



## Discernment for the next generation

by Robert King, OP

Teenagers are in quite a bind. They often are treated like children and denied real responsibility for their actions, or—what is just as bad—when they are given any responsibility, they are held to adult standards. The problem is that teens are no longer children, but neither are they yet adults.

Pope John Paul II expressed this paradox well in his 1985 Letter to the Youth of the World (*Dilecti Amici*). He notes that in childhood, others take responsibility for us, and in adulthood, we take responsibility for ourselves and our world. Between these two stages is youth. "In this sense, the future belongs to you young people... Responsibility for this present reality and for its shape and many different forms lies first of all with adults. To you belongs responsibility for what will one day become reality together with yourselves, but which still lies in the future." (DA 1) That is to say, the stage of life called youth has a responsibility for the future in the present moment, in other words, a responsibility to prepare. "The work which characterizes the period of youth is, above all, a preparation for the work of adulthood." (DA 12) The Holy Father sees that young people are about to take the first steps into full participation in the affairs of the world, and he wants them to be ready to take those steps as Christians.

In answer to this call, Fr. Michael Sweeney and Sherry Weddell, co-founders of the Catherine of Siena

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## Sola Psyche and the Sacramental Economy

by Sherry Weddell

I am seriously liturgically challenged, and I blame it all on the most honorable group of people that I have ever known: the Society of Friends, or Quakers.

(This is an exceptionally low risk comment because Quakers have been pacifists for the past 350 years and can't hit back!) I joined an evangelical Friends meeting while in college and felt right at home in the gestureless simplicity and mystical focus of their worship.

Quakers do not celebrate the sacraments at all—not even baptism or communion—and the severity of their worship made the liturgical starkness of my Baptist childhood seem like Holy Week at St. Peter's. Their meeting houses have a sort of hyper-Cistercian austerity about them: no stained glass windows, no crosses or statues or images of any kind. Quakers sought to avoid anything that would smack of the "creaturely", an archaic term for that which appealed to the senses. Worship was to be "in spirit and truth," an unmediated encounter with the inner Light of Christ.

Traditional Quaker worship involves simply sitting together in silent prayer until the Holy Spirit moves an individual to rise and give a testimony or prophecy. Since the Spirit sometimes doesn't move, the silence can fill the entire hour. Nothing to look at but bare wood walls and your fellow worshipers. Nothing to listen to except the occasional cough or labored breathing. Nothing to do but sit quietly in contemplation of the God who dwells within you. In Indiana, I once worshipped while sitting on an exceedingly hard and lumpy 19th century minister's bench where Elizabeth Fry, the great Quaker prison reformer, had waited for the Spirit to move her to speak. It wasn't exactly comfortable. (Liz must have had a derriere of



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## Happenings...

Been wondering what became of *The Siena Scribe*? Well, during this past fall, we have held **more events than ever** before. Institute staff and collaborators have held 13 **Called and Gifted** workshops, 4 facilitator and teacher-training seminars, attended 3 national conferences, and given a pastoral-staff retreat. And the pace will continue in throughout the rest of winter and spring. (Be sure to look over our events calendar in this issue for events near you.) With the increase in scheduling, however, comes a decrease in our ability to produce *The Scribe* as well as needed resources and programs for individuals, parishes, and diocese. We trust that our newly augmented administrative staff will see this coming year back to a truly quarterly publication of *The Scribe*.

Beginning with the first of the year, we will have a **new administrator** working with us. The Institute has been searching for several

months for help with running the business end of things. We were very pleased to have so many talented and mission-oriented people respond. **Michael Dillon** joins our still small but growing staff to serve as business manager and program coordinator. Mike brings us expertise gained through many years in corporate management, consulting and teaching, and is eager to put that experience to work for the Church's mission. Mike lives in Colorado Springs with his wife **Roxanne** and two youngsters, **Regina** and **Michael**.

**On the drawing board** we have a collection of programs, printed works, and tape sets. With our added full-time staff position, we hope to provide a steady stream of these resources. Dioceses have been approaching us interested in large-scale implementation of discerning spiritual gifts and apostolic call, and we are developing a comprehensive program in response. A youth/teen version of the **Called and Gifted** workshop is in the works from **Br. Robert King** (see article this issue), and a small-group version **Sherry Weddell** put together is currently in a trial-run stage. Hopefully, this year will see publication of **Fr. Michael Sweeney's** book on the sacrament of confirmation. He also has planned a lecture series on Christian Friendship, which we will make available on tape. We have several conversion stories, including Sherry's, which we will offer on cassette tape. Finally, our web site is due for a revision. Among other things, look for a great increase in resources you can order there. We've already added several works by Catherine of Siena in response to many requests. Our "Links" pages will continue to expand and our "What's New" page will be updated more frequently. Also look for features such as chat rooms and search engines.

