

Saint Benedict Center

The Slaves of the Immaculate Heart of Mary

To Our Readers:

When I came upon St. Benedict Center in 1942, I discovered, in the most unlikely of places (Harvard Square), a group of people who still believed in the reality of Heaven and Hell, and who were zealous to convert people to the way of salvation. Sixty years later, we are still at the same business.

In Her mission to the world, this work of bringing people to the way of salvation is the very first duty of the Church. Ironically, Catholic concern for the salvation of souls has been termed “hate” by a world that does not know the meaning of Charity. This is true even among supposed Christians; for when Faith is weak, Charity grows cold. Our Lord taught this in two of His utterances concerning the end times: “But yet the Son of man, when he cometh, shall he find, think you, faith on earth?” (Lk. 18:8). “And because iniquity hath abounded, the charity of many shall grow cold” (Mt. 24:12). It makes perfect sense that Charity (theological love) will become perverted and effeminate in an age when the Faith is weak.

A case in point is the way people view our “proselytism” of the Jews. Fulfilling Jesus’ command to proclaim the Faith to all nations “beginning at Jerusalem” (Lk. 24:47), the Apostles labored earnestly for the conversion of their own people. *And the Church still has a duty to them.* For this reason, I am happy to present a very important article introducing the lives of several Jewish converts who deserve to be better known. Gary Potter makes the point very clear that conversions such as these were likely only when Catholics upheld the necessity of the Church for salvation. After a liberal cloud obscured that dogma, conversion went out of fashion.

On another subject, readers will be delighted to learn the inspiring history of Our Lady of Walsingham, which tells of happier days, when England was called, and was, “Our Lady’s Dowry.” Our Tertiary, Sr. Mary Monica, makes her *House-tops* debut with this article.

Hers is not the only name new to these pages. Steven Mahowald, a publisher in his own right, offers us an instructive study of the sacramentals of the Church. We must value these precious treasures of our spiritual patrimony *especially now*, when the apostles of overly cautious devotion seek to strip us of visible signs of our Faith.

Articles on apologetics, trivia, saintly quotes, and some little surprises round out the edition. Taken as a whole, we pray that this 54th issue is an effective mouth-piece of Catholics who still believe that Heaven and Hell are real, who know the meaning of true Charity, and who fervently live and zealously spread these virtues. Through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin, may the Holy Trinity give this work increase!

In the Immaculate Heart of Mary,

Bro. Francis, M.I.C.M.



From the MATTHEW 10-27 HouseTops

Contents Serial No. 54 • Summer, 2002

Forgotten Converts	Page 2
Prominent converts from Judaism have edified the Body of Christ with their zeal and sanctity. Gary Potter soberly and charitably elucidates the Church’s mission to, and relationship with, the Jews.	
Catholic Sacramentals: Gifts of Grace	Page 25
More than holy decorations, sacramentals are aids to our salvation. Stephen C. Mahowald explains these objects of Christian piety.	
Did You Know...?	Page 32
Catholic Trivia that’s not so trivial.	
Come and Follow Me!	Page 39
A review of an <i>encouraging</i> book on ecclesiastical vocations.	
Catholic Wisdom	Page 47
Bite-sized portions of pious food for thought.	
Assumptionist Martyrs	Page 50
News on three recently Beatified Martyrs for Church unity.	
Our Lady of Walsingham	Page 51
The historic ebb and flow of the Catholic cause in England can be gauged by the triumphs and tragedies of her most prominent Marian shrine. A brief history by Sister Mary Monica, M.I.C.M., Tert.	
It’s All or Nothing	Page 63
Brother André Marie applies principles of sound reason to two common Protestant objections concerning Our Lady and the priesthood.	

Cover: “The Madonna of the Miracle,” Our Blessed Lady as She appeared to Alphonse Ratisbonne in the Church of Sant’Andrea delle Fratte in Rome. **Center:** *Crucifixion* by Francisco Zubaran (1598-1662), with the liturgical text of the “Reproaches” from Good Friday. Design by the Sisters of the Slaves of the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

FROM THE HOUSETOPS is a Catholic quarterly journal published and distributed by *The Slaves of the Immaculate Heart of Mary* at Saint Benedict Center. The effort is made possible only by the helpful support of subscribers and donors to our religious congregation. Subscription rate: \$15.00 annually (\$20.00 Canadian; \$25.00 other foreign). Three- and five-year subscription rates also available — call for details. For additional copies, a contribution of five dollars each is kindly requested. Please send subscriptions or tax deductible donations to:

