

# KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS

Divine Mercy of Jesus Council 17249

St. Jerome's Catholic Church 10895 Hamlin Blvd. Largo, FL  
June 2021 Volume 3 Issue 3



## President Biden, the Catholic Church, and a Communion Controversy

Catholic bishops will consider banning President Joe Biden from receiving communion at an upcoming conference in June, according to a report. Religious leaders at the annual U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops in June will vote whether to make the bishop group's official stance that Biden, 78, should not receive communion because he supports allowing women to decide if they want an abortion.

Archbishop Joseph Naumann — a Kansas City, Kansas bishop who is the chairman of the group's Committee on Pro-Life Activities — told the AP that Biden's stance on abortion is "a grave moral evil." Biden is the second Catholic to ever become U.S. president, following the late President John F. Kennedy.

Because Biden presents himself as a practicing Catholic, Naumann told the AP that "it can create confusion" for members of the church on what to believe. "How can he say he's a devout Catholic and he's doing these things that are contrary to the church's teaching?" Naumann asked. Biden routinely attends church services on most weekends. The president attended church before he was sworn into office last January and has since attended Sunday services in Washington, D.C., and during weekend trips to his hometown of Wilmington, Delaware.



President Joe Biden and wife Jill attend Mass

Whether the bishops vote in favor or against making their official stance against Biden receiving communion, individual bishops would still be able to decide for themselves who can or cannot receive the Catholic Eucharist. Meaning, Biden will still likely receive communion when he attends Mass at his regular churches. However, the vote underscores the controversy surrounding Biden's religious beliefs and his political views, while it also underscores a push for the Catholic church to become more progressive in recent years.

Although the bishops' vote is expected to pass, not every religious leader in the church is in favor of it. Bishop John Stowe, from Lexington, Kentucky, told the AP that the decision would further contribute "to the polarization of the church and of society," while San Diego Bishop Robert McElroy also questioned the push to ban politicians who support abortion rights from receiving communion.

"I do not see how depriving the president or other political leaders of the Eucharist based on their public policy stance can be interpreted in our society as anything other than a weaponization of the Eucharist," McElroy said, adding that the new policy, if passed, would be used "to pummel them into submission."

(See latest abortion news on page 4)



FROM AROUND THE WORLD  
OF INTEREST TO CATHOLICS

Finnish Parliament Member faces criminal charges after tweeting Bible verse

Without tourists, Medjugorje has become ghost town

States continue 'unprecedented' surge of pro-life bills

Texas bans abortions once fetal heartbeat is detected

Catholic Church cancels Guadalupe pilgrimage over pandemic

Italian teenage computer whiz beatified by Catholic Church

Disgruntled Vatican employees pen letter to the Pope

Brazilian boy who painted pictures of saints to help pay for his medical treatment dies

A cannonball that changed the world: Pope Francis marks 500 years since St. Ignatius' conversion

## FROM THE DESK OF THE GRAND KNIGHT

## BUILDING A BRIDGE BACK TO FAITH



Pete Grasso

Brothers: We are coming to the close of our Knight's Council year. I am writing this as I prepare to leave for the Florida State Convention where I will bring back the latest in-

formation. This will be my first convention "Live" meeting as last year's meeting was online and very short. I will carry greetings from the Divine Mercy of Jesus Council.

On our homefront, we are preparing to vote in our new officers for the upcoming year. Please pray on this important decision. I truly believe that God has led us in our coming together as good Catholic gentlemen and He will continue to lead us forward in the work we do for Him.. I know this has truly been

a joy to be a part of this great organization and I wish to be around for a very long time. It is exciting to see miracles happen every day. Vivat Jesus, Pete

### WORDS OF WISDOM

The wind howls, but the mountain remains still.

What happens is not as important as how you react to it.

A pessimist complains about the wind; an optimist expects it to change; a realist adjusts the sails.

The greatest danger for most of us is not in setting our aim too high and failing but in setting our aim too low and succeeding.



## FROM THE DESK OF OUR PASTOR FR. TOM MORGAN



Fr. Tom Morgan

St. Jerome Pastor's COVID-19 Transition Plan through September 1, 2021

Currently:

In light of the CDC's May 13, 2021 announcement

the wearing of masks at Mass of parish gatherings is optional. Anyone with health issues is encouraged to wear a mask.