**Fiscally speaking**, we were able to keep moderately in the black overall for the second year in a row, this despite the significant overhead of relocating the office to Colorado Springs from Seattle, the increase in operating expenditures from office rental and additional staff, and the economic downturn with its negative impact upon donations. Although this last factor has severely affected a great many non-profit ministries, we have been sheltered somewhat by our strategy to keep a good portion of our ministry self-supporting. The recent addition of staff, however, mandates that we place a renewed emphasis upon fundraising from foundations as well as individuals.

We plan to send out quarterly **fundraising letters**. Please look forward to them. We hope you will find them informative and congenial, and we promise to refrain from hype and what can amount to shameless tugs upon the heartstrings! Please consider contributing during this crucial year of growth.

Our most recent **teacher-training seminar** in Byron, CA, was a great success by all reports. We now have over 30 teachers working with us to present **Called and Gifted** workshops. Currently, we have 10 teachers who can function in pairs to present a full workshop. As our newer teachers gain experience, we are confident that we will be able to handle the demand for live workshops for the foreseeable future. Our teachers are highly committed and receive training in basic theological issues likely to arise in workshop situations, and a grounding in the theology of the laity; they must spend many hours preparing and presenting the content of the workshop before they are fully certified.

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**"A s/he is, so are we in this world"**

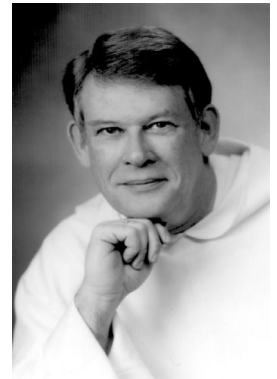
1 John 4:17b



# The Church in Indonesia: A Model of Community

by Michael Sweeney, O.P

“At last the Institute can truly be said to be international!” a young woman remarked upon learning of our invitation to present in Indonesia. This rankles a little, in that we have made a number of presentations in Canada, and Canadians—like



myself—tend to think of Canada as another nation. According to my reckoning, we have been international for the past five years, including trips to Rome, New Zealand, and Australia. All the same, our first presentation in Asia was a very significant event for the Institute. Already international, we might now be said to be “trans-cultural”.

A great deal was accomplished in the fifteen days that we were in Jakarta. We interviewed and trained over 30 interviewers, offered the *Called and Gifted* workshop to over 1,000 participants in two parishes, and trained a dozen teachers—including two priests, Fathers Ignatius and Agus—to continue offering the program. (As of this writing, the first *Called and Gifted* workshop is about to be offered in Indonesia taught by an Indonesian team!) Enormous effort had been made to prepare for the workshop: the *Catholic Spiritual Gifts Inventory* had been translated into Indonesian, along with the digital slides and the “Participant’s Notes” for the workshops. Our booklet, *The Parish: Mission or Maintenance* was being translated for distribution throughout the country.

The workshops were flawlessly organized. Our first workshop, at St. Jacobus parish in Jakarta, was by far the largest that we have offered to date, with about 600 participants. We anticipated a logistical nightmare: not only would 600 participants have to be fed (and have access to rest rooms during the breaks), but the workshops were to be offered through interpreters, which would logically require much more time to cover the material. To our astonishment—and relief—the workshops concluded almost precisely on time. This was also our experience at St. Stefanus parish, also in Jakarta, where over 400 attended the workshop. There the catering was so well planned that the suggestion was seriously made to reduce the time allotted for lunch to 30 minutes!

Too many were involved in the preparations to acknowledge them by name. However, I would like to acknowledge two collaborators, without whom nothing could have occurred. Inge Hendromartono attended the workshop in Tiburon, California, where she now resides.

Inge determined that the workshop should be offered in Indonesia, and contacted Dr. Yos Susanto in Jakarta. Yos, in turn, contacted the two parishes where we offered the workshops, worked with their parish staffs to select interviewers and teachers, and oversaw all of the preparations for our coming. We are enormously grateful to Inge, to Yos, and to all of their collaborators in Jakarta.

To our sadness, Indonesia has been very much in the news of late because of the bombing in Bali and the deaths of several hundred residents and tourists. We hear of the problem of Muslim fundamentalism and the apparent incapacity of the government to respond effectively to the terrorist threat. All of this may be true. None of it tells the whole story. What did we discover in Indonesia?

Indonesia, with a population of some 240 million, is the largest Muslim country in the world. Yet we found the Church to be flourishing—and growing very rapidly. Religious fundamentalism in Indonesia is the exception rather than the rule; several of the Catholic clergy we met, and many parishioners, were converts from Islam. Their families are proud of their roles in the Christian community. During the workshop, I make reference to life before Vatican II. In Jakarta I found that very few people remember the Church before the Council. This was not because those attending were too young to remember—although many young adults attended the workshops—but because most Catholics in Indonesia have come into the Church since the Council. At the conclusion of the Council in 1965, there were some 1 million Catholics in the country. There are now more than 5.5 million.

