



MASSES FOR THE WEEK
 September 23 - September 29
 EACH MASS IS OFFERED FOR
 THE INTENTIONS OF EVERYONE
 PRESENT AND FOR THE FOLLOWING:

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 23

4:00 p.m. Lois Terrebonne Boudreaux; Sidney Fabre;
 Peter Eugene Leson; Roberta Mae Leson;
 Marlene Morris; Lusien Rodrigue; Ruth
 Boudreaux Terrebonne; Heinke E. Trapp

5:30 p.m. Mr. Harold; S. Maringo; In Thanksgiving

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 24

8:00 a.m. Members of St. Patrick's Church
 (Propopulo)

9:30 a.m. Anthony K. Bailey; Roberta W. Bruley;
 Jane O'Brien Chatelain; Brenda Dupuy;
 Mrs. Mary Dixon; John & Annie Grayer;
 Mr. Harold; S. Maringo; Ludger Miller;
 Kelly Plunkett; H. William Reed; John H.
 Schroder, Jr.

11:00 a.m. C.C. Clifton; Margueritte O'Brien May;
 Joseph & Rose McMahon;
 Mary Morissette; Tom Roach

5:30 p.m. Holy Souls in Purgatory

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 25

11:30 a.m. Purgatorial List

12:00 p.m. Lee Vaccari, Jr.

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 26

11:30 a.m. Monsignor John P. Reynolds

12:00 p.m. Jeffrey C. Houin

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 27

11:30 a.m. Purgatorial List

12:00 p.m. Hamilton Barre; S. Maringo

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 28

11:30 a.m. Pope Benedict XVI

12:00 p.m. Elmer P. Grundmeyer, Jr.; Eula Estay

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 29

11:30 a.m. Purgatorial List

12:00 p.m. Kay Brandt; Katherine de Montluzin;
 Mr. Harold

TRIDENTINE LATIN MASS—Sunday at 9:30 a.m.

Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost

Solemn High Mass—First Sunday of the month.

Benediction—Third Sunday after the 9:30 a.m. Mass.

**ADORATION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT
 AND BENEDICTION**

Every Sunday 3:00 p.m.—5:00 p.m.

COFFEE AND DOUGHNUTS

In Reynolds Hall after the Sunday morning Masses.

ABORTION CLINIC ROSARY

Date: October 21, 2006 at 9:00 a.m.

Location: Ridgellake Drive and 20th Streets in Metairie

FIRST HOLY COMMUNION CLASSES

Saturday, September 30, 2006 at 10:30 a.m.

Registration and classes will take place in the rectory.

Information: 525-4413.

PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Tuesday, September 26, at 7:00 p.m. in the rectory.

SUNDAY OFFERING—September 17, 2006

First Collection \$ 12,545

Second Collection* \$ 2,585

* Catholic Communication Campaign

**BISHOP'S OFFICIAL VISITATION OF ST. PATRICK'S PARISH
 SATURDAY, OCTOBER 7, 2006**

The Most Reverend Roger P. Morin, Auxiliary Bishop and Vicar General of the Archdiocese, will represent the archbishop in his official visitation of our parish on Saturday, October 7, 2006. The visit will begin in the late morning, followed by luncheon in the rectory, where the bishop will meet with the pastor and parish officers. Following the afternoon meetings, the bishop will celebrate the 4:00 p.m. Vigil Mass.

The pastor would like to encourage as many parishioners as possible to attend the 4:00 p.m. Vigil Mass on Saturday, October 7, 2006 and extend a warm welcome to Bishop Morin. This Mass will be followed by a reception in the courtyard area and adjacent Reynolds Hall, providing an opportunity for everyone to greet Bishop Morin and for the bishop to meet St. Patrick's parishioners. The bishop has said that he hopes to meet and be able to speak with as many parishioners as possible; so, the pastor strongly encourages everyone to participate in the Mass and afternoon reception. The visitation will close with a dinner for Bishop Morin and the parish leaders in the rectory.

