

A LARGE BOOK



BY A CATHOLIC FOR CATHOLICS

by

FATHER WILLIAM DINGA JR

March 4, 2007

Feast of St. Casmir

I have decided to write a large book – large both in the matter at hand, and large in the way in which it is presented! So much of the high-technology world in which we live is making the print smaller and smaller to read – I wanted to avoid such a thing because I am dealing with such a large topic! The topic is God, and the world, and us! I told you it was going to be a big topic.

I see so many people in the world today unable to find or even if they find it – keep – their balance. With an amazing amount of different activities going on at the same time demanding all of our multi-tasking abilities – something seems to be getting more and more “out of whack!” And what that is seems to be a sense of who we are, where we came from and where we are going as human beings.

I hope that perhaps this large, yet abridged and concise description – from my perspective as a clergyman – may be of help to someone! It is written by me a Catholic priest, about human life as I know it as a Catholic priest, and it is written mostly for Catholic laymen – or for anyone who wants to know what a Catholic priest has to think about life, and

what he is telling Catholic laymen in particular and the world at large – if they are interested.

The outline of my large book will be “the way things got here” “how they seem to be now” “where it is all headed” even if people disagree or don’t want to believe what I am saying.

I want this to be a “discussion starter” book! I want this to be a book that will get people to think, and to act more in keeping with our purpose for being here in the first place! I want this book to be something that you will treasure and want to pass along to others.

I ask God to bless my efforts in spelling out in large letters what I get from him to tell you! I promise to keep myself out of it as much as I possibly can – and be the priest that God made me!

And now...

to the most incredibly and truly awesome story in all of recorded history:

CHAPTER 1 – GOD WAS NOT LONELY AT ALL

When you are a community of three persons within yourself you cannot possibly be lonely – especially when the three of you are one God and have absolutely everything you could ever want in your uncreated, perfect and unimaginably glorious habitat.

You are God – you are Love – and love is a self-giving active process that just never stops! You not only are not lonely, but you don't need anything that anyone else could ever give you.

But – since you are love – it is only natural for you to want to share your amazing love with other persons just for the heck of it – just because you want others to experience what you are experiencing (as much as they possibly can – not being you yourself).

And so – you thought: I am going to make persons to share my life and love with – but first - I need to make them a place to live – an environment – a home. And so you created the entire universe – including the part called: the Milky Way Galaxy – and our sun, and our planets and our earth! And you made everything in our world for the people that you

would create. All of the animals and birds and fish and plants and trees you made for us! You made the world very beautiful and then *you made us as persons*. You made us as persons so you could share your love with us! In your image and likeness as a person living a glorious life – you made human beings: male and female you made human beings: so that they could experience your powers of loving and help you in the creation of other persons!

It doesn't really matter exactly how you made the universe, the world or us – but the fact is that – at one time there was nothing – then you acted – and now there is something: most importantly *there is us!*

And so, God did not make the world or people because he was lonely or bored. He made them – he made us – because he imagined each of us personally before he made us – and then he made us – like himself as a being capable of reasoning, loving and helping others!

At first we had exceptional powers – we had a big dose of the “glory” of God right within us. Life was easy – very easy! But then something went terribly wrong!

CHAPTER 2 – FROSTED-GRACE-SON-GLASSES

In order to understand what is coming up next in this story it is suggested that one put on a pair of “frosted-with-grace-Son-glasses.” These are special invisible glasses that one puts on over the field of vision of the mind and heart! The glasses are actually the gift of faith that is necessary for any of what is coming to make sense at all. Without the Son-glasses what one sees is a dyslexic jumbled mess. But with the glasses everything is proportionate, sequential, truthful, beautiful and meaningful. Notice I said above wearing these glasses is “suggested.” It’s your choice – either refuse to wear them and see a distorted “reality” or wear the glasses and see the “real reality.”

Hoping that some of you have chosen to put on the glasses I can continue...

First, I would like to explain a little bit about the glasses themselves. The glasses are FAITH. Faith is the gift that God gives so that we can deal with him intelligently and effectively on his own level. It’s like wearing a wet suit in order to relate to life under water. The frosted with grace Son glasses (whose

power comes from the action of the Son and the Spirit) help us to relate to God the Father on his level which is above our own natural level.