There are some difficulties that must be faced in a non-Christian environment. It is hard to obtain a building permit to erect a Church in Indonesia. The parishes, as a result, tend to be very large (approximately 17,000 active parishioners in St. Jacobus parish and some 8,000 in St. Stephanus parish). This, however, may prove to have been a boon to the Church in that it has been necessary, as a result, to divide parishes into districts and then

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into neighborhoods. St. Stephanus parish, for example, is divided into ten districts, each with lay leaders. The ten districts are, in turn, further divided into 3-5 neighborhoods, each with lay leaders and lay ministers. Because many of its programs are de-centralized, the parish is much better able to respond to the needs of individual parishioners and to foster faith sharing in small communities.

Accordingly, one of the reasons for the extraordinary growth of the Church lies in the attentiveness of Catholics to each other, as well as to non-Christian neighbors, in their illness or in their financial need. Because the parishes are divided into neighborhoods, the real situations of parishioners are quickly known to the community and quickly acted upon. Moreover, the Church in Indonesia is very conscious of its responsibility to the whole of society. At St. Stephanus parish there is, for example, a nursing service which is offered to Catholics and to Muslims alike. The Catholic elementary schools and high schools are known to be the best in the country and are open to Muslims as well as to Catholics. We did not find a small, beleaguered Catholic ghetto. Rather, we found a Church which is truly "existing in the world for the sake of the world."

We found our hosts to be wonderfully hospitable. I suggested to several of them that I would remember our visit as one large banquet interspersed with the occasional presentation! We found them to be optimistic, even in the face of the severe economic and social problems which are confronting their country. In short, we found men and women of deep faith, and a Catholic community which is vital and growing.

They need our prayers and our active concern. If the already troubled economy of Indonesia further deteriorates, then the environment that fosters fundamentalism and violence will result. But these are not characteristics of the people of Indonesia. The overwhelming testimony of those we met was that extremism is not a normal part of Indonesian society. We should not regard the bombing in Bali to represent the whole of the Indonesian people any more than we would regard a mad sniper in Washington D.C. to be representative of the whole American people.

While I am indeed concerned for our brothers and sisters in Indonesia and have determined to keep them in my prayers, I also have a wonderful confidence in them and in their presence to the country. While a tiny minority, they have been gifted with the authority and power of Christ himself to bring his healing and peace. They have made his presence felt and will continue to do so. And I, for one, would not hesitate for a moment to return and to assist them in whatever way that I can.



## Reflections on the Bali Bombing

by Sherry Weddell

All the traveling I do tends to mask my awareness of national and international news. I was in Boise when I first read in the paper of a terrorist bombing in Indonesia. My heart sunk as I thought of the wonderful Indonesian Catholics whom Fr. Michael and I had come to know less than two months before. It wasn't until I finally got home a few days ago that I received an e-mail message from Inge Hendromartono, the woman who first conceived of bringing us to her native Indonesia. I'd like to share some of her words with you:

***Hearing the news about Bali tonight, I can't help but feel that God had really meant to bring the "Called & Gifted" (Karunia and Panggilan ) seminar to Indonesia last August for very good reasons (whatever that may be). I also know that He has chosen the timing perfectly.***

***After all, it is only through HIS will and HIS help that it all could happen so smoothly and within such a short period of time. But why? Why Indonesia? Why now? Could it be because Indonesia can really benefit from it most? I don't know.***

***In a WORLD where people talk of war, where poverty is rampant, where terrorism hurts so many people, where religion started to be misused as a way for people to "hate one another", where religious tolerance begins to "disappear", etc., perhaps there is even more need to be "an Ambassador of God's love and peace to the world".***

***There were more than 1000 people attending the seminar last August. A lot of good can happen if we are willing to take our calls seriously, and to allow ourselves to be used as an instrument to show HIS LOVE to this world, in other words to be his apostles!!!***

In a world like ours, forming lay apostles is not just a nice thing to do. It is calling out the saints and apostles of the 21st century who, by exercising their charisms and answering God's call, will stand in the gap at critical moments and change the lives and destinies of many. We are extremely grateful for your continued support and prayers that enable the Catholic laity across the continent and overseas to receive the formation they need and deserve.



