

THE TRADITIONAL ANGLICAN NEWS

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Fr. Robert's Remarks



FR. ROBERT MANSFIELD, SSC
VICAR GENERAL

Greetings; the Lord be with you!

I trust that you have had a wonderful and blessed Christmas season and Epiphanytide. For many of us it is undoubtedly a happy time filled with family visits and celebrations and this is great.

However, I never have a Christmas go by when I do not think for a few minutes of Stan and a tear comes to my eye.

Stan was one of our local characters—he would be well into in his 90s today; but he is long dead. I used to have coffee with him from time to time and listen to his stories. The second World War—he was a veteran—and our culture did not seem to have benefitted Stan very much.

I think of a Christmas about 35 or so years ago. Our kids were young and we were committed to leaving town on that Christmas morning that long ago year to visit my parents and then Joyce's parents. I had been on call for the X-Ray department on Christmas Eve and we had to drive downtown to drop off the beeper before we left for points several hours south.

We were stopped by the traffic lights at the main downtown intersection, the cold wind was blowing bits of paper, sand and other detritus. There was not very much in the way of snow down. There was no other traffic.

From my perspective, the scene looked a bit like the closing scene of Neville Shute's *On the Beach* except that the Shute scene had no people in it. The one difference was that Stan was walking along

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Fr. David Marriott, SSC: Organic Faith



FR. DAVID MARRIOTT, SSC

We are organic creatures, and that it is as organisms that we are called to observe and evaluate life.

But the problem is that as we attend school, college and university the basic education which we are provided is based on a very different world view: mechanical. An easy way to tell the difference is if we consider digestion: the machine is fed a nutrient – in the case of a vacuum cleaner, the fuel is probably electricity through a cable from the power outlet. The switch is turned on, the machine starts to work, and you start to push the vacuum into the part of the carpet that you want to clean. But as you do this, it may be that you had not noticed the dust cloths that someone had dropped just by the door. The vacuum did notice the cloths, and tried to swallow them. The motor whined a bit, the brush thing that whirls around stopped, and the motor quit! You have to fiddle around to take the bottom

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Fr. David Marriott, SSC: Organic Faith

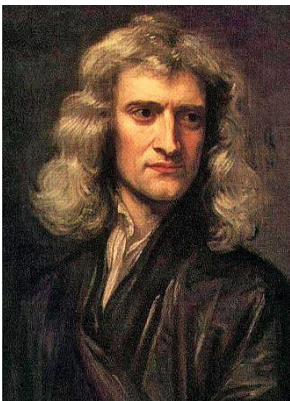
plate off the vacuum cleaner, try and dislodge the cloths, now tightly wound around the cylinder thing where the brushes are attached, and then put it all together again. Half an hour later, you can start the work again, but remember that you have an appointment to keep: so the machine is put away.

Consider the organic way of dealing with a similar problem. It's Thanksgiving, or Christmas: the two days of major family meals here in Canada. And it all looks so good: and after all the main courses, there is pie, and cake, and 'I wonder if Auntie Margaret made her famous trifle with all that sherry?' In the organism that is you, whilst your brain has been thinking all these happy thoughts in anticipation of the feast, another part of your brain has been listening to the conversation: it is an automatic message system that will copy all important messages to the gut if they involve food or drink; to the liver for drink; to the arms and legs if they involve the joy of running, or hiking, or exercise; and so on. Biofeedback.

For food intake, it is the gastrointestinal tract that is prepared for the onslaught. It does this by simple preparation to make sure that adequate supplies of energy are available to keep peristalsis active – so food will 'keep moving right along now, there's room at the back of the bus, you know!'; enough additional enzymes are at hand for the breakdown of nutrients in the small intestine; and the bowels are prepared for the extra expansionary duties that they have to provide. The point is that the organism acts in unison, so that even when the brain has just gone over the top and allowed the mouth to take in too much food for far too long, the organism will respond to try and restore itself to what we call homeostasis: the neutral condition of being in stable health.

Man has relied on many forms of mechanical governance: these all relate in principle to Newton's Third Law of motion:

'When one body exerts a force on a second body, the second body simultaneously exerts a force equal in magnitude and opposite in direction on the first body.'



