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Staying Strong

Dear Friends,

For 23 years, Catholic Parents OnLine has been dedicated to our mission: to build a network of faithful, dynamic, and informed parents, students, and alumni, committed to working with Catholic schools, other programs of education and the community at large, to ensure the authentic teaching and protection of our Catholic Faith, and to address issues that undermine our Catholic Faith and Morals. We have much to be thankful for.

You may recall that because of Covid issues in 2020, we had to cancel our Fall Fundraiser Luncheon that year. But God rewarded us with a full house at our 2021 Luncheon, with an overwhelming response of record numbers of attendees. It is always a joyful gathering of CPO supporters coming together for another excellent talk by Father Altier, a delicious meal, an enjoyable silent auction, and the beloved Art Herkenhoff award. This

year, Michelle Lentz from Child Protection League also spoke of some of the battles their organization is fighting, to protect our kids from confusing and damaging programs being introduced in our schools.

CPO continues to work to inform parents about issues that affect their children. Currently the "Diversity – Equity – Inclusion" (DEI) program has been established in many of our Catholic high schools. This program strongly resembles the neo-Marxist "Critical Race Theory" program in public schools. Concerned parents can find a wealth of information regarding this on the CPO website.

In conjunction with these efforts to educate, we continue to make available Father Altier's series *Beauty, Truth, and Goodness - The Fundamentals of Catholicism*. This is one of the best resources to help catechize and build up our Church at a time when it is most needed. The English and Spanish versions are now running on multiple networks in the U.S. and other countries.

Along with our vast collection of media, CPO is now offering a *Streaming on Demand* service for our audio and video programs. This service allows anyone to watch or listen on their computer or phone. You can check it out at catholicparents.org.

We are busy planning our Lenten Retreat this year on Saturday, April 2nd. For more information and to register, please see the flyer on page 8.

Thank you for your prayers and continued support and God bless you and yours in the New Year,

*Colleen Perfect, President
Catholic Parents OnLine*



Many of the large attendance enjoying the Luncheon

The Way, the Truth and the Life

By Fr. Robert Altier, CPO Spiritual Director

When I was in the seminary in the 1980s (please keep in mind it was one of the worst seminaries in the nation at the time) one of the professors boldly proclaimed: “*Martin Luther had the right idea, but he went about it the wrong way. You can’t change the Church from the outside, you can only change it from the inside, so we’re not leaving.*” I knew from what was being taught in class what these people thought, but after this statement I realized how plotting, calculating, and malicious they were.

As time moved along and Saint John Paul II worked to right the ship, things began to improve. When Pope Benedict took the reins things were getting into pretty decent condition, but Pope Benedict moved them even further in the right direction. Everything these people had been working for seemed to have vanished and their heterodox ideas were confined to the trash bin of time. The novel and wrongful ideas had been presented in the light and they found were found wanting. One could almost hear the collective sigh of relief as the Church was getting back on the right track.

Shortly after Pope Francis was elected I began hearing things I had not heard since the 1980s. Suddenly, many people who had been hiding in the background, waiting patiently for the opportunity to proceed with their agenda, came rushing to the forefront. It seemed that the trash bin had been tipped upside down and all the bad things contained in it were being scattered throughout the Church once again.



I am the way and the truth and the life. John 14:6

In 2017 I became very concerned about where things were headed when the Vatican released a stamp honoring Martin Luther. The concern grew in 2019, when the pope took part in a pagan ceremony featuring the Pachamama; he even placed the potted plant, which represents the Pachamama, on the altar of sacrifice in St. Peter’s Basilica. Instead of repenting of such idolatry, the Vatican released a coin in 2020 commemorating the anniversary of the Pachamama.

Not only was I seeing and hearing things that were familiar because of my seminary experience, but some of these innovations went even further. This all appeared to be very intentional and it definitely had a

purpose. When we couple these events with some of the other things that have come out of Rome in the past few years, there is real reason for alarm.

Back about a half dozen years ago, Godfried Cardinal Danneels, from Belgium, published an autobiography in which he admitted to being part of a secret group of cardinals and bishops who met each year in St. Gallen, Switzerland. He said the group called themselves *The Mafia*. Over the years, these men put together an agenda of the changes they wanted to see in the Church. The problem, from their perspective, was a man named John Paul II. They deliberated about who and how they could get a pope of their liking who would be able to carry out their agenda.

Their ideas can be brought down to a few points: Holy Communion for people who are divorced and civilly married, getting the priesthood opened to married men, and the ordination of women. Some of this was going to be accomplished by decentralization and synodality. By their own admission, there was one man they thought would be best to implement their goals: a cardinal from Buenos Aires named Bergoglio. This has all been documented in a variety of places, but it is now compiled in one place in the book *The St. Gallen Mafia* by Julia Meloni.