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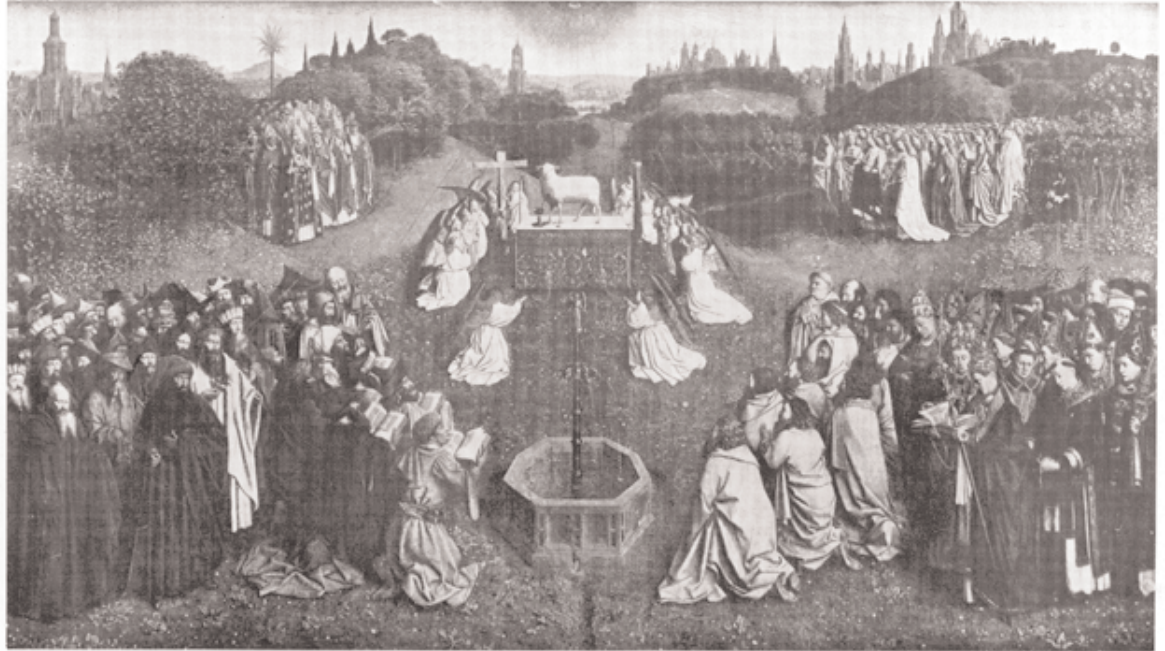
iron because meetings in her day lasted two hours.) But it was peaceful and no one expected you to do more than shift your weight occasionally.

So perhaps you'll understand why I have this theory that when you become a Quaker, the part of your brain that was designed to deal with complex liturgical actions turns to jelly. This is unfair, of course, but it makes me feel a bit better about my kinesthetic incompetence. After

I became Catholic, it took me an entire year to learn how to make the triple sign of the cross at the reading of the Gospel. Even today, if I don't concentrate, I'm likely to give the impression that I'm thumbing my nose at the celebrant.

The irony is that these same Quakers first exposed me to the idea of the *sacramentality*—the idea God could and would convey grace not just through the medium of my personal and inward faith, but through visible, earthly things like water, bread and people. In my Baptist past, we baptized with gusto, but we regarded it as a purely symbolic act, a public witness to the *real* salvific event which was assumed to have taken place within your heart. The idea that God would convey his grace through things or ritual actions was completely foreign to me. But I met a Quaker leader who was reading the great Catholic mystics and was quite taken with the concept of sacramentality. He did not go so far as to suggest that Quakers start baptizing or celebrating the Lord's Supper, but he did talk movingly of the need for us to become living sacraments ourselves.

Nowadays, at least two or three people at every teaching event ask me why I became Catholic. I always tell them that the very short version of a very long journey is that "the sacraments became essential." While it is true, however, that I was drawn to the Catholic Church by the sacraments, it is also true that until very recently, I didn't really "get it". I accepted intellectually what the Church taught about each of the sacraments but floundered badly as I tried to integrate them into the heart of my spiritual life. I was wrestling with an area of Catholic



*Adoration of the Lamb* by Jan van Eyck

belief and practice for which there is simply no equivalent in either my Quaker or my evangelical experience. I knew that I had missed something important. One day, however, a passage I was reading leapt out at me:

***The gift of the Spirit ushers in a new era in the "dispensation of the mystery", the age of the Church, during which Christ manifests, makes present, and communicates his work of salvation through the liturgy of his Church, "until he comes." [2] In this age of the Church, Christ now lives and acts in and with his Church, in a new way appropriate to this new age. He acts through the sacraments in what the common Tradition of the East and the West calls "the sacramental economy"; this is the communication (or "dispensation") of the fruits of Christ's Paschal mystery in the celebration of the Church's "sacraments". (Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC), 1076)***

My map of the spiritual universe had just been turned upside down. I could hardly take it in; Christ communicates his work of salvation through the liturgy! Questions raced through my mind. Christ dispenses the fruits of redemption through earthly things and ritual actions? He does so through the actions of someone else rather than as a direct and unmediated response to my inner devotion? What about faith? What about *my* faith?

I realized that I had been participating in the liturgy and sacraments while in the grip of a profoundly non-sacramental worldview. No wonder I had struggled! The idea that the ***grace of Christ really and only enters this world in response to and through the vehicle of the invisible, personal faith of individuals*** was embedded in my bones; it made grasping Church teaching about the role of the liturgy and the sacraments nearly impossible. Everything in

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Catholic worship and sacramental practice presumed something very different, but no one had ever spelled it out for me. After 14 years as a Catholic, I had finally blundered onto one of the foundation stones of the faith: the **sacramental economy of salvation**.