SIR ISAAC NEWTON

AGE 47 (1689)

BY

GODFREY KNELLER

Ad Clerum: February 8, 2017



Please take note for your Calendars:

On February 8th, all of the District Clergy are to be meeting as a Clericus by teleconference with The Rt. Rev. Rocco Florenza, The Rt. Rev. Steven Scarlett, Fr. David Mulligan, & Archdeacon Bruce Bellmore

8:00 pm Atlantic, 7:00 pm Eastern, and 4:00 Pacific time.

More information to follow



Fr. David Marriott, SSC: Organic Faith

The point can be seen on the sports field: if a football player exerts force on another player, and the force exerted is equal for each of the players: they'll probably both fall down. But if the one player exerts more force than the second player, the second player will fall down first, tackled well! In our bodies, being prepared for the demands of the day as debated by the brain and nervous system will ensure that the very best results ensue: they may not be everything you'd want but they will be your best effort.

It is as your brains and nervous system are debating the coming events of the day that they can also involve other key assets: but these are assets which are often ignored or discounted as being of little value. They are devalued as being of little value because in the mechanical view of the world which is taken by so many human beings, for they do not 'fit' into the operational pattern of a machine. But they do fit very well into the operational pattern of an organism.

What is it that makes you happy? What is it that makes you sad? Why do you feel really good one day, and then another, you just feel down? Can you note down the difference?

The 'affective domain' of the organism is shared not only by humans, but also by many if not all animals. Ask a dog owner if a dog can smile. Emotion and feelings are common to living beings: indeed there is a common hypothesis that plants share this: Daniel Chamovitz, director of the Manna Center for Plant Biosciences at Tel Aviv University. A plant, he argues, can see, smell and feel. (www.scientificamerican.com/article/do-plants-think-daniel-chamovitz/)

In the human affective domain, there is a heightened development of conscience: whereas many of the responses deemed 'autonomic' are cellular responses to stimulus in our physiology, others incorporate concepts of fairness, truth, joy, sadness: the emotions. It is in this area that we can often find ourselves in deep water and far from the shore, where we need help to understand that which is beyond us: it is here that the human organism can seek help from beyond itself: it is here that we, baptised and faithful Christians, can come in contact with God's Will for our life through the mediation of our Soul working with the Holy Spirit which we have welcomed at Baptism, and who is always present for us whenever need arises.

The machine has no soul. The human creation of the Law, be that either Christian Mosaic law, or the law promulgated by other faiths, is based on a mechanical model or template. Man understands that a mechanical model is inadequate: it is why we have appeal courts, supreme courts, and yet we still argue that often they get it wrong! And the machine has no soul: it is only equipped to react to a certain set of circumstances in a specific way, with no feeling, no emotion, and no soul.

Man is an organism, man has a soul; has emotion; has desires: and dreams of what might be, and has the energy and strength to turn the dreams of what might be into what is. But the fulfilment of that organism can only be achieved when the full power of the being is enriched by the soul, which brings to vivid life the Holy Spirit in our life: to be our guide and companion not only in this life but for all eternity.

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Bonnie's Reflections: "VULNERABLE"



MRS. BONNIE IVEY

Christmas has passed; the beautiful celebration of the Incarnation of Christ. For some it was merely an orgy of spending. For others, it was a blanket of nostalgia pulled close to muffle the media's babble of disturbing news. To some, Christmas brought aching loneliness or despair. It brought death to some who went to worship Christ, because others deemed their worship an offense.

C.S. Lewis wrote "The Eternal Being who made everything and created the whole universe became not only a man, but (before that) a baby, and before *that*, a fetus in a Woman's body. If you want to get the hang of it, think how you would like to become a slug or a crab." How defenseless those little creatures are; fated to be eaten by something bigger. Why would God the Son be willing to become vulnerable?

Jesus was born homeless. He was carried off by night into a foreign land, to escape death. (Matt. 2:13-18) In his maturity, after being baptized by John the Baptist, Jesus went to the wilderness for a 40 day fast. While enduring physical weakness, he was subjected to attempted brainwashing by the devil. (John 4:1-11) In his home town, Nazareth, his sermon in the synagogue was first met with approval and wonder. But things turned ugly, and former neighbors became a mob. They tried to drag Jesus to a cliff and push him to his death. Somehow, he escaped. (Luke 4:29-30)

Jesus went from obscurity to popularity. He traveled around the Sea of Galilee, sailing on waters known for sudden storms. At least twice his disciples, seasoned commercial fishermen, feared they would all be drowned. Jesus led them from one town to another, staying briefly wherever they were made welcome. The urgency of his mission would compel him to move on. "Foxes have dens," he said, "and birds have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head." When people sought to become disciples, he warned them to count the cost of being his follower. This was no royal procession to a new day of glory on Earth in Jerusalem. His path led to the cross and he knew it.

