

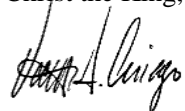
In the many distractions of life, may we, in the days of preparation for and celebration of Our Lord's Birth, make greater effort to apply the meaning of Christ's Nativity to our lives, attending more simply and with greater diligence to the hierarchy of our responsibilities. Everyday is a celebration of Christ's Birth as we are able to receive greater grace by faithfully accomplishing our duties, prudently taking on worthy acts of charity and simply loving God in the ordering of all to His glory. In this humble duty we may hope in the good fruits of conformity to Christ. May God grant us many holy children, who become tomorrow's well-ordered and faithfully zealous Christian adults, to continue manifesting the simplicity of Christ's life, in things modest and great!

But I chastise my body, and bring it into subjection: lest perhaps, when I have preached to others, I myself should become a castaway (I Corinthians 9:27).

As the great feast of Our Lord's Birth rightly inspires us with a greater desire to charity, I wish to thank all of you, dear friends and benefactors, for your generous support. First, for your prayers, sacrifices and good works, without which we would be the poorer in spiritual treasures, which certainly have served to fortify the Mystical Body of Christ and us at Holy Cross. This is the greatest charity to neighbour. Secondly, your material support in this difficult year has maintained the Seminary's operation of training priests and religious – we are completely dependent upon the faithful for our material needs as we have no other source of income to pay our operating expenses or to make necessary repairs and improvements on the buildings and grounds of Holy Cross Seminary.

Thank you for your kind prayers and material charity that both give glory to God and help us to accomplish our duty of training priests and religious. You and your intentions are remembered in our prayers at Holy Cross Seminary. Join us in praying for many holy vocations. May God bless you and the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God, watch over you and bring you to the eternal happiness of knowing and loving God in heaven!

In Christ the King,



Rev. Fr. Vicente A. Griego
Rector, Holy Cross Seminary

NOTICES

Ignatian Retreats – Presently, *both* the Men's and the Ladies' Retreats are fully booked. Names are being placed on a waiting list if there are cancelations. You may contact Fr. Christoph Pfluger for more information at retreats@holycrossseminary.com or at the address and telephone numbers listed above.

- Men's Ignatian Retreat – 2nd (2:00pm) to 7th (11:30am) January 2012
- Ladies' Ignatian Retreat – 23rd (2:00pm) to 28th (11:30am) January 2012



After the Ceremonies on December Eighth



Southern Sentinel

Regnavit a Ligno Deus

HOLY CROSS SEMINARY

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No. 94

Dear Friends and Benefactors,

Prepare for Christ... How easy it is to get caught up with the world's idea of preparing for Christmas – even giving it a *Traditional Catholic spin*, “keeping Christ in Christmas”, and affirming that it is the celebration of Christ's Birth. But do we bear in mind the consequences of this mysterious Birth and the responsibility we, as Catholics, have in light of the grace-filled privilege of possessing the truth? First consider *why* Christ came into this world.

To Give Glory to God

This, Christ would accomplish by living as a man in a world essentially conquered by sin and rebelling against His desire to “take back” the world and souls, which rightly belong to God! Our Lord carried out His mission in a simple and ordinary manner – not in a sensational fashion (although truly magnificent). Christ essentially exemplified what each and every other man on earth is expected and able to accomplish: to do all for God. Do we have this super-natural objective?

Christ, True God and True Man, far surpasses the supernatural life of grace in the most saintly of men, who remain weak and dependent sinners in this life. Yet, it is precisely the grace merited by Our Lord that allows men to live and to act in a manner that surpasses natural ability. Our privileged and mysterious union with Christ enables us weak men to worthily praise God, to presently live His supernatural life and to share it forever in heaven. We must rejoice in the coming of Our Saviour, whereby we *can* and *do* give glory to God as He deserves.

We give glory to God by turning away from sin and labouring to live a *virtuous* life, *restoring all things to Christ*. This dictum of Saint Paul often



Fr. Paul Robinson & Fr. Christopher Curtis make their Perpetual Engagements in the Society



Anthony McNamara receives the Cassock

thunders in Traditional churches and chapels; but has the statement become a mere cliché? Do we preachers and promoters of “restoration” bear fruits of restoration? Unfortunately, many fail to celebrate Christmas as believers of Christ – and this among Catholics (even traditional Catholics – clerical and lay!) by vociferously holding to the theory of Christianity, but not integrally practicing this ideal professed to be believed.

The failure to *live* the personal (and subsequently social) restoring of Christ in all things, may be because we think the ideal is so lofty that, consequently, the daily occurrences of life are insignificant in this crusade. If this were true, why would God send His Son with the most important mission of all time and then spend most of His life on earth doing... “nothing”? At least, what seems *nothing* in the eyes of many. On the contrary, Our Lord did *everything*, albeit in a mysteriously hidden manner.

In the poverty and simplicity of the manger and throughout the whole of Our Lord’s life, He presents to us the grandest ideal and practice of the Christian life – that all men simply live with and for God, even the “smallest and most insignificant aspects of life”. This example is seen beautifully in the child’s confidence in his parents’ care and interest in his life; similarly, we perceive what should be the disposition of believers towards God who also is pleased by the childlike simplicity of confidence and generosity. We must be true children of God in all things, even in the seemingly insignificant of actions of live made fervently devout in His presence.