We would have no idea at all about God – if he did not choose to tell us about himself (revelation). And we would not be able to comprehend anything that he did communicate or say to us with faith!

And so the entire story that I am about to tell you (which you should already know a great deal about already) is intelligible and believable only to those who wear the Son-glasses-frosted-with-faith!

I hope some have changed their minds now and have a desire to wear these glasses – that's all it takes is a desire to cooperate with God who freely gives the gift of faith to those who seek it!

On with the story:

CHAPTER 3 – HISSSTORY BEGINS

As I already indicated above God did not need us but he made us because somehow he could not imagine his eternity without us! How special this makes each and every person who ever was, is or will be!

He made us for two purposes: to share his love; and to receive glory and praise from us (not because he needed it, but because it is only fitting and right for us who would not even exist without his action first!)

We were designed, configured, wired, assembled, made, built and produced with all of this in mind!

There is nothing at all about us that is not directed to loving God back (and loving others simultaneously to loving God); and to offer God constant and never-ending glory and praise.

He made our bodies! He made our minds! He made our souls!

Our bodies he made to house our souls, our spirits; and our minds! Our spirits he made to rule our minds and our bodies!

Together they make up who we are as a person: a person who is either male or female – according to the plan he had for each of us *in living the self-giving communion of persons*. It is in this way that we are made in his image: male and female are configured to complement one another and to live in a self-giving communion which is productive and supportive either the spiritual good of the other or of the creation of a new and wonderful human life.

It is faith that tells us that God created man: mankind. Male and female was mankind. But the appropriate summarizing term is “man.” This is important in the “imagery” that is essential in telling the story in its entirety. It has nothing to do with “equal rights” between men and women. This is a theological distinction that is understood only with the Son-glasses of faith!

So, what happened is that one day in Paradise a snake showed up and hissssstory was born – and this is not a good thing.

Man (male/female), being tempted by the very real Evil spirit who dressed up as a talking snake: sinned *doubly by not trusting God and his word to them that*

he would take care of them and all their needs; and they sinned *by disobedience* by doing what God told them specifically not to do! At that moment **EVERYTHING CHANGED** – forever!

At that moment man (male/female) rejected the Fatherhood of God; they rejected his love; they rejected his protection; they rejected his power to help them. They told God in effect that they could do it themselves from now on...and God agreed. God withdrew his extraordinary gifts, and left them with broken remnants of a life they once knew.

Everything was different. There was now pain, there was now suffering, there was now death, there was now uncontrollable urges and desires. And it looked like this would go on without end.

This is the birth of what the Church calls the “historical” period of mankind. The history of being human begins at this tragic moment. A new chapter or a new story had begun – and it wasn’t a pretty picture.

The Son-glasses were truly all fogged up!

Chapter 4 – NOT LL-BEAN but LLL – Lust, Lust and More Lust

The monster that was unleashed on that fateful day in the “Garden” – was LUST. LOVE was transmorphed into LUST. Not only one kind of lust, but three. (Another term for lust is “concupiscence”)

There was now a diabolical lust for *pleasure, wealth and power* – that infiltrated everything. There were no “frosted-with-grace Son glasses” to help but only a “filthy-film-of-inordinate-sights-and-sounds.”

A most unfortunate aspect of the “filthy-film” aspect is that when one is behind this film everything looks deceptively pleasurable, rich and powerful. It looks attractive and desirable and even good. For no one deliberately chooses what appears to them to be bad or unattractive or undesirable.

All sense of “objective reality” had been lost. The center of life shifted from God, to mankind – who had no idea what to do next – except to follow their lustful desires and let them produce whatever they would.

These lustful desires would only produce eternal death! There was no other option – because among God’s irrevocable gifts to man was reason and free will. Mankind never lost the ability to reason – although its powers were greatly weakened – and his free-will was still intact, though not nearly as dependable and steadfast as it once was.

Even if mankind reasoned and chose to move away from the lusts – there was no way that they could repair the damage done to God. There was the ceiling of the “natural order” that they could not surpass. God and his mercy were out of range!

