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ST. THOMAS MORE SOCIETY OF ORANGE COUNTY

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"I Didn't Know He
Was Catholic"
GREGORY WEILER



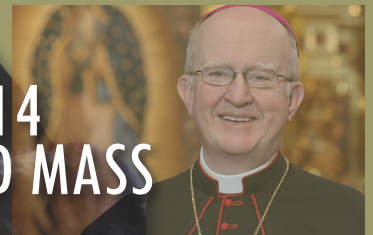
Not You, But I
Am Their Judge
JOHN J. FLYNN III



God's Silence
BISHOP NORMAN
McFARLAND



2014
RED MASS



"I DIDN'T KNOW HE WAS CATHOLIC"



In a recent discussion regarding a prominent well-respected attorney who had recently died (not "passed away" – nobody just passes away), I was struck by a judge who said about the deceased: "I didn't know he was Catholic."

WOW. To live one's entire life—school, family, legal career—and have the community not know of your animating force?

If I die today, what will people say? What will Our Dear Lord say? "Good and faithful servant" or "I didn't know he was Catholic"?

There is the old cliché: If you were arrested for being Christian would there be enough evidence to convict you? Most of us have plenty of evidence for conviction of sinning (our spouses are probably prime witnesses). Therein is our challenge, to bear witness to the goodness of a personal God, to a relationship with Him that makes us quicker repenters, quicker forgivers and consistent lovers of our brothers and sisters.

To be known as a Catholic, and to be public about it in a quietly authentic way, should be our goal, the object of our prayers. Once again, only possible by the Grace attendant to a sacramental life, steeped in the Word, a life of prayer and service. I pray that on our deaths we hear:

"I knew him/her to BE a strong Catholic." PAX ~ GNW

Gregory N. Weiler is a partner at Palmieri, Tyler, Wiener, Wilhelm & Waldron LLP in Irvine.

ad.
veritatem

The St. Thomas More Society of Orange County is an independent organization sponsored by lawyers and judges who are practicing members of the Roman Catholic Church.

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IDEALS OF ST. THOMAS MORE

The legal profession is a high calling with corresponding responsibilities to society. The principal objective of every lawyer is to promote and seek justice. Catholic Lawyers pursue the truth in both their spiritual and professional lives. The duty of a Catholic lawyer is to remain faithful to Jesus Christ, His Church and its teachings at all times despite the personal consequences.

THE OBJECTIVES OF STMS

- encouraging its members to live a Christian life and apply the principles and ideals exemplified by St. Thomas More in their lives and encourage same in the legal profession.
- promoting and foster high ethical principals in the legal profession generally and, in particular, in the community of Catholic lawyers.
- assisting in the spiritual growth of its members.
- encouraging interfaith understanding and brotherhood.
- sponsoring the annual Red Mass for elected and appointed officials and

members of the legal profession.

MEMBERSHIP IN STMS

Each member of the Society is committed to:

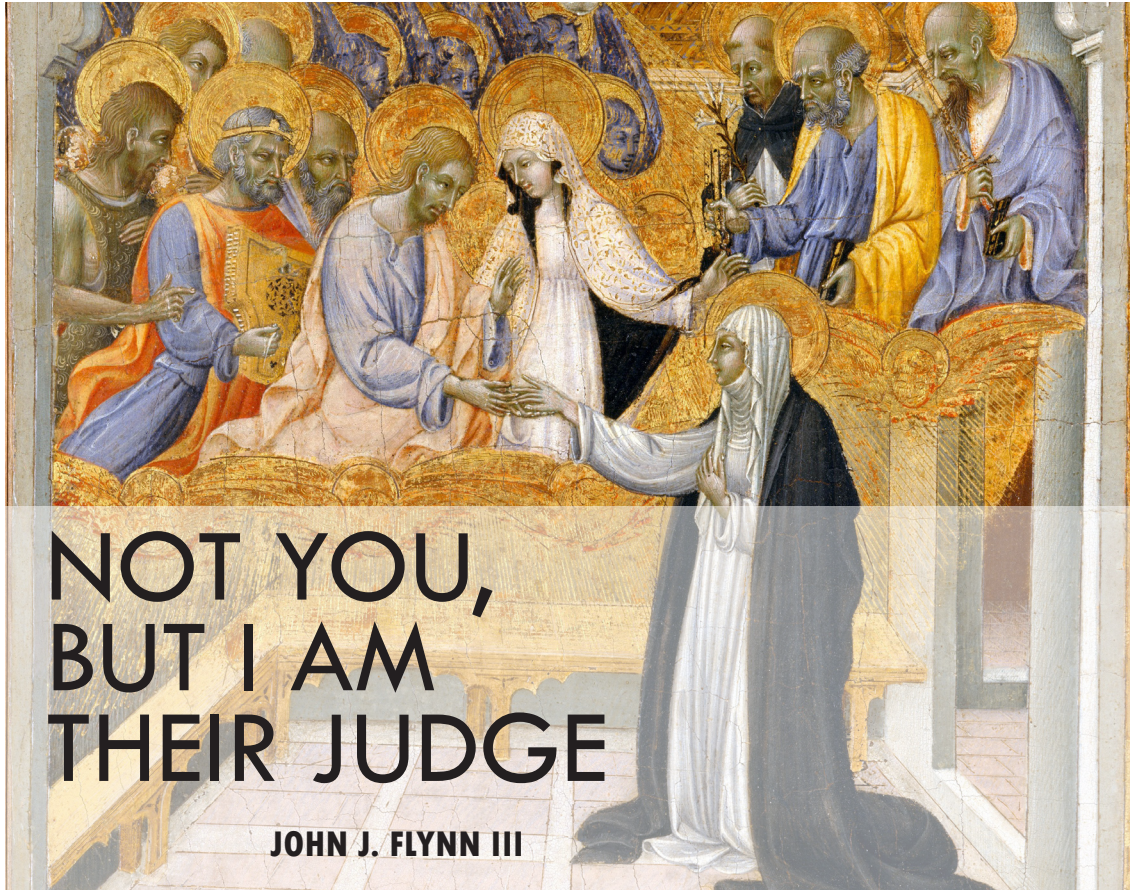
- strive to live an exemplary Christian life and apply the principles and ideals exemplified by St. Thomas More in their daily lives and encourage same in the legal profession.
- attend monthly meeting of the Society and provide personal support to the St. Thomas More Society.
- attend and support the Red Mass.