Crowds turned up by thousands to hear him teach, but many came only to receive, or even just witness, a miracle. Often Jesus warned someone whom he had healed to keep quiet about it. Enthusiastic praise brought so many more seeking help that at last "there was no time even to eat a meal." (Mark 6:31) Jesus led his exhausted companions away from it all to a secluded place, but even there they were spotted, and thousands more people arrived.

Popularity led to conflict. Among the crowds there began to be spies, sent by various groups among the Jews who were uneasy. They asked awkward questions, trying to trip Jesus up so they could accuse him of fomenting rebellion, showing contempt for the priestly class, or worse; blasphemy. As controversy grew it became apparent that even some members of Jesus' family did not believe in him. They tried to provoke him into showing off his miracles in Jerusalem, perhaps hoping he would be exposed as a charlatan. (John 7:1-5) Controversy and plots swirled in Jerusalem, and a

AS THE FATHER HAS
 LOVED ME, SO HAVE I
 LOVED YOU. NOW
 REMAIN IN MY LOVE. IF
 YOU OBEY MY
 COMMANDS, YOU WILL
 REMAIN IN MY LOVE,
 JUST AS I HAVE OBEYED
 MY FATHER'S
 COMMANDS AND REMAIN
 IN HIS LOVE. I HAVE TOLD
 YOU THIS SO THAT **MY**
JOY MAY BE IN YOU AND
 THAT YOUR JOY MAY BE
 COMPLETE.

Bonnie's Reflections: "Don't You Know There's A War On?"

spectacular miracle that occurred in nearby Bethany sparked a decision that *something must be done about Jesus*.

Jesus had been called to the grave of his friend Lazarus, where Jesus said "I AM the resurrection and the life." He is not the *source* of these things. He IS these things. He called Lazarus back from the dead. The plot that followed this miracle included plans to destroy the evidence; to kill Lazarus, as well as Jesus. (John 11:45-50)

The Book of Common prayer offers us four versions, from Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, of the Passion of Jesus. Here the word "passion" refers to the whole grim story: envy, betrayal, lies, three rigged trials, false witnesses, and a cruel death. Why would the Son of God be willing to undergo this?

HE ENDURED IT FOR THE JOY THAT WAS SET BEFORE HIM.
(Hebrews 12:2)

HE BRINGS US TO GLORY AS CHILDREN OF GOD THROUGH
WHAT HE SUFFERED. (Hebrews 2:10)

HE SHARED OUR GRIEFS AND PAIN, SO HE IS WORTHY TO
WIPE AWAY OUR TEARS IN HEAVEN. (Rev. 3,4)



"... REPENTANCE
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Fr. Robert's Remarks

the centre line of the street, his old grey topcoat pulled up to keep the sand away from his face. He passed almost wraith-like through the intersection in front of us and kept on going. No restaurants were open; nothing would be open for Stan that Christmas.

I used to try to rationalise the situation and say to myself that perhaps I would have done things differently if that were today. I cannot change the past.

To-day, I shed a tear and offer a hopeful prayer for Stan that he met Jesus between the time I last saw him a few years later and when he died. Lord have mercy on me; Lord have mercy on Stan.

I am grateful for a few words that I read recently.

They seemed to fit as I thought back to Stan and also as I was preparing the *Devotions for Repentance* section of Fr. Vernon Staley's book, *The Christian Way* for this issue. They also seemed to fit with the fact that before the February issue of this newsletter comes out we shall be in pre-Lent and preparing to enter the penitential Lenten season. The words comprised a few brief paragraphs in Dr. Albert Rossi's book *Becoming a Healing Presence* which I have just recently reread and to which I have referred before in this column. Dr. Rossi wrote:

"The past is what it is. We can't change it. Someone said that repentance is giving up all hope of a better past— that is, the short-term and the long-

Fr. Robert's Remarks

term past. But we don't have to have a self-righteous attitude, telling ourselves that everything we did was proper, correct, and the best we could do. All we can do is pray for God's mercy and let go of the past.

