

Our Lady of Victory School

421 S. Lochsa
Post Falls, ID 83854
(208) 773-7265 www.olvs.org

Dedicated to
The Queen through whom we received Christ, Our King.

Written with gratitude to

Sister Mary Margaret Patricia
of the Holy Names Sisters,
whose love of the Kingship of Christ
introduced me to Encyclicals of the Church.

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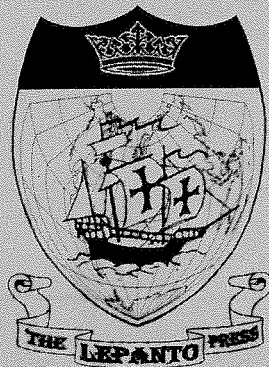
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PREFACE

(To Parents and Teachers)

It had been at least forty years since I was last motivated to read seventh/eighth grade American history text books. Then came a request from an order of Dominican Sisters who teach nearby, asking me to do just that, again. Needless to say, after forty years, such books are read somewhat more critically.

What I discovered in even older American History text books used by Catholic schools, was a selective presentation of situations which, all too often, idealized non-Catholic, or anti-Catholic principles.

Take, for example, "United States History, Grade 8", published in 1965 by Laidlow Brothers. This text book acknowledges eight Catholic educators, at various Catholic Colleges and Universities, for its contents.

You may recall that during the 1920's, neighboring Mexico was suffering from a bloody persecution, inflicted upon Catholics by the anti-Catholic regime of Plutarco Calles. One of those killed by this persecution was Fr. Pro, now beatified. Fr. Pro had been captured by government soldiers at the time Dwight Morrow was the American Ambassador to Mexico. After Fr. Pro's capture, Ambassador Morrow was asked by Catholics to intervene with Calles to save this holy priest's life. Morrow not only refused to help, but right after Fr. Pro was shot to death, while the Calles regime was still actively killing Catholics, Morrow toured Mexico with Calles to show our government's official support of his government.

What did the above mentioned Catholic history book say of Ambassador Morrow? "Morrow's skillful efforts offered the Mexican government a new type of American diplomacy. His understanding and tactfulness soon solved the problems existing between the two countries. Morrow's tact not only brought about a peaceful solution in Mexico, but it also won the United States many friends in Latin America". Now "peaceful solutions", and "winning friends" sound so nice. However, "peaceful solutions" and "winning friends" mean different things to different people. Mexico's "peaceful solution" included the brutal murder of Catholic men, women and children.

History is more accurately understood when one learns that, in the world, a "peaceful solution" may mean the subjugation of the Church by the State, and a "good neighbor policy" may include an alliance against the Church. For the world, "freedom" and "rights" often mean freedom FOR error and rights FOR immorality, while "peace" often means merely the absence of war. Opposed to such worldly decep-

tion is simply, truth. God gave His Church a passionate love of truth, and of principles that flow from it.

After discussing the principles presented in this book with a number of 7/8th graders at our parish school, it is evident that many students at this age level are ready to understand them. The problem facing their teachers is the lack of U.S. History books written with such principles in mind.

It is no small effort to produce a series of American History books that reflect Catholic principles (including an honest presentation of our government's relations with Mexico). To bridge the gap between the present time and when this task can be accomplished, this book is offered as an overview of those Catholic principles most often clouded in existing American history text books. It is offered as a foundation upon which to measure what is written or implied in currently used American History text books.

Note: The Question and Discussion section included at the end of each chapter offers three types of questions: (1) questions that require the student to write an answer; (2) questions that require the student to underline the correct statement; and (3) Discussion/Essay questions.

Answers for the first two types of questions are in the companion PARENT/TEACHER QUESTION AND DISCUSSION GUIDE booklet. This companion Parent/Teacher Guide also contains guidance for selected essay/discussion questions presented in this book.

A Note of Thanks

The artwork for this book was done by my daughter, Maria Ressler, and was enhanced for printing by Krystyna Wisniewski, I am grateful to both for their talented work.