We must understand what these goals imply. If it is allowed that people in an objectively sinful state can receive Holy Communion, then anyone

can receive Holy Communion. It begins with something that appears compassionate, playing on people's heartstrings, but the effect is very extensive. If a person committing adultery can receive Communion, then why can't someone who is fornicating? If that is allowed, what about thieves, murderers, idolaters? Also, if the Church is going to suddenly recognize the relationships of people who are in invalid marriages as acceptable, then why wouldn't relationships of others living in objectively sinful relationships be considered acceptable as well? This would open the way to acceptance of same sex couples, people involved in polygamy or polyandry, or anything else.

The effect of decentralization and synodality can be seen very clearly in the aftermath of the Amazon Synod. If the push by the Amazon Synod was for the allowance of married men to be priests, and women to be ordained deacons, then one could suggest that the need of that local area might require that accommodations be made to meet that need. The problem is this: if something is acceptable in even one case, then it must be acceptable in all cases. In other words, if women can be ordained for the Amazon, then the bottom line is that women can be ordained. If it is acceptable in the Amazon, then it is acceptable anywhere.

This is how the changes are being introduced: present a hard case situation or a situation that pulls at one's emotions. Because of the difficulty being presented, the natural tendency is to want to find a solution to the difficulty. If the suggested solution is contrary to the teaching of the Church, then an exception or an accommodation might be suggested, but only for that one situation. The problem, as I mentioned above, is a theological one: if something is considered acceptable in one situation, then it is acceptable in all situations. Either women can be ordained, or they can't; either Communion can be given to people in an objective state of sin or it cannot. There is no in between, and there is no compromise. It is all or nothing. These people know this and they are very intent on trying to change the basic teachings of the Church (to be clear, priestly celibacy is a discipline, not a dogma).

I present all of this for two reasons. First, so that everyone can understand what is happening and why. Second, to present the way I think we must approach this situation. Now that you can see, in a nutshell, what is happening, it might be easy to panic, to despair, or even to leave the Church. None of these is an appropriate response.

God is truth. The Church has been entrusted with the fullness of truth and she must preserve that truth in all its integrity and she must present that truth to the world. God cannot change, the truth cannot change, the basic teachings of the Church cannot change! The Church is Christ's, not ours, not the pope's; she is the Bride of Christ. When our Lord's human representatives fail to guard and teach the truth, He will come to the aid of His faithful ones. Please understand, it is *impossible* for the Church to change her dogmas. Therefore, what is happening presently is a test of our faith. Are we going to remain faithful to our Lord, to the Church, to the truth, even when many others are not?

It may appear hopeless as things continue to move forward, but it is not. We must employ the virtue of trust. We must learn from the past because similar things happened in ancient Judaism as we read in Scripture. Recall the times of Esther, the times of Elijah, and the times of the Maccabees, to name just a few. God intervened in extraordinary ways to preserve the truth. Therefore, we must trust, we must remain faithful, we must pray. The battle is on, we cannot run away. This time has been given over to our Lady; stay with her and learn how she will purify the Church and bring her back glorious.

It may not be to pleasant to be going through all of this, but we must see it as a gift. What a blessing the Lord has given us to be alive in these times. These are the times when some of the greatest saints in history will be raised up. These are the times when we will witness great things from Heaven, but not until the Lord has allowed evil to run its course. Every person on earth will have a choice to make. If we remain faithful to our Lord, to the truth, and to our prayers, the choice will be an easy one. So, no matter what happens, just remain faithful to Jesus and He will remain faithful to you. The Triumph of the Immaculate Heart is coming. Only those who are faithful will see it.

Mail From Russia...

Dear Mrs. Perfect and CPO Board members,

*Thank you for the generous gift of the CDs of Father Altier's **Series on Marriage and Beauty, Truth, Goodness: The Fundamentals of Catholicism**. Please greet Fr. Altier for me. I remember him and his inspiring ministry with awe!*

I am thankful to God for your dedication to promoting and helping Catholic families. With faithful, active, generous Catholic parents like you, the Lord is blessing countless people, who would otherwise be overwhelmed by the powers of darkness, which He sent His Only-begotten Son to overcome.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Fr. Daniel Maurer, CJD, Pastor

*Most Holy Mother of God Roman Catholic Church
Vladivostok, Russia*

Highway to Heaven

By Marilyn Grutsch

I turned 70 this year. Even though there is only one day between being 69 and 70, it seemed that entering this decade in life catapulted me into a new category, and I did not like being considered “senior” or “elderly” by the world’s standards. The reality that my time here on earth is growing shorter was cause for deep reflection and, in all honesty, was a little depressing.

