

Dear friends and benefactors,

In this dramatic moment in the life of the Church, a moment in which the crisis, extending itself, assumes unexpected characteristics, it is more than ever necessary to undertake the worthy battle of the Catholic Faith vividly and courageously.

Who would have believed that one day traditional Benedictines, Capuchins and Dominicans would see those to be ordained have their ordinations put off or threatened to be put off, for having maintained the same conduct which Archbishop Lefebvre himself followed? Who could have believed that one of the four bishops consecrated by Archbishop Lefebvre would be expelled from the Society St. Pius X, when his position in the current crisis remains the same as the teachings and practical directions of Archbishop Lefebvre, which is not the case in Menzingen? Who could believe that even the older priests, such as Frs. Faure, Pivert, de Mérode, among many others, would one day find themselves out of the Society for being faithful to Archbishop Lefebvre's guidance? Who could believe that not only priests but also lay people, among who are some combatants from the start, would receive similar treatment for the same reasons?

This is all of a bewildering nature, meant to paralyze us from moving forward in the work of Catholic restoration.

But it is necessary to not succumb to this temptation. It is necessary to restart the fight as did Archbishop Lefebvre, always filled with courage amidst the worst difficulties. Let us imitate those who came before us, and although we are not so great in number, let us remember the vision from which the prophet Elijah benefitted, Elijah who prayed to the Lord to show to his servant that those who were with him were stronger and more numerous than those who were against him:

“And the Lord opened the eyes of the servant and he saw, and behold the mountain was filled with horses and carts of fire, surrounding Elijah.” (IV Kings, 6, 16)

It will be the same for us, if we remain faithful to the teaching and guidance of Him against Whom the gates of Hell will never prevail.

Father Prior

With our best wishes. May our
Lord blessed you all for Christmas
and the New Year.

Doctrine

An anonymous critique, accredited to Menzingen, accuses Fr. Pivert's book, "Our Relations with Rome," to have centralized inappropriately Archbishop Lefebvre's combat for Christ the King.

But it was Archbishop Lefebvre himself who affirmed such, as we can see from the following lines:

"Here is what constitutes our opposition, and the reason we cannot understand each other. It does not have to do with the problem of the Mass primarily, since this is precisely one of the consequences of wanting to become closer to Protestantism, having for this reason to change the liturgy, the sacraments, the catechism, etc.

"The true fundamental opposition is the Reign of our Lord Jesus Christ. *Opportet Illum Regnare*, says St. Paul: our Lord came in order to reign. They say no, and we say yes, together with all the Popes." (Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre, *L'Eglise infiltrée par le modernisme*, éditions Fideliter, 1993, page 70)

Has Menzingen changed its position? For our part, we wish to keep the doctrine and orientations left to us by Archbishop Lefebvre, for he is the faithful echo of Tradition.

Re-read "Ils L'ont Découronné". Everything is contained in this book consecrated to the question of Christ the King.

It is even necessary to say more than this. Christ the King is not only the center of the difficulties between Archbishop Lefebvre and liberal Rome. Christ the King is the center of the drama of modern times. Why was King Louis XVI beheaded? Why was Vendée devastated, the Papal Estates occupied, Garcia Moreno assassinated, the Cristeros crushed, fifteen thousand priests and religious, male and female, martyred in Spain and religious liberty proclaimed during Vatican II at the request of the Jewish-Masonic sect B'Nai B'rith? Why, finally, does Our Lady ask for the Consecration of Russia to Her Immaculate Heart, other than the reason that Her Divine Son may reign, and reign over the whole world? "We don't want Him to reign over us", cry the impious. We, on the contrary, say: "May Thy Kingdom come". *This* is the center of Archbishop Lefebvre's and the whole Church's fight, the Church to whom Archbishop Lefebvre was the most meritorious, faithful and devoted of sons.

Two Churches?

Some people make less of the actual crisis by trying to undo the distinction between the Catholic Church and the official Church. It is certain that our Lord founded but one Church, but She is today occupied by Her enemies. Let us listen once again to Archbishop Lefebvre, who quotes Leo XIII and St. Pius X in his book, "Ils L'ont Découronné". These citations help us better understand the dark reality which is that a Counter-Church has installed itself inside the Catholic Church. It is a mystery, the mystery of iniquity.