A special note of thanks is also offered to the Bishop, priests, sisters, laymen and women, and members of my family who so generously gave of their time to read through drafts of this book. Their suggestions were a great help to me. Any remaining mistakes are simply mine. Should you wish to bring anything to my attention, please send your comments to the publisher's "C-C-C" department (Criticisms, Complaints and Corrections), in care of the author.

Thank you.

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THE MEASURING TAPE

(Introduction)

St. Augustine wrote about two cities: one was "The City of God"; the other was called "The City of Man". One can tell in which city he or she lives by reading a local newspaper.

The purpose of this book is to give readers an understanding of Certain principles which govern the City of God. Needless to say, the corruption of these principles is found everywhere in the City of Man, our temporary home.

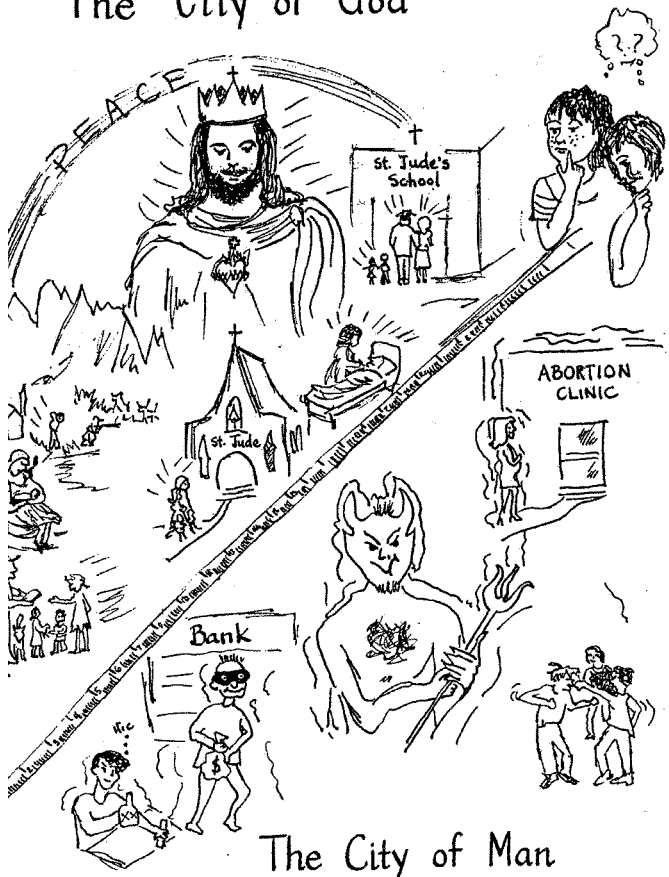
God created man to live in the City of God. Adam, created a little less than the angels, his soul possessing the image of God and filled with Sanctifying Grace, had both a natural AND supernatural Claim to dignity. After Adam's fall, man sadly learned that his natural dignity can be corrupted, and his supernatural dignity totally lost, by living according to the principles that govern the City of Man.

To make sure His "elect" would understand and live by those principles which govern the City of God, God gave mankind a VISIBLE guide for all those of good will to follow. This, His Church, visible from the time His Divine Son established it upon earth, will so continue until the end of time. It teaches what mankind needs to know, regarding belief and moral conduct on earth, to reach heaven.

Amidst the conflicting opinions of human beings, only to those whom He wished to represent His visible Church, did Christ say, "He who hears you, hears Me." That is why, if we are to work towards restoring even a little part of something properly called a "Christian Civilization", (is this not our duty?), we need to listen to what His Church says, and understand the principles it teaches.

The first half of this book (Chapters I through X) covers certain basic principles. The remainder of this book relates these principles to government and governing.

The City of God



The City of Man

for the creative hand of a loving God. Thinking this way is to see a watch and not admit a watch maker.

Nor did the planets and stars (what a variety!) create themselves. From Common Sense, it is obvious that each thing that exists came forth from an intelligent Creator. The order within and among His creation shows forth His intelligence.

Order

Of order, there can also be no doubt. There is an order between not only all the stars and planets, but between everything that exists on Earth. Some people think they can ignore God's natural and moral laws which govern this order. The truth is that they can never escape them.