Saint Benedict Center, 95 Martin Road, Richmond, New Hampshire 03470
Telephone: (603) 239-6485 or **Toll Free** (orders only) **1-877-773-1773**
Fax: (603) 239-4502

E-mail: info@FromTheHousetops.com
Web: www.Catholicism.org -AND- www.FromTheHousetops.com
Copyright © 2002 by FROM THE HOUSETOPS PUBLICATIONS



Forgotten Converts

By Gary Potter

Most U.S. Catholics have probably heard of St. Edith Stein, though many may know nothing about her except that she was a convert and died in a Nazi concentration camp. Some number will be aware that after her conversion — she was an atheist of Jewish descent — she became a Carmelite, taking the name in religion of Teresa Benedicta of the Cross. Those who keep up with the news would have noticed that her canonization by Pope John Paul II in 1998 was protested by Jewish organizations in the U.S. as well as Europe.

To many of the Catholics who noticed them but prefer to ignore certain realities, the protests against the saint's canonization would have been baffling, especially given the circumstances of her death. It was different when similar protests were earlier raised against the canonization of St. Maximilian Kolbe, another Servant of God who died in a Nazi camp (as did hundreds of other Polish priests). The reason for those protests was known and understood: St. Maximilian was guilty during his life, it was alleged, of preaching "anti-Semitism."

The Catholics baffled by the protests against the canonization of St. Edith Stein did not understand, or preferred to ignore, that in Jewish eyes she was guilty of a crime worse even than preaching hatred of Jews. In truth, nothing can be more vilely "anti-Semitic," though only a Jew can do it. It is for one of them to become Christian.

That is a reality many Catholics today prefer to ignore because, in the immortal words of Rodney King uttered 10 years ago this past spring, they would rather "get along." They have been encouraged in this by the post-Vatican II Church, or at least by high ecclesiastics of the kind who have been leading the Church during this period. Alas, the ecclesiastics can do nothing to change the attitude of those Jews who are not interested at all in getting along, but are very happy that Christians want to do so, especially if the Christians want it more than anything else — like, say, seeing Jews convert.

Those of us who have come into the Church from one or another of the Protestant sects may know about the sorrow and bitterness that conversion can cause among family members and friends left behind. We may have seen a parent weep over what we have done. In most cases, however, weep is the worst a Gentile parent will do. It can be otherwise when a Jew converts. In this regard, this writer thinks of a convert of Jewish descent who is now a priest in a religious order, a convert whose story is known to numerous

Catholics besides myself. When he came into the Faith, his father and mother took baby pictures of him and all the belongings of his that they had, piled them in the driveway outside their house, and burned everything. They never spoke to him again.

I know of another convert of Jewish descent, a younger man, who is now preparing for the priesthood. As I understand it, his father also stopped speaking to him when he converted. Thank goodness, the two did reconcile when the father lay on his deathbed. What is striking is that the father reacted with indifference when a daughter earlier announced she had become a Buddhist.

When St. Edith Stein was raised to the Church's altars, the Church was honoring her anti-Semitism, as far as the Jews protesting her canonization were concerned. To them, the canonization revealed the Church herself to be anti-Semitic, or to have remained so, despite all she had been doing since the Second Vatican Council to prove otherwise, including ending all officially-sponsored, organized efforts to evangelize Jews even individually, let alone as a people. (Unofficial efforts were and are disavowed, of course.)

Did our ecumenical hierarchs think St. Edith Stein's canonization could take place without the protests of organized Jewry simply because,



apart from the Servant of God dying in a concentration camp, the Church no longer sought converts and, indeed, was even teaching, at least according to these Churchmen, that Jews can be saved without membership in her, provided they are "sincere"? How foolish. Why was it not noticed that the same Jews protesting against the canonization had never stopped protesting against the Church in general and Pope Pius XII in particular for "not speaking out strongly enough" against Nazi depredations during World War II? After all, those Jews knew perfectly well that St. Edith Stein and other Jewish converts to the Faith in occupied Holland were rounded up by the Nazis in a punitive operation in July, 1942, only after the Dutch bishops

Ven. Francois (Francis) Marie Libermann, C.S.Sp., founder, reformer of religious life, Apostole, and Jewish Convert.