We also often don't know what is best in the present moment. We pray, ask for guidance, and can easily be surprised at how dense we are and how judgmental of others we can be. In the present moment, I may not know if God wants me to plan a family outing for next week or use the time to prepare my classes.

Regarding the future, it's a no-brainer that there is nothing we can be certain about. We might not get a next breath; we might have no future. But, as humans, we are sorely tempted to worry about future events. Lord, have mercy, and He does.”*

Is it not wonderful that the Lord does have mercy on us! I do not need to remind you again that the essence of God's mercy is his love., but I will and shall probably do so again. This brings us back to the Christmas gift God gave to us—his Son who reveals the Father to us. “God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son...” Read and understand the word “mercy” as we use it in the Prayer Book in light of this.

Another writer, a priest/psychologist, Fr. David Fontes, wrote, “When we say we love someone, in one sense, we are trying to convey that the person is of extraordinary value and importance to us.” This is what God has been doing all along. Fr. Fontes also wrote in his book *In The Eyes Of Your Creator* that in his counselling practice,

“I have discovered over these years that most people tend to come for counseling because they are wrestling with one of two issues, or perhaps both. The first issue is that they don't know in the deepest core of their being—their heart—how truly valuable they are in the eyes of their Creator. The second issue they often wrestle with is how to truly show unconditional value toward others, especially those who have treated them poorly in the past, even those whom they see as enemies.”

That is what Christmas is and has always been about.

Christmas without the Cross can degenerate into pure sentimentality and the Cross without the Incarnation is just another human being killed; but, together they combine to show you how valuable YOU are “In The Eyes Of Your Creator”.

Til next month, God Bless!



* page 146-7, Rossi, Albert S.. Becoming a Healing Presence (Ancient Faith Publishing. Kindle Edition.

** page 11 , Fontes, David L., In The Eyes Of Your Creator. p.11



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The Rev. Vernon Staley: The Christian Way—Serialized



The Rev. Vernon
Staley

Devotions for Repentance.

The goodness of God leadeth thee to Repentance.

SELF-EXAMINATION.

A prayer before examination of conscience.

O LORD Jesus Christ, my Advocate with the Father, before Whose throne I must one day appear to give an exact account of my whole life ; enlighten my mind by Thy Holy Spirit, and give me an humble and contrite heart, that I may see wherein I have offended Thee, and judge myself now with such justice, that then Thou mayest judge me with mercy and pity. Amen.

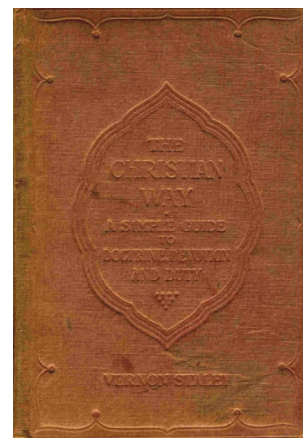
Upon your knees, read slowly and thoughtfully the following form of self-examination. Write down the sins which you have committed, and the number of times you have been guilty of the greatest sins.

Form of. Self-examination.

CONCERNING GOD. Have I omitted morning or evening prayer, prayed thoughtlessly? have I spent Sunday badly, stayed away from church and Communion without due cause? Have I practised self-denial on fasting days? Have I given alms according as God has blessed me? Have I gambled? Have I used God's Name lightly, spoken irreverently of holy things, been untruthful or deceitful? Have I done my best? Have I failed in my duty for fear of man, through self-interest or love of the world? Have I been zealous for God's honour, reproving sinners when it was my duty, using opportunities of advancing Christ's kingdom amongst men? Have I borne with patience and resignation the troubles which God has permitted? Have I promptly put out of my heart thoughts of unbelief, distrust of God, presumption, or despair? Is my religion a reality?