Drops of water, SLOWLY dripping from a bath tub faucet, are orderly. When, however, the flow is slowly increased, there is a point at which the falling water seems to develop a whole variety of agitated patterns as it leaves the faucet and drops through the air. (Try it).

This "agitation" APPEARS to no longer be subject to the same laws that governed the original drops of falling water. The laws of gravity and flow, however, did NOT change at all as the tub faucet was being slowly opened. The falling water continued to follow ALL of the same laws that it did before. The water's agitated reaction to these laws was merely the result of its OWN change in flow.

So it is with mankind. Whatever men and women do with their free will, they remain AS subject to ALL the moral laws God fashioned for them, and their consequences, as they do to all the physical laws of nature.

The agitation within and among people who try to oppose or ignore God's laws arises BECAUSE they remain as subject to His laws, whatever their behavior, as falling water, whatever its flow.

It is by His LAWS, that God maintains ORDER throughout His Creation.

Unity

Whenever an intelligent creature makes something, he makes it for a purpose. Because God is supremely intelligent, we know that each thing He created was made for a purpose. The ultimate purpose of everything, rightly understood, is to glorify God and draw mankind, fascinated by all he sees, towards his Creator.

We see in the human body how all its parts (e.g., the eyes, blood, cells, bones), are not only adapted to each other, but all fit and work TOGETHER to form a single human body. So it is with creation. All the beings and things He created were created to fit well with each

CHAPTER I... THE "BIG PICTURE"

The best place to begin anything is at the beginning, let us start this chapter with a look at Creation. What we see, if we look closely, are three things: (1) variety, order, and (3) unity.

Variety

Of variety there can be no doubt. Look at all the different kinds of animals, insects, flowers, and people. They are all part of one, glorious Creation. Within this creation, we know that each species reproduces only itself, and no other species. We know that none of us descended our self, and that each new member of any species comes forth from previous members of the same species. Each species, new generation of members is like a link in a chain that points backwards to its first member. Since this first member could not create itself, it had to be created by something other than itself.

Those who think that what the most advanced scientists in their super-equipped labs have not been able to produce from nothing (life) could have come about by sheer chance, are trying to substitute a "toss of the dice"

other.

Everything in creation depends upon something other than itself to survive. Humans depend upon air, gravity, and food. Gravity is regulated by heavenly bodies, food depends upon warmth from the sun, water from the clouds, and minerals from the earth.

Look, for example, at how an apple tree grows. It gets needed warmth and energy from the Sun, food from the soil, and water from the clouds that are formed by the evaporation of oceans fed by rivers. Its fruit depends upon blossoms whose coming forth is regulated by the seasons which, in turn, respond to the movement of heavenly bodies. Thus the apple tree finds its needs met not just by the planet upon which it grows, but, in varying degrees, by the rest of creation.

From this we can understand that each single detail of creation was formed by God to be a part of a single, well harmonized whole. This harmony that we see in the material world is a reflection of the unity that exists in God. The natural unity and harmony of all the parts of creation with God, includes us.

Variety, order and unity are found in every part of creation. Not only is it found between creatures, but also within them. We see in the human body, for example, how all its parts (eyes, blood, cells, bones) are perfectly adapted to each other and work together to form a single, complete organism. So it is with creation: all the beings and things of creation were made to complement each other within the "body" of a single creation. From this, we can begin to understand that every detail of creation was formed by God to be a part of an entire, harmonized, whole. This harmony that we see in the material world, and throughout creation, is a manifestation of the unity that exists in God.

It is the awesome grandeur of creation, which people no more can fully understand than they can understand infinity, that beckons mankind towards the infinite greatness of its creator, God. (Who of us can understand where the universe "ends", or what is beyond the furthest star?.... God doesn).

The tremendous desire we have for freedom (most of us are willing to die for it), arises from our desire to be able to choose from all the bits and pieces of creation what we think are the TRULY best ones for us. God gave us this faculty to choose, from the variety of goods that He created for ALL mankind, the PARTICULAR ones best suited to bring each of us into the realm of His eternal happiness.

