

## TM-TRI08

06.16.19

A Commentary on the Gospel by St. Athanasius <sup>1</sup>

It will not be out of place to consider the ancient tradition, teaching and faith of the Catholic Church, which was revealed by the Lord, proclaimed by the apostles, and guarded by the fathers. For upon this faith the Church is built, and if anyone were to lapse from it, that person would no longer be a Christian either in fact or in name.

We acknowledge the Trinity, holy and perfect, to consist of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. In this Trinity there is no intrusion of any alien element or of anything from outside, nor is the Trinity a blend of creative and created being. It is a wholly creative and energizing reality, self-consistent and undivided in its active power, for the father makes all things through the Word and in the Holy Spirit, and in this way the unity of the Holy Trinity is preserved. Accordingly in the Church, one God is preached, one God who is *above all things and through all things and in all things*. God is *above all things* as Father, for he is the principle and source; he is *through all things* through the Word; and he is *in all things* in the Holy Spirit.

Writing to the Corinthians about spiritual matters, Paul traces all reality back to the one God, the Father, saying: *Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and varieties of service, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of working, but it is the same God who inspires them all in everyone.*

Even the gifts that the Spirit dispenses to individuals are given by the Father through the Word. For all that belongs to the Father belongs also to the Son, and so the graces given by the Son in the Spirit are true gifts of the Father. Similarly, when the Spirit dwells in us, the Word who bestows the Spirit is in us too, and the Father is present in the Word. This is the meaning of the text: *My Father and I will come to him and make our home with him*. For where the light is, there also is the radiance; and where the radiance is, there too are its power and resplendent grace.

This is also Paul's teaching in his Second Letter to the Corinthians: *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all*. For grace and the gift of the Trinity are given by the Father through the Son in the Holy Spirit. Just as grace is given from the Father through the Son, so there could be no communication of the gift to us except in the Holy Spirit. But when we share in the Spirit, we possess the love of the Father, the grace of the Son, and the fellowship of the Spirit himself.

<sup>1</sup>A Word in Season – vol. III – Exordium Books – 1983 – pg 224

**06SN1701**

**06/17/19**

Blessed Joseph Cassant – From an article by Fr. Bernardo Bonowitz, OCSO <sup>1</sup>

Joseph Cassant was born on March 6, 1878, in the southern French town of Casseneuveil, the younger son of Pierre and Marie-Anais Cassant. The family was relatively prosperous, because of the successful cultivation of orchards and vineyards, as well as solidly devout. Whereas Joseph's elder brother Emile was clearly marked out both physically and by inclination to continue his father's agricultural work, Joseph's talents and interests were oriented in a completely different direction. From early childhood, he entertained a single ambition: to be a priest. His desire for the priesthood was accompanied by an unusually intense interiority. As a child, he spent a good deal of time in prayer, especially before a ceramic image of Jesus that he often brought with him to school. According to a relative, already at this age Joseph consciously attempted to live in conformity to his favorite adage, "All for Jesus."

Unfortunately, Joseph proved almost a total failure academically. There is no doubt that he was slow, and the proof of this fact is that at fifteen he was in the same class as nine and ten year olds. He felt the humiliation keenly; even more, he felt the tremendous frustration of the inevitable rejection by the minor seminary. However young Cassant's spirit of prayer and recollection and his involvement in a parish mission had not gone unnoticed by the pastor, Monsignor Filhol. He hit on the idea of taking Joseph in as a boarder at the rectory and putting him through an intensive remedial course in French and Latin with the aim of getting him into the seminary.

Fifteen months of study were sufficient to convince Filhol that his plan of studies was untenable. Unwilling to send the boy home radically disappointed, he decided on another approach to the priesthood for Cassant: the Trappists. The pastor took it upon himself to obtain the necessary parental consent for the sixteen-year-old's entrance into the Trappists. It was he himself who took Joseph to visit the nearest Trappist monastery, Sainte-Marie du Desert, near Toulouse.

Joseph was immediately taken with the spiritual seriousness he perceived in the abbey in the celebration of the divine office and the atmosphere of prayer and silence. The novice master, Fr. Andre Malet, met with Joseph, and finding him somewhat timid and anxious, sought for a word of encouragement. "Courage," he told him. "I will help you love Jesus." This sentence would constitute the heart of

the relationship between the novice master and his novice, as well as the heart of Joseph's whole vocation. He entered the community on December 5, 1894.

