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Stepping Up

Dear Friends of CPO,

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 annual Luncheon and Silent Auction. Father Altier's talk, the *Battle Has Begun: Whom Will You Serve*, drew a sellout crowd.



Remaining faithful to the Truth, which is Jesus Christ, in a world and Church which have abandoned Truth, is becoming more and more difficult. CPO will continue to offer opportunities to help strongly defend Catholic values and beliefs.

CPO continues, through generous supporters, the *Holy Face of Jesus Billboard Project*. We currently have billboards on Snelling Avenue in Saint Paul, on 694W just past Rice Street in Shoreview, in Glencoe, LeCenter and in Eagle Lake, near Mankato.



Our third annual Mass in Reparation to the Holy Face occurred on March 4, 2025 at St. Augustine Oratory in South Saint Paul.



CPO also continues to monitor Social Emotional Learning (SEL) in Catholic schools of the Archdiocese of Saint Paul and Minneapolis. SEL is a delivery system for DEI (Diversity, Equity and Inclusion) which has no place in a Catholic school.

We are working to educate parents and school administrations about Scholastic book fairs at Catholic

schools in the diocese. Many books promoting homosexuality, LGBTQ+, witchcraft/occult, and other ideologies contrary to Catholic teaching are promoted and sold at these fairs.

You can find Father Altier's daily homilies on CPO website, YouTube, Rumble, Gettr and GloriaTV among other online video platforms. 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 here.

As the title of this article is *Stepping Up*, CPO has a new president for 2025. Thank you for your prayers and continued support.

God bless you and yours in 2025,
Kurt Virnig,
President, Catholic Parents OnLine



CPO Board Members

In back: Fr. Robert Altier, Kurt Virnig, John Trojack, Joe Kolles
In front: Anne Taylor, Carley Sonnen, Michelle Lenz,
Colleen Perfect and Terese Jensen.

And welcome to our newest Board Member,
Patricia Altier, who joined in late 2024.



Annual Luncheon and Silent Auction



Devotion to the Holy Face

by Fr. Robert Altier, CPO Spiritual Director

Over the past few years, Catholic Parents OnLine has embraced and promoted the devotion to the Holy Face. This devotion, given by our Lord to a Carmelite nun in Tours, France in 1846, is intended to make reparation for blasphemies against the Holy Name, for the failure to keep Sunday as the Lord's Day, and to combat Communism. Today, all three of these areas have reached unprecedented levels.

People use our Lord's Name in anger, in surprise, or for emphasis in making a point. The Holy Name is used lightly in conversation and it seems Hollywood cannot put out a movie unless it uses God's Name wrongly on at least a few occasions, but usually many more.

Sunday has become the largest shopping day of the week. Many businesses are open on Sundays, forcing employees to work. The NFL has taken over Sunday for half the year and many youth sporting events are held on Sunday mornings when people should be at Mass. Rather than be a day set aside for prayer, study of the faith, and recreation, Sunday has just become another day of carrying out our own pursuits while paying little or no attention to the Lord.

At Fatima our Lady told us that Russia would spread her errors throughout the world. The evil of atheistic communism has indeed spread, as our Lady said it would, and has now infiltrated into or completely taken over most of the world. Even worse, it has infiltrated into the Church and is exerting profound influence, even in the highest levels of the Church.

Holy Face Relic

True image of the face of Our Lord Jesus Christ venerated in Rome in the Most Holy Basilica of St. Peter, authenticated with red seal in lower right corner, dated 1879.



Given this brief outline of the areas our Lord asked us to address with this devotion, we can see the absolute necessity of this spiritual exercise in our own day. The devotion has been fully approved by the Church and was spreading quickly, but then fell into decline. For many years it was almost unheard of, but now it is suddenly and inexplicably (on the natural level) exploding in popularity. Why?

Our Lord spoke to Sister Mary of St. Peter, giving to humanity the means to defeat communism a year before Karl Marx published his *Communist Manifesto*.

Our Lord told Sister that the chastisement for our failure to love and serve the Lord was going to be brought about through “revolutionary men.” We are not speaking about something that affects only a small country like Israel, but that affects the whole world. The world cannot be brought into exile like the Israelites of old when they forsook the ways of God. In those times, God used the enemies of Israel as the means to purify them. Today, He is using the enemies of the Church and of humanity to purify and to punish our widespread disobedience.