Thus the internal expression of our freedom, our free will, is constantly seeking to select what we THINK will make us happiest. By possessing the

TRUTH needed to choose the very best, and aided by God's GRACE (another gift of God which serves to unite us to Him), we are able to fulfill our desire for happiness by reaching heaven. In heaven, each of us will have all the happiness we can take. In Heaven, the REASON for our wanting to be "free", namely, to FIND some happiness we do not have, is fulfilled.

In heaven, the very purpose for which we ALL were created and given our freedom to choose is fulfilled. In heaven our desire for eternal happiness and love is fulfilled to overflowing and our desire to know His Glory, Goodness and Infinite Beauty fulfilled.

Church and State

A watch contains variety, order and unity. It is made up of a variety of parts, placed into a certain order. These parts achieve the purpose of their individual existence only when united into a single, functioning watch.

A just society of people also contains variety, order and unity. People secure a measure of TEMPORAL happiness by uniting themselves into a single, functioning State.

The Church contains variety, order and unity. Men and women attain the ETERNAL purpose of their existence (eternal happiness) only when united into this unique Mystical Body, whose head is Christ.

As the watch maker is needed to guide the needed parts into a watch, so God's Church and The State exist to guide mankind into its eternal union with Christ. The State gives temporal guidance, and the Church gives spiritual guidance.

Men, women and children cannot unite themselves into the body of Christ (and thus achieve eternal happiness) without God, any more than pieces of metal, silicon and plastic can unite themselves into a watch, without a watch maker.

God's Will

Opposing the purpose of both Church and State is the desire of fallen mankind to find happiness on its own (without God). Thus we see the tremendous emphasis placed there day upon "doing our own thing" (rather than God's). We also see the sad result of "doing our own thing" all around us. The remedy to this sadness is to better understand, and then to serve God's will.

God's will is accomplished within both State and Church through variety, order and unity: the variety of people's talents serving each other's different spiritual and temporal needs; the proper order among people

CHAPTER II ... PATRIOTISM

resulting when justice and virtue are practiced to fulfill our desire for peace; the unity among people resulting from love of God and neighbor, made perfect by the possession of truth. This unity becomes possible when the members of the State, through their union with Christ's Mystical Body (the Church), are united by love with Christ, and with their neighbor. The result of HIS union is temporal and eternal happiness.

God's will is accomplished within both State and Church through variety, order and unity: the variety of people's talents serving each other's spiritual and temporal needs; the order among people based upon justice and virtue fulfilling their desire for peace; the unity among people resulting from their possession of truth. Their unity becomes perfect when the members of the State, through union with Christ's Mystical Body (the Church), are united by grace and charity with Christ, Himself. The result of THIS union is eternal happiness.

A Nation is Like a Garden.

A nation is like a garden, and a nation's government is like its gardener. For things to grow well, a gardener must keep things "straight", fertilize and water the soil, keep out the weeds, protect his plants from the attacks of insects, and follow the advice of an expert gardener on certain problems.

For the people of a nation to "grow well" (prosper temporally and spiritually), its government (like a gardener) must also keep things "straight", make sure its people have enough of what they need to grow on their own, keep down the "weeds" of vice, protect its members against the attacks of their enemies, and follow the advice of an expert (The Church) to solve certain problems.

Not all insects are bad for a garden. Bees are needed. Some flies, however, look like bees. Your job in reading this book, is to learn the difference between what merely LOOKS good or bad, and what is TRULY good or bad.

DEFINITION: Patriotism means love of country.

PURPOSE: Patriotism urges us to love, defend, and build upon the true, good and beautiful gifts God has given our country.

FOUNDATION: The foundation of patriotism is the love of moral goodness. Patriotism, to bring about any lasting good, must be rooted in what is ACTUALLY (not just apparently) true, good and beautiful for your Country.

EXAMPLE: A person who loves his country because of its Catholic heritage, the heroism and generosity of its people, and its natural beauty, loves his country for the right reasons.

ABUSE: Patriotism is abused in the same way love is abused: (1) by loving created things (creatures) more than God, (2) by selfishness, or (3) by desiring immorality. Rather than attaching a person to his or her country, these FALSE loves attach a person to what is NOT true, NOT good or NOT beautiful.