But unbeknownst to mankind – at the moment that his most precious form of creation betrayed him, mistrusted him and sinned against him – thus condemning themselves to a horrible future – God (who at that time was known simply as “Lord”) immediately began to plan a way to rescue his wayward children from their own arrogant stupidity.

He would send a redeemer – a qualified redeemer – the only human being in the whole newly formed history of mankind that could do the job. And so he

asked the “Second Person” of his essence of Trinity if he would take on a second nature – a human nature – be born as one of the sinful creations – in order to redeem them by paying the ultimate price of obedience – human death!

The “Second Person” – the Son – without any hesitation at all wholeheartedly agreed to do this.

He would come and as a full-fledged human being (although full-fledged God at the same time) he would make the *unconditional act of trust and obedience* which would set everything straight once again.

His act, and only his could break through the natural ceiling that prevented mankind from reaching God – and raise mankind once again to an amazing relationship with God.

And so taking thousands of years to prepare a “family” for the Son of Man to be born into – it was finally the fullness of time – and of the Jewish people – the people God had chosen to be his special people – of a humble maiden of Nazareth – the Messiah – the Savior of the world was born.

The only time in all of recorded history thus far when heaven and earth stood still in utter silence was most likely the moment when God's messenger – the angel Gabriel asked Mary, on behalf of God, if she would consent to be the mother of his Son!

And Mary responded! *Behold the handmaid of the Lord! Let it be done to me according to your word!*

And Jesus, the Savior of all mankind, began to exist in her womb, because of the overshadowing of the Holy Spirit.

The long story of how God specifically formed this people, formed this family for Jesus would take too long to tell here – but suffice it to say that the entire story – which is the Old Testament – which is the Hebrew Scriptures – demonstrates very clearly the depraved state of a people stumbling about in the darkness of their lusts! There were many success stories, and many heart-breaking stories of loss, pain, suffering but always hope – somehow, always hope that someone would come and make it possible for everything to be better – for everything, maybe, to go back to the way it was – before that fateful “day in Paradise” when the lights went out!

CHAPTER 5 – HE WAS A REAL KNOW-IT-ALL

If we really stop to think about who Jesus really is, it is quite astounding. The one who volunteered to take on a human nature was the Second Person of God who was the Word of God. God's real WORD. This might be a bit hard to comprehend, but the WORD is the spoken product of God the Father's being. This Word is what was activated when the whole world was made. "God spoke...and it was made." This means that Jesus was there when everything was made. Jesus knows how everything works. Jesus knows God, Jesus knows us. Jesus knows how to fix the problem that caused the great rift between God and us.

Therefore, it just makes sense that we should be doing everything in our power to get to know all that there is to know about this Word, this God-Man, this Jesus of Nazareth!

Jesus, for his part had three things to do when he came among us: to tell us all about his Father; to bring about our salvation by dying for us (and then by rising from the dead); to invite us all to come to

the heavenly banquet feast that is being prepared just for us – through the door of his Church.

Before Jesus came – all we knew about God was that he was “Lord!” He was One, he was Powerful, he was Beneficent, he was Personable, he was Compassionate, he was Merciful, he was Patient, and he was very interested in reconciling us with himself.

But now that Jesus came: who is God’s Word; when we look and Jesus and listen to his words; taking in what he did and what he said: there is nothing more to be said about God, us, or salvation! Somewhere in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus, his ascension and sending of the Spirit – everything we need to know about God and how to live life in this world is there for us to see and to motivate us to right action.

This is revelation – Jesus is the fullness of God’s revelation! There is nothing more to be said!

In the sending of the Spirit on Pentecost, God the Father and Son did something very wonderful and practical: they provided a way for us to stay intimately in touch with them, so that we would not

be without their constant friendship, guidance and assistance along every step of the way all the days of our lives. This practical means that they provided is the reality of the Church founded by Christ on the confession of faith of St. Peter, the Apostle. This is the Catholic Church. *Herein resides the fullness of the means available to humankind to attain all that is promised to those who believe and live the life of a Christian following in Christ's own footsteps.*

The Spirit is the Third Person of God who is Gift and giver of all gifts to make the Church work! Without the Spirit there would be no life at all – let alone life in the Church.