"Behold, astute enemies have filled with bitterness the Church, Spouse of the Immaculate Lamb, and have given Her poison to drink and have placed their cruel hands upon all the most precious things contained within Her. Where the Seat of St. Peter and the Throne of the Truth were once established as a light for the nations, they have erected the throne of their abominable impiety so that once they have struck the shepherd they can disperse the sheep" ("Little Exorcism by Leo XIII", quoted by Archbishop Lefebvre, *Ils L'ont Découronné* – Éditions Fideliter – 1987 – page 151).

Citing St. Pius X, Archbishop Lefebvre reminds us of poignant phrases from the *Pascendi*:

“...They hide themselves, which is reason for great anxiety and anguish, in the center and within the very heart of the Church. In truth, these enemies are more damaging the less they declare themselves openly.

“...in our days the danger is almost in the bowels of the Church and even in Her veins; the damage produced by such enemies is even more inevitable the more they know about the Church. Add to this the fact that they apply the poison neither to the branches nor the offspring, but to the roots, or to the Faith, and to its deepest fibers” (St. Pius X, *Pascendi*, quoted by Archbishop Lefebvre in *Ils L’ont Découronné* – Éditions Fideliter – 1987 – pages 153 and 154).

The “canonizations” of John XXIII and John Paul II confirm what we have just finished reading here. The enemy occupies the Church. Archbishop Lefebvre denounced him, and from this has preserved us. Another spirit animates many of those within Tradition. It is another spirit, not Archbishop Lefebvre’s. For this reason we refuse to accept it.

Chronicle

February 3rd

Father Prior, accompanied by Brother Plácido OSB and Mr. Deivid Nass, goes to France, where he will visit Saint Nicolas du Chardonnet, Avrillé, Bellaigue and Morgon, Father Pinaud and Rioult at the home of Mr Bonnet de Viller and a few families among the most faithful, before crossing the English Channel to meet with Bishop Williamson, Father Joseph Pfeiffer, the faithful of London and Middleland, before moving on to Ireland then back to Paris to take the plane back to Brazil.

April 17th (Holy Thursday)

Bishop Williamson, who honors us with his presence, consecrates the Sacred Oils at the Monastery during a long ceremony that demanded long and numerous rehearsals.

April 19th

Bishop Williamson gave a conference to the faithful followed by confirmations: 29 people.

April 20th

The community accompanies Bishop Williamson to the State of Bahia, to Father Jair’s monastery, where His Excellent re-ordains, conditionally, Fr. Marcelo Masi and confers the sub diaconate upon Brother Lourenço FBMV and upon Brother André OSB, besides administering the sacrament of Confirmation upon dozens of people.

May 1st

Father Prior and Brother Agostinho depart for the city of Volta Redonda, for the funeral of Mrs Sônia Araújo Ferreira da Costa, Father Angel’s mother. (Father Angel founded Bellaigue and left wherever he went the impression of being a man totally belonging to God.)

May 13th

Profession ceremony, in Anápolis, Goiás, for the Sisters of Our Lady of the Rosary, which we attended with some of our faithful.

June 2nd

Rev. Father Fernando Lopes (whose Sisters of Our Lady of the Rosary take care of our little school, St. Benedict and Scholastica), visits.

Report of the Cellarer

We now have a U.S. tax-exempt charitable (non-profit) corporation, whose sole purpose is to make it easier for you to assist in our monastery's work. Donations are tax-exempt under 503(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue code. Make checks payable, and mail donations, to: Holy Cross Monastery Brazil, Inc., 223 West Jackson Blvd., Suite 615, Chicago, IL 60606.

