

Wisdom from the Cloister: Interview with Father Cyprian, Prior of
Our Lady of Guadalupe Monastery

The following interview of Fr. Cyprian, O.S.B., Prior of [Our Lady of Guadalupe Monastery](#), was conducted by Brian McCall, Editor-in-Chief of *Catholic Family News*. Readers may recall that Fr. Cyprian has spoken at CFN conferences in the past. The monks of Our Lady of Guadalupe Monastery have also served their [Abbey Roast Coffee](#) at our conferences many times. In addition to supporting the monks, one type of their coffee, [Cafe4Life](#), supports the pro-life movement.

In this wide-ranging interview, Fr. Cyprian steps out of the silence of this “Oasis of the Faith” (in the words of Archbishop Lefebvre) to share with us the fruits of the monks’ meditation and prayer in the midst of this year of turmoil and upheaval. His words are inspiring and consoling. In a similar vein to Archbishop Viganò, Fr. Cyprian sees the current presidential election in America as monumental. He comments:

[T]here has never been a more crucial time than now to take interest in both American and world social order. The catastrophic divorce, the separation of Church and State, presumes that the Church has been neutralized and has no further impact on civil society. Nothing could be more wrong! American Catholics live a life-long paradox, in unforgiving tension between democracy and monarchy, between Church and State. Without compromise, the Faith must come first. They must vote according to their informed conscience. Today, it is clear that their vote is for much more than a man, a candidate, or for a party, but for the universal common good of our country and its conversion, far beyond the limits of a four-year term.

Notwithstanding this year of turmoil, Fr. Cyprian remains supernaturally hopeful. Every day, the monks fight on the front lines by preserving the traditional liturgy. They take up their “arms” in the knowledge that victory is certain:

All the works of God, such as the Catholic Faith or Holy Church, are serenely firm and unstoppable. Divine realities cannot be destroyed. Human attempts to deter the works of God will always fail, for His Word will never cease or be silenced. Human hands cannot make religious vocations or monastic communities, which are spiritual realities. Though it be very modest, Benedictine life is one such reality, a pure gift of God, Who, in His infinite mercy, has willed to give us a little taste of Heaven on earth.

Catholic Family News (CFN): Reverend Father Prior, speaking in these troubled times, in the present context of global chaos and confusion, especially in our own country as presidential elections approach, and even now within our world of Catholic Tradition, where does Our Lady of Guadalupe Monastery stand in the present hour of tension and anxiety?

Like all Catholics, we remain prayerfully vigilant. Two answers come to mind. The first being Our Lady of Fatima, who requested the things we need to do in order to survive the present hour of darkness. Penitential prayer is one of them. She also spoke of fidelity to one's duty of state. We assume it will be challenged and become difficult, but with the Rosary we can save our souls. She spoke of the triumph of her Immaculate Heart. The word *triumph* implies a prior conflict, a final battle which will precede her victory, which is the triumph of charity. It reminds us of the words of St. Joan of Arc: "The men will wage battle, but God will give the victory." Christians will have to wage battle prior to this triumph.

A second answer would be the words of Archbishop Lefebvre, when he mandated our Benedictine foundation just before his death. "It is now the time to do the impossible in order to establish an Oasis of the Faith. Nothing is more pleasing to God and redeeming to the faithful than places where the true Faith is lived without compromise." His words still resound in our ears to this day.

The present confusion and chaos in modern society did not begin yesterday, and certainly not because of the turbulence of an election year. Even though most everything wrong today can be traced to the errors of Vatican II, those same errors existed well before they came to the forefront during the Council. This reminds us of the corrective encyclicals such as *Pascendi* of St. Pius X and especially the *Syllabus of Errors* published in the pontificate of Pius IX. These Popes took corrective measures when matters had already reached the extreme. Modernism, called the "synthesis of all errors," was already rampant well before the timely publication of *Pascendi*. It unfortunately resurfaced during Vatican II. And for the last 50 years, Modernism has become "the new normal".