Congregational singing resumes during Mass.

Sunday church bulletin and other material now being distributed at Sunday Mass (the bulletin is also available on the parish web site and parish Facebook page).

Large print missalettes and Breaking Bread Missal and Hymnal are now available in the church for use at Mass. Livestreaming of Masses and other liturgical events continue.

Drive-through Confession continues at the northern entrance of the church.

Drive-through distribution of Holy Com-

munion on Saturday at 5:00 pm and Sunday at 12 noon at the northern entrance of the church.

We have returned to having a priest lead the Novena to Our Lady of Perpetual Help on Saturday Mornings at 8:45 am. The Novena will, as in the past, be livestreamed.

Ministries or individual groups meeting and under agreed guidelines for COVID-19 safety: Baptism Classes, RCIA, Catechesis of the Good Shepherd, Confirmation and Youth Ministry, AA and AL anon, Grief Share, Life-Line Food Bank, Homeless Meal Ministry, Legion of Mary, 11:00 am Sunday Choir, Spirit Singers Children Choir, and our Life Teen 5:00 pm Sunday Mass Choir.

The priests, deacons, and Eucharistic Ministers will continue to wear masks during the distribution of Holy Communion.

Beginning the weekend of May 22/23, 2021, and through the months of June, July, and August:

Holy Water will return to the Baptismal Font and the Holy Water fonts at the entrances of our church and chapel.

We will return to having parishioners bring forward the offertory gifts at our Sunday Masses.

We continue to practice social distancing in our church and parish buildings.

We also remind anyone not feeling well to avoid attending Mass and you are encouraged to participate in the Mass by watching our livestream broadcasts. We anticipate during this time having drive-up Confessions and the opportunity of receiving the Eucharist at the north entrance of the church on Saturday at 5:00 pm and Sunday at 12 noon Daily Mass will continue to be celebrated in the church.

We are anticipating discontinuing our 9:00 am and 11:00 am additional Masses in the parish center at some point when and if the additional Masses are no longer needed.

It is our hope that as of September 1, 2021, the following will happen:

Social distancing will no longer be necessary in our church and parish buildings.

4:00 pm Saturday Vigil Mass in the Parish Center ends.

Our previous Sunday Mass schedule returns for September – May:

Saturday Vigil: 4:00 pm and 5:30pm  
 Sunday: 7:30 am, 9:00 am (Family Liturgy), 10:45 am, 12:30 pm, and 5:00 pm Life Teen Mass.

(Continued on next page)



# JUNE BIRTHDAYS



Boone Bowen  
June 16



Joe Zanga  
June 16



## FROM THE DESK OF OUR PASTOR FR. TOM MORGAN (Continued from previous page)

St. Jerome Van Ministry (ride to church) will begin the weekend of September 4. The sign of peace will resume during Mass. We will return to having those at Mass come forward for the reception of Holy Communion. We will resume the distribution of Holy Communion under both kinds when we have been authorized to do so. We will return to hearing Confessions on Saturday in our chapel. The time will soon be announced. We will no longer be distributing the Eucharist on a drive through basis. As in pre-COVID times, those unable to participate at a public Mass will be asked to contact Sr. Lucia Brady to arrange for a Eucharistic Minister to bring the Eucharist to the home. Coffee and doughnuts will resume in the Parish Center following the 7:30

am, 9:00 am, and 10:45 am on Sunday September 19th. Weekly Friday visits to our homebound parishioners by a priest will resume. Priest visitation of the nursing homes located within the boundaries of our parish will resume. Daily Mass will return to the chapel Parish Center Rededication on Sunday September 12, 2021 following the 11:00 am Sunday Mass, at approximately at 12:15 pm. Parish ministries return to meeting: Bethlehem Center, ALPHA, Stephen Ministry, Vocation Ministry, Small Christian Community Advent and Lent Groups, St. Joseph Covenant Keepers and That Man is You Men's groups, St. Jerome Health Ministry, Adult Faith Formation Ministry, Sunday Coffee and Doughnuts, Adult Bible Studies, RCIA weekly in person meetings, Altar Soci-

ety, Returning Catholics, Hospitality Table returns to Sunday Masses, Greeters at all of our Sunday Masses, the St. Jerome Gift Shop reopens, Funeral Ministry and Funeral Family receptions resume, Martha Mary Guild, Respite Ministry, Social Committee, Bingo, and in person Knights of Columbus meetings and more. Bingo resumes on Thursday September 16th in the Parish Center. The new gift shop located in the main gathering space in the church is opened. Livestreaming of our Masses in the church and chapel continues. St. Jerome Feast Day Celebration Sunday September 26th, Parish Center, time to be announced. \* The above are subject to the circumstances that our country finds itself regarding COVID-19.