RESPECT LIFE SUNDAY, OCTOBER 1, 2006

"Help build a world where human life is always loved and defended, every form of violence banished" is the theme for 2005-2006. The Respect Life Program focuses on many critical concerns of the day — abortion, euthanasia, marriage and family life, capital punishment, poverty, immigration issues, chastity, natural family planning, post-abortion healing and reconciliation, the culture of life, biotechnology, children, teens, persons with disabilities, the elderly, those who are dying, and more.

**JOSEPH HAYDN: MISSA BREVIS SANCTI JOANNIS DE DEO
 (SMALL ORGAN MASS)**

Sunday, October 1, 2006 at the 9:30 AM Mass

St. Patrick's choir will perform Joseph Haydn's *Missa Brevis Sancti Joannis de Deo (Small Organ Mass)* accompanied by string orchestra and organ.

RITE OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION FOR ADULTS

Registration for St. Patrick's RCIA program is still open for those who would like to attend the Monday classes held at 7 p.m. in the rectory.. RCIA is a course of instruction required for adults (baptized or not) who wish to be received into the Catholic Church, as well as Catholic adults who have not yet received the sacrament of confirmation.

For more information: 525-4413.

**THE MASS IS THE GREATEST FORM OF CHRISTIAN
 CHARITY—Mass request envelopes can be found in the vestibule.**

PRAYERS FOR THE FAITHFUL

For the sick of our parish and those who have asked for our prayers especially: Ree Alario; D. J. Ales; J. Frank Armstrong; Harold Berrigan, Jr.; Michael Brasslet; Lillian Capozzi; Margie Case; Michelle Catalanatto; Jim Clynych; Jackie Dabdoub; Grace Daigle; Ralph DeBlanc; Raymond DeBlanc; Regina Dillon; The Dunlap Family; Joseph Ebberman; Cardinal Francis George, O.M.I.; Donald Faust, Jr.; Anette Folse; Joseph French; John G. Fulcher; Frank Hemelt; Marie Herty; Marilyn Kitto; Zivana Kovacevich; Albert Leonhard; Betty Leonard; Dorothy Luquet; Reverend Val A. McInnes, O.P.; Colin McInnis; Irene Mackenroth; Carol Mallette; Joseph Morales; Gerald L. Moran, Jr.; Madeleine Nicoladis; Suzanne Nogues; Lucille Ogden; Beverly Orillion; Robert Plaskas; J. Van Provosty; Hugh Ramsey; Tom Roach; Ashley Turkington; Jonathan Weiler.

TWENTY-FIFTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

IS DIALOGUE WITH ISLAM POSSIBLE?

Both before and since his elevation to the papacy, Benedict has taken a consistent approach to controversial issues: he locates the assumptions and fundamental principles underlying the controversy, analyzes their "inner" structure or dynamism, and lays out the consequences of the principles.

... in his Regensburg lecture he is defending the foundational truth that God is *Logos, Reason*. *The central theme of the lecture is that the Christian conviction that God is Logos is not simply the result of a contingent historical process of inculturation that has been called the "hellenization of Christianity". Rather it is something that is "always and intrinsically true"*.

In the main body of the lecture, Benedict criticizes attempts in the West to "dehellenize" Christianity: the rejection of the rational component of faith (the *sola fides* of the 16th century reformers); the reduction of reason to the merely empirical or historical (modern exegesis and modern science); a multiculturalism which regards the union of faith and reason as merely one possible form of inculturation of the faith. All this is a Western self-critique

But as the starting point of his lecture, Benedict takes a 14th century dialogue between the Byzantine Emperor and a learned Muslim to focus on the central question of the entire lecture: whether God is *Logos*. *The Emperor's objection to Islam is Mohammed's "command to spread by the sword the faith he preached"*. The emperor asserts that this is not in accordance with right reason, and "not acting reasonably is contrary to God's nature". Benedict points to this as "the decisive statement in this argument against violent conversion"

It is at this point in the lecture that Benedict makes a statement which cannot be avoided or evaded if there is ever to be any dialogue between Christianity and Islam that is more than empty words and diplomatic gestures. For the Emperor, God's rationality is "self-evident". But for Muslim teaching, according to the editor of the book from which Benedict has been quoting, "God is absolutely transcendent. His will is not bound up with any of our categories, even that of rationality"

Benedict has struck bedrock. This is the challenge to Islam. This is the issue that lies beneath all the rest. If God is above reason in this way, then it is useless to employ rational arguments against (or for) forced conversion, terrorism, or Sharia law, which calls for the execution of Muslim converts to Christianity. If God wills it, it is beyond discussion.

