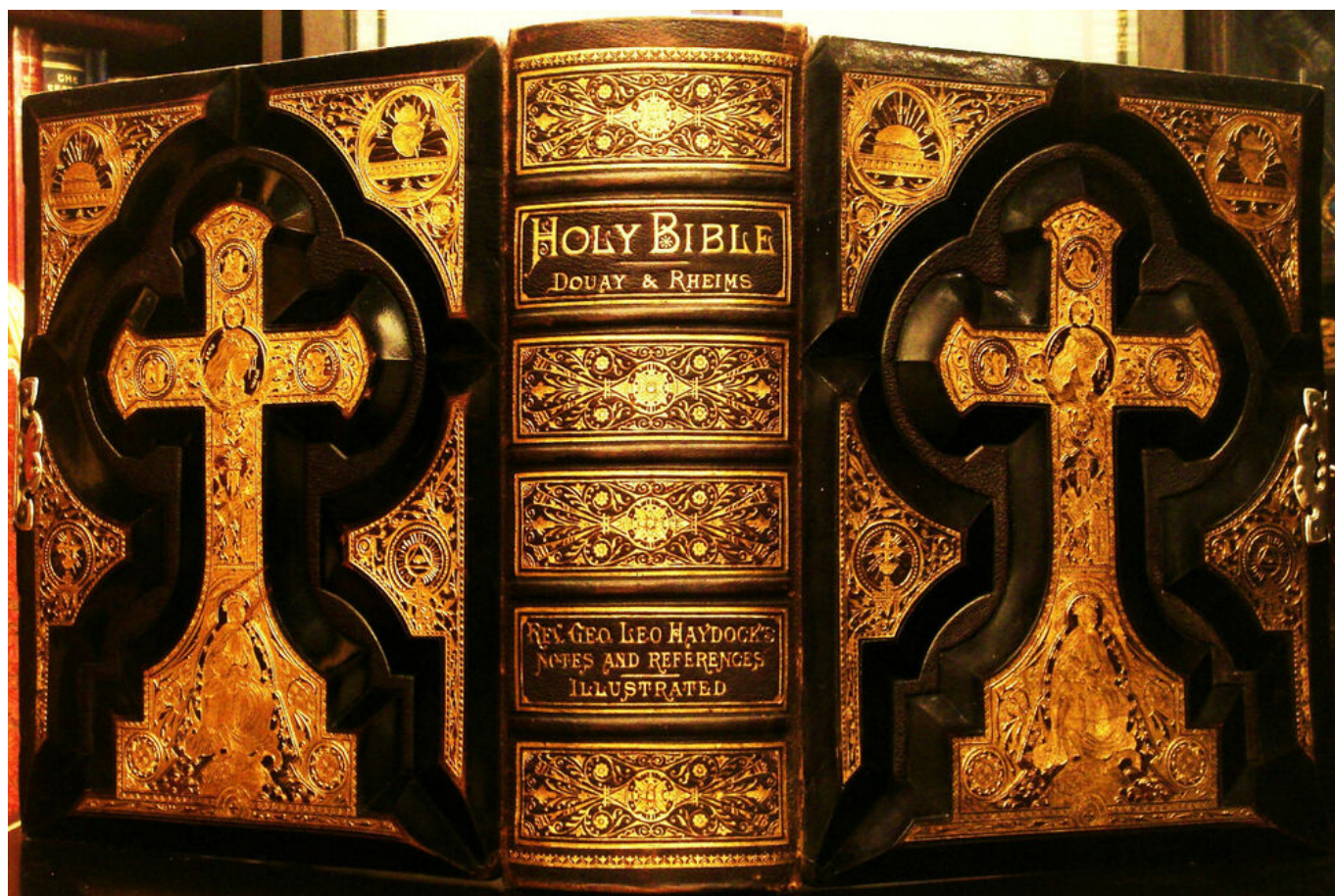


## Fifth Week of Lent: The Church Militant

*“Put you on the armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the deceits of the devil. For our wrestling is not against flesh and blood; but against principalities and powers, against the rulers of the world of this darkness, against the spirits of wickedness in the high places. Therefore take unto you the armor of God, that you may be able to resist in the evil day, and to stand in all things perfect. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of justice, And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace: In all things taking the shield of faith, wherewith you may be able to extinguish all the fiery darts of the most wicked one. And take unto you the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit (which is the word of God). By all prayer and supplication praying at all times in the spirit; and in the same watching with all instance and supplication for all the saints.” — [Ephesians 6:11-18](#)*