Beneath the practices of my Quaker and Baptist friends was a common assumption: the truly spiritual is invisible and disembodied. Indeed, Quakers often quoted John 4:24: "God is Spirit, and those who worship him must worship in Spirit and truth," to make the case against water baptism. We were certain that Christ's saving grace was communicated in a non-corporeal, unmediated manner by the Holy Spirit directly to the unseen heart of the individual in response to that person's faith. When, as evangelical Protestants, we asserted that salvation was by personal faith alone, *sola fide*, we meant **unmediated** faith alone. We understood personal faith as both the pre-requisite and the instrument through which one becomes a Christian, receives forgiveness for all sins, justification, adoption as God's child, and eternal life. The only embodied alternative we could envision was "earning" our salvation through works.

As Catholics, we definitely believe that we are saved by grace. But if Christ has chosen to communicate this grace through sacramental means, then the **instrument** through which we receive initial justification is not our own faith.

We become Christians, are forgiven, made God's sons and daughters, and receive God's own life through perceptible signs that actually do what they signify—the sacraments. As the universal catechism teaches:

***Holy Baptism is the basis of the whole Christian life; the gateway to life in the Spirit (vitae spiritualis ianua) and the door which gives access to the other sacraments. Through Baptism we are freed from sin and reborn as sons of God; we become members of Christ, are incorporated into the Church and made sharers in her mission.*** (CCC 1213)

***The sacraments of Christian initiation—Baptism, confirmation, and the Eucharist—lay the foundations of every Christian life.. The faithful are born anew by Baptism, strengthened by the sacrament of Confirmation, and receive in the Eucharist the food of eternal life.*** (CCC 1212)

***The Church affirms that for believers the sacraments of the New Covenant are necessary for salvation.*** (CCC 1129)

Personal faith is the necessary pre-disposition that

makes reception of the sacraments fruitful. Personal faith moves us to cooperate with the graces we have received through the sacraments and to be transformed by Christ, to become holy. But in the first 14 centuries of Christian history, one's personal faith was never understood to **replace** the sacraments as the instrument of grace.

In the early centuries of persecution and martyrdom, the Church taught that even those who had no access to the sacraments were still saved through the same sacramental economy—either through a baptism of blood (via martyrdom) or a baptism of desire. The doctrine of "baptism of desire" held that an individual's desire to know and serve God implies a desire for baptism if it were available. If the individual has no access to baptism, God in his mercy, confers the graces of it in ways we do not understand. ***But no early Christian theologian or apologist envisioned or taught an unmediated, non-sacramental way of salvation.***

Why am I focusing on this point? Because we live in a culture that is saturated with the idea that "spirituality" is something that happens entirely within the heart and soul of the individual. "Sola fide" has morphed into "*sola psyche*". This belief permeates popular psychology, most secular and New Age thought, and reinforces the assumptions of evangelical Protestantism, the most pervasive Christian culture in the United States. But once a person absorbs the idea that one meets God entirely through the disembodied, invisible, and interior means of one's personal faith, the sacramental

economy of salvation is not only difficult to grasp, it is literally unimaginable. The proposal that the grace of God is actually and truly made available to us sacramentally—by the visible, physical, public means of the Church and the sacraments—makes no sense at all. The sacraments are, at best, mere symbols of the "real" event, that which happens entirely in the privacy of one's heart. *Sola psyche* rules!

One consequence of the lack of solid catechesis in the 40 years since the Second Vatican Council is that a deep, prayerful knowledge of the sacramental way can no longer be assumed among Catholics. In the course of my work, I have visited 100 different parishes in 40 dioceses around the world and have never yet heard a homily or attended a class that clearly articulated the sacramental economy of salvation. On more than one occasion, I have had to explain to well-meaning RCIA directors that baptism is not merely the ritual celebration of an individual's

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***Vast portions of the faith are simply gutted of their power and relevance.***

faith journey but that it really changes those who receive it. I have seen Catholic parishes and dioceses uncritically adopt evangelical Protestant approaches to evangelism and Christian formation without first correcting the non-sacramental, even anti-sacramental, assumptions with which they are filled.

According to a well-publicized 1994 *New York Times/CBS* poll (cited by Germain Grisez and Russell Shaw in *Homiletic & Pastoral Review*) a hefty 45% of Catholics aged 65 years or more believed that the consecrated host is merely a "symbolic reminder" of Jesus. Among those a little younger (aged 45-64), this number increased to 58%. In the youngest group (18-44), those who were still children or not yet born when the Council began, it is a whopping 70%. According to the same survey, even the majority (51%) of the most regularly practicing Catholics, those who attend Mass every Sunday, held this symbol-only view of the Eucharist.

What is lost if we fail to communicate to this generation the reality and life-changing power of the sacramental economy of salvation? Vast portions of the faith are simply gutted of their power and relevance. The quarter of the universal catechism devoted to the "Celebration of the Mysteries" is rendered incomprehensible.

Baptism, "the basis of the whole Christian life, the gateway to life in the Spirit," becomes a rite of passage. The Eucharist—the closest, most intimate and life-changing encounter with Christ available to human beings in this life—is reduced to a ritual of communal self-expression.