The devotion to the Holy Face was given before Communism began. In other words, this was not a devotion that someone developed years later as a means to combat such a heinous evil. If this had happened, although the devotion may be good, we would be trying to fight a praeternatural evil with human or natural level means. Instead, we have the means to combat a praeternatural evil with a supernatural response. God has allowed things to get as bad as they are so that each person has a clear choice to make. Do we want to continue along the path we have been on or do we want to get onto the path God has set out for us? One is the wide and easy path that leads to perdition and the other is rough and narrow, but it leads to life.

The Church has three miraculous images of our Lord: the Veil of Veronica, the Shroud of Turin, and the Veil of Manoppello. Going in reverse order, the Veil of Manoppello, below, is an image of our Lord at the moment of His resurrection.



The Shroud of Turin, below, is an image of our Lord in death.



The Veil of Veronica is an image of our Lord from His Passion, but before His death. The image from the Veil of Veronica is the image associated with this devotion.

It should be noted that this is an image made by artists. The actual Veil has become discolored over the centuries and the image can no longer be seen on it. However, during a crisis in Rome in 1849, the Pope declared that the Veil should be exposed for public veneration, and prayers should be offered to bring the crisis to an end. A candle was placed before the Veil and a white silk sheet was hung behind the veil. On the third and final day of prayer, an image was seen being projected onto the white silk sheet. The Pope ordered that artists should be brought in to draw or paint what they saw. So, the image we have today is an artist's rendition of the miracle that occurred that day.

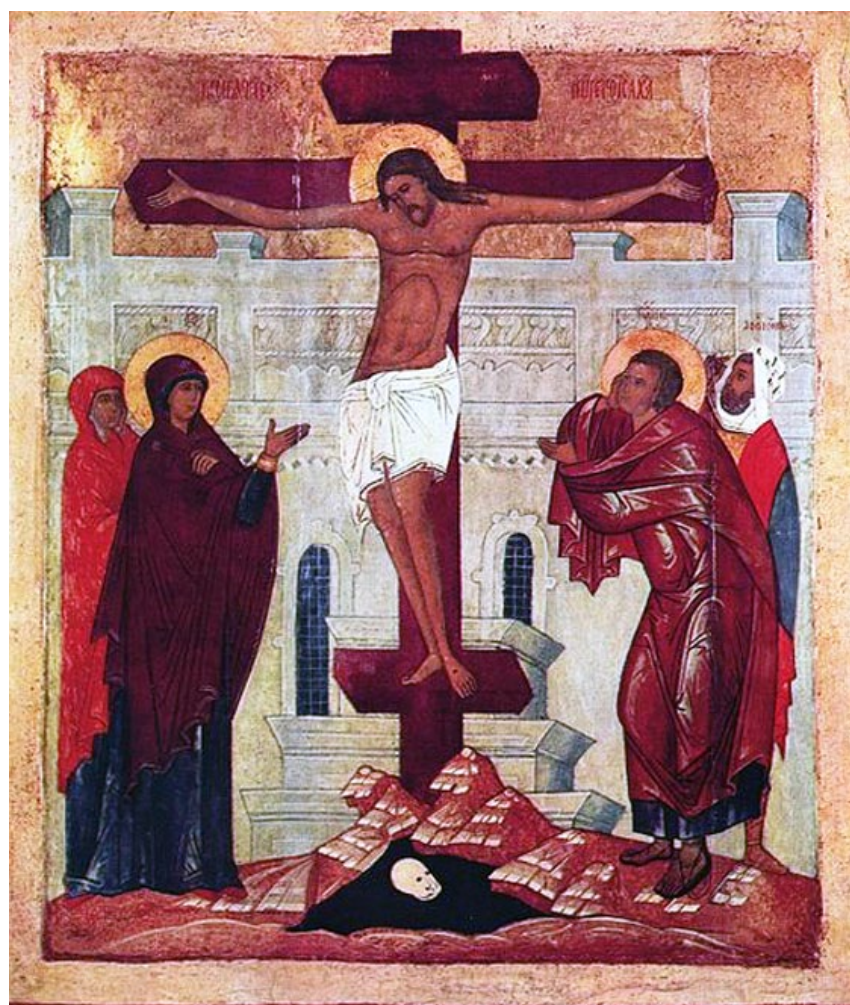


Although the devotion was well received a century and a half ago, I believe it was really intended for today. It was necessary, as we have seen, that it was revealed *before* the formal inception of communism so we know it is endowed with divine power and the promise that this will defeat communism. It was also necessary for the devotion to become popular so it could be accepted by the popes and bishops, thus preparing the way for when the devotion would truly be needed.