## Commentary on Sacred Scripture

In the foregoing, St. Paul lays out some weapons for the '[Church Militant](#)' in the Spiritual Combat: the armor of God; your loins girt with truth; the breastplate of justice; your feet shod; the shield of faith; the helmet of salvation; and the sword of the Spirit (which is the word of God). The road to Heaven is a battle between good and evil. St. Paul warns us to be prepared. The war will continue until the day we die. No one is exempt from the Spiritual Combat. You either fight or you lose — and the loss results in eternal damnation.

Until we draw our final breath, we are members of the 'Church Militant' fighting to get into Heaven. As living members of the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church, we are united with our comrades in arms: the '[Church Triumphant](#)' who have died having won the prize of Heaven; and the '[Church Suffering](#)' who have finished the battle but must be cleansed in the fires of Purgatory before entering into eternal happiness.

The New Testament contains further instructions for the Church Militant on how to be an effective 'soldier for Christ.' Those war plans include the following quotes from Sacred Scripture.

First of all, we have the Words of Our Lord, Jesus Christ, referring to the "sword" of Spiritual Combat having a God-given place in our lives: "Do not think that I came to send peace upon earth: I came not to send peace, but the sword" (Matt. 10:34).

St. Paul assures us that the sword can strike from all sides. We must be spiritually armed:

- "Who then shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation? or distress? or famine? or nakedness? or danger? or persecution? or the sword?" (Rom. 8:35).
- "For he is God's minister to thee, for good. But if thou do that which is evil, fear: for he beareth not the sword in vain. For he is God's minister: an avenger to execute wrath upon him that doth evil" (Rom. 13:4).
- Soldiers of Christ strike with "the sword of the Spirit (which is the word of God)" (Eph. 6:17).

The imagery of other tools of war besides those found in our opening quote from Ephesians can be found in several Letters from the Apostle to the Gentiles:

- "But let us, who are of the day, be sober, having on the breastplate of faith and charity, and for a helmet the hope of salvation" (1 Thess. 5:8).

- “In the word of truth, in the power of God; by the armor of justice on the right hand and on the left” (2 Cor. 6:7).
- “The night is passed, and the day is at hand. Let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and put on the armor of light” (Rom. 13:12).

Make no mistake, St. Paul sees us as ‘soldiers of Christ’:

- “Labor as a good soldier of Christ Jesus” (2 Tim. 2:3).
- “But I have thought it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother and fellow laborer, and fellow soldier, but your apostle, and he that hath ministered to my wants” (Philip. 2:25).
- “And to Appia, our dearest sister, and to Archippus, our fellow soldier, and to the church which is in thy house” (Philemon 1:2).

The inspired Word of God proclaimed by Saints Peter, Paul, and James tells us that the Spiritual Combat also involves a “war” against the flesh:

- “Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, to refrain yourselves from carnal desires which war against the soul” (1 Pet. 2:11).
- “For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal” (2 Cor. 10:3-4).
- “From whence are wars and contentions among you? Are they not hence, from your concupiscences, which war in your members?” (Jam. 4:1).

St. Paul makes it clear that the Spiritual Combat is a fight to the death, literally.

- “Fight the good fight of faith: lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art called” (1 Tim. 6:12).
- “I therefore so run, not as at an uncertainty: I so fight, not as one beating the air” (1 Cor. 9:26).
- “And therefore we also having so great a cloud of witnesses over our head, laying aside every weight and sin which surrounds us, let us run by patience to the fight proposed to us” (Heb. 12:1).
- “I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith” (2 Tim. 4:7).



As the Church Militant, we MUST be loyal to the Lamb of God, Christ the King. He, in turn, will assist us in our Spiritual Combat, especially during the end times:

- “And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies gathered together to make war with Him that sat upon the horse, and with His army” (Apoc. 19:19).
- “These shall fight with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them, because He is Lord of lords, and King of kings, and they that are with Him are called, and elect, and faithful” (Apoc. 17:14).
- In this Apocalyptic battle, “saith the Son of God: ... I will come to thee quickly, and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth” (Apoc. 2:6-18).