The Spirit is the teacher of the Truth – and *Jesus is the Truth*. The Spirit is the teacher of the Way to a blessed eternity for us all – *Jesus is the Way*. The Spirit is the teacher of the Life that we are all meant to live in fullness for ever – *Jesus is the Life*.

Just as Jesus knows it all, and says it all; so too the Spirit's only task is to remind us of all these things – and make them clear and understandable! And he does this in a remarkable and unmistakable way!

The Church, thus born on the day of Pentecost, can only delve deeper and deeper into the revelation she has already received from Christ and his Father, and reinforced and explained by the Spirit. Nothing concerning dogma – objective truths obtained from God by revelation as to what everything is all about – can be altered in any way. The Church has no authority to do such a thing.

CHAPTER 6 - WHEN ALL ELSE FAILS READ THE DIRECTIONS

God knew how complex human life had become after the “fall” and he was so eager to provide detailed instructions as to how to get the most out of life – the most that he had in mind for us to have – not the most that we might conclude is the answer.

And so he provided an instruction manual. Not only that, *he provided a living-walking-talking instruction manual: Jesus, his Word, his words, the vital information that we need to live a successful life.*

Now, in our fallen human condition not many of us feel the need to be taught anything – or to read instructions about things that we are somewhat interested in. We buy automobiles and computers and cell phones – but we are not terribly interested in reading the owner’s manuals to find out how they *really* work. Then, when things don’t operate properly we get frustrated with the product instead of with ourselves who simply were not willing to receive help.

This, in essence, is another way of defining the fallen condition of mankind. Mankind being unwilling

to receive anything at all; mankind being willing to believe that everything depended upon himself; mankind mistakenly believing that he himself could fix everything in life and “save himself” from his fallen condition.

This could not be further from the truth. Paradise was mankind being willing to receive *everything* from God (the Father), it was *depending* upon God for everything, it was *believing* that God could fix whatever needed fixing, whenever it needed fixing.

Only a return to this believing and reasoning could save mankind. But, being saturated with the “filthy-filter” of false values unleashed by the Devil, mankind can barely begin to see the real reality behind the muck!

An “owner’s manual” was needed and God provided one: in the stories of God’s intervention into human history to save us that were first passed on by word of mouth, but then written down (as Scripture), then by an infallible authority regarding the teaching of the Truths of God that was set in place to ensure the purity and integrity of the content and transmission

of the stories/scriptures. This is the root of the validity of the Church of Jesus, the Catholic Church.

We should not forget that one day – when we stand before the judgment seat of God – and everyone will do this – *we will be asked whether we walked in the footsteps of Jesus*. We will be asked if we followed him who is the Way, the Truth and the Life. We will be seeking Life: eternal life, with God – but if we have not followed in the footsteps of Christ – which includes carrying a cross – then we shall not have life everlasting – we shall have eternal death and punishment.

This idea is not something invented or contrived – it is a promise that was made by God the Father: follow my Son and you will have life! And God always keeps his promises.

And so, we cannot tamper with revelation – God speaking Truth as such – but we can always delve deeper into our understanding of it and we can apply it afresh to the circumstances and situations of our day – if we do not mix theological language with secular. It can be dangerous to use similar terms that might mean something entirely different in the

other context. So long as we keep the contexts straight we should have no problems in this regard.

Also, there is a lot about the expression of faith that is not doctrinal, but practical and custom-bound. We will see later how, while Jesus instituted all seven sacraments: the fleshing out of their particular external celebrations has changed and evolved throughout a long, rich and colorful history. And there is no reason to think that such evolution cannot and will not continue – so long as the essential and eternal core of each sacrament remains the same – unchanged and unchangeable – from the will and intention of Christ.

CHAPTER 7 – IT IS NOT NECESSARY TO REINVENT THE WHEEL

If we consider the fact that at one time there was nothing – except God – and then God created everything – out of love – then some very interesting conclusions can be drawn. Even though something went really wrong at the beginning – with mankind – something even more wonderful was going to happen to repair the damage: God himself was to become one of his own creatures. Talk about power, talk about humility – talk about love! God is so almighty and powerful that he could contain himself in a tiny baby boy born in a cave! Yes, Jesus is the second and last caveman! Everything begins again with him.

The intricate and marvelous plan that God planned and executed is all that is necessary to restore mankind to an even greater experience of blessed union with him.