Although very necessary, there is often too much talk about the “big issues” of life, such as restoring the Church to Tradition or civil society to the rule of Christ, or the sanctification of families – at the expense of promoting what is fundamental and essential; namely, the practice of the individual’s union with God! It seems we take this for granted, but the abundance of poor fruit (among our youth, for instance) blatantly manifests something is gravely wrong.

It is easy to blame the world for ruining our children, but the world has always been alluring and caused the ruin of men – and frankly, we today do not have the right to blame the world for our failure. We are responsible for our own lives, temporal and eternal, and Christ has *done everything*. We need only comply, and the world cannot overcome us or our children.

Look to the hidden scene of the Nativity of the Incarnate God in the poor and hidden simplicity of Bethlehem’s outskirts. This peace must first reign in the hearts of men and be applied in their daily ordinary lives, and then believers will be able to truly, supernaturally, and effectively plunge into the worthy and necessary “great issues” consequent upon their social duties and mission to conquer the world for the love of Christ – and not merely in guise of an activist or for natural political theories or fancies, which have little or no value before God.

All things in Christian Order

How easy it is to concern ourselves with others at the expense of ourselves, or even those who more proximately depend upon us in our duty of state. Imagine a man who devotes every weekend to the Church, sacrificing his evenings after work to help with so many organisations and good interests, in fact “doing good”. Yet, he may be failing to attend to his home, his wife and his children. His home is in disorder because he is “organising” others’ lives. He fails in his duty and consequently, his “generosity” is of no merit. How much more for the man who fritters away his time with leisure, indifference or vice? The first obligation we have in ordering all things to Christ is the ordering of our own lives, our own families and our own homes.

What disorder prevails in modern families chasing after so many “worthy” endeavours here and there at the cost of giving their children, in their early education, one of the most important lessons and habits: order! It cannot be stressed too much, as Saint Ignatius clearly explains in his *Spiritual Exercises*, that the time-table for the day must be planned: when to rise, when to

sleep, when to eat, when to pray, when to play, when to work, and when to accomplish the various duties incumbent upon parents and family in the course of the day. Irregularity is detrimental to the sound spiritual life and conducive to activism – simply “doing things” – even in the name of religion or the common good.

Can we imagine that the home of the Holy Family was one in which the Blessed Virgin was regularly rushing off to help here and there, leaving her home in disorder or her husband and Son to care for themselves? Can we imagine Saint Joseph putting off a client’s order because he was involved with activities for various social works? On the contrary, although many extra-familial and after-work activities are praiseworthy, and quite possibly even necessary, for the common good, we may be quite certain that Our Lady attended *first* to her duty of state – her Divine Son and her home and family – and that Saint Joseph *did not* abandon his familial or professional duties for worthwhile but voluntary projects.

This being said, we may be absolutely certain that, when charity demanded an interruption of the ordered routine, it was lovingly and compassionately obliged; but this presupposed a habit of order. The fast pace of a noisy world certainly may impose itself upon us, but we need not respond to every “call” – at least not until we have accomplished justice. Even the brute animals give instinct to this truth; they are still quite predictable *even* in our modern world. Man, on the other hand, is also predictable... he allows himself to follow caprice and leisurely distractions, as is the tendency of his fallen human nature, before ordering all things to God, which must permeate even the ordinary events of life.

St. Pius X gives three principles which govern Catholic Action: first *piety*, then *study*, finally *action* (Allocution, 25 September 1904). St. Pius X explains that we must first live what we will promote in others:

...For it is not priests alone, but all the faithful without exception, who must concern themselves with the interests of God and souls – not, of course, according to their own views, but always under... [direction and order]. ...Our predecessors have long since approved and blessed those Catholics who have banded together in societies of various kinds, but always religious in their aim. We, too, have no hesitation in awarding Our praise to this great idea, and We earnestly desire to see it propagated and flourish in town and country. But We wish that all such associations aim first and chiefly at the constant maintenance of Christian life, among those who belong to them. For truly it is of little avail to discuss questions with nice subtlety, or to discourse eloquently of rights and duties, when all this is unconnected with practice (E Supremi Apostolatus § 14, 4 October 1903).



Four Seminarians make a one year Engagements in the Society

A man cannot effectively engage in the Christian apostolate, without first engaging himself in the duty of his own sanctification. *Restoring all things in Christ* in our parish or community, than it is in being home for a family meal, cultivating an ordered environment that reflects the serenity and discipline of the Holy Family, exemplifying peace and order before our children and neighbours.

Why was Christ born in a manger? It was not necessarily that the townfolk of Bethlehem were cruel, selfish and uncharitable. It may well be that these simple folk *forgot* about the good order of charity in the excitement of the great and wealthy crowds that flocked to this provincial village in fulfilment of the Emperor’s command for the census. For a moment, disorder dominated, and an expecting mother was overlooked, a child’s birth was not considered, the agony of a poor man to provide for his family was little regarded. We too may be overly occupied with secondary matters and not properly attendant to our primary duties. Charity starts at home. This may be why Christ was not welcomed in Bethlehem, because people were too busy *doing* secondary things.

Humble and Generous