The external aspect of the tumult of our modern world touches Benedictine life but rarely and superficially. However, the spiritual malice and betrayal which lie beneath the surface of the current societal crisis are keenly felt by all who live the religious vocation, and we sense it is only the beginning of great tribulations. The entire world is in expectation of guiding light from Holy Rome, that supernatural aspect of the Church which is infallibly led by the Holy Ghost, the Eternal Rome of which Archbishop Lefebvre so often spoke with great reverence.

CFN: Several distinguished prelates of the Church have recently gained public attention, each one like a Voice Crying in the Wilderness, casting serious doubts on the presumed authority of the Second Vatican Council. Two bishops in particular are making sensational news, Athanasius Schneider and Carlo Maria Viganò. What are your thoughts on these interventions?

Yes, they have been compared to Archbishop Lefebvre. That is what they are not. Despite their heroic honesty in publicly criticizing Vatican II for its errors and worsening consequences, they have not yet taken concrete practical action to counter the crisis as Archbishop Lefebvre did with great fortitude. The fact that these courageous bishops are questioning the Council through public media is undeniably a cause for universal rejoicing. One can only imagine how the message of Archbishop Lefebvre would have resonated worldwide had he been able to communicate with the same means these prelates now have at their service. Their words do indeed resonate throughout Christianity, but there have been legitimate solutions to the problems and answers to these questions throughout the past 50 years of the existence of the Society of St. Pius X. It is one thing to question and criticize yet quite another to take action. We hope these bishops will soon join and strengthen the united front of Tradition, which has already proven the most effective and salutary solution to the crisis in the Church. The chimera of the Novus Ordo must be absolutely and completely abolished and ascribed as a disaster.

Archbishop Lefebvre was not a “lone voice crying in the wilderness.” Far from acting alone, he was the faithful echo of two millennia of the Church’s magisterium, acting in perfect continuity with Tradition by inseparably belonging to it from within. Above and beyond being a valid and authorized teaching voice of the Church, he took firm action in perfect accordance with the same certitude of the Church’s saints: her Popes, Confessors, Doctors and Martyrs, creating seminaries and missions worldwide, forming and ordaining priests and bishops, confirming thousands of faithful, carefully and generously handing on what he received. Despite the persistent but empty rhetoric of his persecutors, he was never “outside the Church” by any measure and hardly “not in full communion” with Rome.

Among the hundreds of the priests he ordained, I am honored to be one of them. He faithfully passed on the great light of the world, the salt of the earth: the only way to practice the Catholic Faith because it has always been and always will be the only way to be a Roman Catholic. This is what one faithful Prince of the Church can accomplish in his lifetime. We hope it inspires these bishops to take similar action and move beyond political commentary.

CFN: How has Archbishop Lefebvre shaped OLGM?

Though it be our death sentence in the opinion of some, Archbishop Lefebvre is our founding father. He alone encouraged us to do the impossible, to go against all odds to establish an Oasis of the Faith in the desert here in the mountains of New Mexico. It is the same spirit that guided him throughout his long career — a spirit that provokes hope to live in the boldness of faith and charity. He warned us of the dangers! Our mission statement therefore begins with his personal words of encouragement and blessing. And contrary to St. Peter's denial of Jesus, we say without any fear or shame of human respect: "We know the man!"

Archbishop Lefebvre was greatly loved and admired, but also greatly misunderstood — being reviled, persecuted, and betrayed on all sides, even by some of his own priests and bishops, not to mention his colleagues within the Vatican. Some said he was too conservative, others said he was too liberal, and everything in between. The whispering dissidents always project faults onto the authority to justify their cowardly betrayal. Like all leaders, like all men who must bear the cross and burden of authority, he was criticized. Like Jesus, "He heals on the Sabbath," and, "He eats with sinners". Unashamedly, we are thankful to be the ones healed and to be counted among those sinners He has dined with!

There will always be attempts to make a dead man speak. The voices that once said what Archbishop Lefebvre should or should not have done during his lifetime are now the voices that say what he would or would not have done today. Only his legitimate successors can truthfully say how his work, which is the logical continuation of two millennia of Tradition, "should and would" be addressed today.

CFN: What has been the experience of perseverance of OLGM which will soon celebrate its 30th year?