In the past year, more and more of my friends and relatives passed away, many, seemingly, at too young of an age.

I mourned the loss of these people and pondered the mystery of our lifetime here, questioning things such as, why an 8-year-old child dies tragically when a car crashed through a parade in Wisconsin. And how can we understand when a 3-year-old child dies in a drowning accident or why cancer takes the life of a young mother? Each person that dies leaves behind a mom, dad, brothers and sisters, children, and spouses...none who were ready to say goodbye to their loved one. I am fully aware that our time in this world is temporary, and that God has something incredible in store for us in the next, but why then, do we desperately try to cling to things and people as they are today, even amid a world full of turmoil? Is that human nature? Even my 93-year-old mother, with all her aches, pains, limitations, and loss of independence, told me recently, *“I’m ready to go whenever God takes me...but I don’t want to leave you kids!”* God has placed in us a desire to love this life. After all, when He created this world,



did He not say, *“It is good!”*?

During my angst with contemplating aging and death, I picked up a book about a recently beatified young man, who died in 2006 at the age of 15 and who once said, *“Our goal must be the infinite, not the finite.”* His life had barely begun, and yet, he has already been beatified. What could someone who spent such a brief time in this world have to offer? As I entered into the story of the short life of this modern day, fun-loving, computer savvy, millennial, I was about to have an attitude adjustment.

Carlo Acutis was born on May 3, 1991, in London, England, but his Italian-born parents moved the family back to Italy shortly after his birth. Outwardly, he lived a life of an average child and teenager, but from very early on, his parents and others who knew him, recognized that there was an unusual depth of faith in him. As early as the age of 5, when his family went to the Shrine of Our Lady of Pompeii, he begged his mother and grandmother

to allow him to consecrate himself to the Blessed Mother. Because of his obvious maturity in understanding and desire for the Holy Eucharist, the local bishop gave him permission to make his First Holy Communion at the age of 7. After that, Carlo was often heard to say, *“The greatest event in my life was my First Communion. Receiving the Eucharist is my highway to Heaven.”* From that day forward, Carlo attended daily Mass and received the Eucharist every day, which was quite remarkable for a child and teenager.

Some of the words used to describe him by people who knew him were: deep concern for the poor or marginalized, generous, brave, missionary of the Eucharist, genius in computer technology, devotion to the Blessed Mother, deep attachment to the Blessed Sacrament, serene dependence on God, pro-life, authentic Christian, loved soccer and playing his saxophone, honored his parents, avid reader, loved St. Francis of Assisi and St. John Bosco, had a great reverence for religious and priests, and practiced virtues of purity and love. He was not one to flaunt his faith but had an openness of talking with others about it.

This is what his mother, Antonia, said about him:

Every Christian is called to holiness. So, it is not just for Carlo, but for all of us, to strive for it. He has set before you and me a simple path of holiness, based

on the Word of God and the Holy Eucharist. His unassuming Christian life was anchored on daily Holy Communion and weekly confessions. He was convinced that these were the surest paths to holiness. He relished spending time for Eucharistic Adoration, either before or after his participation in the Eucharist. He also considered the holy rosary a corollary to these practices. He was deeply devoted to his guardian angel as well as to the Archangel Michael, who he considered would protect him from every evil and temptation. Now it is his ardent wish that we take holiness as a special project of life, by pursuing a simple Christian spirituality as he did. Each one of us is uniquely loved by God and destined to perform some special tasks in life. God Himself empowers us to do them, proves Carlo. You have only to follow the Word of God in order to fulfill His call to us to strive for holiness.

She also added that it was her young son, Carlo, who brought her to a fuller appreciation and love of the Eucharist. He is probably best known for his documentation of the Eucharistic miracles around the world, cataloging them on the website that he created.

Carlo used to say, "We must make our Exodus from sin with complete

conviction. What good would it be for a human being to win a thousand battles if he is incapable of conquering his very self?" And he reminded us that we should count the days we have on this earth and to consider that, even if they happen to be many, life is brief in comparison with eternity. As he was in his last days, dying from leukemia, he said, "I am dying peacefully because I have lived my life without wasting a single minute of it in things that displease God." Throughout his illness, he offered all his suffering for the pope (then Pope Benedict XVI) and the Church. He had a peaceful detachment from earthly things because he knew that he was ultimately going to meet Jesus, with whom he had formed such an intimate friendship.

So when I bemoan the arrival of the seventh decade of my life and grieve over those who have left this world at such young ages, I am reminded that, it's not the years we live in this world but whether we have fulfilled the purpose for which each of us is created. And, to remember that, good as this world is, the challenge is to not become too attached to it. As we read in Wisdom 3:2-4: *In the eyes of the foolish, they seemed to have died and their departure was thought to be an affliction, and their going from us to be their destruction; but they are at peace. For though in the sight of men,*

they were punished, their hope is full of immortality.