# facebook

For the Divine Mercy of Jesus Council 17249



In this paragraph you will find a website for our council's new Facebook account set up by Bill Bannon and helped by Gregg Appel. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/383157552963823/> It is not a hyperlink, so you will have to copy and paste it in your browser.

This site will become another way we can communicate with you and give

more latitude for back-and-forth communication for all to see, unlike email. We are not promoting Facebook at all, just using it for its convenience. All you have to do is sign in or sign up, if you're not already a Facebook user.

Email will continue to be our main way to communicate with you, but this might change once we see how the website

works. And of course we still have the telephone tree. You will never be left in the dark, unless the lights go out. (Just trying out my new role as Lecturer.)

Please let Brother Bill or Brother Gregg know how you feel about the website, especially if you have any suggestions on how to make it better.

## ABORTION

Oklahoma GOP Gov. Kevin Stitt signed a near-total **abortion ban** and two other abortion restrictions into law, making the state the second this year to enact a so-called heart-beat ban. These laws bar most abortions at the onset of a fetal heartbeat, which can occur as early as six weeks into a pregnancy and before many people know they are pregnant. Republican-controlled states have



## NEWS

advanced a wave of anti-abortion bills this year consistent with the trend under the Trump presidency. The Oklahoma laws are due to go into effect on November 1 and will likely face immediate legal challenges based on federal precedents set by *Roe v. Wade*. However, the fact that Oklahoma and other states are pushing such bans shows that the state-level fight over abortion access is far from over.

Numerous states of the US have been considering bills regulating **abortion** in recent weeks.

In Idaho, a bill which would ban abortion after the detection of a fetal heartbeat passed the Senate on April 21 and is awaiting the governor's signature.

The day before, the bill advanced through the Senate State Affairs Com-

mittee, and was voted through the Senate by a vote of 25-7. The bill contains exceptions in cases of rape, incest, or medical emergency.

"This is good legislation that gives a preborn child the same rights as a mother," said Sen. Patti Anne Lodge, a Republican who sponsored the bill.

It is unknown if Gov. Brad Little (R) will sign the bill.

Montana Gov. Greg Gianforte signed a 20-week **abortion ban**, adding to the slew of such measures advanced by Republican state lawmakers as the Biden administration seeks to unwind restrictions on the procedure.

"Today we're taking action to protect the most vulnerable amongst us, the unborn -- we are celebrating life."

The bill, the Montana Pain-Capable Unborn Child Protection Act, would ban abortion at 20 weeks based on the scientifically disputed notion that a fetus can feel pain at that point in development. According to an advocacy memo posted by the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, fetuses are not capable of feeling pain until at least 24 weeks gestation.

Roman Catholic Democrats in the House and Senate are in violation of the church they claim to serve, CatholicVote.org President Brian Burch told Newsmax last week. According to Pew Research, there are 77 Catholic Democrats in the House and 14 Catholic Democrats in the Senate. Burch spelled out how their positions in Congress on issues such as abortion, taxpayer funding of abortion, and religious liberty put them at odds with their church.

"They call themselves Catholic but do not practice faith in any meaningful way," said Burch. "[House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, Senate Democratic Whip Richard Durbin, and Joe Biden all hold themselves to be practicing Catholics." But all three, he quickly added, "...work against the teachings of the church." Like many other modern Democrats, Biden follows the same position on abortion initially sculpted by the late New York Gov. Mario Cuomo, that he is "...personally opposed to abortion," but won't impose his views on his constituency.

"On no other issue except abortion do [Democratic Catholic politicians] 'silo' themselves and not apply their 'personal' views to public policy," he added. In so doing and "in holding themselves out as devout," Burch told us, "Biden and other Catholic Democrats play us as fools."