Brother Cellarer

Addresses for correspondence and bank accounts for those who want to help us:

Mosteiro da Santa Cruz
Caixa Postal 96582
28610-974 Nova Friburgo – RJ
BRAZIL

IN THE USA

Monastery of Santa Cruz
JP. Morgan Chase Bank
1730 N Stillwell RD
Boston, KY 40107-8666
Account Number 259826 826

IN EUROPE

Soc. C. Mant. do Mosteiro da S. Cruz
BNP PARIBAS
PARIS ARC DE TRIOMPHE
Code Banque Code Agence N° de compte Clé RIB
30004 02933 00010061014 60
IBAN: FR76 3000 4029 3300 0100 6101 460
BIC: BNPAFRPPPE
80 av. Marceau
75008 Paris - FRANCE

**To access our Paypal's account see our site:
www.beneditinos.org.br**

*For the Rosarian Sisters
(Nova Friburgo-RJ foundation):
Mail address:
Instituto Nossa Senhora do Rosário
(Our Lady of Rosary Institute)
Caixa Postal (P.O. Box) 96889
BR - 28610-974 Nova Friburgo-RJ
BRAZIL*

SUPPLEMENT

N° 6

THE TWELVE STAGES OF HUMILITY

St. Thomas teaches us that the foundation for humility is reverence towards God. It is for this reason that St. Augustine connects humility with the gift of fear of the Lord, by which man honors God. Humility makes us submit to God. It is, therefore, radically opposite from Liberalism, which is none other than pride erected into a system. A liberal wants to be free from all submission, as if submission to God was a bad thing, while in truth it is not just the only attitude befitting for his creatures, but also the only means of happiness, since we can only be happy if we reach the only end for which we were created which is God Himself.

But let's see what St. Benedict, less speculative than St. Thomas and St. Augustine, but highly practical in applying the same principles stated by these holy Doctors of the Church, has to say.

St. Benedict's purpose is to educate monks, adults or children, who appear at the monastery gates. How does he go about it? He repeats to them the words from the Gospel: "He who humbles himself shall be exalted and he who exalts himself shall be humbled." (Luke, 14:11), and he precedes this citation with these words: "The Sacred Scripture, my brothers, makes us hear this cry:". St. Benedict desires, by this means, to attract us entirely to this decisive point for all education. It is necessary to become small if we want God to take care of us and make us great by taking part in His divine nature. This is the Benedictine teaching: the apprenticeship of holiness.

St. Benedict mentions twelve stages by which to arrive at perfection through humility as well as charity, since, to be exalted, in Scripture, means nothing other than to be sanctified in this life and glorified in the next, and this is accomplished essentially by charity.

St. Benedict starts from the interior and ends with the monk's external posture.

St. Francis de Sales agrees completely with St. Benedict's method. This is what he says: "I could never approve a method which, to change mankind, started from the outside, with his manners, his habits, and his hair. It seems to me, on the contrary, that it is necessary to start from the inside, because, one who has Jesus Christ in his heart, soon has Him in all his external actions."

Thus, we are sufficiently informed about humility and about the educational methods of St. Benedict in order to start our study of the twelve stages proposed by the patriarch of western monks.

A last word, this time from St. Bernard, to place us even more so on the right path. The holy abbot of Clairveaux defines humility as the virtue which makes us disregard ourselves as the consequence of a very true knowledge of ourselves. St. Teresa of Avila says that *humility is the truth*.

Therefore, let us begin our study. Here is the summary of the chapter on humility written by Father Emmanuel of Mesnil de St. Loup:

1. Always have before your eyes the fear of God and, consequently, keep from all sin and especially guard yourself against self-will;
2. Renounce your own desires, as a result of the renunciation of self-will;
3. Submit yourself with complete obedience to your superior, for love of God;
4. Accept peacefully difficult orders, even bad treatment and insults;

5. Tell your superior your thoughts, even the bad ones, which enter your spirit;
6. Content yourself with that which is most vile and abject;
7. Consider yourself, from the bottom of your heart, the last person of all;
8. Follow with simplicity the common rule, avoiding all singularity;
9. Keep silent until interrogated;
10. Don't laugh too much;
11. Speak calmly and seriously, with few and reasonable words;
12. Carry humility within your heart and also on the entire exterior, lowering your eyes like a criminal who considers himself as if he were about to be called to the terrible judgment of God.

