

Reflection May 6, 2018 – Karen Kerns

Easter was not the end which we seem to gear up for during lent. Easter brought us the beginning of a new life.

This new life became visible to the apostles as they have seen Christ in human flesh after His resurrection. They are bringing this new eternal life to us. There is no darkness in God. He is the light.

Outward appearances will no longer be the way we judge others. Christ died in the flesh for us, He died to sin. He will never die again as He is with the Father. God has reconciled us to Him through His Son. He has given us the Sacrament of Reconciliation. We could not have regained life if the Father had not wished it. We are justified by our faith in Christ. The power of the curse has been broken. We now have the chance to gain eternal life if we follow what Christ has taught us.

Candidacy I – Formation

My favorite saints are St. Catherine of Siena and St. Thomas Aquinas.

St. Catherine was a joyful child at a very early age. Although pushed to marry she did not. She cut her hair off and her father had her do menial work and would not allow her to be alone as she liked solitude. He realized the further pressure was useless she was allowed to do she pleased.

Catherine obtained the Black Habit of a Dominican tertiary which had been granted to matrons and widows. As time passed she was enraptured by celestial visions and it to severe trials. On Shrove Tuesday 1368 a vision of Christ with his mother Mary happened Mary took her hand and held it up to Christ who put a ring on her finger and espoused her to Himself. This ring was visible only to Catherine. Later she received the stigmata which also was visible only to her until her death.

St. Thomas Aquinas was born 1225 and died 1274. He was an Italian Dominican Theologian. He was one of the most influential medieval thinkers of scholasticism and was the father of the Thomist's school of theology.

Thomas had eight siblings and was the youngest child. The family was considered to be of lower nobility. He was sent to train with the Benedictine monks at age five. As a boy he repeatedly posed the question, "What is God?"

He secretly joined the Order of Dominican monks. He received the habit in 1244. His family felt betrayed and kidnapped him. They tried to deprogram him of his new belief. Thomas went back to the Dominican order.

St. Thomas earned his Doctorate in Theology. Religious institutions and universities yearned to benefit from the wisdom of the "Christian Apostle"

St. Thomas believed that revelation could guide reason and prevent it from making mistakes, while reason could clarify and demystify faith. His works go on to discuss faith and reason's roles in both perceived and proving the existence of God. St. Thomas believed that the existence of God could be proven in five ways.

- 1: Observing movement in the world as proof of God, the "Immovable Mover"
- 2: Observing cause and effect and identifying God as the cause of everything.

3: Concluding that the impermanence nature of beings proves the existence of a necessary being God, who originate only from within Himself.

4: Noticing varying levels of human perfection and determining that a supreme, perfect being must therefore exist.

5: Know that natural being could not have intelligence without it being granted to them by God.

St. Thomas identified three types of laws: Natural, Positive and Eternal.

Natural Law prompts man to act in accordance with achieving his goals and governs man's sense of right and wrong.

Positive Law is the law of the state and should always be a manifestation of Natural Law.

Eternal Law depend on reason and is put into action through free will which also works toward the accomplishment of man's spiritual goals.

St. Thomas wrote a Commentary on Peter Lombard's Four Books of Sentences, "On being and Essence", "Against Those Who Assail the Worship of God and Religion", and other writings.

The influence of St. Thomas's writing has been so great that in estimated 6,000 commentaries on his work exist to date.

Pope John XXII pronounced Thomas a Saint July 18, 1323, 50 years after his death.