LAWYER'S PRAYER

Give me the grace, Good Lord,
to set the world at naught;
to set my mind fast upon thee
and not to hang upon the blast of men's
mouths;
to be content to be solitary;
not to long for worldly company
but utterly to cast off the world
and rid my mind of the business
thereof.

• ST. THOMAS MORE

EDITOR@STTHOMASMORE.NET



"Giovanni di Paolo The Mystic Marriage of Saint Catherine of Siena," by Giovanni di Paolo - Unknown.
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Pride is blind to itself. Hence, the one in the grip of pride is unmoved to repent and reform. Though there are traces of pride in every sin, no other sin is quite so blinding, or so dangerous. And when the sin of pride infects a soul who professes the faith, the consequences are dangerous not only to the sinner: The soul is no longer only in the danger of persisting in the sin, but now also in danger of giving scandal, since the face of the Lord is so badly disfigured by spiritual pride and self-righteousness.

Just a few years before her death in 1380, St. Catherine of Siena wrote the profoundly illuminating spiritual classic, *The Dialogue*, in which Catherine related insights provided to her by God the Father. On the response to the sins of others, the Father told Catherine:

“When you cannot see clearly and openly whether the sin is deadly, you must not pass judgment in your mind, but be concerned only about my will for that person. And if you do see it, *you must respond not with judgment but with holy compassion*. In this way you obtain perfect purity, for if you act in this way your spirit will not be scandalized either in me

or in your neighbors. For you cast contempt on your neighbors when you pay attention to their ill will towards you rather than my will for them. *Such contempt and scandal alienates the soul from me, blocks her perfection, and to some extent deprives her of grace — in proportion to the seriousness of the contempt and hatred she has conceived for her neighbor because of her judgmental thoughts.*

So if you would attain the purity you ask of me, there are three principal things you must do. You must be united with me in loving affection, bearing in your memory the blessings you have received from me. With the eye of your understanding you must see my affectionate charity, how unspeakably much I love you. And where the human will is concerned, you must consider my will rather than people’s evil intentions, *for I am their judge — not you, but I*. If you do this, all perfection will be yours. This, if you remember well, is the teaching my Truth [Jesus, in

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 7)

*You are
invited.*

RED MASS

Join us
October 6, 2014



We are honored to welcome Bishop Kevin Vann to his second Red Mass in Orange County and seek his blessing on the dedication and mission of our local legal community.

Red Mass begins at 6:00 p.m.
The complimentary dinner reception is at 7:00 p.m.

Holy Family Cathedral
566 S. Glassell St
Orange, CA 92866
(714) 639-2900

Questions about Red Mass should be directed to Bill Malecki at bmalecki@yahoo.com

Sponsorship opportunities for Red Mass should be directed to Fabio Cabezas at fabiocabezas@cox.net

CALENDAR

Wednesday, August 20, 12 p.m.
Monthly lunch meeting.

DEFENDING THE CHURCH TEACHING ON MARRIAGE AND FAMILY

Speaker: Fr. Sebastian Walshe

As lawyers, we zealously defend and fight for our clients and their worthy causes—and hopefully make a buck. Are we half as zealous when it comes to defending the Truth, especially when the world may label us “bigots” or “haters” - and likely cost us a buck?