Our mission is to live the traditional observance of the Rule of St. Benedict and to uphold the traditional Liturgy of the Church. The two are inseparable. The Rule makes the monk. The Liturgy is how he lives.

Firstly, the Rule: The monk is like a soldier on a secret mission. His vocation is intimate and penetrating. It is secretive, because it is between himself and God. He lives out what St. Paul wrote to the Ephesians, being the one "bowing his knee to the paternal authority of God," an "inward man". He heeds the "ingrafted word" which he hears as a command. He opens St. John's Gospel of Charity and he lives it. He is a John the Baptist, an apocalyptic precursor of Christ; a Jonathan Maccabee, the first to step across the river while the halted army watches before following him. He is a crosser of the Rubicon — never turning back lest he offend the forward momentum of charity. He is a man of his word, keeping his perpetual vows unto death — the daily martyrdom of conversion. He is an enigma, boldly

humble, willfully silent, a martyr for love and loyalty. Like St. Benedict, he too has fled the corruption of imposture: the modern world with its false gods, whose commandments are the seven capital sins.

According to the divine promises made to St. Benedict, his Order will survive through the end times. There will indeed be many hardships beforehand and the deeply personal daily challenges are not in the textbook manuals! The average Benedictine vocation will mature into manhood and womanhood while living in the monastery. Our life is the experience of perseverance, since it is something needing to be lived in order to be fully understood.

Secondly, the traditional Liturgy is the monk's duty of state.

Every Latin Mass is a ***de facto*** declaration of war. Every priest who celebrates it will be "dragged through the synagogues because of Me ..." Thus, the permanent warning of Our Lord to priests of every generation! Who is the enemy and who is doing the dragging? "My name is Legion" say the fallen angels, and the powers and principalities spoken of in Holy Scripture.

The Mass is a declaration of war on four fronts, so to speak, the four ends of the Mass which are flatly rejected by our modern unbelieving world: Adoration, Thanksgiving, Reparation and Petition. The True Mass is warfare!

Without going into the often-debated problems of the *Novus Ordo Missæ*, we pray for the end of the arrogant impostures of the Conciliar Church whose long-term ripple effects are the cause of everything that is wrong, both inside and outside the Church today. The Fatima prophecy of "diabolical disorientation" fomented by doctrineless papacies has affected all walks of society throughout the last 50 years; the total confusion caused by a muted, silenced magisterium has opened the floodgates to every false religion; the present rioting and chaos of anarchy wherein there is no longer any distinction between peace and violence, while Churchmen sit on their hands; the elusive "traditional interpretation" of Vatican II which common sense calls the hermeneutics of doctrinal emptiness. And now, shockingly rampant, as Archbishop Viganò has recently and courageously exposed: **error in doctrine equals error in morals**.

CFN: Are Benedictines allowed to vote? Can they take interest in politics?

The short answer is: Absolutely! I would add that there has never been a more crucial time than now to take interest in both American and world social order. The catastrophic divorce, the separation of Church and State, presumes that the Church has been neutralized and has no further impact on civil society. Nothing could be more wrong! American Catholics live a

life-long paradox, in unforgiving tension between democracy and monarchy, between Church and State. Without compromise, the Faith must come first. They must vote according to their informed conscience. Today, it is clear that their vote is for much more than a man, a candidate, or for a party, but for the universal common good of our country and its conversion, far beyond the limits of a four-year term.

American Catholics have been wisely taught to be leery of the errors of Americanism, in light of the papal encyclicals such as Leo XIII's *Testem Benevolentiae* or Pius XI's *Quas Primas*, to name a few. Religious indifference is a grave danger in our country wherein truth and error are given equal rights.

On the global level, we are also watching the progress of the Visigrád Alliance in Central Europe. These four countries that expelled Islam in the past are once again leading Europe towards a Catholic Renaissance, though not without strong opposition from socialist-occupied Western Europe. President Duda's re-election has confirmed the continuation of the Catholic restoration of Poland. These once-great Catholic nations have their patron saints in Heaven watching over this renewed battle for the Faith. It will be a long battle, but we look to these countries as models in the fight which is now in front of us.