The most profound reaction on our part is to cooperate with the plan and to let it be effective for us! That's all there is to it! We do not have to reinvent salvation! It has already taken place! The

Savior has come and did what was necessary – and he remains in a mystical way in a Body that is made up of living members – the Church. Therefore, *no one has the authority or really the need to reinvent anything that has to do with salvation!* We need simply to believe in what is already revealed and offered to us.

There is an extremely dangerous philosophy in place today that is steeped in the effects of original sin – the “filthy film of false values” – and it states that mankind – on its own – with its own resources – can save itself and make itself supreme in its technological advances. This *is secular messianism* – **this is the face of anti-Christ at its most dreadful expression.**

There is no salvation outside of Jesus Christ, period. As was stated earlier – only this God-Man could transcend the boundaries of natural human life, meet God on his own level and fix the problem that occurred at the beginning. Mankind, on its own can never “build a tower” that will reach God.

And so, anything at all that smacks of secular messianism is directly opposed not only to the

teachings of the Church – but to the very person of God the Father who is still grievously offended by such misguided human activity. It is simply restating the problem of Original Sin all over again – and throwing it all right back up in the Father's face again!

Quite unfortunately a huge majority of persons in the world today either don't care one way or the other – or they participate in the spiritual decay of the world at large by apathy, ignorance and misguided use of free-will and reason.

One thing is certain: either we are consciously contributing to going along with the Father's generous plan of salvation; or we are heading to our own eternal doom and destruction. *There is no such thing as standing still or being neutral.* This is part of what it means to be human: free will, combined with reason is meant to be exercised on a regular basis choosing and deciding either what is of God, or what is not of God. *The chooser and the decider is directly responsible for his / her choice / decision all day and all night long.*

PLEASE NOTE: the spirit of Evil that is still roaming the world seeking the ruin of souls (and will until the Last Day) has as its aim and goal to convince people that they are the center of the universe, and that anything at all that we fathom, contrive or invent is true reality. A good test is if you can call God, Father! Our first parents grabbed hold of the center of attention – and many of us still have not let go. God the Father lost his rightful position. If you can truly call God your Father, believing that he can truly provide all your needs if you trust in him and love other people and you would love him: then you are on the right track. To the extent you cannot, you are not on the right track.

HELP! WE NEED HELP to get on the right track: to stay on the right track: AND GOD OUR FATHER HAS PROVIDED FOR THIS...read on...

CHAPTER 8 – ETERNAL LOVE, ETERNAL MERCY, ETERNAL POWER

To ensure that we have everything we need for our own particular journey through life on our way back to him – God the Father – through Jesus – in the Holy Spirit – gave us some very useful tools! They are the *Profession of Faith* (the Creed); the *Celebration of the Christian Mystery* (the Sacraments); *Life in Christ* (the Beatitudes); *Christian Prayer* (the Lord’s Prayer).

Recall that not one of these things makes any sense at all without the “frosted-with-grace-Son-glasses” of faith – which takes us beyond the natural realm so that we can understand things as they really are: as gifts from God’s love!

What each of us needs is to know that the love of God – from which we came, and to which we are going – is eternal; we need to know that mercy is available to us, over and over again when we need it; we need to know that there is an inexhaustible source of power for doing good that will never abandon us, if we never abandon it! These God

freely, loving, willingly and immediately gives to those who ask!

Volumes have been written about the topics mentioned above but I will give here a thumbnail sketch of each – just to let you know what is there for you to use, if you choose, to respond to God’s invitation to use them!

The Profession of Faith. This is the *Creed* that we as Catholics proclaim every Sunday at Mass. It took several centuries during the early years of growth in the Church to formulate its content. Based on oral tradition, scripture and the authority to teach given to the successors of the Apostles, the Creed is a summary of the marvelous works of God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. A copy of it can be found in the appendix to this book!

Each and every word in this profession has been studied, prayed about, discussed and subjected to the promptings of the Holy Spirit for final approval. What he have before us is worthy of our utmost, absolute and complete trust, faith and confidence. The Creed is a succinct and wonderful description of who God is – and what he did, and does for us!