DISCUSSION

Catholics can ALWAYS be proud of those who practiced their Catholic faith before them. A quick glance at the Catholic heritage of the "New World", and that of our own beloved country's history, merely proves this point.

All the world knows that Christopher Columbus was Catholic. Consider after him the Catholic missionaries who brought both faith and civilization to American Indians. Jesuits such as Fr. De Smet, and Fr. Nicholas Point left their homes to come to our Country, and then traveled thousands of miles on horseback from St. Louis to serve the Northwestern Indian tribes, building missions and teaching Indians how to survive by farming. Where the Indians were not stirred up against the Jesuits by English protestants, the records clearly show how deeply these Catholic missionaries were loved by the Indians they served.

Recall Fr. Serra who established a series of still-standing missions up and down the coast of California, to unite Indians with their Saviour. These missions are monuments to the love of Indian souls that caused many a Catholic boy to leave his home and follow a missionary vocation in our distant country.

Catholics not only brought love to our nation's people, they brought courage. Consider the martyrs such as Fr. Isaac Jogues, who shed his blood in the State of New York; the schools of Mother Cabrini; the Sisters

CHAPTER I ... THE BIG PICTURE

QUESTIONS

1. Name three characteristics of God's Creation.
2. Give an example of each of these characteristics.
3. Church and State exist to guide mankind into union with.
4. Describe how a nation's government is like a gardener.

of Mercy who nursed the wounds of dying soldiers during the Civil War.

Did you know that in the First World War the first American soldier to be wounded, the first officer killed, the first nurse to be wounded, the first to meet the enemy in the air, and the first commander of an American division to capture an important enemy position, were all Catholics?

Our nation's first Distinguished Service Cross, the first woman's award of the Distinguished Service Cross, the first Navy award of the Congressional Medal of Honor and the first Army Aviation award of the Congressional Medal of Honor ALL went to American Catholics. To list all the Catholics who have served our country with honor would take books!

It was through Catholic men and women, starting with those who first brought the Faith to our country, that the Faith lives in our Country today. Soon it will be your turn to pass it on to others. True patriotism (love of country) is shown by those who build upon the Catholic heritage of their past, for those who are yet to come.

Love Protects

People will protect what they love. People who love their country will fight, even die, to protect it. Thus love of country (patriotism) is a virtue that PROTECTS your country. On the other hand, people will not protect what they do not love. A nation whose citizens fail to love it will be overcome by its enemies as surely as a starving calf will be overcome by its predators.

What to Love

What should we love and protect in our country? Simply stated, we should love ONLY what is good for it, ONLY what God would love in it, or want for it. It is NOT patriotic to love what is bad in it or for it.

For example, every country has its heroes and heroines. Many of them were gifted. At the same time, it would not be right in God's eyes to make a hero out of someone whose actions harmed the Faith or Our Lord's Catholic Church in our country, or in other countries.

Since the proper love of our Country is based upon loving ONLY what is good, we need to know what makes things good, and what makes them bad.

Evil is a Lack of Something Good

In the beginning, everything God created was both perfectly good and in perfect order. Creation was like the sound of a beautiful symphony playing through eternity, with every instrument perfectly played. When Adam fell, he was like a trumpet player who decided to

play what he wanted to play, instead of playing the notes he was supposed to play.

Because of this disobedience, the perfection of this entire "symphony" was disturbed, and the original beauty of its harmony was lost. From this example we can see that (1) things go wrong when we do *things "our way"* instead of God's way, and (2) the result is always something less good *than it* could have been. It is this LACK of goodness that is called "evil".

The very fact that *something exists* means that, by its existence, it gives a certain glory to God who created it. For this reason, just existing gives each created thing a certain goodness (even insects) on the other hand, to the extent that what exists lacks something it needs, or fails to do what it is supposed to do, this failure is called "evil". Evil is a lack of something that should be there. Sickness is a lack of health, vice is a lack of virtue, and lies are a lack of truth.

Evil is like a hole in a road. Evil is a lack of something that should exist, like pavement in a road, but is missing. Evil, because it is a lack of something good, honors nothing.