There is a Final Crusade gathering like dark storm clouds. The line has been drawn in the sand. Whether consciously or not, everyone is choosing their side: for or against Christ the King, Whose royal dominion over the entire universe is His divinely willed and definitive image. Will it be the ruling of Divine Love or its opposite: hell on earth, which is the hidden Masonic agenda, the globalist government by the so-called invisible one percent. The dream of American Socialism is the enemy at the gates. Dare we say this final form of Socialism is now the enemy within? The dress rehearsal is over, we are now witnessing phase one, through a managed agenda of agitation and upheaval: the Great Disruption.

CFN: How would you respond to some critics (even traditional Catholics) who claim that since the American governmental system is tainted with Americanism and Liberalism, Catholics should not participate in it all and should not vote?

Patriotism is a Christian virtue, says St. Thomas Aquinas. It always has been and always will be, given the divine concept of Patria, the land of one's father. Here is what he says in the *Summa Theologiae*:

"Man is a debtor chiefly to his parents and his country, after God. Wherefore just as it belongs to religion to give worship to God, so it belongs to piety, in the second place, to show reverence to one's parents and reverence to one's

country.”

Summa Theologiae II-II, q. 101, a. 1

To abstain from voting because of the personal faults of the candidate is to ignore the office. One can always vote against the adversary by voting for the lesser of two evils, although it is hardly the ideal situation. To abstain entirely is to give away one’s vote to the adversary. Popes such as Pius XII mentioned this and called it sinful and indolent. He was not merely speaking of the Italian vote of his era, but stating the universal principles of civic duty. Everyone wants to vote according to their good conscience, and everyone wants integrity in the highest sense. But absolute integrity is found in one place only: the tabernacle.

The two sides are presently very clear. The true and virtuous freedom of American Law and Order or its opposite, the oppression and slavery of American Socialism. November 3rd is not about any single candidate but about much more: two diametrically opposed social orders. To abstain from voting is to refuse one’s own country and to live here in hypocrisy. It would amount to the rejection of your own homeland and family.

The anti-Catholic origins of American independence are something Catholics must confront every day. It’s been the reality we live in since day one, yet we know it is not the final and permanent form of our American society. The Catholic Church alone has the means to overthrow the adversaries of Christendom. The only truly prosperous and peaceful future for our country lies in its conversion to Catholicism. When was the last time every American bishop, priest, and religious, together with every member of the Catholic laity, campaigned in unison for the conversion of America?

The present moment is critical.

CFN: What do you think is the future of Catholicism in America?

The mother of America, after the Immaculate Conception, is its foundress and first queen, Isabella of Spain. The reading of her admirable Catholic directives for the New World are found in the writings of the eminent American historian William Thomas Walsh. The traditions she established should have been carried out by her son and grandson, Kings Charles V and Phillip II, and would have had an impact on America far surpassing any Constitution, Declaration of Independence, or Bill of Rights.

Pope Leo XIII wrote that a nation wishing to be restored must return to its roots, to the sources of its origins. America has had the vocation to the Catholic Faith since day one. It is time for America to finally answer the call. And time is running out. The eyes of the world

are watching!

Nothing is impossible to Almighty God: He willed to convert the Roman Empire which became the instrumental cause of world evangelization. He can surely convert rebel America to the one true Faith. Our country needs the Catholic Church now more than ever. Truth and justice come from the Cross of Christ. There is only one way a nation can be great: one nation under God, indivisible.

Our Lady of Guadalupe was sent by our Heavenly Father in 1531 in order to end the demonic strangle-hold of paganism and to precede the arrival of Catholicism. Her apparition caused conversions by the thousands well before there were any borders separating Mexico from the other frontiers of the New World. Her miraculous image has resisted deterioration, even several attempts to destroy it, and remains the permanent witness of her unceasing love of the New World. It is no coincidence that the graphic portrayal of the Empress of the Americas is the same as the Immaculate Conception, for after all, she is the same person.

The prophecy of the triumph of the Immaculate Heart of Mary concerns the entire world. But the visionary of Fatima, Sr. Lucia, being questioned about our country gave this additional detail: "America will be brought to its knees but will survive the great chastisement, because of the generosity and goodness of the American people."