Jesus said, “I am the way, the truth, and the life.” (John 14:6) And, “Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.” (Matthew 24:35) The Truth is immutable, as is the Church teaching on marriage and the family. When we defend marriage and the family, we defend the Truth; we defend Jesus Christ.

If that makes you a “bigot” or “hater,” then: “Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.” (Matthew 5:11-12) St. Thomas More defended the Truth, and whilst he lost his job—and his noggin—he gained the Beatific Vision. Devictus vincit!

• • •

Originally from Pasadena, Fr. Sebastian Walshe is a Norbertine Canon of the Abbey of St. Michael in the Diocese of Orange, California, where he is a professor of philosophy for the seminary program.

After completing his studies at Thomas Aquinas College in California, he continued studies at The Catholic University of America in Washington D.C., receiving a license in Philosophy. Later, he attended the Pontifical University of St. Thomas at Rome (the Angelicum) where he received a Masters in Sacred Theology and a Doctorate in Philosophy.

Sunday, August 24, 8-11 a.m.
Feed the hungry at Isaiah House.

ISAIAH HOUSE · 316 S. CYPRESS ST.
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GOD'S SILENCE

BISHOP NORMAN MCFARLAND

(ORIGINALLY PRINTED IN JULY 2002 -
SIGNPOSTS ON THE WAY)



Shusaku Endo (1923-1996) is widely regarded as Japan's foremost novelist of the 20th century, a very unique distinction insofar as he was not just a writer who happened to be a Catholic, but "a Catholic writer" in the cast of Graham Greene, Walker Percy and George Bernanos, in a country with a cultural tradition not at all oriented toward a Westernized Christianity extracted out of Europe. The conflict between East and West, especially in its relationship to Christianity, was the vexatious problem that preoccupied Endo.

His literary output was largely rooted in the struggle that seemed to him endemic to the living out of one's faith. In reading his novels, I distinctly heard in them echoes of the mysterious Genesis story of Jacob wrestling God by the waters of Jabbok, refusing to let go throughout the night (32:23-33). There was the perception that unless, like Jacob, one is willing to wrestle until dawn and look with bloodshot eyes into the face of God saying, "I will not let you go until you bless me," our faith will be immature if not anemic. Endo recognized in his own struggle "the confrontation of my Catholic self with the self that lies underneath," what he called "the mud swamp Japanese in me."

For Endo saw that, in the orchestration of humanity, "Catholicism is not a solo, but a symphony.... If I have trust in

Catholicism, it is because I find in it much more possibility than in any other religion for presenting the full symphony of humanity. The other religions have almost no fullness; they have but solo parts. Only Catholicism can present the full symphony. And unless there is in the symphony a part that corresponds to Japan's mud swamp, it cannot be a real religion. What exactly this part is – that is what I want to find out."

In pursuit of his quest amid his personal faith struggles, Endo returns repeatedly in many of his novels and short stories to the relentless, brutal torture of Christians in 17th century Japan in an attempt to get them to apostatize, and to suppress Christianity completely. He combines vivid historical detail with chilling descriptions of the huge cost of remaining faithful to the Lord, a price scarcely equaled in the entire history of religious persecution.

His classic novel on the theme, *Silence*, jarred me more profoundly than any book I have ever read. In a factual historical setting, the protagonist of the story is a young Portuguese priest who travels to Japan to minister to the underground Church, fully anticipating and willing to embrace martyrdom. He is nourished by the memory of a treasured face of Christ, full of "vigor and strength," an image that expresses to him the certainty of God's presence

in his mission. But he is confronted only with God's silence in the extreme agony of captured believers, and he suffers "the feeling that while men raise their voices in anguish, God remains with folded arms, silent."

The silence becomes only louder when the priest himself is captured -- not to be racked and killed, but forced to watch the hideous torture of his fellow Christians and listen to their cries, cries he is assured he can bring to a stop by a simple external act: to apostatize by trampling on a *fumie*, an image of Christ, "no longer serenely triumphant, but ugly ... worn down and hollow." [In Ueno Museum in Tokyo one can still see *fumie* "rubbed flat and shinning by the hundreds of feet that ached with pain ... while they trampled on someone whom their hearts loved" – Translator's Preface] While watching a group of Japanese Christians being tortured mercilessly, one of the novel's characters sobs, "Certainly Christ would have apostatized for them!"