The point of speaking of the three images we have of our Lord and the idea that this devotion was actually meant for our day are very much connected. The image from the Veil of Veronica is, as mentioned, from the time of our Lord's Passion: from the time when He was carrying His Cross on the way to His death. This is important to this devotion because today the Church is undergoing her passion. Our Lord will not abandon His Spouse in her time of suffering. She will be crucified and she will rise to be more glorious than ever, but today she is being condemned, beaten, and scourged.

As she carries her cross on the way to her crucifixion, God is asking for heroic souls, souls who love Him and love His Church, to be like St. Veronica who ignored the crowds and the soldiers and offered charity to our Lord in the form of wiping His Face with her veil. As the Church undergoes her passion, as it happened with our Lord, the majority will abandon her. When our Lord was crucified and buried, the Faith remained alive in one person: the Blessed Virgin Mary. No one else believed in the resurrection except our Lady. This time, the Faith will be maintained by a small number of people who are willing to suffer with the Church and remain faithful, trusting in our Lord's promise that the jaws of hell will not prevail against her.

Make no mistake. Two thousand years ago Jesus really died and He was really buried; on the third day He really rose from the dead. In our time, the Church is going to be appear dead and buried, but she will rise again by the power of God. Are we willing to unite with our Lady and remain faithful? This might appear to be a simple and obvious question, but when things get tough, the Church is rocked by scandals or as false accusations are brought against her, she is being persecuted and those who remain faithful will be persecuted; it might become very difficult. Looking back, it should have been pretty easy to remain faithful to Jesus, but even his Apostles, with the exception of St. John, ran away and locked themselves in a room.



We are coming to the Church's greatest hour, an hour that will appear on the surface to be her worst hour. We have been given a privilege that is the single greatest privilege to be given to anyone since the time of our Lord's Passion, death, and resurrection. God has you alive today in a time when the Church will be crucified. Pray and ask the Lord if He is calling you to be like our Lady, St. Mary Magdalene, and St. John; the few whose love and fidelity brought them to the foot of the Cross. If this is your calling, take up the devotion to the Holy Face, pray for the grace to remain faithful, and be part of the Triumph of the Immaculate Heart; that is, share with our Lady in crushing the head of the enemy of our souls. This

will only take place in the resurrection of the Church. When she dies, we can unite with the image on the Shroud of Turin, in her resurrection, we can unite with the image on the Veil of Manopello, but today she is in her passion, so unite with the image on the Veil of Veronica and take up the Holy Face devotion.

If you would like more information about this, there are several books available. *The Golden Arrow* is about the messages of our Lord to Sister Mary of St. Peter; *The Secret of the Holy Face* by Fr. Lawrence Carney outlines the devotion and the call to unite in defeating the enemy; and *Unveiling the Sixth Station* by Mary Jane Zuzolo goes into greater depth about this devotion. There is also a group called the Martinians, named for St. Martin of Tours, that is working to spread the devotion and establish prayer groups.



Mass in Reparation to the Holy Face on March 4, 2025



2024 National Eucharistic Congress

by Marilyn Grutsch

What a gift it was to be able to attend the 2024 National Eucharistic Revival in Indianapolis: a little piece of Heaven on Earth!

It was a joy to be in the presence of nearly sixty thousand other Catholics who were eager to grow deeper in their love of our faith by listening to dynamic speakers, attending Mass, receiving Jesus in Holy Communion, enjoying concerts, Eucharistic Processions, Adoration and Benediction in the stadium with so many people from around the country. It is almost hard to imagine sixty thousand Catholics gathered in a stadium and Conference Center, but it would be like the entire city of St. Louis Park or Edina, all in one place for four days of learning and growing in our love for our Lord.



We flew into Indianapolis, rented our car, and arrived at the conference on Wednesday night, just in time for Adoration and Benediction. We were completely dazzled by seeing the number of people in the stadiums already. We got in on the end of Bishop Cozzen's introductory talk. The hosts for the conference were amazing (Sister Miriam, Montse Alvarado, and Father Josh Johnson) and each gave a bit of their own testimony before introducing the guest speakers.

We heard Lila Rose, Monsignor Shea from North Dakota, Father Mike Schmitz, Mother Olga of the Sacred Heart, Bishop Robert Barron, Jonathan Roumie, Matt Maher, Sister Bethany Madonna, Sister Josephine Garrett, Mother Adela Galindo, Patrick Madrid, Cardinal Christophe Pierre, Chris Stephanik, Mary Healy, and so many others.

During the day, we were able to hear wonderful speakers, attend Mass, and spend time in the Exhibition Hall where there were hundreds of vendors and different groups. Relevant Radio was covering it live, along with EWTN, Franciscan University, University of Mary, University of Dallas, Belmont Abbey, and so many more faithful Catholic Colleges and Universities, in addition to all the vendors and

orders of religious Sisters, Brothers, and priests.