I might somewhat boldly add that the Rule of St. Benedict enshrined in the Catholic Church is certainly part of the future of America. It has been one of the foundational inspirations contributing to the greatness of Christendom. It will be the same in the conversion of America and its rise to Christian greatness.

CFN: How do you foresee the future of Our Lady of Guadalupe Monastery?

Monasteries have always been the first targets of raids during revolutions. Are we in grave danger? Divine institutions, whose dynamic is to continue without fail, include those same monasteries which are the personal of work of God: created unto His greater glory alone.

All the works of God, such as the Catholic Faith or Holy Church, are serenely firm and unstoppable. Divine realities cannot be destroyed. Human attempts to deter the works of God will always fail, for His Word will never cease or be silenced. Human hands cannot make religious vocations or monastic communities, which are spiritual realities. Though it be very modest, Benedictine life is one such reality, a pure gift of God, Who in His infinite mercy has willed to give us a little taste of heaven on earth.

Our gratitude to our Heavenly Father is unceasing for the beautiful twin contemplative

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communities which have come to life here in these obscure desert mountains where there is great peace and calm. Our newly established *Moniales*, the beautiful French name for female monks, beneath the patronage of St. Joseph, are flourishing with young ladies coming to discern their vocation each week. The first Sisters will be pronouncing their religious vows this fall. This is a great step forward towards the Consecration of Virgins which will follow in a few more years of formation. The original way to be a Catholic nun, dating back to Christian antiquity, is alive and well in these young “unconquered hearts”, as the Scripture says, who are so generously fulfilling their vocation to intercede for souls. Their monastery is a house of prayer and total commitment, as their beautiful feminine voices echo that of their Benedictine brothers throughout the fullness of the Divine Office, seven times a day and once in the midst of the night.

Our own community of monks continues to recruit excellent young men unto the service of the Church. Our monastery is currently full. Thus, the plan to add more room as soon as possible, since 10 extra rooms are already spoken for! St Thomas Aquinas Seminary in Dillwyn, VA, is generously hosting those of our monks who are in formation for the priesthood. Since our modest work is part of the greater work of Archbishop Lefebvre, it is only fitting that our priests be formed by the Society of St. Pius X and ordained by the bishops consecrated by the same Archbishop who is our founding father.

CFN: The new Abbey Roast facility is nearing completion. What comes next?

We are hoping to develop this modest coffee enterprise to create a stable means of economic support for our religious communities, as all monasteries have done in the past. The overwhelming response to this coffee apostolate has encouraged us to move forward with the construction of a full-scale facility. This will allow us to fill larger orders from grocery stores along with the individual orders we receive every day. We can hardly keep up with the current high demand. We are eager to have the adequate means to fill the ever-increasing orders.

Our joint venture under the name of Café-4-Life is also gaining popularity among the many Pro-Life groups in America. We’ve even received requests from Pro-Life groups outside of America.

The move into the new facility will soon ensure the means to serve this broader audience.

CFN: Any final words, Father?

Our communities are presently in full expansion. Besides the new coffee facility, in order to keep up with our increasing numbers, we are needing more lodging and a definitive abbey

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church in which we can fulfill our primary duty of state which is the *Opus Dei*, the Work of God. We turn to our faithful friends and benefactors for help to complete these audacious projects. We have come so far in such a short time. Right now, we are so close to the finishing stages of the coffee facility and **need \$150,000 by December 1st**, which is the remaining amount needed for the matching-funds donation of a generous benefactor. This will allow us to complete that building.

May Divine Providence inspire our supporters to help us meet our urgent and immediate goals, and also ensure our greater work: the continuation of the living traditions of the Benedictine Order, for the greater glory of God and the salvation of souls. Our daily Masses and sacrifices are the unceasing expression of gratitude to all who take part in this work, which is our testament to the words of Archbishop Lefebvre: **“Without monasteries, without souls consecrated to the unceasing praise and worship of God, the Church will never recover from the present crisis.”**

For more information about Our Lady of Guadalupe Monastery, please visit
<https://www.ourladyofguadalupemonastery.com>.

To support the monastery by ordering Abbey Roast coffee, please visit
<https://www.abbeyroast.com>.