The Sacraments: are channels of grace. They are ways for the mystery of Christ's life, death and resurrection to be introduced into our lives specifically, individually, personally; as well as corporately and as a special body of people God has chosen as his own! There are seven sacraments that have all been instituted by Christ either explicitly or implicitly – but all confirmed and approved by the working of the Holy Spirit of Truth! Councils of the Church have defined them with the authority given them by Christ himself.

All of the sacraments are about life in the Body of Christ. They all equip us to live Christian lives, individually and as a member of this mystical Body of Jesus! *Baptism and Confirmation* brings us into the Body, into the group, it forgives all sin, and makes us really, truly and authentically “children of God the Father, and brothers and sisters of his only-begotten Son, Jesus.” *Eucharist* is the key and central sacrament for it makes present the very reality of Jesus in his word, and under the species of bread and wine to be our food, our strength, our guide, our mercy, our forgiveness. In this way Jesus has chosen to be with us “until the end of time.” The

reception of Eucharist completes the three Sacraments of Initiation. The sacrament of *Penance* directly applies what is celebrated in the Eucharist – the forgiveness of sins – for those who sin after Baptism. The sacrament of Penance returns the participant to his pristine baptismal state. It is an amazing sacrament of healing and peace. The sacrament of *Anointing of the Sick* also forgives sin and brings strength and oftentimes healing of various kinds to a seriously ill person, or one who is near death. It prepares the recipient for a quick and safe passage into the arms of the Eternal Father at the moment of death!

The sacrament of *Holy Orders* preserves in an unbroken line the authority and the power to celebrate the rest of the sacraments (especially Eucharist and Penance) for the good of building up the Kingdom of God. No one can take it upon himself to minister in the Church of God unless they are “sent” in an official and God-given capacity. Just as Jesus did nothing on his own, only what he saw his Father doing; so too the ministers of the Church, beginning with the Bishops and Priests do only what they have been invited by Christ and sent to do!

The sacrament of *Marriage* is an enormously important sign that is meant to direct the attention of the world to the Kingdom to come. Life in heaven will be a life of self-giving in an intercommunion with the whole Body of Christ. The intercommunion of man and wife perfectly anticipates this up and coming reality. The center of a Christian marriage is meant to be God – and not the other person. Both keeping their eyes focused on God will produce a married life that is far beyond what most married couples experience today. Journeying together in an unbreakable covenant back to God is the purpose of marriage. The only way that it can really work is if it is a total commitment that is for life! This is how God loves us: totally committed for life: this is the duty of marriage to speak this unending love to the world: and so to bring hope to all!

What makes the life of the Priest and the Married Couple, as well as the Baptized and Confirmed Catholic doable is the power of the Holy Spirit that permeates the participants. This makes the burdens easy and light!

The only thing that we need to do is to stay connected to the power! It takes work- a lot of it - to be a Christian – but the rewards are beyond anything you can imagine.

Recall: our first parents, whoever and whenever they lived – had it made! They had a truly awesome and wonderful life with God. Then everything changed and Plan B went into effect: the need for a reconciler, a redeemer, a savior. Now that the Redeem has come and stayed – we look forward to Plan C – life of beatitude with God. Just imagine the most pleasurable experience you ever had. No doubt you wanted it to last forever. There is every reason to believe that what is waiting for us is an experience that is 50 billion billion and then some times more pleasurable – that will not be the slightest bit overwhelming – but really amazingly real – and it will last forever and ever. *It will be the power of the Transfiguration of Jesus! It will be power of his Resurrection! It will be the power of Pentecost*

The only admission price is FAITH! It's belief that it is so! It's belief that Jesus made it so! It is belief that

his Father loves us beyond all telling! It just simply belief (and of course, the living like you believe).

Now God offers faith and the power to believe to everyone!

But not everyone accepts! This is kind of difficult to understand – but some people who are disciples of the evil spirit *prefer to remain duped*. But the very word coming from the mouth of the Word-made-flesh Jesus, is that they will “go off to a fiery place of torture and punishment prepared for the devil and his angels – and it will last forever.”

Here is the bottom line. The some or all of the contents of this book may be bogus, or it may be true – all of it! If it is not true and you don't believe it – then you won't lose anything all. But if it is true and you don't believe it – then you stand the chance of losing it all.

