

## An Exhortation About the Pope's New Exhortation



Pope Francis released his apostolic exhortation on the family which is based on the synods on the family that have happened over the past three years or so. The exhortation is massive considering it's nature and the history of apostolic exhortations; it is more than 250 pages.

Obviously the pope does say many good things about marriage and family life in the exhortation.

I hate to say this, but it is also controversial. There are different ways of looking at this document. For example George Weigel contends that the pope defends traditional Catholic teaching while others accuse the pope of compromising doctrine. Ed Peters has a level-headed critique on his blog (In the Light of the Law). Other people have lost a sense of perspective. Simply the fact that there is some ambiguity over moral teachings of this nature may indeed be problematic. I agree that far.

While it really is impossible for me to get very deeply into this matter, I want to encourage you not to allow yourself to be carried to extremes over things like this. In the first place, the Vatican itself stresses that the document is "pastoral". This means it is intended to offer principles for the care of souls on the part of pastors. By it's nature then, it is intended to offer help for situations that are in degrees of receptivity to God's grace. It is not intended to be a work of dogmatic moral theology such as was intended in an encyclical like *Veritatis Splendor*. Second, contrary to the claim of some people, the pope does not clearly change or deny any traditional teaching on the family. In order to claim that the pope is really departing from traditional teaching, one must really give oneself to a process of eisegesis.

Remember that in the Sacred Scriptures themselves, the Holy Spirit tells us that "the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, **peace**, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control" (Galatians 5: 22-23). We can afford to be at peace. The truth is bigger than us and it always eventually wins; it is, in fact, an irresistible force. If your assessment of the document is that it is gravely and dogmatically erroneous — I disagree with you — but time will tell. (The fact that it is arguable is telling in itself.)

Well, I had a few other things to say, but I am out of room here. Hopefully next week. But I will say this. The pope's situation shows how important it is that we pray for each other. Let's not let a week go by where we don't take some time to pray: to thank God, to praise and worship him privately, to intercede for others and to listen to him. *Peace, Father Gerald*

## ACT OF OBLATION TO MERCIFUL LOVE

by *Thérèse of Lisieux*

J.M.J.T.\*

Offering of myself  
as a Victim of  
Holocaust to God's  
Merciful Love



O My God! Most Blessed Trinity, I desire to *Love You* and make you *Loved*, to work for the glory of Holy Church by saving souls on earth and liberating those suffering in purgatory. I desire to accomplish Your will perfectly and to reach the degree of glory You have prepared for me in Your Kingdom.

I desire, in a word, to be saint, but I feel my helplessness and I beg You, O my God! to be Yourself my *Sanctity!*

Since You loved me so much as to give me Your only Son as my Savior and my Spouse, the infinite treasures of His merits are mine. I offer them to You with gladness, begging You to look upon me only in the Face of Jesus and in His heart burning with *Love*.

I offer You, too, all the merits of the saints (in heaven and on earth), their acts of *Love*, and those of the holy angels. Finally, I offer You, *O Blessed Trinity!* the *Love* and merits of the *Blessed Virgin, my Dear Mother*. It is to her I abandon my offering, begging her to present it to You. Her Divine Son, my *Beloved Spouse*, told us in the says of His mortal life: "*Whatever you ask the Father in my name he will give it to you!*" I am certain, then, that You will grant my desires; I know, O my God! that *the more You want to give, the more You make us desire*. I feel in my heart immense desires and it is with confidence I ask You to come and take possession of my soul. Ah! I cannot receive Holy Communion as often as I desire, but, Lord, are You not *all-powerful?* Remain in me as in a tabernacle and never separate Yourself from Your little victim.

I want to console You for the ingratitude of the wicked, and I beg of you to take away my freedom to displease You. If through weakness I sometimes fall, may Your *Divine Glance* cleanse my soul immediately, consuming all my imperfections like the fire that transforms everything into itself.