To the shame and judgment of those in position to warn souls of the diabolical enemy who is coming upon us, but do not sound any alarm of meaningful significance, we have: “For if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle?” (1 Cor. 14:8).

Note that Matt Gaspers, the Managing Editor of *Catholic Family News*, also expounded upon chapter 6 of Ephesians at the 2018 CFN “Weapons of Our Warfare” Conference. There, he spoke of “The Final Battle” foretold by Our Lady of Fatima on marriage and the family (see [here](#) and [here](#)).



## Scupoli's Spiritual Combat

"The Soldier of Christ Must Prepare Early for the Battle" is the title of chapter 16 of Dom Lorenzo Scupoli's classic work, [\*The Spiritual Combat\*](#), written in 1589.

The chapter begins with: "The first thing to do when you awake is to open the windows of your soul. Consider yourself as on the field of battle, facing the enemy and bound by the iron-clad law — either fight or die" (chapter 16).

"Imagine the enemy before you, that particular vice or disorderly passion that you are trying to conquer — imagine this hideous opponent is about to overwhelm you. At the same time, picture at your right Jesus Christ, your Invincible Leader, accompanied by the Blessed Virgin, St. Joseph, whole companies of angels and Saints, and particularly by the glorious Archangel Michael. At your left is Lucifer and his troops, ready to support the passion or vice you are fighting and resolved to do anything to cause your defeat" (chapter 16).

"Imagine your Guardian Angel thus spurring you on: 'Today you must fight to conquer your enemy and anyone who tries to ruin you. Be courageous. Do not be afraid or cowardly. Christ your captain is here with all the power of Heaven to protect you from the enemy, and to see that they never conquer you, either by brute power, or by trickery. Hold your ground! Do violence to yourself, no matter how painful it is. Call out for the help of Jesus and Mary and all the Saints. If you do this, you will be victorious'" (chapter 16).

"It does not matter how weak you are — how strong the enemy may seem, either in number or in power. Do not be discouraged" (chapter 16). Here we can recall the words of Padre Pio: "Discouragement is the tool of the devil."

Dom Scupoli warns: "You must not become tired of this war. Everyone must serve and please God. It is impossible to avoid this fight. If anyone flees, he is exposed to being wounded and even destroyed. By revolting against God and indulging in a life of sensuality with the world, the difficulties are not lessened, because both body and soul suffer greatly when given to luxury and ambition" (chapter 16).

"When you have performed a good act," Scupoli warns, "recall that God is the Author of the act, and you are but His instrument. Lift up your eyes and cry out: 'O Sovereign Lord of the Universe! It is with the greatest pleasure that I recognize that, without Thee, the First and Principal Cause of all things, I can do nothing'" (chapter 21).

"An inexperienced soldier who wants seasoning must be very discreet and cautious ... but he must never think of turning back or quitting the fight ... What has been discussed here

does not pertain to the vice of impurity, which, as has been observed, can only be subdued by flight" (chapter 37). Padre Pio observed: "The devil is like a mad dog tied by a chain. Beyond the length of the chain, he cannot catch hold of anyone. And you, therefore, keep your distance. If you get too close, you will be caught."



The Rosary and the Brown Scapular are Inseparable

## The Message of Fatima

When asked Her name by Lucia, the Mother of God responded on the last of the six apparitions at Fatima: “I am the Lady of the Rosary.” She would tell us, through the three Fatima shepherds, to “Pray the Rosary every day.”

When asked by Lucia if she and her two cousins would go to Heaven, Lucia and Jacinta got a quick affirmative. Regarding Francisco, Our Lady said that he would go to Heaven also, “but he will have to say many Rosaries.” Some wrongfully feel that the reason for having to say “many Rosaries” was because Francisco was a bad boy. In my opinion, Francisco was a good boy who had the God-given capacity to pray many Rosaries, similar to Padre Pio. Hence, as with us, if God gives us a special gift He expects us to use it for His glory and the salvation of souls, lest we lose the rewards of Heaven. When Church officials disinterred the mortal remains of Francisco for transfer to the newly built basilica, he was identified in part by the Rosary beads which were embedded in his fingers. Francisco, indeed, prayed many Rosaries before his death.