The sacraments are not magic. Deficient catechesis on the sacraments seriously diminishes their impact. Our Church teaches that, although they always bestow grace objectively, the transforming power of sacramental grace is directly dependent on *expectant faith*: the spiritual openness and disposition of the receiver. It is nearly impossible to receive a "mere symbol" with expectant faith. (cf. CCC 1129).

A "sola psyche" view of God's working even undermines Catholic social teaching, which presumes that God enters and redeems this world through embodied human means in human history.

A couple of years ago, I came across an interview with the sort of raw-boned country preacher that I knew growing up in Mississippi. He summed up his response to the Catholic understanding

## Do You Have a "Sacramental Story"?

Sherry Weddell is currently developing a new offering on the life-changing power of the liturgy and the sacraments. As part of her research, she is collecting true stories of people who have experienced life-changing conversion through exposure to the liturgy, the sacraments or the presence of the Blessed Sacrament. She is particularly interested in experiences of initial conversion of the completely unchurched, non-Christians, or non-practicing Christians. Stories of major healing (from addiction, depression, physical or mental illness, etc.) are also most welcome.

If you or anyone you know has had such an experience and would like to share it, please send your story via e-mail to [sherry@siena.org](mailto:sherry@siena.org) or via postal mail to Sherry at the Institute: PO Box 26440, Colorado Springs, CO 80936. Please include your phone number and e-mail address so that Sherry can contact you.

of the Eucharist in one no-nonsense sentence: "If I believed what you Catholics believe about communion, I'd crawl down that aisle on my belly." I have never known a committed evangelical who would knowingly neglect to tell others about the most intimate and life-changing encounter with Jesus possible in this life. If evangelicals and Quakers believed about the Church and the sacraments as we do, they would never base their evangelistic and formation efforts on anything else.

Why then do we, as believing Catholics, so often evangelize and form Catholics in a non-sacramental, sola psyche vision? Have we lost confidence in the transforming power of Christ mediated through the Church, the sacraments, and the Tradition? Perhaps we have yet to experience it ourselves. Or perhaps we have unwittingly absorbed a sola psyche worldview.

We need to hear once more powerful stories of sacramental grace such as that of Raissa and Jacques Maritain who were baptized in 1906 and later became the center of a powerful Catholic cultural revival in France. I would like to leave you their

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Institute, have asked me to lead the development of a new program: a spiritual gifts discernment program for highschool-aged youth. This call also has come from many who have gone through our *Called and Gifted Workshop*, but until recently, we've had to answer that we had no such program—yet. But we now plan to begin offering workshops for youth in the spring of 2003.

I am working together with a team composed of current *Called and Gifted* teachers and experienced youth ministers. Together, we are adapting the content of the *Called and Gifted Workshop* to a format more relevant to teenagers.

"Relevant" is, I think, the key word here. Most teens, given a chance, are both able and willing to take in the *Called and Gifted Workshop* as it now stands. I know many who already have, and have found a new and growing source of grace for their lives. So we are not talking about "dumbing down" the workshop in any way. In fact, teens rightly demand a real sophistication in what we present to them. But the *Called and Gifted Workshop* was designed originally for adults—people who had already gained a good deal of life experience and who had fully entered into the "grown-up" world of work, politics, family, and the whole secular sphere. But this is not where teens find themselves, and we fail to serve them if we ask them to shoulder the responsibilities of adults. Teenagers are at an in-between stage, in which their primary task lies in looking ahead, in preparation for the future.

Part of their preparation is the development of a personal "plan of life" and thinking through and deciding upon what they want to do with their life—the work they want to do, the skills they want to develop, the relationships they want to enter into. But for a Christian, this plan also becomes a vocation. "Young people, entering into themselves and at the same time entering into conversation with Christ in prayer, desire as it were to read the eternal thought God the Creator and Father has in their regard. They then become convinced that the task assigned to them by God is left completely to their own freedom, and at the same time is determined by various circumstances... Examining these circumstances,

the young person...constructs his or her plan of life and at the same time recognizes this plan as the vocation to which God is calling him or her." (DA 9)

But this plan is not simply a speculation about the future: it must be put into place in the present. After all, the life they are planning is the life they are already living. In our youth, we lay the foundations for the rest of our lives. Most adults know very well that the habits they developed early on have shaped and formed their lives and their work as adults. So the Pope recommends that young people form habits of prayer, service to the poor, moral discipline, charity toward others—in short, the whole basis of Christian happiness.

In forming this life plan, in looking toward where he or she fits into the world, youths "stretch their wings," so to speak. They explore their interests, their abilities, develop their skills and learn how to relate to other people. And during this time it is crucial that they begin to discover their spiritual heritage: their apostolic mission as Christians. They must explore not only their personal identity but their role in the world: the vocation to which God is calling them.