I thank You, O my God! for all the graces You have granted me, especially the grace of making me pass through the crucible of suffering. It is with joy I shall

—over

\*J.M.J.T. is a common way for Carmelites to mark their correspondence. It stands for: Jesus, Mary, Joseph and St. Theresa of Avila

contemplate You on the Last Day carrying the sceptre of Your Cross. Since You deigned to give me a share in this very precious Cross, I hope in heaven to resemble You and to see shining in my glorified body the sacred stigmata of Your Passion.

After earth's Exile, I hope to go and enjoy You in the Fatherland, but I do not want to lay up merits for heaven. I want to work for Your *Love Alone* with the one purpose of pleasing You, consoling Your Sacred Heart, and saving souls who will love You eternally.

In the evening of this life, I shall appear before You with empty hands, for I do not ask You, Lord, to count my works. All our justice is stained in eternal possession of *Yourself*. I want no other Your eyes. I wish, then, to be clothed in Your own *Justice* and to receive from Your *Love* the *Throne*, no other *Crown* but *You, my Beloved!*

Time is nothing in Your eyes, and a single day is like a thousand years. You can, then, in one instant prepare me to appear before You.



In order to live in one single act of perfect Love, I OFFER MYSELF AS A VICTIM OF HOLOCAUST TO YOUR MERCIFUL LOVE, Asking You to consume me incessantly, allowing the waves of *infinite tenderness* shut up within You to overflow into my soul, and that thus I may become a *martyr* of Your *Love*, O my God!

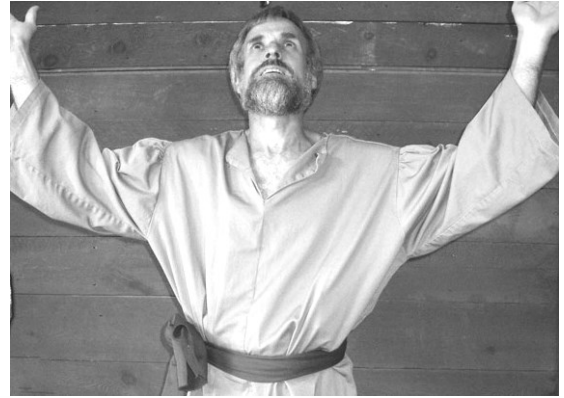
May this martyrdom, after having prepared me to appear before You, finally cause me to die and may my soul take its flight without any delay into the eternal embrace of *Your Merciful Love*.

I want, O my *Beloved*, at each beat of my heart to renew this offering to You an infinite number of times, until the shadows having disappeared I may be able to tell You of my *Love* in an *Eternal Face to Face!*

—*Thérèse of the Child Jesus*  
*and the Holy Face*  
(*Thérèse of Lisieux*)

Study more about Thérèse of Lisieux by reading her spiritual autobiography, *The Story of a Soul*. You may also enjoy *Compete Spiritual Doctrine of Thérèse of Lisieux* by Francios Jamart and *With Empty Hands* by Conrad De Meester.

## *A Visit with St. Paul*



The year is 65 A.D. and Paul of Tarsus finds himself under house arrest in Rome. You're invited to visit the great saint during his captivity where he will recount his days as a missionary.

*A Visit with St. Paul* is a one-man show written and performed by Glenn Smith.

**Monday, April 18, 2016**

**Saint Thomas-Ann Arbor**

**7:00pm**

More information can be found at [www.visitwithstpaul.com](http://www.visitwithstpaul.com)

## **Visit the Holy Door**

In this special Jubilee Year of Mercy, you will can visit the Holy Door at St. Mary Cathedral, Lansing Monday through Friday, 7:30am - 3:30pm, and on Saturdays, 7:30am - 5:00pm. A Holy Hour is scheduled, on selected Sunday afternoons during the Year of Mercy (May 1, June 5, July 17, August 7, September 18, and October 2) to provide opportunities to make a pilgrimage.



The Holy Hour will include Eucharistic Adoration and Benediction. The Cathedral will be open on those days following the 11:00am Mass until the conclusion of the Holy Hour which begins at 3:00pm (except October 2: Holy Hour begins at 1:00pm).

To understand indulgences associated with your visit please go to <http://www.dioceseoflansing.org/sites/default/files/files/Jubileelndulgence.pdf> Do not miss this opportunity to deepen your Lenten experience.