Our Lady taught the three shepherd children on July 13, 1917 to say the following prayer after each decade of the Rosary, commonly referred to as the ‘Decade Prayer’: “O my Jesus, forgive us, save us from the fire of hell. Lead all souls to Heaven, especially those who are most in need.” The words “of Thy mercy,” often added at the end, are not part of the foregoing literal translation of the actual words of Our Lady that were recorded in Portuguese in the [official memoirs](#) of Sister Lucia (page 179).

Pope Pius XII crowned the statue of Our Lady at Fatima and proclaimed Her “Queen of the World” through a papal legate on May 13, 1946. This ‘Fatima Pontiff’ was consecrated a bishop by Pope Benedict XV in the Sistine Chapel at the Vatican on May 13, 1917 at 12 noon — at the same time and date that Our Lady was appearing to the three shepherd children at Fatima. Heaven confirmed Pius XII’s definition of the Dogma of the Assumption in 1950. At that time, this Vicar of Christ is [said to have witnessed](#) a version of Fatima’s ‘Miracle of the Sun’ on [four different occasions](#) from the Vatican Gardens. This holy Pontiff would famously say that the Brown Scapular is “a sign of consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary.”

On October 13, 1917, during the great Miracle of the Sun, the Blessed Mother appeared at one point in the sky as ‘Our Lady of Mount Carmel’ holding forth a [Brown Scapular](#). Sister Lucia would comment that Our Lady held the Brown Scapular in Her hands “because She wants everyone to wear it.” Sister Lucia confirmed that the Brown Scapular is an essential condition of the Fatima message, as she declared: “The Rosary and the Brown Scapular are



inseparable.”



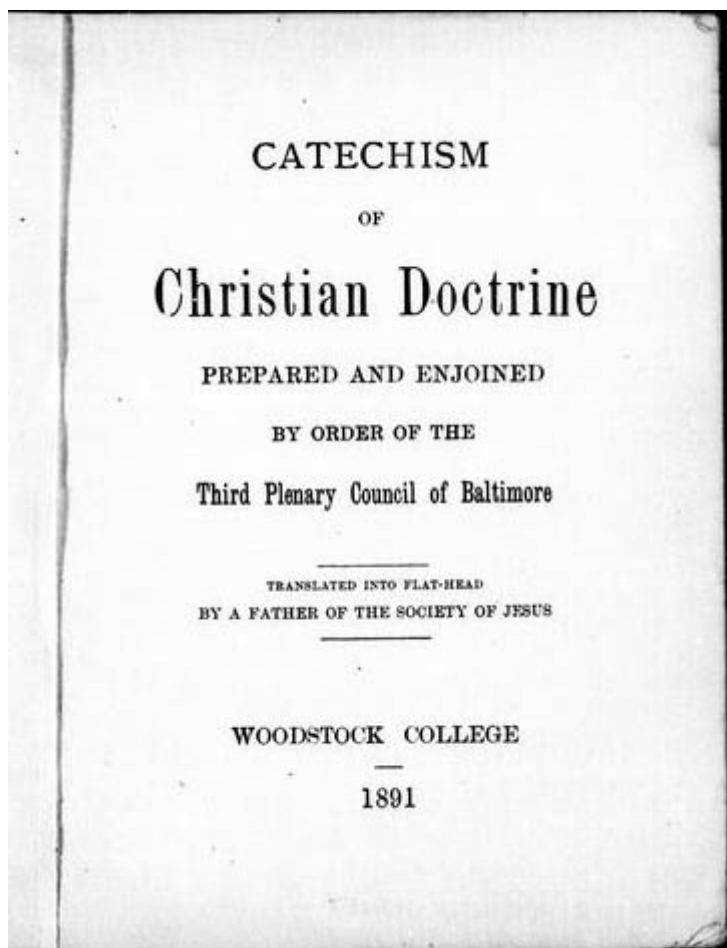
The monument to Nuno outside of the Gothic Monastery Batalha in Portugal

## The Greatest Warrior of Portugal

[Nuno Álvares Pereira](#) is heralded as the ‘Greatest Warrior of Portugal.’ Among his many other titles and honors he was the Third Count of the Castle of Ourem which overlooks the environs of Fatima. He was born in 1360 and died in 1431. He fought and won numerous battles defending the borders of Portugal from neighboring Castile and safeguarding Portuguese interests against the Muslims. His trusty sword, inscribed with the name ‘*Santa Maria*’, was known as ‘the Peacemaker.’ He fought in the land where Our Lady would later appear at Fatima.