Carlo's life is a challenge to everyone to live virtuous lives in this world. Presiding at the beatification service, Cardinal Agostino Vallini praised Carlo as an example of how young people can use technology to spread the Gospel "to reach as many people as possible and help them know the beauty of friendship with the Lord. He was an ordinary boy, simple, spontaneous, likeable...he loved nature and animals, he played football, he had many friends of his age, he was attracted by modern means of social communication, passionate about computer science and self-taught, he built websites to transmit the Gospel, to communicate values and beauty." A renowned theologian from Italy wrote the following about his death: "In the eyes of the world, his death at such a tender age was foolish, but God deemed him already fit for His Kingdom!" He died on October 12, 2006, and by his wishes, was buried in Assisi. He was beatified by Pope Francis on October 10, 2020. Blessed Carlo Acutis, thank you for the lessons you are teaching this world. Please pray for us.

The website Blessed Carlo created is: miracolieucaristici.org/en/Liste/list.html

NOMINATIONS FOR 2022

ARTHUR A. HERKENHOFF AWARD

The CPO Board of Directors seeks the names of individuals who would be worthy of nomination for the 2022, 17th annual Arthur A. Herkenhoff Award. The persons nominated should exhibit the same qualities, principles and values which characterized the life and person of Art Herkenhoff: Faith, family, pro-life involvement, courage, charity and joy.

Please submit your nomination by October 1, 2022.
You may complete the Online Nomination Form on our website at:
catholicparents.org/official-candidate-nomination-form/
or contact us at 651-705-5409 and we'll be happy to mail you the form.

Arthur A. Herkenhoff Award

On October 31, 2004, CPO lost a true friend and one of our founding Board members, Art Herkenhoff. Art was a hero in all the areas that truly matter: in Faith, family and pro-life involvement. Art had enormous courage in the face of opposition to proclaim the Truth of Jesus Christ and the Catholic Church, and he always exhibited true charity, humility and joy. Each year CPO receives many outstanding nominations for the Arthur A. Herkenhoff Award.

The Board of Directors chose to present the 2021 Arthur A. Herkenhoff Award to a remarkable woman, Andrea Kullmann. Andrea Kullmann was a Birthright volunteer for 14 years, before becoming a founding member of Total Life Care Center in Hastings, Minnesota. She has now been their Executive Director for 10 years. Under her leadership the Total Life Care Center of Hastings has greatly expanded. There is now an ultrasound service, Fertility Education Medical Management, a Fatherhood program, Lactation Support, Sexual Integrity program, an Abortion Healing Ministry, *Earn While You Learn* program and Life Coaching. A new Miscarriage Ministry is being added this year. Andrea has dedicated her life to pro-life work.

Andrea Kullman received the 16th Arthur A. Herkenhoff Award at the annual CPO Luncheon & Fundraiser held at the Southview Country Club in St. Paul on October 23, 2021.



Andrea Kullmann and her husband, Todd

Fr. Altier, Colleen Perfect, and Art Herkenhoff family members with Andrea Kullmann and her husband, Todd





L to R:
Mary Jo Trojack - Marilyn Grutsch - Terese Jensen
working on finishing touches for Silent Auction

L to R: Melinda Perfect -
Tim Perfect - Mike Perfect
enjoying the Silent Auction
and Media Sales



CPO Board:
Fr. Robert Altier,
Kurt Virnig, Jeff Davis,
Joe Kolles, John Trojack,
Colleen Perfect, Marilyn
Grutsch, Terese Jensen





Church in Crisis: How to be a Light in the Darkness

Saturday, April 2, 2022

8:00 AM - 2:30 PM

Maternity of Mary

Presented by Father Robert J. Altier

*Syncretism and paganism are like
poisons entering the veins of the
Mystical Body of Christ, the Church.*

Bishop Athanasius Schneider



The day begins with 8:00 AM Mass at Maternity of Mary Catholic Church, followed by a continental breakfast, and includes three dynamic presentations by Fr. Robert Altier, a delicious lunch, the Rosary and more.

Maternity of Mary Catholic Church
1414 Dale Street North
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55117

Please join us!
Register early, seating is limited.

REGISTER:

Online at **catholicparents.org** or

By mail, send name(s), address and check to: Catholic Parents OnLine
P.O. Box 130815
St. Paul, MN 55113

Cost is \$25 per person, \$40 per married couple
Includes continental breakfast and lunch. (Please note if you want Gluten-Free.)

Tickets will not be mailed out in advance; name tags will be waiting for you at the registration table after Mass.