

THE THIRD ORDER

2 January 2007

Of the Society of St. Pius X

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Dear Postulants and Professed members,

With the liturgical year having begun and the New Year upon us, let's begin by putting first things first. Why have you become a Third Order Member? St Benedict, founder of the Benedictines, requested his monks to frequently ask themselves a similar question when entering the monastery, "Why have I come here?" If the answer was anything other than "To become a saint" then they'd lost sight of the fundamental end to which all their life was henceforth orientated. The first words Our Lord addressed to His Apostles were, "*What seek you* (by following ME)?" The first words the Church asks us at the very beginning of Baptism are "Quid petis ab Ecclesia Dei?" What do you seek from the Church of God? So what do you seek in following Christ by joining the Third Order? If the answer is "To become a saint" then stay. If you seek from the Church faith as you replied at Baptism, then stay.

Why become a saint? because it's the supernatural destiny of every baptized soul. At baptism God planted in each one of us (I assume you're all baptized as there are still a number of members for whom I have no record of baptismal certificates!) a seed, *inchoatio vitae aeternae*, the beginning of eternal life. Having never seen an oak it's very difficult to grasp the full potential of an acorn. Someone who has never seen a Saint will find it hard to comprehend the full potential latent in a baptized infant. Having never seen heaven we often doubt our full dignity and the extraordinary heights of our destiny. If we lose sight of our end we will quickly lose grasp of the means to that end. Therefore daily we must ask ourselves before undertaking spiritual reading, meditation, mass ... "Why?" The answer must always resound, "To become a saint". Never lose sight of your destiny.

Never lose sight of your dignity. People find it so hard to dare to be different in a world where everyone seeks to express their individuality but no one wishes to stand out. How hard it may seem to dress modestly, to admit you have 5, 6, 7 ... children, that you don't believe in contraception or NFP, that you don't watch television, that you don't listen to rock, that you still go to church on Sundays. It's hard to be different, but knowing your Christian dignity and your supernatural destiny makes it easy.

Does a prince or a queen find it too much to ask to avoid certain company, licentious places or modes of dress inappropriate to his or her office? Is he or she embarrassed at having to conduct him or herself with comportment and speech worthy of their state? No, because they're conscious of their dignity.

Every Catholic is more than a prince for his Father is more than a king and his family is not just royal but Divine! His dignity therefore surpasses infinitely that of an earthly prince. St

Thomas Aquinas says on this point “The good of grace in one Christian is greater than the good of nature in the entire universe.”¹

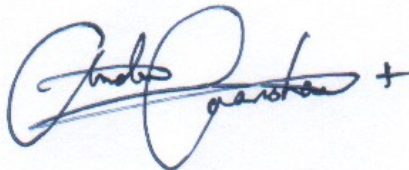
If you find it hard to continually oppose the spirit of the world then remember the words of Our Lord and Master, “Blessed are they that thirst and hunger after justice for they shall have their fill.” The more you thirst and hunger to become saints the more you have your fill, for just as iron is to a magnet so are we to God. The closer we approach him by our efforts of sanctification the more He draws us and the faster we advance. Don’t be afraid to be really generous!

Do you find it hard to continually resist the sexual perversities of this century? Then remember the words of Our Lord, “Blessed are the pure of heart for they shall see God.” Are you tired of opposing the spirit of the Novus Ordo, do you, like so many priests, grow weary of the battle and yearn to see tradition return? Then remember, “Blessed are they that suffer persecution for justice sake for theirs’ is the kingdom of heaven ... be glad and rejoice for your reward is VERY GREAT in Heaven.”² Great rewards are not given for little efforts and great graces require great sacrifices. Do you want that great grace of sanctity? Such a grace is so singular, such a scarce commodity nowadays, yet by continued fidelity to the Third order you have it in you grasp. Do you want it? Then resolve this year to put your sanctification first.

Let’s start the New Year with a great vigilance over our meditations, both in preparing them in advance and undertaking them for the full 15 minutes without unnecessary distractions. Spiritual reading must be DAILY. No Television.

In Christ through Mary,

Fr Andrew Cranshaw

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Andrew Cranshaw', with a small cross symbol to the right.

Fr Andrew Cranshaw,
Spiritual Director of the Third Order of FSSPX
for Australia and New Zealand

¹ I^a II^{ae} q113 art9 ad2^m

² Mt 5 v11-13