only explanation of why, with such a message, he had any audiences at all, is that he brought to his message a sound proof of both parts of that hard lesson in the very person who taught it to them.

Fr. Hardon came of age during something of a golden age in the life of the Catholic Church in North America. It was a time when the Catholic school system was the envy of the world. Fewes were packed. Archbishop John Cardinal Cody was on the radio and television. At the time, there was nothing particul- arly remarkable about a young Jesuit teaching to a large audience. The intelligence named Hardon, just ordained in 1947, that was all soon to change.

The modern world has a hard time with religion, partly because religion doesn’t allow you to change your mind nearly as often as the modern world would like. The modern world has a particularly hard time with the Catholic Church because Catholicism has been ex- ceptionally “close-minded” in its resistance to something it can’t resist, which is that the modern world is something as incessant as changing your mind.

Over the centuries, heresy has played an interesting role you might say providential) role shaping Catholic doctrine. Like a shark, it took him the entire life of the Church to find the way. The Church had its ups and downs, but the life of the Church was the same from the beginning of the twentieth century. The usual progression of vi- olent video games is to battle a series of minions before ad- vancing to the boss-guy. Violent length of time, there was nothing par- ticularly remarkable about a young Jesuit teaching to a large audience. Folks didn’t know if priests would soon be allowed to choose their wives, or both. Literature appeared claiming the Church’s position on moral issues like homosexuality, abortion, and contraception had been “relaxed.” Added to the confusion, individual bish- ops were making their own rules about these issues. Worse still, many Catholics had bought into the dogma of the day that said individuals had to “figure out for themselves” what was true and good, if any- thing. Conceivably, this sort of figuring has been the hobby of humans with leisure time in every age. The only difference was that now people thought they could come to different conclusions and still call them- selves Catholic.

This was a turbulent sea on which Fr. John Hardon was asked to sail. He taught authen- tic, orthodox Catholic doctrine to millions of people. Catholics included, were terri- bly confused, if not downright mistaken, or hostile to, what the Church actually taught. A student of history, Fr. Hardon knew that to compro- mise the Faith was to lose the Faith. He did not compro- mise. At a time when many theo- logians would wink at reali- ties like the existence of the devil and the Real Presence, Fr. Hardon was teach facts like “heretical,” “diabolical,” and worse, “sinsful.”

But history had also taught Fr. Hardon that modernism, and even been popular to practice ortho- dox Christian religion, let alone teach it. Moreover, he didn’t have time for theologians who were too open-minded to be- lieve in angels; he had work to do.

Fr. Hardon prayed for three hours a day and was ordered by his superiors to take seven hours of rest a night. The other fourteen hours were for Christ. Evidently, Christ asked him to spend every minute of them catechizing His sheep. Fr. Hardon lectured on every topic imaginable: from metaphysics to the practice of prayer, from comparative religion to the mystery of the Trinity. He lec- tured in every place conceivable: from Jesuit seminaries to secular universities, retreat centers to church basements. And he taught everyone God put in front of him, from a Mis- sionary of Charity to a Muslim on an airplane. When he wasn’t teaching, he was before the Blessed Sacrament writing books, letters, a catechism, and even a dictionary, or crisscrossing the globe founding insti- tutes and apostolates to fill whatever need he saw, or at re- treat centers giving confer- ences and hearing Confessions.

As much as Fr. Hardon taught the Faith, more so did he suffer for the Faith. He suffered in the body: from asthma and perpetual frailty throughout most his life; late in life from heart failure and loss of vision, hearing, and his voice; and he died a few years after his death.”

in America today.

David Hottinger is a fre- e lance writer from the Twin Cities who is attending the University of Minnesota Law School.

*This article was funded by the St. Benedict Chair of Writing spon- sored by an anonymous donor.*
Catechism of the Catholic Church

Catechism supposes evangelization, conversion, and adoration. If people do not think of Him, if they have not bothered to get to know Him, read the books about Him? All liturgy presupposes evangelization, conversion, faith, and adherence to God’s will. (see Catechism of the Catholic Church, nn. 1072 and 1098)

That is a minimum condition for people to understand what is taking place when God speaks His language of love. We need to understand what the grasping of nothing out of Mass really means. It could be rephrased in this way: “I don’t see any connection between what happens at Mass and how I live my daily life.” People today as in every age have no time for irrelevancies. If the Mass does not correspond more transparently to the values by which they engage their freedom, make their choices, and claim their happiness, then it will certainly be irrelevant. It will not contribute in any way to their quest for a fully human life.

This shows that what is ultimately at stake is the very definition of what it means to be human and to live with meaning and purpose. There is much evidence of futility and meaningless-ness in our culture. Might it be time for a transformation to take place in those who complain of getting little or nothing out of Mass. Certainly an integral catechesis is indispensable. Is there any real surprise that people would find God’s language strange, foreign, incomprehensible, if they never think of Him, if they have not bothered to get to know Him, read the books about Him? All liturgy presupposes evangelization, conversion, faith, and adherence to God’s will. (see Catechism of the Catholic Church, nn. 1072 and 1098)

Certainly the wrong thing is for a transformation to take place when God speaks His language of love. His love is more perfect than that cheap concern that is correlated to our dispositions. His love is more personal than that fashionable love that begins with the Confiteor.