Evil is a Weakness That Leads to Harm

The results of evil seem so powerful it may be hard to understand that the foundation of evil is weakness. To help you understand this, we will use a bridge as an example.

We all know that a bridge NEEDS to be strong to support the people who cross it. A strong bridge that supports all those who cross it is rightly called a "good bridge". On the other hand, a bridge that LACKS the strength it needs to do its job is called a "bad bridge", because its weakness will certainly cause a painful LACK of well-being to those upon it when it collapses.

People are like bridges. A morally strong person can be trusted to carry an important job. A morally weak person can not.

One needs only to read the crime report of any city in our *nation* to know how much harm has resulted from people being morally weak. Crime is a measure of a *nation's weakness*, not strength.

Spiritual Strength and Loving Things in Order

To be strong and able to defend itself against its enemies, a nation must have not only military strength, but spiritual strength. Spiritual strength comes from loving things in the RIGHT ORDER.

God and virtue must always come FIRST and can never be loved too much. If a *nation loves* God and virtue above all else, it will love and defend all that is

ed upon God's Laws and Catholic virtue, and op-
e all that attacks them.

On the other hand, if the people of a nation love
gs in the WRONG ORDER, such as themselves or
erial things MORE than they love God, or pleasure
RE than virtue, they will destroy their own as well
eir nation's spiritual strength.

Never underestimate the power of spiritual strength
n it comes to war. It was the SPIRITUAL strength,
the physical strength, of David that killed Goliath.
far better for a citizen or a nation, to be a "David"
er than a "Goliath".

Great Christian battles have been won with spiri-
strength, rather than physical superiority. At Lep-
the outnumbered Catholic forces, strengthened by
Mass and Rosary, defeated the terrifying Islamic
y. The little army of Cortez, in ridding Mexico of
Aztec's bloody practice of human sacrifice, was
numbered 10,000 to one.

How Good Nations Fall

It is important to understand that there are two
s your nation can be attacked; (1) by its enemy
ly declaring war against it, or (2) by that same en-
weakening it from within. Declaring war against a
try unites its citizens against the attacker. This
y makes the country being attacked harder to con-
.

For this reason our enemies know that the most
ctive way to conquer a good nation is NOT to im-
liately declare war against it, but to first weaken it
encouraging its citizens to desire those three false
s that divide them from God and from each other.
enemies know them well: a love of material things
e than God, selfishness, and the desire for immoral-

Divide and Conquer

Each of these false loves has its own way of weak-
g a nation. While justice and charity serve to unite
ation's people, selfishness divides them, and those
practice immorality set themselves against those
practice virtue.

As the number of citizens practicing any or all of
three false loves increases, their nation becomes
e and more divided. A nation weakened by such
sion invites its enemies to attack.

Because these false loves draw a nation into war,
can see why war is a punishment for the Bins
se loves) of mankind. That is why the most impor-
gift we can give our country is not our physical
ngth, as important as it is, but the strength of our

own moral goodness. THIS goodness is the foundation
of true patriotism.

Our Country's War with Evil

One of the things any accurate history records is
the tremendous war being fought against God and His
Church within each country. Just as surely as Satan
fought against God's will being done in Heaven, he
fights against God's will being done on earth.

Because the Sacrament of Confirmation prepares
you to be a soldier in this war, it is important for you to
know how to choose which side to join.

The War Has Only Two Sides

The first thing to realize is that the war waged on
earth has ONLY two sides. Each side serves its leader.
One side serves Christ; the other side will serve any
one BUT Christ. The difference between these two
sides can be understood by looking at the difference
between good kings and bad kings.

Good Kings and Bad Ones

Good kings know that the authority they received
from God can ONLY be used for the spiritual and tem-
poral GOOD of their subjects, and NOT for any selfish
reasons. Such kings willingly serve Christ.

Bad kings want to use the gift of authority to serve
themselves and evil causes. They do not want anyone,
not even God Who gave them their authority, to tell
them what they should or should not do.

No one really wants to live in a nation ruled by a
king who thinks he can do anything he wants. With this
in mind, would it not be just as bad to live in a country
ruled by a majority of people who think THEY can do
anything they want?