Among some of the vendors, one local couple, Nancy and Steve Johnson from Ave Maria, Florida (previously from Minnesota) had a booth called *Six Months or Less*. This idea was born out of Nancy's hospice care work with patients who have six months or less to live. As Steve says, "It's to make us all think about how we would live our lives differently if we knew we only had six months to live." There was also an exhibit of Blessed Carlo Acutis on Eucharistic Miracles and a room with relics to venerate. So many priests made themselves available to hear confessions all the days and into the evenings, throughout the Conference.



I have never seen so many priests and religious in one place before. What a sight to behold: over 1000 priests in white robes, over 150 bishops and cardinals, and massive numbers of religious Sisters and Brothers from so many different orders! That, in itself, is enough to spark the love of the Church for Catholics. I am so grateful for these men and women who give their lives for us, especially amid those who judge all priests with those who have betrayed our trust. The numbers of religious Sisters and Brothers, in our midst, were edifying! We were able to run into a few of our local Sisters from Minnesota, but found out later that there were so many more local priests and religious from Minnesota in attendance that we didn't see due to the masses of people there.

Each day was filled with surprises of what they had in store for us! Being with fifty thousand plus people of all walks of life, all ages from newborn to elderly, including lots of teen groups and children from all over the country, all with joy and excitement to be there to celebrate our Catholic faith together was uplifting. You can imagine trying to accommodate this many people for food and parking and bathrooms and seating! But throughout it all, including waiting in lines sometimes, during the five days we were there, I never saw any anger or heard any negative words. Everyone was so courteous and kind. At the end of each night when we were all tired and ready to go back to our hotels, imagine the parking lots with that many people trying

to get out at the same time at 10:00 P.M. Even in the midst of that, people kindly let others in line and were patient about waiting, sometimes up to 30 minutes. Although many of us ate in the two buildings, the stadium and the Conference Center, I never saw garbage left on the floors or tables. The respect for each other and the facilities was heartening.

I loved seeing the teens. I loved seeing the families with little children, some in strollers or front carriers. There were people in wheelchairs, knee scooters, crutches, and some with obvious hardships with walking. I loved running into some of our friends from Minnesota and making new ones from all over the country.

The two biggest highlights for me were:

Watching the thousands of deacons process up to the altar at each Mass but especially at the final Mass on Sunday, being followed by over a thousand priests process behind them, with another hundred and fifty or more bishops and cardinals in their mitres processing behind. All of us were awestruck as we watched for twenty-five minutes while they all walked in four by four. The floor level front sections were reserved during Mass for them.