The sooner people realize that much work of evangelization, catechesis, and conversion needs to be done outside of the liturgy, as a prerequisite for the liturgy, the sooner the temptation to change the liturgy can be laid to rest. As the Dominican professor of theology, Father Simon Tugwell, wrote: “Liturgy is essentially something given, and in this it expresses a fundamental feature of all prayer. Its sublime lack of concern for our personal moods is a forcible reminder that when we come to God, it is not to force our moods or our interests on to Him, but to receive His interests and to let Him, in a sense, share His moods with us.”

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One of the features of the modern world that affects people’s dispositions with respect to God is that as never before man is able to satisfy his own desires: clothes tailored to conform to individual tastes; cars ordered with personalized colors; food ordered to comply with personal tastes; curricula structured to suit individual learning styles and interests. In a market-driven economy, consumers have learned that marketers are eager to identify personal preferences and cater to them. God is not a marketer. He is Truth and Love. He is our Savior. Those who recognize their need for redemption possess the fundamental disposition to derive great benefit from the liturgy.

They possess the humility that opens one’s heart and freedom to God, Who “resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble.” (James 4:6)

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Motherhood continued from page 1

she is wiser than we are) how we could take a shortcut through some of the suffering in life, if only we’d listen to her and take her advice. But, like a wise mother, she knows it is best to wait to give advice or offer help until she is asked. But, oh, is she ever yearning to be asked.

May is her month. Let’s make her happy by spending some time telling her about our lives and asking for her help and advice and prayers. And just like any other mother, she wouldn’t mind a little affection now and then. She’d love to know her picture is hanging on our wall, she’d love for us to bring her flowers, and she’d love for us to whisper, “I love you.”

Dia Boyle is a wife, freelance speaker, and writer from St. Paul, Minnesota.

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Marriage
done from page 1

Dr. Morse: Marriage is society’s way of attaching mothers and fathers to children. Without that core purpose, we wouldn’t need marriage. Life-long sexual monogamy would be pointless.

Historically, everywhere and always, marriage has achieved this purpose through what’s called the presumption of paternity: society assumes that any children born to a wife are children of her husband too. The combination of the presumption of paternity and the social norm of sexual exclusivity work in tandem to serve a legitimate public purpose. That purpose includes the interest of the child in having a mother and a father to care for the individual and the interests of the parents in having public acknowledgement of their parental rights and responsibilities.

Notice this is a public purpose. The other, private purposes of marriage—companionship, emotional support, sharing of finances, sexual exclusivity—all these together don’t add up to public purpose. They certainly don’t add up to tax benefits. Without its public purpose of connecting children to mothers and fathers, marriage is just a friendship. And so, marriage works to separate them.

Legal parenthood no longer tracks biological parenthood, the result will be that the government determines who is a parent and not biology. The presumption of paternity will be replaced by a presumption of parenthood, and the role of fatherhood, no longer essential, will be diminished.

Another effect of the redefinition of marriage will be on the place of religion in our society. The idea that marriage is between one man and one woman is not the idiosyncratic belief of one religion. It’s perhaps the one common belief of nearly all the world’s religions. If marriage is redefined, it will marginalize the beliefs of a huge percentage of the population and institutionalize an essentially atheistic idea of marriage in its place. What we now call marriage is a nominally non-sectarian, sectarian and anti-religious institution.

"The Catholic Servant": Why is this issue coming to a head now?

Dr. Morse: The Catholic Church’s ancient teachings on marriage and sex are being proven correct all the time. Some sex marriage would never be an issue if not for the sexual revolution [the widespread rebellion, most notably occurring in the 1960s, against norms derives in large part from the Church’s teaching on human sexuality]. While marriage had served to unify sex, childrearing, and marital love, the sexual revolution came and scattered all those parts. With the advent of artificial insemination, another thing the Church has been opposed to from the beginning, childbearing has become a private, individual activity. Now it is acceptable to have sex without being married and it’s possible to have a child without ever having sex.

The sexual revolution hasn’t made anyone happy. I think many young people are discovering that now. But what it did do was help weaken the theistic reality of marriage. Because childbearing and sex are no longer tied up in marriage, many people don’t understand what marriage really is anymore. For them, it becomes just a promise of sexual exclusivity and an emotional attachment, and that’s why you see people arguing for same-sex marriage.

"The Catholic Servant": What can we say to our well-meaning neighbors, especially the youth, who see same-sex marriage as simply a civil rights issue?

Dr. Morse: People who see marriage as an individual right really don’t understand what marriage is and what makes it unique. They think same-sex marriage is an idea without a downside. They think it’s nobody’s business if two people want to be married and so what if they are the same sex. But marriage isn’t just a contract between two people. It’s the basis of creating community. It’s how we bring children into the world.

The most success I have changing people’s minds is by showing them that there is a downside to redefining marriage.
It takes courage to follow Jesus. Do you know a young man who’s got what it takes? Please invite him to this event.