Youth, therefore, must take a different approach to the charisms than adults do; they must approach them from the standpoint of preparation for the future. They can learn the process and habits of spiritual gifts discernment. They can learn to expect and to recognize charisms as they emerge in their own lives and their friends'. They can use their knowledge of spiritual gifts to help them form their life plans, discern God's call, and to eventually recognize their vocations. The Pope refers to our Lord's parable of the talents, saying that "youth is the time for discerning talents," and that when "little by little you recognize the 'talent' or 'talents' which each of you has, and you begin to use them in a creative way, you begin to increase them." (DA 12) Such youth will then question and challenge and prepare the world around them for the gifts which God will bestow in their lives.

*Br. Robert is currently serving on staff for the Institute and is active in teaching the Called and Gifted Workshop both for adults and young-adults. He resides at Blessed Sacrament Priory in Seattle.*



***During this time it is crucial that our youth begin to discover their spiritual heritage their apostolic mission as Christians. They must explore, not only their personal identity, but their role in the world: the vocation to which God is calling them.***



*Sola Psyche* continued from page 7

story. In her book entitled *We Were Friends Together*, Raissa writes about their experience of conversion:

*We suffered, Jacques and I, a kind of agony. This lasted for about two months.*

*Once, during those months, I heard in my sleep these words, said to me with a certain impatience: 'You are forever seeking what you must do. You have only to love God and serve Him with all your heart.'*

*Our suffering and dryness grew greater every day. Finally we understood that God also was waiting, and that there would be no further light so long as we should not have obeyed the imperious voice of our consciences saying to us: 'You have no valid objection to the Church; she alone promises you the light of truth—prove her promises, put Baptism to the test.'*

*(We) betook ourselves to the Church of Saint John the Evangelist in Montmartre. I was in a state of absolute dryness, and could no longer remember any of the reasons for my being there. One single thing remained clear in my mind: either Baptism would give me Faith, and I would believe and I would belong to the Church altogether; or I would go away unchanged, an unbeliever forever. Jacques had almost the same thoughts.*

*'What do you ask of the Church of God?'*

*'Faith.'*

*We were baptized at eleven o'clock in the morning. . . . An immense peace descended upon us, bringing with it the treasures of Faith. There were no more questions, no more anguish, no more trials—there was only the infinite answer of God. The Church kept her promises. And it is she whom we first loved. It is through her that we have known Christ.* ❀

## Our Mission

At the Catherine of Siena Institute, we work to make apostolic formation and support readily available to all lay Catholics by:

1. Making self-formation resources available to lay Catholics throughout the world.
2. Equipping parishes to become houses of formation, discernment, and apostolic support for the laity.
3. Forming clergy, religious, and lay leaders to be effective formators of lay apostles.
4. Fostering awareness, discussion, theological inquiry, and pastoral consultation throughout the Church regarding the apostolic mission and formation of the laity.
5. Collaborating with interested individuals, groups, and organizations in the service of this mission.

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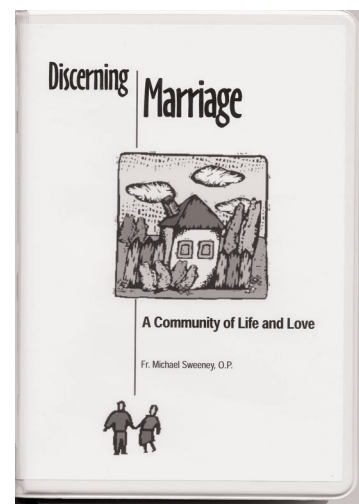
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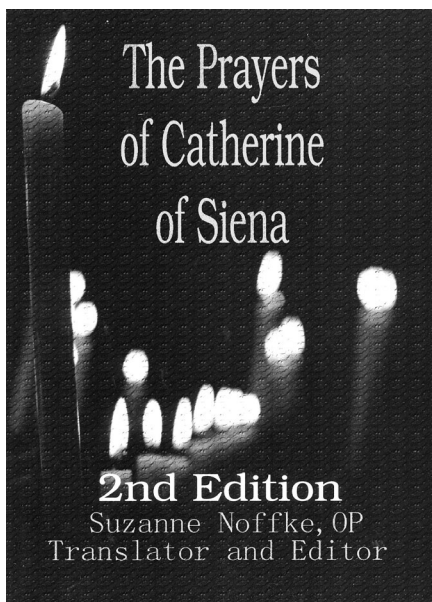
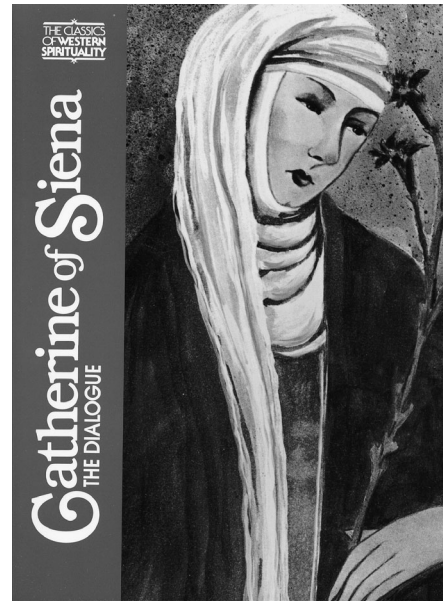
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## Catherine of Siena Institute Events

### *Where we've been and where we're going*



### **November**

- 1-2 Byron, CA Interviewer/Facilitator Training.  
 1-2 Reno, NV Interviewer/Facilitator Training.  
 8-9 Pocatello, ID **C & G Workshop**, St Paul's Church.  
 15-16 Sidney, BC **C & G Workshop**, St Elizabeth's Church.  
 15-16 San Francisco, CA **C & G Workshop**, St Dominic's.  
 22-23 New Orleans, LA **C & G Workshop**, St Jerome's.