Two questions jump out at the one who dares to read this novel – and it is not for everyone. Surely we should sense a warning about being too presumptuous concerning the depth of our own faith (Saint Paul had some sharp things to say in this regard) or being too glib in its articulation (Christ took Peter to task for that). As we sit in

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 6)

GOD'S SILENCE

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5)

the comfort of our homes, maybe we ought to think hard about what God could have in store for us before we shed these mortal coils, and pray always for the strength to remain faithful no matter what. Or are we unaware that the Church has had in the last one hundred years more martyrs than in all previous centuries combined? But some Catholics today are quoted as saying that the Church's present crisis is too much for them and they want out!

Then there is the question of God's seeming unresponsiveness in the face of such assurances by Jesus as, "Ask, and you will receive. Seek, and you will find. Knock and it will be opened to you" (Matt. 7:7); "...if two of you join your voices on earth to pray for anything whatever, it shall be granted you by my Father in heaven" (Matt. 19:19). Pope John Paul, in his yearlong series of addresses on the Psalms that make up part of the Liturgy of the Hours, addressed this mystery in several of his general-audience meditations, speaking of the anguish that sometimes touches the lives of believers. Reflecting on Psalm 76 -- and noting that "Just as dark days appear, in which the sky is covered with clouds threatening a storm, so our life experiences days full of tears and fear" -- he says, "Here we have before us, first of all, the [Psalmist's] lamentation on

the sad present and on God's silence. A cry for help is directed to a seemingly mute heaven, the hands are raised in supplication, the heart is overwhelmed by desolation ... The Psalmist wonders why the Lord ever rejects him, why He has changed His appearance and action."

The Holy Father in later continuing the same subject with a meditation on Psalm 79, remarks that the Lord is invoked there by the Psalmist as Shepherd of Israel and "leads His flock, namely, His people, and protects them from dangers. That is what He did during the desert crossing. Now, however, he seems absent, almost asleep or indifferent. He offers the flock which he was to lead and nourish only the bread of tears. The enemies laugh at this humiliated and offended people; yet God does not seem to be moved, to be 'stirred up,' nor does he reveal His power, arrayed to defend the victims of violence and oppression."

"However," Pope John Paul says, "there are reasons for hope. And what emerges from the second part of the supplication is like a hymn destined to propose again the courageous confirmation of one's faith even in the dark day of pain. One sings about the salvation of the past, which had its epiphany of light in creation and in deliverance from the slavery of Egypt. The bitter present is illuminated by the past salvific experience, which is a seed planted in history: it is not dead but only buried, and will sprout later."

Two concluding notes. On the last

page of *Silence*, the young priest who risks his life to bring Christianity to the Japanese, but falters under extreme pressure, betraying God and himself, says "Lord, I resented your silence." Back comes the answer: "I was not silent. I suffered beside you."

The Golden Country, another of Endo's novels on the same theme, ends with a report that all the loyal Christians arrested had been executed, just as a messenger comes in with the news that "Four Christian priests have just landed in Amami O-shima. They came over in a small boat rowed by Chinese and managed to land under the cover of night." ♦

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NOT YOU, BUT I AM THEIR JUDGE

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3)

even in this life. If you keep this teaching in mind you will fall neither into the devil's trap (for you will recognize it) nor into the traps you asked me about." (*The Dialogue*, § 100, emphasis added.)

The devil's trap is pride, producing in the believer an especially unholy and manifold effect: As the grip of pride

the Gospel] gave you.

Now I tell you, dearest daughter, those who have learned this teaching taste the pledge of eternal life

intensifies, so does the believer's conviction of his own righteousness, and with it the death of compassion, of mercy. And as the fire of love burns lower and lower, and perhaps even dies, still all the externalities of faith remain in motion, though empty of grace, of divine life, and the heart of flesh given by God is soon restored to stone. No grace enters or escapes the stone; there is no blood within to shed. No one who lays eyes on us in that condition will see the Redeemer. They will either see us, or see themselves, but they will not see the One they seek. And if, because of our pride and our hardness of heart, they fail to see the Lord, or worse, reject him because they have mistaken us for him, and they walk away from the Church because they have seen only faithless and cruel-hearted lip service, who will be at fault, and who will answer for the scandal given? ♦

SPIRITUAL EXERCISES

•
Are you
serious
about
your faith?

For almost 500 years every Jesuit (Pope Francis, for instance) has experienced The Spiritual Exercises developed by St Ignatius of Loyola. The Exercises are an incredible prayer experience meant for folks who want to change, deepen their relationship with God. In Orange County we are blessed to have the Exercises are offered over a 9-month period facilitated by STMS Board member and Isaiah House super chef David Werner. The Exercises involve praying through scripture in a unique way and

meeting from time to time to share, led by Dave.

About doing the Exercises 10 years ago, STMS President Greg Weiler said: "I wanted to get closer to God. Most of the Catholics who I most admired had done the Exercises so I thought, I'm going for it. It changed my prayer life forever."

If you are interested in doing the Exercises starting next month call Dave Werner at 949 244 1566"