Cassant gave himself enthusiastically to his monastic vocation. Fidelity was part of the fabric of his nature. Unfortunately, so were its frequent distortions: scrupulosity and a tendency to discouragement. Fr. Andre showed an ability to go beyond the excessive moralism of the Spiritual Directory of the Order of 1869. Instead of putting the emphasis on the attainment of perfection, Malet emphasized the primacy of the person of Jesus in the monastic life, presenting the monk's activity as a response of confident love to the love of Jesus.

Soon after his entrance into monastic life, Joseph began to develop health problems of various sorts. Now as he prepared for priesthood, he started to manifest the classic symptoms of tuberculosis. He was ordained priest on October 12, 1902. By this time, everyone was aware that Joseph's ordination was a participation in the death of Jesus. He celebrated his final Mass on May 31, 1903 and received the last rites in the presence of the community on June 1. He died on June 17, as his novice master, Fr Andre, was celebrating a Mass for his intention.

1Joseph Cassant: A Man After God's Heart – Bernardo Bonowitz – Cistercian Studies Quarterly – 39.1 – 2004 – pg 67f

Commentary on the Book of Genesis by St John Chrysostom <sup>1</sup>

Leiah's daughter went off to see the daughters of the district. Sychem, son of Emor, slept with her and fell in love with the maid. He spoke to her to win the maid's heart. Do you see how much wickedness youth is capable of when it does not keep its thoughts holy and restrained? He saw the maid, was completely enraptured by the sight, gave his lust free rein, "and spoke to her to win the maid's heart." What is the meaning of "to win the maid's heart"? Since the maid was young, he spoke these things to her that were sufficient to win her heart and captivate her. He said to his father: "Get me this servant girl for my wife."

Now Jacob heard what had happened, and for the time being he contained himself, awaiting the arrival of her brothers; they were with the flocks, you see. "Jacob held his peace." The text goes on, "until they returned". Now, as Emor came to visit Jacob, Deinah's brothers arrived; they were shocked to hear what had happened to their sister. What is the meaning of "they were shocked"? They were distressed; it seemed intolerable to them. It was an outrage and the source of distress to them. The text says, in fact, "It was extremely distressing to them, because what Sychem had done in sleeping with Jacob's daughter was an unseemly thing in Israel." Do you see the sons' sense of propriety? They regard the act as the greatest outrage. Do you notice, on the one hand, how the good man had trained his sons in virtue and, on the other, how Emor's son, by giving free rein to his lust, proved the cause of ruin for his father and the whole city?

First of all, however, let us listen to the words spoken to them by Emor, and then you will realize the scheming of Deinah's brothers and the way they set their heart on avenging what was done to their sister. "Emor spoke to them these words," the text says, "My son Sychem has lost his heart to your daughter." See how already he foreshadows the disaster soon to overtake him: "He has lost his heart," he says, that is, he has given over his heart to your daughter. He was making his statement and admitting his lust for the maid, but before long he learned that it would be the cause of ruin for himself and everyone there. So since he was inflamed with passion for her, he said, "Give her to him as wife, and intermarry with us. See the land is open before you: settle down, negotiate, and acquire holdings in it."

See the great affection for his son that motivates the father to show friendliness to the strangers, and how he wants to win them over by giving them control of the whole region. Do you see the father making an earnest appeal out

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<sup>1</sup> The Fathers of the Church – vol. 87 -St John Chrysostom Homilies on Genesis – Catholic University of America Press – Washington D.C. – 1992 – pg 169

of care for his son, and the young man ready to offer everything to win the maid? This disastrous passion, note, this it is that persuades its victim to connive at anything until it brings him to the very depths of hell.

Notice, I ask you, how because of one person's lust all the inhabitants of the city were affected by the trouble. You see, just as when fire breaks out people living nearby are involved in the danger as the fire spreads everywhere, in just the same way, in this case the young man's intemperance completely destroyed not only his father but all the people in the city as well.

**OT-GEN81**  
**06.19.19**

Commentary on the Book of Genesis by St John Chrysostom <sup>2</sup>

Let us now see how the old man was affected by the doings of his sons. The text goes on: "Jacob said to Simeon and Levi: 'You have made me so hated as to be an enemy to the dwellers of the land'"

Observe now, however, God's ineffable care for the good man in this instance. "God said: 'Set out and make for the place Bethel and stay there.'" Notice the good man's obedience and godliness when he heard the words. He purified himself and all his people and set out. Now observe again God's care for him and the way Scripture teaches us clearly. "Fear fell on the cities round about, and they did not pursue the sons of Israel". After all, when he wishes personally to offer grace on his part, he makes the weak stronger than the mighty and the few more powerful than the many. Nothing could be more fortunate than the person enjoying grace from on high.

