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CPO News On the Line

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New Offerings and Growth

Dear Friends,

We at Catholic Parents OnLine (CPO) would like to thank you for your continued support for 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 are committed to persevere in this pursuit of defending our Catholic faith.

We had a great turnout at our April Retreat on "Church in Crisis; How to be a Light in the Darkness" and also at our recent annual Luncheon. Our attendance at these events continues to grow as the issues and battles against morality and faith are exploding in our society, leaving people in all walks of life feeling unprotected and confused about how to defend our strongly held values and beliefs.

CPO continues to work to inform parents about issues that affect their children. We have alerted parents to the dangers of the inappropriate and indecent book offerings in the Scholastic Book Fairs used in many of our Catholic Schools. In addition, we informed parents of the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) programs that have been established in many of our Catholic high schools, which strongly resemble the neo-Marxist critical race theory (CRT) programs in public schools. Concerned parents can find a wealth of information at catholicparents.org.

In conjunction with these efforts to educate, we are very excited to introduce Father Altier's new book, hot off the press: ***God's Plan for your Marriage, An exploration of Holy Matrimony from Genesis to the Wedding Feast of the Lamb***, available for purchase at Godsplanforyourmarriagebook.com. Cardinal Burke had this to say about it,

Inspired and sustained by the Virgin Mother of God, Father Robert J. Altier illustrates God's plan for marriage from the beginning, from the first moment of the creation of man - male and female - in God's own image.

We now offer Father Altier's daily homilies on YouTube, and the number of people who are listening is growing dramatically. Our *Streaming on Demand* service for our audio and video programs is also very popular, available at catholicparentsonline.podia.com

For information on our upcoming Retreat, 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



Fr. Altier speaking at the Luncheon

Weapons for the Battle

By Fr. Robert Altier, CPO Spiritual Director

There are many areas in which God has blessed me, but one area that is not a strength is that of choosing a topic for a talk or an article. I have known for over two months that I needed to write this article and I have been wracking my brain trying to figure out what I should address. I keep asking the Lord to show me what He wants me to write about, but it seemed I was coming up empty. The only thought that kept coming to mind I rejected because I assumed it to be my own idea and not one I wanted to write about. After two months everything changed last night, December 2, when a friend sent me a video clip of a man named Glenn Beck.

I have known of Mr. Beck for a number of years, but I know very little about him. I don't even know if he is on the radio, television, podcasts, or all of the above. I understand that he has left the Catholic Church, but his Catholicism explains the clarity of some of his thought process. Beyond this, I know nothing of the man. However, what I heard in the video clip clarified in my mind what I need to write about, so I will put this into the form of two stories before making my way to the final point.

The first story comes from a situation I know of first hand. A group of some of the most highly trained people in the world were involved in a very daring and dangerous endeavor, yet one for which every reasonable human being will be most grateful when we learn of it. Part of this endeavor involved meticulous planning, which required gaining knowledge of the people involved. What appeared on the surface to be fairly straight forward proved to be anything but.

As these men began their investigation, it became clear that the situation they were involved in was much bigger than what it appeared. Even more, it was far deeper than anyone could have guessed. After gathering information about the various layers that were part of this organization, the men uncovered another layer that left

“Being a spiritual battle, it must be fought with spiritual weapons: Mass, Adoration, and the Rosary...

them dumbfounded. They knew the organization they were dealing with was involved in some evil things, but they were not prepared for what they had found.

With great humility, these men called a friend to ask specifically for prayer because the layer they had uncovered was not human. They could handle almost anything that could be thrown at them, but they were not trained to deal with demons. God used this to help them understand the scope of the situation in which they found themselves. This was not just about bad or malicious people who were doing bad things. This was spiritual and it was a war of good versus evil. These men made this very clear and stated that they could deal with the human problems, but they would need help from people who pray to handle the deeper spiritual problems.

The second story is the one referenced above regarding Glenn Beck. He said, in this video, that he

never imagined that he would be telling this story, but then went on to talk about a dream (which he said was not a dream, but he did not know how else to describe it) he had ten years earlier that remains with him and about which he thinks regularly. The details of the “dream” are not so important as the points he made regarding his understanding of what the dream meant.

After telling of the dream, Mr. Beck went on to talk about the fact that what we are in now is a spiritual battle, a war of good versus evil. He made a point of saying that this will involve everyone; his way of stating this is that no one will be left on the bench. He said that if anyone

thought they could sit this one out or stay on the bench, they were choosing the wrong side. He also told everyone they needed to get back to their religious foundation because without a spiritual foundation there is no way anyone can survive what is to come.

The fact that in both of these situations mentioned above, the people involved understood that this was a battle of good versus evil is critically important. Things are not good right now, but I believe they are soon going to get much worse. If one does not have a solid prayer life, it will be extremely difficult to persevere through the difficulties. We know that this time is given over to our Blessed Lady, so we need to stay close to her. She will keep us faithful to her Son.