God the Father gives us our lifetime to make up our minds. And until the moment of death we can change our minds. But once we are dead, we are dead. And there is no more time for God's mercy; it is only time for judgment.

The time for mercy is now! As it is proclaimed in the Season of Lent: turn away from sin and be faithful to the Gospel!

Let us pray that the eternal mercy of God – distributed by the pierced heart of Jesus – may be appreciated by as many as possible – while there is still time!

Lord, have mercy!

Christ, have mercy!

Lord, have mercy!

CHAPTER 9 – SOMEWHERE OVER THE RAINBOW

Everyone is looking for a fullness of life – a happiness and a peace that will be real and lasting and which will include everyone we know and love.

This is what is waiting for us at the end of the rainbow of our earthly journey. Something inside us tells us that it will be a place of beautiful colors, amazing music, unparalleled vistas and a great crowd of blessed and happy people!

This does not have to wait until the end of the rainbow. In the Sermon on the Mount Jesus tells us that it can begin now. *The life of blessedness, the life of beatitude, can begin here and now for those who look at life not only with the eyes of faith, but with an eye for detail.* Jesus detailed what a satisfying life on earth should look like. He detailed what a life of happiness in spite of everything else that is going on around us could be like. He detailed what a life of following in his footsteps would look like: and it is, the life of the Beatitudes. The Beatitudes will be listed in the appendix at the end of this book. Suffice it to say now, that Jesus turns the

concept of happiness upside down. In fact Jesus took the entire Law and the Prophets of the Old Testament and turned them upside down in order to fulfill them. Jesus, as Word-made-flesh was the great editor, the great summarizer, the great administrator of real Truth.

Just as his entire life was a contradiction; so too would be the life of his followers. The exalted would be humbled, but the humble would be exalted. The rich would be made poor, and the poor rich. The powerful would be made lowly, and the lowly would become powerful. The persecuted for justice sake would be made victorious when it really counts. The Kingdom of Heaven belongs to such as these Jesus tells the world on that mountain.

Most of the world is humble, poor, lowly, persecuted – that's just the way things are – they were then and they are now. *But by becoming humble, poor, lowly and persecuted to death as he was – Jesus transformed this entire experience into something to be grasped for, rather than rejected.*

The eternal power of the Spirit is given to such as these so that they can truly be happy, blessed and

even joyful in their lowly conditions. These are the highly favored of God. And the more the lowly and the poor turn trustingly toward God – the more they will experience the reality of beatitude here and now – and how much greater will their experience of beatitude be in heaven when they are directly rewarded for what they had to put up with!

Of course, along with just putting up with what being poor automatically ensures – God's poor also have the opportunity to live very holy lives. They seem to be more in touch with what is right, good, just, moral and commendable. It is the lives of the complex that oftentimes get foggy in these areas.

CHAPTER 10 – I SAY A LITTLE PRAYER FOR YOU

Sometimes when Catholics think of a little prayer they think of the “Our Father” – the “Lord’s Prayer.” It is commendable that they think of this prayer but it is by no means in any way, shape or form a “little prayer.” It is one gigantic “perfect” prayer! If one were to prayer this one prayer over and over for the rest of one’s life – it safely get you through to the end of your journey! Everything that we need to be reminded of for our journey through life is in this prayer given to us by Jesus himself.

As was said earlier every word that Jesus said is well worth studying and appreciating to the maximum. The prayer that he taught his disciples is unparalleled. (It will be given in its entirety in the appendix to this book.) Suffice it to say for now that each phrase could be meditated upon for hours, weeks, months! For example, just the word “Father” is truly one of the most astounding words Jesus ever spoke. He, the Word-made-flesh is telling us that God his FATHER, is also now our FATHER. We, as human beings have no idea of the depth of the

meaning that “Father” really has – and this is unfortunate, as all we have to go on is our personal relationships with our fathers! And a great many of them are not all that praiseworthy! But considering the term “Father” not as a human term but as a theological term: it takes on a wealth of meaning that is in its totality beyond us.

Recall that the sin of our parents snatched the concept of Father away from our relationship with God – here, now, Jesus is restoring it to its rightful place! And it will remain stable and unchanged forever.