See this good man, virtually isolated and with very few companions though he was, taking heart when protected by God's right hand, and taking courage and escaping subterfuge, whereas those others, though massed in great numbers, were yet unable to put into effect any of their schemes. "Fear of God fell on the cities round about," the text says. So now that the good man was freed from fear and from the local inhabitants, see once again the extraordinary degree of the loving kindness God showed in his regard. God appeared to him at Bethel. He had appeared to him previously in this place when he fled from his brother. So now, as he appeared to him then on his departure, so now he also reveals himself to him on the same place on his return journey and confirms the promises he had made him at his departure.

God blessed him and said to him: "No longer will you be called Jacob, instead Israel shall be your name." Since, on account of what was done at Shekin by Simeon and Levi he had said: "I have so few men, and if they assemble against me and strike and exterminate me and my household," and had given every sign of faintheartedness and the great dread that gripped him, hence the loving Lord now says to him: "learn that you will increase and your descendents will multiply and be so considerable that leagues of nations and kings will come from them. Not only will you not be wiped out, but you and your descendants will take possession of the whole country." Learn from this God's ineffable love.

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<sup>2</sup> The Fathers of the Church – vol. 87 – St John Chrysostom on Genesis – vol. 3 – Catholic University of America Press – Washington DC – 1992 – pg 173

**Ot-GEN 82**  
**06.20.19**

Commentary on the Book of Genesis by St John Chrysostom <sup>3</sup>

What is read today is sufficient to teach us how great the harm of envy, and how this ruinous passion of ill-will demonstrated its typical force even to the extent of affecting brotherhood. “At the age of seventeen Joseph was tending the sheep with his brothers.” Why does the author indicate to us his age? For you to learn that his youth constituted no obstacle to virtue and for you to have a complete awareness of the young man’s obedience to his father and his sympathy for his brothers despite their savagery, and how despite his being so well disposed to them he was unable to win them over to concord with him on the grounds of his youth so as to be able to maintain the bond of love; instead they saw from the outset the youth’s inclination to virtue and the father’s favor from him and were prompted to envy of him. You see, they brought false reports about Joseph to their father Israel. See the extraordinary degree of their wickedness: they endeavored to undermine their father’s love and devised false stories about their brother, succeeding only in bringing to light their own envy.

What is meant by “he loved Joseph more than all his other sons, as he was a son of his old age”? You see, somehow the children born to one in old age seem particularly dear, and manage to attract their father’s favor in greater measure. However this was not the only factor in winning his father and causing him to prefer him to his brothers. For Scripture tells us that even after him another son was born. So what can it mean? That it was a kind of grace from on high that made the young man amiable and rendered him preferable to all the others on account of the virtue of his soul.

Envy is a terrible passion, you see, and when it affects the soul, it does not leave it before bringing it to an extremely sorry state, damaging the soul that gives it birth and affecting the object of its envy in the opposite way to that intended, rendering him more esteemed. Notice how this remarkable man is depicted as ignorant of what was going on and conversing cheerfully in great simplicity with them as his brothers, whereas they for their part were in the grip of the passion of envy and were thus brought to hate him.

Notice how it indicated as cause of their hatred this fact that had its roots in envy: “His brothers saw that their father loved him more than all his other sons.” Their father’s affection gave rise to envy of him, whereas the boy’s virtue won the father’s favor. So they should have imitated their brother and followed his lead so that they might have won their father; yet far from giving thought to this, they displayed instead a common hatred for the one loved by their father. Whereas they, for their part, like men involved in a feud, gave free rein to the evil lurking within them and had no kind word to say to him, conducting themselves treacherously, this remarkable man, on the contrary, maintained a brotherly regard for them, suspecting nothing in his trust in them as brothers, and attributed everything to himself.

This was the passion that even in the beginning led Cain to rush headlong into murdering his brother. Do you see his brother suspecting nothing, but with full trust in his brother’s plans going out and falling victim to that deadly blow. In the same fashion the

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<sup>3</sup> The Fathers of the Church – vol 87 – St John Chrysostom on Genesis – vol. 3 – Catholic University of America Press – Washington DC – 1002 = pg 186

remarkable Joseph dealt with them as brothers, unaware of their wicked complicity, he brought to their notice the revelation God had given him in a dream, foretelling the prosperity that would come his way and the subjection of his brothers.

These men, however, as I said before, neither had any respect for nature itself nor took account of the favor shown their brother from on high: from day to day they deepened their hatred, the fire that burnt secretly within them, without their father or the young man suspecting anything of the kind nor the fact that they were about to proceed to such awful folly.