There are two things I have been telling people for the past number of months and years. The first is that the only thing that is important is remaining faithful to Jesus. The problems we are going to be facing

will not be merely on the natural level; they will be in the Church as well. As I have said many times, it does not matter what color cassock someone wears: the black of a priest, the purple of a bishop, the red of a cardinal, or the white of a pope, if **anyone** says anything contrary to the teaching of Christ or the Church, stay with Jesus!

I believe this is going to be a very dark time for the Church, but it is the Church's opportunity to prove her love and fidelity to her divine Bridegroom. There has never been a better time to be alive if you want to be a Saint. This brings me to the second point: there will be no in-between in this battle. Every person on the face of the earth must make a choice, and that choice will be either for Jesus or for Satan.

Either way, it needs to be a 100% commitment. If someone one does not want to choose Jesus, they have chosen Satan.

So, please make your choice for the Lord, but make it with your heart, not with your head. It must be acted upon, so we need to pray, frequent the Sacraments, and strive to remain always in the state of sanctifying grace. Those who remain faithful to the end will either find themselves in Heaven (if they are so blessed as to be martyred) or they will find themselves in the Triumph of the Immaculate Heart. Either way, we win!

We do not know the details of how this is going to unfold, but we do know who is going to win. The woman is going to crush the head of the

serpent! That woman is your mother, so she will protect you and take care of everything for you; all you need to do is remain faithful, trust, and do whatever she tells you. There is nothing to fear as long as we have our Lord and our Lady.

So, now you are receiving this news from three sources. The battle is not on the natural or worldly level: it is a spiritual battle and it is literally a battle of good versus evil. Being a spiritual battle, it must be fought with spiritual weapons, Mass, Adoration, and the Rosary being the most powerful. Satan has no power over Jesus and Mary; if you are with them, he has no power over you either. Make your choice! Choose Jesus and Mary and be part of the victory over sin and the devil!



CPO Board: Fr. Robert Altier, Kurt Virnig, Joe Kolles, John Trojack, Terese Jensen, Marilyn Grutsch, Anne Taylor, Colleen Perfect (*not pictured Michelle Lentz*)

Godparenting 101

By Marilyn Grutsch

Congratulations! You were asked to be a godparent. This can be flattering and a great honor, but what are the parents really asking when they choose a godparent for their child? My husband and I have 12 godchildren. Each of these children (many are now adults) have had a special place in my heart over the years, but most of what we have done for them is to participate at their Baptism, to pray for them, and to remember them at Christmas time with a gift. Recently, a frantic mother of one of our godchildren told me her daughter has thrown off all her connection with the Catholic faith since going to college. It deeply troubled me, but then as I pondered the list of the other 11, I came to the sad reality that only five of them have remained active in their Catholic faith. And of the seven who have left the faith, most of their parents are no longer practicing Catholics either. It made me think about how frivolous and superficial we have been about this role and how we may have neglected our promise.

What is the role of a Catholic godparent? And what are the Church's expectations of godparents at Baptism and beyond? Looking back to the historical beginning of godparents, I found that it is rooted in the role of the sponsor of a catechumenate when the early Church was persecuted by the Roman Empire in the first few centuries. A sponsor was asked to be there to testify to the integrity of the catechumenate so as not to allow infiltration of a pagan who intended to do harm to the Church from within. By the ninth century, infant Baptisms were more the norm, and the sponsors began to be identified as "godfather." Now we call the sponsors godparents (godmother and godfather). The Code



of Canon Law states, "Insofar as possible, one to be Baptized is to be given a sponsor who is to assist an adult in Christian initiation, or, together with the parents, to present an infant at the Baptism, and who will help the baptized to lead a Christian life in harmony with Baptism, and to fulfill faithfully the obligations connected with it (No. 872)."

So how does one do this? And what qualifies one to be a godparent? Here's a summary of what the Code of Canon Law states, regarding this:

A person must 1) be designated by the one to be baptized or by the parents; 2) be at least 16 years of age; 3) be a Catholic who has been confirmed and has already received the most Holy Sacrament of the Eucharist and who leads a life of faith in keeping with the function to be taken on; 4) not be bound by any canonical penalty legitimately imposed or declared; and 5) not be the father or mother of the one to be baptized. A baptized person who

belongs to a non-Catholic ecclesial community is not to participate except together with a Catholic sponsor and then only as a witness of the Baptism. (No. 874 1, 2) Code of Canon Law 873 adds: There is to be only one male sponsor or one female sponsor or one of each.

Okay, so, we qualified because we met all those prerequisites. Or have we? What would be the conditions in which we would fall short of these requirements? Father William Saunders, a priest in the Arlington Diocese, clarifies this in his article "The Role of godparents":

One who does not practice the faith by regularly attending Mass or who is in an invalid marriage; one who is antagonistic to the faith, i.e. 'I am Catholic, but ...'; or one who would not be a good example and witness to the faith, not striving to fulfill his own obligations of Baptism and Confirmation.

But is there more to being a worthy godparent than meeting all the initial requirements? On a practical level, what should a godparent do for their godchild after the Baptism?