CONCERNING MY NEIGHBOURS. Have I disobeyed my parents and superiors, been disrespectful to them? Have I been conceited and rebellious when told of my faults? Have I been true and just in my dealings with others? Have I always spoken the truth? Have I taken anything which does not belong to me? Have I hurt anyone by word or deed, by bad example, by not restraining others from sin? Have I taken pleasure in hearing ill of others? Have I taken away their good name, spread evil reports, made mischief between others? Have I judged others harshly, and not made the best of them? Have I borne with the infirmities and imperfections of others, and made allowances for them? Have I provoked others, been unjust to those under me? Have I apologised to others when I have been in the wrong? Have I been unforgiving? Have I recognised my responsibility to those younger than myself, and to those placed under my care? Have I used my influence aright? Do I commend religion to others?

CONCERNING MYSELF. Have I loved the praise of men more than the praise of God? Have I taken credit for what was not my due? Have I been mean, or acted from low and selfish motives? Have I been obstinate, in refusing good advice, in taking my own way? Have I been self-assertive? Have I sulked? Have I been lazy, idle, or lux-



The Rev. Vernon Staley: The Christian Way

urious? Have I read bad books? Have I given way to impurity in thought, word, or deed? Have I set a guard on my tongue, and kept my words in check? Have I been immoderate *in* food, drink, dress, or recreation? Have I spent too much upon myself? Have I lost command of myself in any way? Have I gone with companions or to places which are dangerous to me? Does my religion make me happy?

You may not be able to go through all this form of self-examination at one time. Whenever you have made a part of your self-examination, say as

AN ACT OF SORROW.

O MY God, I repent with all my heart for having thus offended Thee, Who art infinitely good, loving, and gracious; therefore I will henceforth love thee above all things. Forgive, Almighty God, forgive, and have not my sins in remembrance. By the help of Thy grace, I purpose never more to offend thee wilfully; but, confessing my sins, I will trust in Thy infinite mercy, and in the merits of the passion and death of Thy Son Jesus Christ. Amen.

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CONSIDERATION TO EXCITE CONTRITION.

To every contrite sinner, sin is a painful wound ; therefore, to confess without contrition, is to acknowledge the wound without feeling the pain. Contrition is godly sorrow—sorrow according to God—which flows from a true view of sin in its relation to God. When the heart is not hardened, to see sin as God sees it, is to be contrite for sin.

It is upon the cross that God teaches us what He thinks of sin, and how sin affects Him. The death of Jesus Christ was the result of sin. Sin, if it were possible, would destroy God. The sins which I have committed have been so many attempts to put God out of the way. Sin is a fearful thing. By my sins I have taken my own way in spite of God, and so denied Him. Sin is awful rebellion against Almighty God. By my sins I have joined in the wicked cry, "Away with Him, crucify Him." By my sins I have driven in the nails which pierced my Lord, and held Him to the cross. My sins formed part of the dense cloud which hid the face of God from Jesus, when He cried in His supreme agony, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" God, because He is holy, is bound to hate sin ; and, if I am contrite, I shall hate sin too, and I shall shew my hatred of my sins by confessing and forsaking them.

Upon the cross God teaches not only His hatred of sin, but also His love for sinners. Yes; whilst He hates the sin, He loves the Penitent sinner with a love stronger than death. "Inscribed upon the cross I see, in shining letters, God is love." In Christ crucified, we read the vastness of the Divine love. "God commendeth His love towards us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." God's love, which the cross manifests, has ever been over me, even when I sinned against Him: and all my sin has been in spite of His love. By my sins, I have again and again slighted and cast back the wondrous love of God. My sins have been so many blows



The Rev. Vernon Staley: The Christian Way

aimed at the heart of God. God's great love is wounded by sin. Oh, the wretched heartlessness of my sins against so good and loving a Father! It is the thought of the love against which I have so often sinned, which should bring me to my knees before God in contrite confession. Say:

Lord Jesus, make me to hate my sins,
Because they crucified Thee.
Lord Jesus, make me to love Thee,
As Thou hast loved me.

A CONFESSION OF SINS.

ALMIGHTY God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Maker of all things, Judge of all men; I acknowledge and bewail my manifold sins and wickedness, which I, from time to time, most grievously have committed, by thought...word...and deed...against Thy Divine Majesty, provoking most justly Thy wrath and indignation against me. I do earnestly repent, and am heartily sorry for these my misdoings ; the remembrance of them is grievous unto me ; the burden of them is intolerable. Have mercy upon me, have mercy upon me, most merciful Father ; for Thy Son our Lord Jesus Christ's sake, forgive me all that is past : and grant that I may ever hereafter serve and please Thee in newness of life, to the honour and glory of Thy Name ; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

You may add Psalm 51.