At the age of 63, the great 'Constable' and 'Lord High Steward' of Portugal walked into the imposing Monastery Church dedicated to Our Lady of the Scapular of Mount Carmel (*Convento da Ordem do Carmo*) in Lisbon. There, he laid down his sword and prestigious titles before a statue of Our Lady. He then picked up a Rosary as his weapon and a Brown Scapular as his shield and became 'Brother Nuno of St. Mary,' a Carmelite. Nevertheless, as the lowest rank of Carmelite, a *donato*, he would have been able to leave the monastery if Portugal's enemies dared try to threaten the country in Nuno's absence. Hence, Nuno wore a suit of armor under his habit as a warning to those who would consider attacking Portugal while he was in the monastery.

Nuno the Carmelite, armed with a Rosary and shielded by his Brown Scapular, understood that true peace is only won by being willing to fight. Such it is with the Spiritual Combat for all of us.



## Baltimore Catechism

The traditional 1891 Baltimore Catechism (#3), "[Lesson 15 — On Confirmation](#)", affirms the teaching of Sacred Scripture that we are to be soldiers in the Spiritual Combat:

**Q. 670. What is Confirmation?**

***A. Confirmation is a Sacrament through which we receive the Holy Ghost to make us strong and perfect Christians and soldiers of Jesus Christ.***

**Q. 672. Why is Confirmation so called?**

***A. Confirmation is so called from its chief effect, which is to strengthen or render us more firm in whatever belongs to our faith and religious duties.***

**Q. 673. Why are we called soldiers of Jesus Christ?**

***A. We are called soldiers of Jesus Christ to indicate how we must resist the attacks of our spiritual enemies and secure our victory over them by following and obeying our Lord.***

**Q. 686. What is meant by (the bishop) anointing the forehead with chrism in the form of a cross?**

***A. By anointing the forehead with chrism in the form of a cross is meant that the Christian who is confirmed must openly profess and practice his faith, never be ashamed of it; and rather die than deny it.***

**Q. 688. Why have we good reason never to be ashamed of the Catholic Faith?**

***A. We have good reason never to be ashamed of the Catholic Faith because it is the Old Faith established by Christ and taught by His Apostles; It is the Faith for which countless Holy Martyrs suffered and died; It is the Faith that has brought true civilization, with all its benefits, into the world, and it is the only Faith that can truly reform and preserve public and private morals.***

**Q. 689. Why does the bishop give the person he confirms a slight blow on**

the cheek?

***A. The bishop gives the person he confirms a slight blow on the cheek, to put him in mind that he must be ready to suffer everything, even death, for the sake of Christ.***

**Q. 694. Is it a sin to neglect Confirmation?**

***A. It is a sin to neglect Confirmation, especially in these evil days when faith and morals are exposed to so many and such violent temptations.***

**Q. 695. What do we mean by “these evil days”?**

***A. By “these evil days” we mean the present age or century in which we are living, surrounded on all sides by unbelief, false doctrines, bad books, bad example and temptation in every form.***

**Q. 698. Which are the effects of Confirmation?**

***A. The effects of Confirmation are an increase of sanctifying grace, the strengthening of our faith, and the gifts of the Holy Ghost.***

The traditional 1891 Baltimore Catechism (#3), “[Lesson 1 — On the End of Man](#)”, teaches us about why we were created and what we must do to save our souls, including the following:

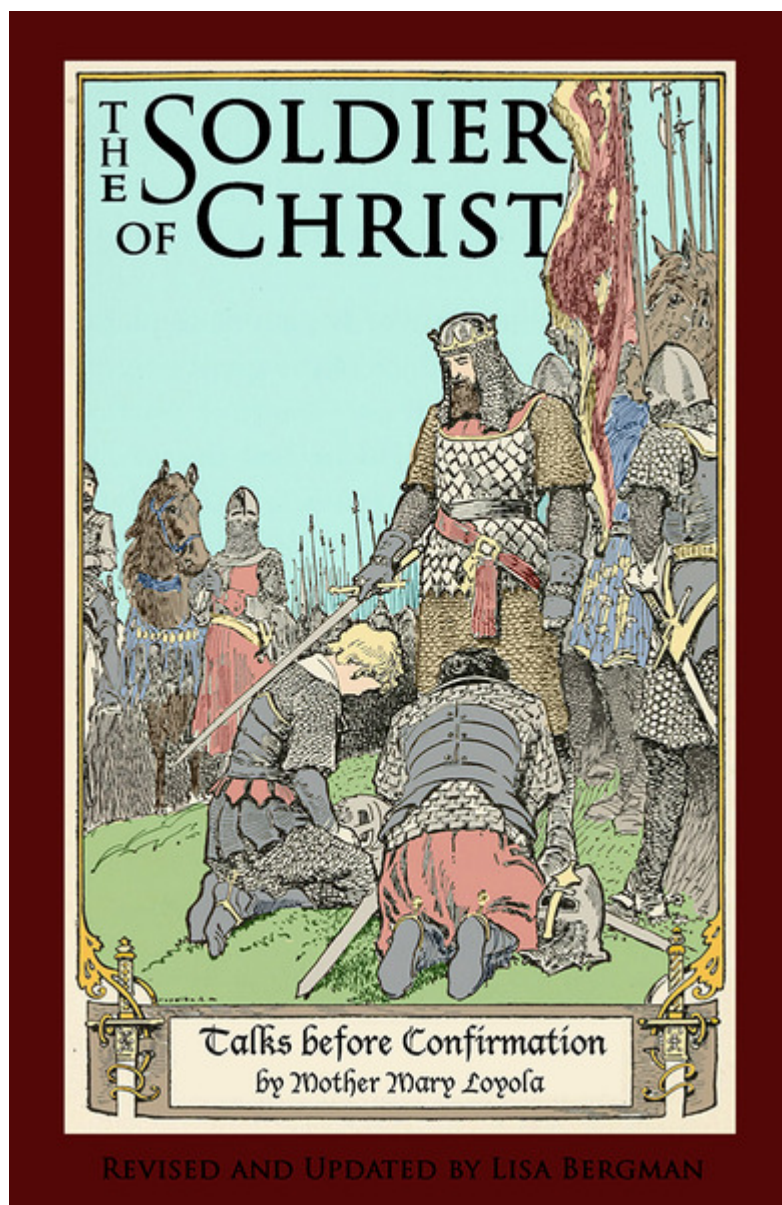
**Q. 150. Why did God make you?**

***A. God made me to know Him, to love Him, and to serve Him in this world, and to be happy with Him forever in the next.***

**Q. 153. Why must we take more care of our soul than of our body?**

***A. We must take more care of our soul than of our body, because in losing our soul we lose God and everlasting happiness.***





## The Sacrament of Confirmation

Renowned for her effectiveness in communicating traditional Catholic truth, Mother Mary Loyola wrote a series of books in the late 19th and early 20th centuries to help Catholics better understand their Faith. One of those books is entitled, [\*The Soldier of Christ: Talks before Confirmation\*](#).

The Kingdom of Heaven on earth is represented by the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church. All Catholics are called to be soldiers in this Kingdom. Christ is our King. The Blessed Virgin Mary is our Queen. Confirmation is that Sacrament that makes us soldiers of

Christ. Catholic soldiers are called upon to defend and expand Christ's Kingdom on earth by our words and deeds.

The idea that one became a 'soldier of Christ' at Confirmation was indeed not unique to Mother Mary Loyola. In fact, it was a commonly held traditional Catholic belief up to the time of my own Confirmation in the 1960s. The religious Sister who prepared me for Confirmation taught the same lesson.