Along with the abortion stands of Biden and other Catholic politicians, the CatholicVote.org president cited as signs of their conflict with their church taxpayer funding of abortion (which Biden formerly opposed but now supports) and what he called the "coercion of conscience" of people of faith. He specifically pointed to the court battle over the Catholic group known as Little Sisters of the Poor as an example of "[t]he reach of the federal government to coerce people of faith to carry health insurance that directly conflicts with their faith [by providing for contraception and abortion]."

Of the 14 Democratic senators who are Catholic, only West Virginia's Joe Manchin is still considered pro-life. The last pro-life Democratic U.S.

## Thoughts on one's Character

Romans 5:4 Endurance produces character, and character produces hope.

Proverbs 22:1 A good name is to be chosen rather than great riches, and favor is better than silver or gold.

Philippians 4:8 Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.

James 4:8 Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts.

1 Corinthians 11:1-2 Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ. Now I commend you because you remember me in everything and maintain the traditions even as I delivered them to you.

1 Corinthians 5:17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.

1 Timothy 3:2-5 Therefore an overseer must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, sober-minded, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not a drunkard, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. He must manage his own household well, with all dignity keeping his children submissive.

Galatians 5:22-23 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.

Anonymous: Character is what you have when no one is looking.



# Council Says Goodbye (partially) to Two Special Members



Danny McConnell

Danny McConnell and his wife Suzanne will soon leave St. Jerome Parish and move back to Bloomington, IN. Even so, he will remain a member of our Knights of Columbus Council 17249.

Both of them have been very beneficial parishioners and have put their faith to work as few of us have. Since Danny has also been a Knight of Columbus, we thought it would be appropriate to wish him God speed and blessings galore.

Danny has given of himself in too many ways to mention. Even so, I'm going to take a stab at it.

1. He has helped with drive-through communion and confessions.
2. He has been a sacristan.
3. He has helped Pete Grasso in his funeral business when Pete was short of workers.
4. He has arranged tables and made

coffee for KofC meetings.

5. He has helped at the Ed Kilroy Building.

6. He helped Jim Hand paint the Knight's meeting room in the Ed Kilroy Building.

7. He helped Jim Hand paint the Parish Office.

8. He has been a KofC officer and past Grand Knight.

9. He has helped move kitchen appliances.

10. He helped greatly with the construction of the grotto and Mary's Prayer Garden

11. He has helped with 50/50 at various functions12

12. He has helped with 40 Days of Life. ...and the list goes on and on.

We hope we have not heard the last of Danny and Suzanne. Friends like these are one of a kind.



Pete Grasso

We are also losing Pete Grasso, but not literally; we are losing him as our Grand Knight.

We were extremely fortunate to have Pete as our council's first Grand Knight upon our founding in 2019. Although he would graciously deny any special talent as Grand Knight, he has many accomplishments to be proud of.

1. He was the first to drive the golf cart for helping those who have trouble getting from the car lot to the parish.
2. He established a Hurricane Preparedness seminar that proved quite fruitful.
3. He concentrated on the domestic church in which he sought way for our council to help the parish in any way we could.
4. Our council has participated in the

Trunk or Treat ministry.

5. He has helped form our corporal communion and meal.

6. He oversaw that we helped Sr. Lucia in the Our Lady of Fatima ministry.

7. He helped form team categories: Faith, Community, Life, and Family.

8. He spearheaded the Sunday Morning Breakfasts that were quite popular.

9. He kept us up to date about church activities during the pandemic.

10. He helped form a Christmas party for members and their families.

11. Helped get the grotto project into fruition.

12. ...and the list goes on and on.

We look forward to working with and supporting our next Grand Knight. Pete will continue working on various projects.

## LET'S TAKE ANOTHER LOOK

### ILLUMINATI



**Illuminati:**  
*A name given to different religious societies or sects because of their claim to superior enlightenment.* The name assumed by some false mystics

who appeared in Spain in the sixteenth century and claimed to have direct intercourse with God. They held that the human soul can reach such a degree of perfection that it contemplates even in the present life the essence of God and comprehends the mystery of the Trinity.

All external worship, they declared, is superfluous, the reception of the sacraments useless, and sin impossible in this state of complete union with Him who is Perfection Itself. Carnal desires may be indulged and other sinful actions committed freely without staining the soul. The highest perfection attainable by the Christian consists in the elimination of all activity, the loss of individuality, and complete absorption in God.