RESOLUTION OF AMENDMENT.

O MY God, I am resolved, with the help of Thy grace, to be more watchful over myself, to amend my failings, and to fulfil Thy law. Look down on me with the eyes of Thy mercy, O God, and blot out my sins, and strengthen me. Forgive me what is past, and through Thine infinite goodness, keep me by Thy grace from all my failings for the time to come; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

SACRAMENTAL CONFESSION.

FORM OF CONFESSION BEFORE A PRIEST.

If you desire to make your confession before a priest, the following are the words which you should use as you kneel beside him in church.

✠IN the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

I CONFESS to God the Father Almighty, to His only begotten Son Jesus Christ, and to God the Holy Ghost, and before you His priest, that I have sinned exceedingly in thought, word, and deed, by my own most grievous fault ; especially I confess that I have committed these sins,...

Here name all the sins you have to confess. When you have told all that you can remember, say :

“GOD'S
GREAT LOVE
IS WOUNDED
BY SIN.”

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For these and all my other sins which I cannot now remember, I am heartily sorry, I firmly purpose amendment ; I most humbly ask pardon of God ; and of you, His priest, I beg for penance, advice, and absolution : wherefore I pray God the Father Almighty, His only begotten Son Jesus Christ, and God the Holy Ghost, to have mercy upon me, and you, my father, to pray for me to the Lord our God. Amen.

Then wait for advice, and Absolution if it be given to you. Listen carefully to all that the Priest says. When he pronounces Absolution, bow your head and receive humbly the message which God gives by his mouth.

THANKSGIVING FOR ABSOLUTION.

O MOST merciful God, Who dost wholly put away the sins of those who truly repent, I pray Thee to look upon me, Thy unworthy servant, and accept my confession, for Thy mercies' sake. I thank Thee, O God and Father, that Thou hast mercifully forgiven me all my sins. Give me grace to make a new beginning. Keep me from falling back. Help me to go forward, and strengthen and uphold me to the end; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

You may add Psalm 103.

Remember that Amendment of life is a necessary part of repentance, and that it is the test of a true repentance. Be careful to perform the penance which has been given you.

Continued next month



St. Bernard of Clairvaux: On Loving God—Serialized



**ST. BERNARD OF
CLAIRVAUX**

1090–20/08/1153

Chapter VI. A brief summary

Admit that God deserves to be loved very much, yea, boundlessly, because He loved us first, He infinite and we nothing, loved us, miserable sinners, with a love so great and so free. This is why I said at the beginning that the measure of our love to God is to love immeasurably. For since our love is toward God, who is infinite and immeasurable, how can we bound or limit the love we owe Him? Besides, our love is not a gift but a debt. And since it is the Godhead who loves us, Himself boundless, eternal, supreme love, of whose greatness there is no end, yea, and His wisdom is infinite, whose peace passeth all understanding; since it is He who loves us, I say, can we think of repaying Him grudgingly? 'I will love Thee, O Lord, my strength.

The Lord is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer, my God, my strength, in whom I will trust' (Ps. 18:1f). He is all that I need, all that I long for. My God and my help, I will love Thee for Thy great goodness; not so much as I might, surely, but as much as I

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St. Bernard of Clairvaux: On Loving God

can. I cannot love Thee as Thou deservest to be loved, for I cannot love Thee more than my own feebleness permits. I will love Thee more when Thou deemest me worthy to receive greater capacity for loving; yet never so perfectly as Thou hast deserved of me. 'Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in Thy book all my members were written' (Ps. 139:16). Yet Thou recordest in that book all who do what they can, even though they cannot do what they ought. Surely I have said enough to show how God should be loved and why. But who has felt, who can know, who express, how much we should love him.