According to Catholic apologist Patrick Madrid, "Being a godparent means that you are undertaking a lifelong commitment to doing what you can to try to help the child grow into a good, strong, mature Catholic faith." We are called to walk alongside of the parents in this duty, but he uses the following analogy in the case where their parents are not fulfilling their obligation:

If someone is going to go skydiving, you don't just pack

one parachute, you pack a second backup in case the first one doesn't deploy properly. So if parents are not 100%, you are that backup parachute and you do what you can to try to help. Maybe your good example may even lead their parents to become more serious about their Catholic faith.

But what about the young adult godchild who has become hostile to the Catholic Church? Patrick's response to this is: "Do what you can do, speak the Truth in love, show that you genuinely care about them and seek after their welfare both spiritually and physically, but don't hash it over and over." It is important to maintain as good a relationship as they will allow, showing love, empathy, and support.

Ultimately, the godparents' purpose is to help the child attain Heaven. Simply put, a godparent's role is to be holy, live in obedience to the Church, and be an example to show Catholic virtue in both word and deed, so that you may help lead your godchild to holiness. As Pope St. Paul VI once warned, "The gap between the Gospel and the culture is growing. Parents benefit greatly from godparents who will be a light and guide, like the candle lit at Baptism, to their child."

Because we may live a distance from a godchild, especially as they become adults, here are a few steps that can help assure intentionality to the relationship:

- Remember your godchild's Sacramental anniversaries and birthdays by a phone call, card, gift or getting together for a meal. Gifts, dinners, and gatherings communicate the importance.
- Help him/her cultivate a devotion to a patron saint - send a note on this Saint's Feast Day.
- Build him/her a spiritual library. I've sent many Catholic books over the years, even knowing that some of them would be tossed aside or given to Goodwill. I trust that the Holy Spirit will at least allow them to be moved by the title in some way. Or maybe, when the time is right, they might dust it off from their shelf, and read it (or someone else will).
- Be a spiritual mentor. Be intentional about asking about their spiritual life, even if they don't seem too open to it. You never know how the Holy Spirit will show up at these encounters.
- Be prudent. Go gently but recognize our culture has

encouraged opposition to the faith.

Pondering this, I am compelled to write a letter to our godchildren, to remind them of our continued prayers for them:

Dear godchild,

Your parents asked us to be your godparents when you were Baptized. It was, and still is, a great honor that they trusted us with this role in your life. We have always kept you close in our hearts and, especially, in prayer. At your Baptism, we made these promises for you: To renounce Satan and all his empty promises, to believe all the Church teaches in the Creed, and to help you practice and persevere in your Catholic faith. Wherever you are at in your faith life, know that we will always be praying for you. Life can be difficult in this world, but know that we love you, and more importantly, God loves you. "I have loved you with an everlasting love." Jeremiah 31:3. Our greatest prayer for you, as godparents, is that you will someday live with Him in Heaven. Pray for us too, that we may join you there.

*Love,
Your godparents*



Colleen Perfect and Kurt Virnig at Minnesota Parents Alliance event

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 2022 Arthur A. Herkenhoff Award to a remarkable woman, Anne O'Meara. Anne O'Meara left the corporate world, and a higher salary, to become the Executive Director for HALO - Healthcare

Advocacy and Leadership Organization. HALO addresses a wide array of ethical issues including euthanasia, assisted suicide, rationing of medical services, and hastening of death in healthcare settings. Anne has far surpassed all expectations, working well in excess of 40 hour weeks to ensure that every person who reaches out to HALO is served, regardless of the time of day or night such need arises, including answering the HALO Helpline 24/7.

Anne O'Meara received the 17th Arthur A. Herkenhoff Award at the CPO annual Luncheon & Fundraiser held at the Southview Country Club in St. Paul on November 5, 2022.



Fr. Altier presenting the award to Anne O'Meara



Fr. Altier, Colleen Perfect, and Art Herkenhoff family and friends with Anne O'Meara and her son, Tommy

NOMINATIONS FOR 2023 ARTHUR A. HERKENHOFF AWARD

The CPO Board of Directors seeks the names of individuals who would be worthy of nomination for the 2023, 18th 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, 2023. 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.*

*CPO media
always in demand*



*God's Plan For Your Marriage,
recent best-seller by Father Altier*

*CPO Luncheon
and Fundraiser
at Southview
Country Club*



Father blessing religious article

*Lots of interest
in the Silent
Auction items!*



Lenten Retreat *sponsored by*

The Incarnation: God's Humility, Humanity's Glory

Saturday, March 25, 2023

8:00 AM - 2:30 PM

Maternity of Mary

Presented by Father Robert J. Altier

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.



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Cost is \$25 per person or \$40 per married couple.

Please send check made payable & mailed to:

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P.O. Box 130815

St. Paul, MN 55113

Number Attending _____

Number Needing Gluten-Free _____

Total Enclosed \$ _____

Includes continental breakfast and lunch

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