The peasant girl known as La Beata de Piedrahita (d. 1511) is cited among the early adherents of these errors; but it is not certain that she was guilty of heresy. At Toledo, which was one of

the main centres of Illuminism, Isabella of the Cross is said to have carried on an active propaganda. More celebrated was Magdalen of the Cross, a Poor Clare of Aguilar near Cordova, who, solemnly abjured the heresy. So rapidly did the errors gain ground that the Inquisition proceeded with relentless energy against all suspects, even citing before its tribunal St. John of Avila and St. Ignatius of Loyola.

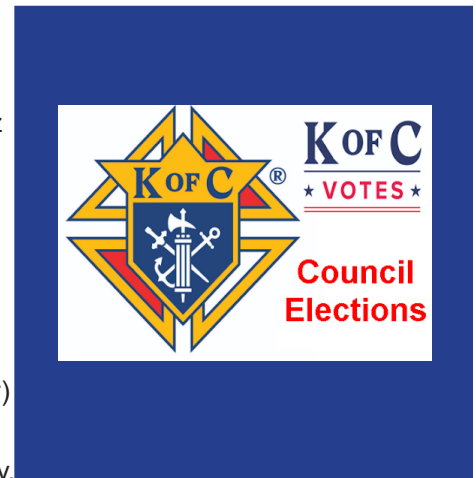
In spite of this determined action, however, the heresy maintained itself until the middle of the seventeenth century and some of its features reappear in the Quietism of the Spaniard Michael de Molinos.

## Voting for New Officers To Take Place June 9, 2021, in Education Building, Plus Zoom

On Wednesday, June 9, 2021, we will vote for our new officers. Presently, there are two offices where there are two candidates: Grand Knight and Deputy Grand Knight. Those members are Joe Ghezzi and Bill McClelland for Grand Knight and Gregg Appel and Peter McCabe for Deputy Grand Knight. The other officers are unopposed at this time:



Recorder:	Jim Hand
Advocate:	Open
Chancellor:	Chuck Lake
Treasurer:	Boone Bowen
Inside Guard 1:	Henry Rodriguez
Inside Guard 2:	Ed Wirth
Outside Guard:	Joe Moore
Warden:	Gene Sanders
1-Year Trustee:	Edgar Lecuyer
2-Year Trustee:	Bob Anderson
3-Year Trustee:	Pete Grasso



The following officers are appointed:

Financial Secretary:	Fred Belzel (new)
Lecturer:	Jim Hand (new)
Chaplain:	Fr. Tom Morgan
Program Directors:	Faith, Community, Family, and Life

Retiring officers: Bill Baldwin, Jack Fitzgerald, Jim Blackwell, Danny McConnell, Dave Wilson  
 Running for office: GK - Joe Ghezzi and Bill McClelland; Deputy GK - Peter McCabe and Gregg Appel. Each candidate will have about 3 minutes to speak about himself.

Even though some offices are unopposed now, any member may still be nominated on Wednesday, June 9, before the voting begins. At that time, the Grand Knight will mention an office and say three times: "Are there any more nominations for this office?" If there are none, that officer will remain unopposed. If there are any new nominations, their names will come forward and added to the voting list.

For those of you who cannot make the June 9 meeting, which will be held in the Education Building, you can attend via Zoom as you have for several months now. You will text your vote, still to be held secret, to either Bill Bannon at 743-9643 or Pete Grasso at 249-3590. Those members who are present will vote by secret paper ballot. They will be counted and then destroyed. Results will be given for each candidate where there is one or more member running for that office. The person who loses that runoff may then decide, if he wishes to, to run for any other office that is still open. This must be a quick decision. The Results will be announced at the end of the election.

Installation of officers will be in July, date and place TBA.

## As Normalcy Returns to Our Parish, So Does Our Council's Roll

Our parish has begun organizing various activities for the upcoming fiscal year, starting in June. Various people are hoping to complete the parish calendar that would take the church through May of next year.

Fr. Tom has recently done a great job of outlining various activities and their dates, but the Fellowship Committee will soon give him (if it hasn't already) a list of activities of the past and some new ones, so the calendar can be completed. Two activities that we will not hold any more are Oktoberfest (it is way too hot to be held outside) and the Internation Festival (which has run its course).