Let us now turn to the statement in Benedict's lecture which has aroused the most anger. Benedict quotes the Byzantine Emperor's challenge to the learned Muslim: "Show me just what Mohammed brought that was new, and there you will find things only evil and inhuman, such as his command to spread by the sword the faith he preached."

Benedict's main argument -- that God is *Logos* and that violence in spreading or defending religion is contrary to the divine nature -- could have been made without including that part of Emperor's remark (made "somewhat brusquely" according to Benedict) that challenges Islam much more globally. And in his Angelus message the following Sunday, Benedict said: "These (words) were in fact a quotation from a Medieval text which do not in any way express my personal thought." Nevertheless, it may be instructive to examine this "brusque" utterance of the Emperor and ask the question: Is it simply indefensible?

As a thought experiment, let's reverse the situation. Suppose a major spokesman for Islam publicly issued the challenge: "Show me just what Jesus brought that was new, and there you will find things only evil and inhuman." What would be the Christian

response? Not to burn a mosque or an effigy of the Muslim spokesman, or to shoot a Muslim nurse in the back in Somalia. It would rather be to reply with some examples of just what makes the New Covenant new: the revelation that God is a Father who has a co-equal Son and Holy Spirit; that Jesus is God's Son made flesh; the Sermon on the Mount; the Resurrection of the body; the list would be long. As Irenaeus put it: he brought all newness, bringing himself. Such a statement would not make dialogue impossible; it would be an occasion for dialogue.

There is obviously much room for qualification in the Emperor's blunt statement, even for a Christian who holds that Mohammed was not a prophet, and that whatever is good in Islam is traceable either to man's natural religious knowledge or to conscious or unconscious borrowings from Jewish and Christian revelation.

Yet there is a crucial underlying principle that needs to be enunciated. Christianity and Islam make incompatible truth claims. Despite the difficulty in determining who can speak authoritatively for Christianity or for Islam, there are elements of belief common to all Christians which are incompatible with elements of belief common to all Muslims. The two most obvious and most fundamental are the Trinity and the Incarnation.

I would expect an intelligent and informed Muslim to consider me a blasphemer (because I introduce multiplicity into the one God) and an idolator (because I worship as God a man named Jesus). Should I be offended if he says so publicly? Should I not rather be offended if he conceals his position for the alleged purpose of fostering dialogue?

The question of *respect* is entirely distinct. Benedict is clearly aware of this distinction as evidenced in the official Vatican statement subsequent to Benedict's lecture, where the Secretary of State refers to his "respect and esteem for those who profess Islam". That is, one can and should respect Muslims (those who profess Islam) as persons with inherent dignity; but where there are incompatible truth claims, they cannot be simultaneously true. One cannot hold one as true without holding the other as false. Any *religious* dialogue should begin by examining the evidence for the incompatible claims.

... Certainly, it may sound provocative to make the claim the Emperor did. But why (since Christians believe that God's full and definitive revelation has come with Christ, who brings all prophecy to an end) isn't it just as provocative for a Muslim to proclaim that Mohammed is a new prophet, bringing new revelation that corrects and supplements that of Christ?

... Finally, has no one seen the irony in the episode related by Benedict? Byzantium was increasingly threatened in the 14th century by an aggressive Islamic force, the growing Ottoman Empire. The Byzantine Emperor seems to have committed the dialogue to writing while his imperial capital, Constantinople, was under siege by the Ottoman Turks. It would fall definitively in 1453. Muslims were military enemies, engaged in a war of aggression against Byzantium. Yet even in these circumstances the Christian Emperor and the learned Persian Muslim could be utterly candid with one another and discuss civilly their fundamental religious differences. As Benedict described the dialogue, the subject was "Christianity and Islam, and the truth of both".

Father Joseph Fessio, S.J.
Father Fessio is the founder of Ignatius Press