Chapter VII. Of love toward God not without reward: and how the hunger of man's heart cannot be satisfied with earthly things

And now let us consider what profit we shall have from loving God. Even though our knowledge of this is imperfect, still that is better than to ignore it altogether. I have already said (when it was a question of wherefore and in what manner God should be loved) that there was a double reason constraining us: His right and our advantage. Having written as best I can, though unworthily, of God's right to be loved. I have still to treat of the recompense which that love brings. For although God would be loved without respect of reward, yet He wills not to leave love unrewarded. True charity cannot be left destitute, even though she is unselfish and seeketh not her own (I Cor. 13:5). Love is an affection of the soul, not a contract: it cannot rise from a mere agreement, nor is it so to be gained. It is spontaneous in its origin and impulse; and true love is its own satisfaction. It has its reward; but that reward is the object beloved. For whatever you seem to love, if it is on account of something else, what you do really love is that something else, not the apparent object of desire. St. Paul did not preach the Gospel that he might earn his bread; he ate that he might be strengthened for his ministry. What he loved was not bread, but the Gospel. True love does not demand a reward, but it deserves one. Surely no one offers to pay for love; yet some recompense is due to one who loves, and if his love endures he will doubtless receive it.

On a lower plane of action, it is the reluctant, not the eager, whom we urge by promises of reward. Who would think of paying a man to do what he was yearning to do already? For instance no one would hire a hungry man to eat, or a thirsty man to drink, or a mother to nurse her own child. Who would think of bribing a farmer to dress his own vineyard, or to dig about his orchard, or to rebuild his house? So, all the more, one who loves God truly asks no other recompense than God Himself; for if he should demand anything else it would be the prize that he loved and not God.

It is natural for a man to desire what he reckons better than that which he has already, and be satisfied with nothing which lacks that special quality which he misses. Thus, if it is for her beauty that he loves his wife, he will cast longing eyes after a fairer woman. If he is clad in a rich garment, he will covet a costlier one; and no matter how rich he may be he will envy a man richer than himself. Do we not see people every day, endowed with vast estates, who keep on joining field to field, dreaming of wider boundaries for their lands? Those who dwell in palaces are ever adding house to house, continually building

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ENED FOR HIS
MINISTRY.

St. Bernard of Clairvaux: On Loving God

REST IS IN HIM
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up and tearing down, remodeling and changing. Men in high places are driven by insatiable ambition to clutch at still greater prizes. And nowhere is there any final satisfaction, because nothing there can be defined as absolutely the best or highest. But it is natural that nothing should content a man's desires but the very best, as he reckons it. Is it not, then, mad folly always to be craving for things which can never quiet our longings, much less satisfy them? No matter how many such things one has, he is always lusting after what he has not; never at peace, he sighs for new possessions. Discontented, he spends himself in fruitless toil, and finds only weariness in the evanescent and unreal pleasures of the world. In his greediness, he counts all that he has clutched as nothing in comparison with what is beyond his grasp, and loses all pleasure in his actual possessions by longing after what he has not, yet covets. No man can ever hope to own all things. Even the little one does possess is got only with toil and is held in fear; since each is certain to lose what he hath when God's day, appointed though unrevealed, shall come. But the perverted will struggles towards the ultimate good by devious ways, yearning after satisfaction, yet led astray by vanity and deceived by wickedness. Ah, if you wish to attain to the consummation of all desire, so that nothing unfulfilled will be left, why weary yourself with fruitless efforts, running hither and thither, only to die long before the goal is reached?

It is so that these impious ones wander in a circle, longing after something to gratify their yearnings, yet madly rejecting that which alone can bring them to their desired end, not by exhaustion but by attainment. They wear themselves out in vain travail, without reaching their blessed consummation, because they delight in creatures, not in the Creator. They want to traverse creation, trying all things one by one, rather than think of coming to Him who is Lord of all. And if their utmost longing were realized, so that they should have all the world for their own, yet without possessing Him who is the Author of all being, then the same law of their desires would make them condemn what they had and restlessly seek Him whom they still lacked, that is, God Himself. Rest is in Him alone. Man knows no peace in the world; but he has no disturbance when he is with God. And so the soul says with confidence, 'Whom have I in heaven but Thee; and there is none upon earth that I desire in comparison of Thee. God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever. It is good for me to hold me fast by God, to put my trust in the Lord God' (Ps. 73:25ff). Even by this way one would eventually come to God, if only he might have time to test all lesser goods in turn.