In Conclusion...

We have discussed (1) the relationship between
goodness and strength, weakness and evil; (2) the fact
that those who love their country have an obligation to
love ONLY what is good about it; (3) why each citizen
has an obligation to reject evil; (4) the fact that a war is
being fought within your nation to replace God's will
with that of fallen man; and (5) how to recognize good
kings from bad ones.

CHAPTER II LOVE OF COUNTRY (PATRIOTISM) QUESTIONS

1. What is patriotism?
2. What is the foundation of patriotism?
3. What should you love about your country?

4. Name some reasons why Catholics should be proud of their country.
5. What is evil?
6. Is it patriotic to love what is NOT good in your country?
7. What two things should we love above all others?
8. How do our nation's enemies seek to weaken it?
9. Name the 2 sides that are at war in your country.
10. How does one properly show love for his country?
 - a.) By supporting what is both good AND bad in it?
 - b.) By supporting ONLY what is good in it?

TRUE OR FALSE:

11. One way to weaken a nation before conquering it, is to get its citizens to desire immorality more than virtue.

ESSAY/DISCUSSION QUESTION

The battle for your country has two sides. How will you know the right side for you to be on?

CHAPTER III - RIGHTS

DEFINITION:.....A right is something to which a person is entitled.

PURPOSE:Each man possesses rights for two purposes: 1) to fulfill his obligations towards God and neighbor, and 2) to be given what is his in justice.

FOUNDATION: The foundation of a "right" is justice.

EXAMPLE:If you possess authority, you have a "right" to use it for a just purpose, but you have no right to use it for an unjust purpose.

ABUSE: Since our rights are given to us by God to fulfill His Will, what is desired by a "right" can only be something truly good. A "right" to do something that is unjust or immoral simply does not exist.

DISCUSSION

Since rights are based upon justice, we should first make sure that we understand justice. Justice is a rule of balance. The balance between how hard a man works and how much he is paid is a matter of justice.

Simply stated, justice is what obliges us to give to each person what we owe to him.

Thus justice can be seen as having two dimensions: (1) the OBLIGATION to give what is owed, and (2) the RIGHT to receive what is due. In this way we can see that one person's rights relate to another person's obligations.

Subjective and Objective Rights

Looking at something "subjectively". means looking at it from only our point of view. We may define a right from the SUBJECTIVE point of view as the moral or legal authority, based upon justice, that allows us to possess, claim, and use a thing as our own. If you are owed \$10, based upon justice, you have a right to claim it as yours. If I am the one who owes you the \$10, it is my obligation to pay it to you.

However, since ALL people have rights and obligations, we may look for OBJECTIVE (general) rules that govern ALL man's rights and obligations. An example of an objective right would be what we call "fair play". Every one is obliged by it.

Another objective rule that governs ALL rights and obligations is this: Since all rights and obligations come to mankind from God, what a person claims as a right must be reasonable. Since nothing reasonable is served by injustice, error or evil, neither injustice, error nor evil can be the basis of any man's right or obligation.

Rights, Justice and the "What" & "Who" of People

In what way do each man's individual differences affect his rights and obligations? To answer the question, we must look at the "what" and "who" of mankind.

In things related TO people because of WHAT they are (human beings), there is no difference in what rights each person possesses. For example, each man and woman is equally a member of the human race, and thus each possesses the same right to life.

In what people owe each other because of WHAT they are (human beings), there is no difference in what they are obliged to give. Thus all men and women are equally obliged to respect another's right to life.

However, regarding matters of WHO we are, differences of rank or ability DO affect what we have a right to do and not do; and what we owe, or are owed. Such rights, however, can NEVER diminish the basic rights that relate to WHAT we are. Differences in WHO we are form the basis of the saying, "To whom more has been given, more is expected". One expects more from a general than from a private.

One way to understand how rights and obligations are related to the "who" and "what" of mankind, is the following. While a private has no right to COMMAND a general in military matters (because of the differences in WHO they are), the private has the right, perhaps even obligation, to REBUKE a general regarding an immoral command. Why? Because as human beings, they BOTH have the SAME obligation to obey God's moral law.