Another very important reason for doing this is so the parish center can be reserved appropriately for everything that's going to be held in there. Before any activity takes place, though, Fr. Tom wants it to be dedicated. That will take place September 12 after the 11 a.m. Mass at approximately 12:15.

For those of you who might not know, the Parish Center has been painted, has received a new floor, has a new stove, new round tables, and also a new paint job and floor in the kitchen. Our council was responsible for much of the work. Much of the expenditures was donated by an anonymous parishioner in honor of his mother. Another parishioner has anonymously donated the money to buy a new sound system for the parish center. It is a great system and much needed.

September will be the month that many things will begin returning normal at our parish. The bulletin of May spells out most changes. One of the most important--Coffee and doughnuts will resume in the Parish Center following the 7:30 am, 9:00 am, and 10:45 am on Sunday September 19th--will surely be a green light for our breakfasts which were becoming so popular.

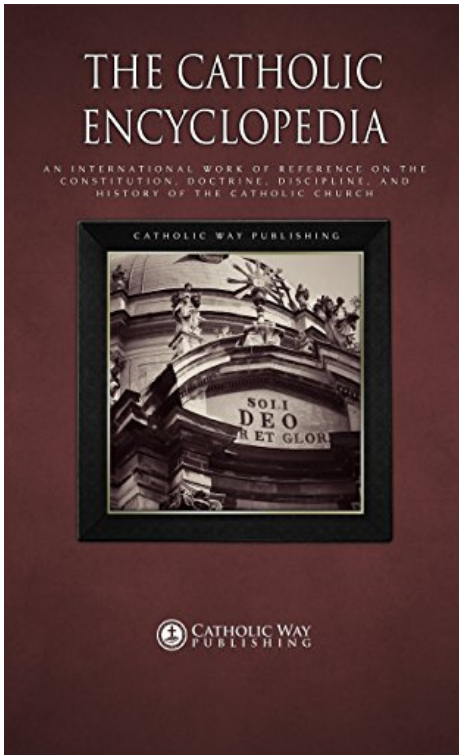
In other ways, our council was helping with communion, confessions, and

a myriad of other things. As soon as we know when these will end, we will let you know. Fr. Tom is very thankful for the help throughout the past year we have given the parish.

Because of my wife's and my compromised health condition, we went out very little during the pandemic. Kudos to Fr. Tom for making the Masses available on live-streaming. Slowly getting our feet wet by coming to Mass and various committees has been wonderful. It is so good to see everyone and be blessed by a physical presence here and there. I had no idea how much we had missed things and how wonderful it would feel to return to normalcy.



# What Does the Catholic Encyclopedia Say about Relics?



## Part II

There is nothing in Catholic teaching to justify the statement that the Church encourages belief in a magical virtue, or physical curative efficacy residing in the relic itself. St. Cyril of Jerusalem (A. D. 347), and a few other patristic and medieval writers, apparently speak of some power inherent in relics. For example, St. Cyril, after referring to the miracle wrought by the body of Eliseus, declares that the restoration to life of the corpse with which it was in contact took place: "to show that even though the soul is not present a virtue resides in the body of the saints." But this seems rather to belong to the personal view or manner of speech of St. Cyril. Be this as it may, it is certain that the Church, with regard to the veneration of relics has defined nothing, more than what was stated.

Neither has the Church ever pronounced that any particular relic, not even that commonly venerated as the wood of the Cross, as authentic; but it approves of honor being paid to those relics which with reasonable probability are believed to be genuine and which are invested with due ecclesiastical sanctions.

As early as the end of the fourth century, St. Augustine denounced certain impostors wandering about in the habit of monks, describes them as making profit by the sale of spurious relics. Numerous stories, beginning with the writings of St. Gregory the Great and St. Gregory of Tours, prove to us that many unprincipled persons found a means of enriching themselves by a sort of trade in these objects of devotion, the majority of which no doubt were fraudulent.

In the case of the nails with which Jesus Christ was crucified, we can point to definite instances in which that which was at first venerated as having touched the original came later to be honored as the original itself. Join to this the large license given to the occasional unscrupulous rogue in an age often curiously morbid in its realism, and it becomes easy to understand the multiplicity and extravagance of the entries in the relic inventories of Rome and other countries.

(Concluded in the next issue)