But life is too short, strength too feeble, and competitors too many, for that course to be practicable. One could never reach the end, though he were to weary himself with the long effort and fruitless toil of testing everything that might seem desirable. It would be far easier and better to make the assay in imagination rather than in experiment. For the mind is swifter in operation and keener in discrimination than the bodily senses, to this very purpose that it may go before the sensuous affections so that they may cleave to nothing which the mind has found worthless. And so it is written, 'Prove all things: hold fast that which is good' (I Thess. 5:21). Which is to say that right judgment should prepare the way for the heart. Otherwise we may not ascend into the hill of the Lord nor rise

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up in His holy place (Ps. 24:3). We should have no profit in possessing a rational mind if we were to follow the impulse of the senses, like brute beasts, with no regard at all to reason. Those whom reason does not guide in their course may indeed run, but not in the appointed race-track, neglecting the apostolic counsel, 'So run that ye may obtain'. For how could they obtain the prize who put that last of all in their endeavor and run round after everything else first?

But as for the righteous man, it is not so with him. He remembers the condemnation pronounced on the multitude who wander after vanity, who travel the broad way that leads to death (Matt. 7:13); and he chooses the King's highway, turning aside neither to the right hand nor to the left (Num. 20:17), even as the prophet saith, 'The way of the just is uprightness (Isa. 26:7). Warned by wholesome counsel he shuns the perilous road, and heeds the direction that shortens the search, forbidding covetousness and commanding that he sell all that he hath and give to the poor (Matt. 19:21). Blessed, truly, are the poor, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven (Matt. 5:3). They which run in a race, run all, but distinction is made among the racers. 'The Lord knoweth the way of the righteous: and the way of the ungodly shall perish' (Ps. 1:6). 'A small thing that the righteous hath is better than great riches of the ungodly' (Ps. 37:16). Even as the Preacher saith, and the fool discovereth, 'He that loveth silver shall not be satisfied with silver' (Eccles. 5:10). But Christ saith, 'Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled' (Matt. 5:6). Righteousness is the natural and essential food of the soul, which can no more be satisfied by earthly treasures than the hunger of the body can be satisfied by air. If you should see a starving man standing with mouth open to the wind, inhaling draughts of air as if in hope of gratifying his hunger, you would think him lunatic. But it is no less foolish to imagine that the soul can be satisfied with worldly things which only inflate it without feeding it. What have spiritual gifts to do with carnal appetites, or carnal with spiritual? Praise the Lord, O my soul: who satisfieth thy mouth with good things (Ps. 103:1ff). He bestows bounty immeasurable; He provokes thee to good, He preserves thee in goodness; He prevents, He sustains, He fills thee. He moves thee to longing, and it is He for whom thou longest.

“THE MOTIVE
FOR LOVING
GOD IS GOD
HIMSELF”

I have said already that the motive for loving God is God Himself. And I spoke truly, for He is as well the efficient cause as the final object of our love. He gives the occasion for love, He creates the affection, He brings the desire to good effect. He is such that love to Him is a natural due; and so hope in Him is natural, since our present love would be vain did we not hope to love Him perfectly some day. Our love is prepared and rewarded by His. He loves us first, out of His great tenderness; then we are bound to repay Him with love; and we are permitted to cherish exultant hopes in Him. 'He is rich unto all that call upon Him' (Rom. 10:12), yet He has no gift for them better than Himself. He gives Himself as prize and reward: He is the refreshment of holy soul, the ransom of those in captivity. 'The Lord is good unto them that wait for Him' (Lam. 3:25). What will He be then to those who gain His presence? But here is a paradox, that no one can seek the Lord who has not already found Him. It is Thy will, O God, to be found that Thou mayest be sought, to be sought that Thou mayest the more truly be found. But though Thou canst be sought and found, Thou canst not be forestalled. For if we say, 'Early shall my prayer

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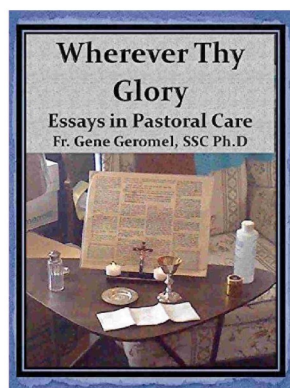
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come before Thee' (Ps. 88:13), yet doubtless all prayer would be lukewarm unless it was animated by Thine inspiration.

We have spoken of the consummation of love towards God: now to consider whence such love begins.



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