In this “politically correct” world in which we live – which to a great extent depletes the true richness and meaning out of a lot of reality – there is a lot of “throwing babies out with bathwater.” This cannot be so dealing in the realm of the Church, in the realm of God, in the realm of theology.

The terms “Father” and “Son” and “Spirit” are dogmatic realities that cannot be altered by any social current or philosophy. They come from revelation – the words of Christ - and the Church has no authority to change them.

Mindful of the need for women to feel included more directly in some circumstances, there is room for true and valid inclusive language in some sectors of society, but the dogmatic religious statements of the Catholic Church is not one such place. This does not mean that women cannot play a more active role in the life of the Church than they have in past ages. This is certainly a welcome thing. But, what God has spoken, through Christ, in the Holy Spirit cannot be tampered with.

My summary conclusion is this: You and I are so very much loved by God – who made us – and wants us home with him in heaven. But he will not force us to be there against our wills. He has given us a truly monumental organization to help us along the way: a living organization: the Mystical living Body of his Son, our Lord, Jesus Christ.

He tells us that all salvation in one way or another is associated with Jesus - all paths lead through him – to heaven. He respects all of our efforts to find the Way, find the Truth, and find the Life! And he is

looking forward to the day when all will be all in himself! After all – he is God – he is Good – and he is our Goal! And his will is always done!

I hope that this book has been useful to Catholics to better understand some of what we say we believe!

I hope that this book is helpful to Catholics sitting on the fence who needed a bit of direction and encouragement.

I hope that this book is helpful to non-Catholics and those who want to find out about the Catholic Church.

One thing is for certain: for all of its faults and its imperfections; and because of all of its perfection and promise: the Church has been around for 2000 years – and as Jesus promised – “the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.” And *Jesus will be here with us until the end of time!*

The Church always prays for the coming of her Lord. *Come, Lord Jesus! Come, soon!*

While we wait for the coming of the Lord, I would offer you knowledge of a third “filter” for your use to keep you on the path and on the bridge that leads to our Father:

if everything you think, say and do can be filtered through a heartfelt desire to give glory and praise to God the Father, and his Son and the Spirit, then everything will seem to fall into place.

We are made for the praise of his name – plain and simple! When we praise it and give him direct and conscious and deliberate glory and honor – as often during the day as we can – then our life takes on a dramatic new shift. We become truly human and truly alive with the redemption that Christ wrought for us flowing through our being.

Let us put on our “glory-glasses!”

Yes, we live in a frantic multi-tasking chaotic world – but *seeking first the Kingdom of God* – will make it all fall into place! This is a Christ-given promise and guarantee!

**GLORY AND PRAISE TO OUR GOD!
WHO ALONE GIVES LIGHT TO OUR DAYS!
MANY ARE THE BLESSINGS HE GIVES TO
THOSE WHO TRUST IN HIS WAYS!**

APPENDIX

PROFESSION OF FAITH – NICENE CREED

We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made, one in Being with the Father.
Through him all things were made.

For us men and for our salvation
he came down from heaven:

by the power of the Holy Spirit
he was born of the Virgin Mary, and became man.

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;
he ascended into heaven

and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son.

With the Father and the Son he is worshipped and glorified.

He has spoken through the Prophets.

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.

We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

THE BEATITUDES

How blessed are the *poor in spirit*:

the kingdom of Heaven is theirs.

Blessed are the *gentle*;

they shall have the earth as inheritance.

Blessed are those who *mourn*:

they shall be comforted.

Blessed are those who *hunger and thirst for uprightness*:

they shall have their fill.

Blessed are the *merciful*:

they shall have mercy shown them.

Blessed are the *pure in heart*:

they shall see God.

Blessed are the *peacemakers*:

they shall be recognized as children of God.

Blessed are those who are *persecuted in the cause of uprightness*:

the kingdom of Heaven is theirs.

Blessed are you when people *abuse* you and *persecute* you and speak all kinds of calumny against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward will be great in heaven: this is how they persecuted the prophets before you.

THE LORD'S PRAYER:

Our Father, who is in heaven,
holy is your name;
your kingdom come;
your will be done on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread;
and forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us;
and lead us not to the test,
but deliver us from evil.