That's the summary given by Fr. Emmanuel. Every summary takes a little bit away from the author's thought, but a summary has the advantage of putting before our eyes an overall sight of the subject. We see here that St. Benedict starts from the inside and ends with the external posture. He starts with God's presence and ends with the same presence. Initially, the effect of this presence in the interior of the soul is fear. Fear can be either servile or filial. Both cause man to submit to God, but only the second one enters with him into Heaven. At the end this holy Patriarch adds that also the body should be full of this same fear, which is reverence towards God.

The picture would not be complete if St. Benedict had forgotten to mention explicitly charity, which follows, step by step, all the stages to humility or, at least, unites one to the monk at a given moment of this climb. It is humility which animates the monk, and every Christian, in the ascent to the all-good God. Listen to St. Benedict speak of this charity, when the monk reaches the last of the twelve stages of humility:

"The monk, having reached all these degrees of humility, will soon reach this godly charity, which being the most perfect, casts away the fear and causes all that which he used to observe before with a sentiment of terror, to now start to be fulfilled without any difficulty, as though naturally and through an acquired habit; no longer for fear of Hell, but out of love of Christ, out of a good custom and the attraction proper to the virtues which the Lord deigns to make grow in His servant purified of his vices and sins."

Liberalism does not know fear, but it also doesn't know charity. Liberalism eliminates fear, but it also eliminates charity. Liberalism attracts, since it also seems to have arrived at the top of the stairs, when the truth is that it hasn't even placed its feet at the first step. Catholicism, on the contrary, knows how to wear the unpleasant face of true goodness, according to the expression of an illustrious writer. Unpleasant towards sin, but with a smile towards virtue, only Catholicism knows how to unite severity and goodness, humility and magnanimity, to reach this charity which eliminates servile fear, in order to leave room only for this reverent fear, full of holy intimacy between the soul and its Creator and Savior.

In the next bulletin, if God gives us the grace, we will return to each stage, either one at a time, or a few, to understand in depth St. Benedict's thoughts, he who formed thousands of Saints, monks and lay people, and molded Catholic Europe, a light for the whole world.

To give a foretaste of that which illustrious commentators write about each step of humility, let us listen to Dom Etienne Salasc, a Cistercian monk, comment on the eleventh step:

"It behooves the monk, who entered ostensibly Christ's militia, to imitate Jesus Christ by his language filled with meekness and with an absence of unsuitable laughter, always humble and serious, sober, reasonable, never noisy, unceasingly seasoned with the salt of wisdom. With these perfect and attractive forms of correction placed before

him, the desire to imitate imposes itself upon him with a charm in proportion to as much as he recognizes these good effects of humility as the characteristics of a perfect courtesy and a complete education. It happens thus with humility as with true piety: it is useful for all things, bringing with itself promises inseparable from the present life and for the future life. A true Christian is inferior in nothing to a gentleman.”

And on the tenth stage, which might give the appearance of excluding any type of happiness in the cloister, here is the wise comment by the same author:

“Laughter is a necessity of nature which depends much on the diversity of temperaments more or less sensitive to the causes which stimulate it. It would be absurd to want to ban it radically. This is not the condition imposed for humility, and this was not our Father St. Benedict’s way of thinking. More than that: laughter is sometimes a necessary means to release tension.”

Truly, St. Benedict’s aim with the tenth stage of humility is that the monk (and this goes for all Christians) may know how to exclude all vulgarities incompatible with the “inexpressible seriousness of the Christian life,” as Bossuet says.

We recommend to all who wish to study in depth these lessons on humility, the excellent book by Rev. Fr. G. A. Simon “Commentary on the Rule of St. Benedict for Oblates and Friends of the Monasteries,” published in French in the 1930’s and re-published in 1982 by Fontenelle Publications. Unfortunately this book was never translated into English to my knowledge.

Fr. Simon comments eruditely and with great sense on the entire Rule. He makes one better understand it in order to better live it. May all find in this Rule, which is, according to Bossuet, “a condensation of Christianity, a wise and mysterious summary of the doctrine of the Gospel”, may all find a precious help to restore all things in Christ, as was St. Pius X’s desire.

Br. Thomas Aquinas OSB