Now all this happened as a type of things to come. As Joseph went off to his brothers to visit them, to those who had no respect for brotherhood nor for the reason of his coming, and who first intended to do away with him and then sold him to foreigners, so too our Lord in fidelity to his characteristic love came to visit the human race: taking flesh of the same source as ours and deigning to become our brother, he thus arrived among us. In this case things were prefigured as in shadow.



**06SN2103**

**06.21.19**

St Aloysius of Gonzaga – From Butler's Lives of Saints <sup>1</sup>

The patron of youth, St Aloysius was born on March 9, 1568, in Lombardy. He was the eldest son of Ferrante, Marquis of Castiglione. His father's one ambition was that his eldest son should become a great soldier. In 1577 his father took him and his brother, Ridolfo, to Florence, and left them there under the charge of tutors to improve their Latin and to learn to speak the pure Italian of Tuscany. After two years, his father placed them in the court of the Duke of Mantua, Aloysius was then about eleven. Even then he had the intention to resign to his brother the right of succession to the marquisate of Castiglione. A painful kidney disease furnished him with excuse for appearing little in public, and he spent most of his time in prayer and reading the collection of the Lives of the Saints.

Another book he read about this time described the experiences of the Jesuit missionaries in India. This suggested to him the idea of entering the Society of Jesus in order to work for the conversion of the heathen. As a first step to a future missionary career he set about instructing the poor boys of Castiglione in the catechism during the summer holidays. At Casale-Monferrato, where the winter was spent, he visited the church of the capuchins and began to practice the austerities of a monk, fasting three days a week on bread and water and rising a midnight to pray on the stone floor of a room in which he would allow no fire to be lighted however bitter the weather.

He was now quite resolved to become a Jesuit. After much labor, he was able to convince his father to grudgingly give his consent. On November 25, 1585, he entered the Jesuit novitiate house of Sant' Andrea. Being under regular discipline he was obliged to take recreation and to eat more. Out of consideration for his precarious health he was recalled from Milan to Rome to complete his theological course in the City.

In 1591 an epidemic of plague caused great ravages in Rome. The Jesuits opened a hospital of their own. At his own entreaty, Aloysius was allowed to minister there. He instructed and exhorted the patients, washed them, made their beds, and performed with zeal the lowliest duties of the hospital. Several of the Fathers fell victims to the disease and Aloysius caught it. Contrary to expectation he recovered from the plague but fell into a low fever which reduced him to great

weakness. He died on June 21 at the age of twenty-three. He was canonized in 1726.

[1](#)Butler's Lives of Saints – Revised edition – Harper – San Francisco – 1991 – pg 187

MY-60

06.22.19

**From a Sermon by Saint Sophronius, bishop.<sup>1</sup>**

"Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with you." What joy could surpass this, O Virgin Mother? What grace can excel that which God has granted to you alone? What could be imagined more dazzling or more delightful? Before the miracle we witness in you, all else pales; all else is inferior when compared with the grace you have been given. All else, even what is most desirable, must take second place and enjoy a lesser importance.

"The Lord is with you." Who would dare challenge you? You are God's mother; who would not immediately defer to you and be glad to accord you a greater primacy and honor? For this reason, when I look upon the privilege you have above all creatures, I extol you with the highest praise: "Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with you." On your account joy has not only graced us, but is also granted to the powers of heaven.

Truly, "You are blessed among women. " For you have changed Eve's curse into a blessing; and Adam, who hitherto lay under a curse, has been blessed because of you.

Truly, you are blessed among women. Through you the Father's blessing has shone forth on humankind, setting them free of their ancient curse.

Truly, you are blessed among women, because through you your forebears have found salvation. For you were to give birth to the Savior who was to win them salvation.

Truly, you are blessed among women, for without seed you have borne, as your fruit, him who bestows blessings on the whole world and redeems it from that curse that made it sprout thorns.

Truly, you are blessed among women, because, though a woman by nature, you will become, in reality, God's mother. If he whom you are to bear is truly God made flesh, then rightly do we call you God's mother. For you have truly given birth to God. Enclosed within your womb is God himself. He makes his abode in

you and comes forth from you like a bridegroom, winning joy for all and bestowing God's light on all.

You, O Virgin, are like a clear and shining sky, in which God "has set his tent." From you "he comes forth like a bridegroom leaving his chamber." Like a giant running his course, he will run the course of his life which will bring salvation for all who will ever live, and extending from the highest heavens to the end of them, it will fill all things with divine warmth and life-giving brightness.

[1Oratio 2, in sanctissimae Deipararæ Annuntiatione, 21-22.26: PG 87, 3, 3242, 3250](#)