### **December**

- 6-7 Dubuque, IA **Called and Gifted Workshop**, St. Joseph.  
 6-7 Byron, CA Teacher Training.  
 13-14 Boise, ID **Extended Discern. Workshop**, Sacred Heart.

### **January**

- 10-11 Byron, CA (Oakland) **Called and Gifted Workshop**, St. Ann's Church. Stephanie Moore (925) 576-0506.  
 17-18 Oceanside, CA **Called and Gifted Workshop**, Mission San Luis Rey Parish. Contact: Matt Heck (760) 757-3250 or mattheck@sanluisreyparish.org  
 17-18 Yakima, WA **Called and Gifted Workshop**, Holy Family Church. Frank Murray (509) 972-2479.  
 17-18 Hagerman, ID **Called and Gifted Workshop**, Contact: Carol McGee, (208) 344-8311.  
 21-23 San Diego, CA **Called and Gifted Workshop**, San Diego Diocese. Contact: Bernadine Carr (858) 490-8272 or bcarr@diocese-sdiego.org  
 31-1 Federal Way, WA **Called and Gifted Workshop**, St Theresa's Parish. Contact: Linda (253) 838-5924.  
 31-1 Reno Diocese, NV **Called and Gifted Workshop**, Venue TBD. Maureen Keck (775) 326-9442.  
 29 Seattle, WA **Friendship Series**. Fr Michael Sweeney, OP. Blessed Sacrament. Contact: (206) 547-3020.

### **February**

- 2-3 Reno, NV Teacher Training.

- 5,12,19 Seattle, WA **Friendship Series**. Fr Michael Sweeney, OP. Blessed Sacrament. Contact: (206) 547-3020.  
 7-8 Everett, WA **Called and Gifted Workshop**, Immaculate Conception Parish. Parish Office (425) 349-7014.  
 21-22 Colorado Springs, CO **Called and Gifted Workshop**, Holy Apostles Church. Contact: Institute office (719) 219-0056 or (888) 878-6789.  
 21-22 Spokane, WA **Called and Gifted Workshop**, Gonzaga University. Contact: Fr Barnett (509) 487-6363.  
 28-1 Great Bend, KS **Called and Gifted Workshop**, Dodge Diocese, Heartland Center for Spirituality. Contact Center (620) 792-1232.

### **March**

- 3-6 Puyallup, WA Lenten Parish Mission, All Saints Church. Eric Paige (253) 845-7521 x104.  
 7-8 Phoenix, AZ **Called and Gifted Workshop**, Most Holy Trinity Church. Parish Office (602) 944-3375.  
 17-20 La Jolla, CA Lenten Parish Mission, All Hallows Church. Mary Anne Russell (858) 459-2975.  
 21-22 El Cajon, CA (San Diego area) **Called and Gifted Workshop**, Church of St Luke. Contact: Carol Stone (619) 440-8412 or (619) 442-1697.  
 24-27 Renton, WA Lenten Parish Mission. St Stephen the Martyr Church. Cynde Bosshart (253) 631-1940.  
 31-3 Vancouver, WA Lenten Parish Mission. St Joseph's Church. Dale Magers (360) 696-4407 x245.

### **And beyond...**

- Apr. 12 Manchester, NH Women's Conference, Immaculate Heart Church. Sherry Weddell, "The Apostolic Woman." Contact: Nancy (603) 669-3100.  
 May 9-10 Alameda, CA **Called and Gifted Workshop**, contact Greta (510) 865-2626 ext15  
 Oct 17-18 Greenville, SC **Called and Gifted Workshop**, St. Mary's Church (864) 271-8422.



# Catherine of Siena Institute

Equipping Parishes to Form Lay Apostles

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***As he is, so are we in this world***

*1 Jhn 4:17*

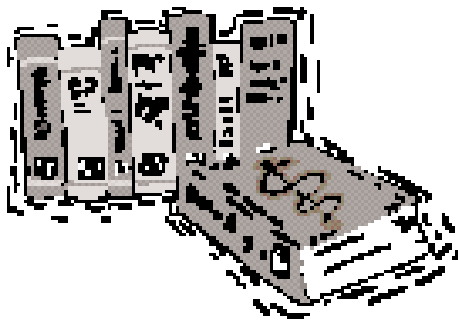
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