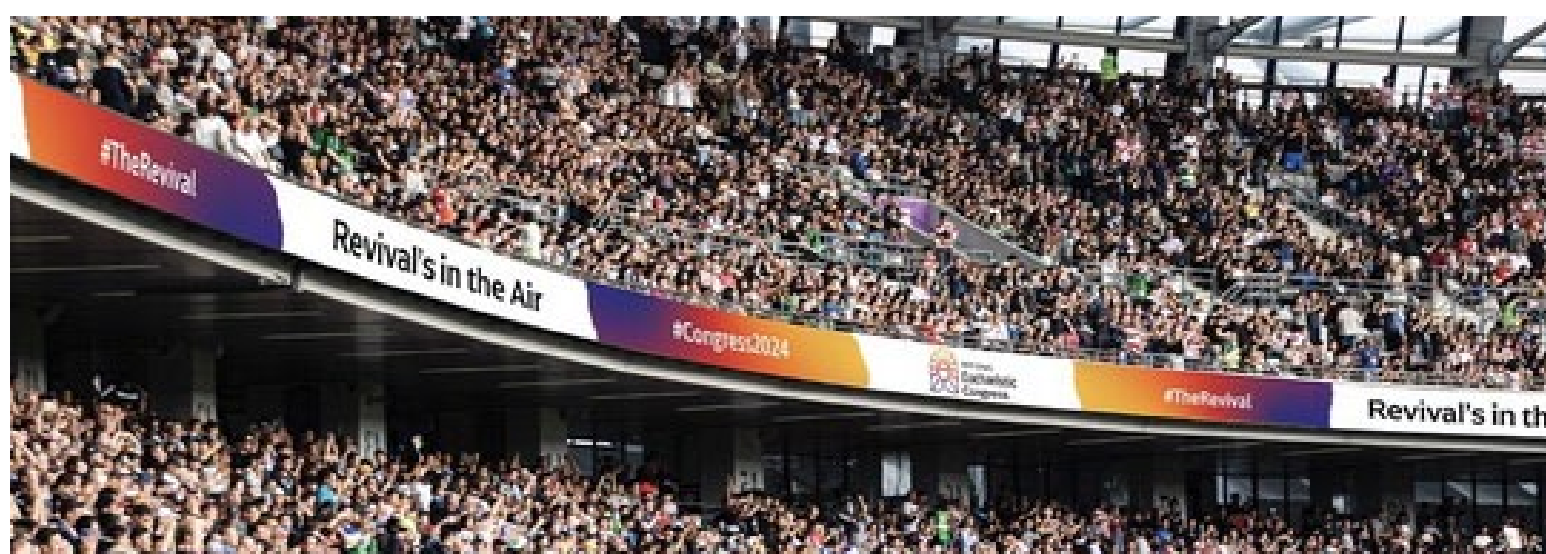


And that didn't even count the number of them on the altar concelebrating Mass. It included all the orders of Sisters in blues, black, brown, white and I even saw some lilac-colored habits. This was absolutely breathtaking! And such a confirmation of how many people there are in this country who are serving the Catholic Church.

The second highlight was the Eucharistic Procession, walking through the downtown streets for a mile each way. When we arrived at the Capitol building, the bishops and some of the priests climbed the fifty or so steps, with the Monstrance and held Benediction for all of us. The police of Indianapolis were very accommodating to us, closing off streets and manning the intersections during this three-hour trek. As we waited in line for an hour before we actually started walking, we happened to be next to a teen group from Rapid City, South Dakota. None of them were complaining or groaning about the heat or the wait. Instead, they were having contests to see who could maintain a plank for the longest time and other entertaining things. People would break into

song randomly, especially the Hispanic people, who sang with such exuberance and joy! As we walked, many of the pilgrims lined the streets on both sides, cheering us along, offering water to those who needed it. It was a great witness to the people there in Indianapolis. I'm certain we were a curious sight to behold!

The overall message was to REVIVE our love and belief in the Holy Eucharist and that we are all missionaries, called to go out and spread the Word to the world. This revival definitely set this crowd on fire! I will never forget this Eucharistic Congress! Of all the pilgrimages I've been on, including to the Holy Land, Rome, Assisi, Lourdes, Fatima, Camino, La Crosse and Champion, Wisconsin shrines, and others, this one rates right up there with the highest. It was a pilgrimage of a lifetime for me, and I will always be thankful to God for this opportunity to attend. At the end, the crowd went wild when Bishop Cozzens announced they are considering having another one in 2033 to celebrate the 2000 year anniversary of Jesus' birth. I hope it happens!



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 2024 Arthur A. Herkenhoff Award to a remarkable woman, Colleen Perfect.

Traditionally, the Board has made it a policy not to nominate a Board member for the Award. However, in this particular case, without Colleen being present, the Board voted unanimously to give the 2024 Award to Colleen.



Colleen with Award, Fr. Altier and fellow CPO Board members

Colleen Perfect has given countless hours of her time as President of CPO since September 1998. Colleen attends daily Mass and practices many holy devotions. She is a third-order Carmelite. Her support of the pro-life movement is unceasing. Twenty-six years of dedication to CPO deserves our acknowledgment and gratitude. How can one calculate the impact of providing an online source for Fr. Altier's sermons and educational classes all these years? May her treasure in heaven be immense!



*Colleen with the Art Herkenhoff family men and Fr. Altier
(all the Herkenhoff women were at a baby shower)*

Giving the Award to Colleen at this time is most fitting as was shown by the immediate and unanimous vote of the CPO Board. Colleen has been the driving force, even ahead of her time, in initiating and tackling some of the most dire issues affecting not only Catholics, but all of God's children whom parents have entrusted to the faith. In the short time new Board Members

have known Colleen, they have been impressed with her curious, yet feisty Irish charisma, unafraid to tackle issues to protect children and families of faith from the harmful influences penetrating Catholic schools for decades. Colleen exemplifies a sincere heart of love, gratitude, empathy and strength one can only aspire to! And her knowledge of the Church and the values it stands for is something we all should desire.

Colleen Perfect is a steadfast advocate for the Catholic faith, family, and values. She is unwavering in her commitment to keeping families informed about the latest developments within the school system and the Archdiocese. Colleen's dedication and determination make her an invaluable asset to the Catholic community.

Having this background and being so deserving of this Award, Colleen received the 19th Arthur A. Herkenhoff Award at the 25th CPO Annual Luncheon & Fundraiser held at the Southview Country Club in Saint Paul on October 26, 2024.