TEAM VIANNEY EVENT
Dates to be announced

Catholic high school to college-age men (9th grade and up) meet for dinner with college seminarians. Attend Adoration and Benediction, hear a short dynamic talk on our Catholic faith, and participate in an energetic Mass with college seminarians and university students. Dinner is open to high school and college age students. Adoration, Benediction, and Mass are open to everyone.

5:30 - Dinner with seminarians
6:30 - Adoration with evening prayer
7:30 - Mass at seminary

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Help him join the Team. Christ’s Team.
A surprising book about the end of the world, but we know that the world ends

By Dale Ahlquist

I remember with some embarrassment how in the 1970s (and what about the 1970s is not embarrassing?), I was quite swept up, along with my fellow evangelicals, with an almost obsessive interest in the end times. We, of course, believed we were living in the end times. I suppose, to some degree, every Christian who has ever lived has had reason to believe that, or at least reason to hope that Christ will come soon. But we also believed in “The Rapture,” the idea that just before Christ returned, all the Christians would suddenly go “poof” and get a quick ticket out of here in order to avoid the coming persecution. Then the Anti-Christ, “the Beast,” would rule the world for a while, and then, finally, Christ would come. The timing of the Rapture and duration of the Rule of the Anti-Christ and sequence of events before the Second Coming and the Final Judgment differed, depending on whether you were a pre-Millennialist, a mid-Tribber, a post-Tribber, and so on, based on how you interpreted the Bible and strung together the writings of Daniel of Babylon, Paul of Tarsus, and John of Patmos.

Rapture-theology inspired the phenomenally successful “Left Behind” book series—demonstrating that the Tribulation of future Christians can be a pretty profitable venture for at least a few present Christians.

There is no “Rapture” in Catholic theology, but Evangelicals and Catholics have generally shared the belief that there will be an Anti-Christ rising to power in the end times. However, Catholics never really seemed to get as worked up about it. In fact, I noticed that I completely lost interest in it after my conversion. A few years ago I read Michael O’Brien’s Father Elijah, but it did not particularly capture my imagination. During Lent, however, I read another novel about the end times, and I thought it was excellent—not only well-crafted, but a profound and truly prophetic book.

The author’s vision of the future does not seem far-fetched: rapid transit, rapid communication, densely populated cities that are bathed in sunlight; a world that has set up a new one-world government. The author’s vision of the future does not seem far-fetched: rapid transit, rapid communication, densely populated cities that are bathed in sunlight; a world that has set up a new one-world government. The author’s vision of the future does not seem far-fetched: rapid transit, rapid communication, densely populated cities that are bathed in sunlight; a world that has set up a new one-world government.

And yet with all the tolerance and understanding and peace and euphoria, there is still an excuse to openly persecute and even kill Catholics and do everything possible to destroy the Catholic Church. Though the new Humanitarians regret the recourse to violence, they are nonetheless thankful for the results.

G.K. Chesterton says, “Once abolish the god, and the government becomes god.” We see this idea acted out in this apocalyptic novel. The Humanistic idea that man alone is sufficient breeds the idea that man is to be worshipped and will allow no other deity to be worshipped. The world may reject Christ, may reject His Vicar on earth, the Pope, but, as Chesterton says, “sooner or later it will try to supply the need of something like a Papacy; even if it tries to do it on its own account. That will be indeed an ironical situation. The modern world will have set up a new Anti-Pope, even if, as in Monsignor Benson’s romance, the Anti-Pope has rather the character of an Antichrist.”

Who’s Monsignor Benson?

Robert Hugh Benson, the author of the book to which I’ve been referring, and to which also Chesterton refers. It’s called The Lord of the World, and it was written in 1907.

Robert Hugh Benson was the son of the Archbishop of Canterbury. He converted to Catholicism in 1903, was ordained a Catholic priest, wrote 15 novels, and died in 1914 at the young age of 43.

Whether or not Monsignor Benson’s picture of our future is accurate, the fact is his picture of our present is chillingly accurate.

The author apologizes for the sensational nature of the book, but he says he chose it as the best means by which to make his point: a picture of what the world would look like as “the necessary culmination of unimpeded subjectivity.” In other words, relativism. But the term was not even known when Monsignor Benson wrote his book.

He certainly illustrates the words of the prophet Jeremiah, who predicts the false comfort offered by those who say, “Peace, peace,” when there is no peace. (Jer. 6:14) The Bible quite clearly promises that a time of testing will come. In

The Lord of the World, the author says that only the humble and the pure will stand the test for long. Sobering words, indeed.

It is interesting that even in secular film and literature, most visions of the future are dark. We generally see a world that has blown itself to bits, where civilization stands in ruins, and even the survivors are mere shells of human beings. The Lord of the World, however, dark, is actually a novel of great hope. It is well worth reading, and I give nothing away even if I tell you how the story ends, because every Catholic should already know the ending. There is a final stand-off between the Pope and the Anti-Pope, between Christ and the anti-Christ. The dramatic ending is nothing less than the end of the world.

Dale Ahlquist is President of the American Chesterton Society and host of the EWTN series “G.K. Chesterton: The Apostle of Common Sense.”

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