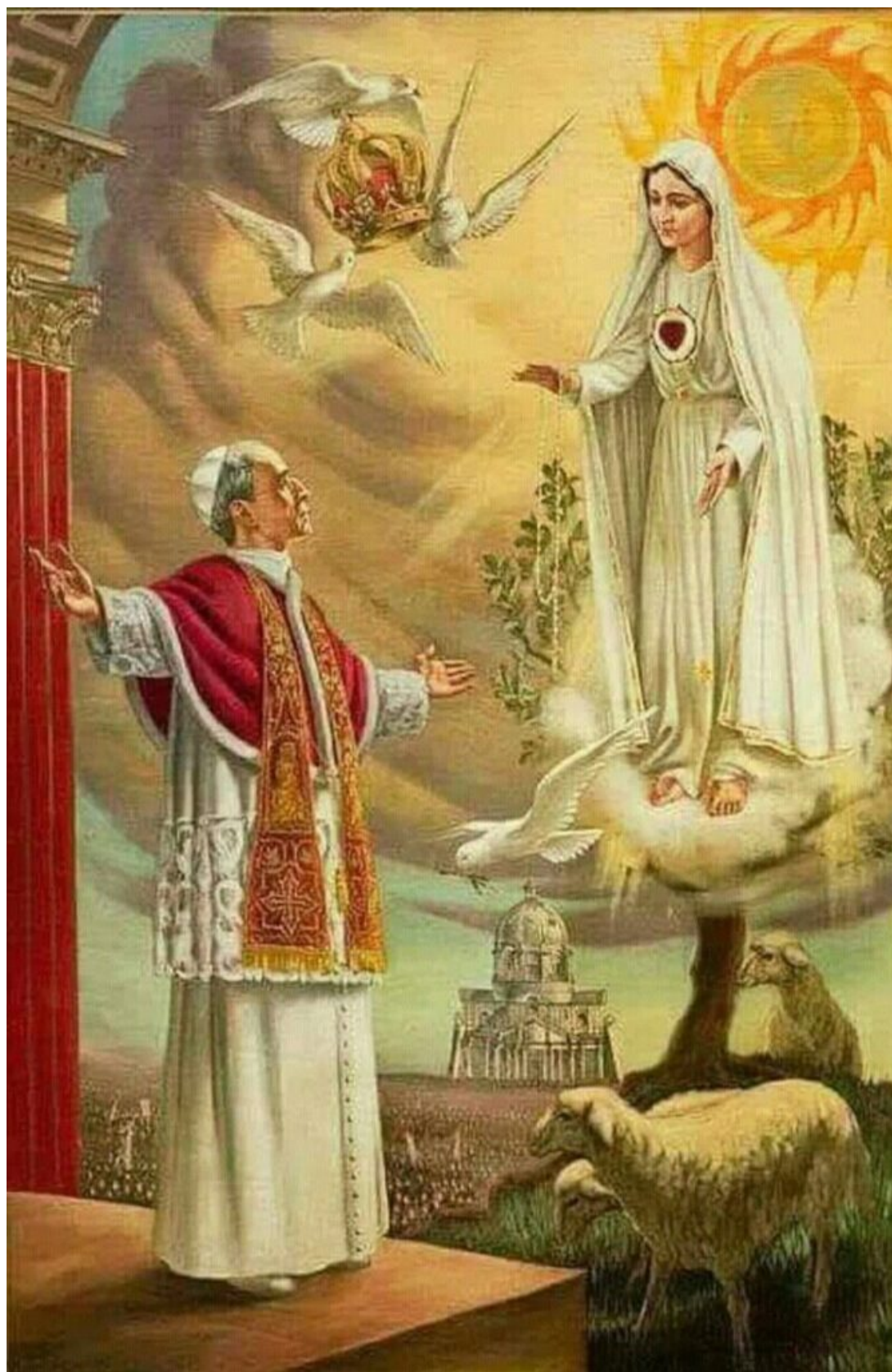
In preparing her students for Confirmation, Sister told us that the Bishop would slap the confirmand across the face in the ritual to teach us that we must be brave in order to be a soldier of Christ. This calls to mind the secular 'accolade' or 'dubbing' ceremony in the rite of passage ritual conferring knighthood in the middle ages. Today, such 'knighting' involves tapping the flat blade of a sword on the shoulders of the candidate or a slight blow on the neck or cheek with the hand. The blow, or '*colee*', evolved from a stout box on the ear given with a bare fist.

I remember the day of my Confirmation and seeing the Bishop for the first time. He had large hands and gigantic fingers, one of which had a ring on it that must have weighed a pound. I imagined that when he would hit me across the face, that it was going to hurt bad ... really bad. I manfully looked forward to the challenge.

When the time came inside the church, the bishop wound up his arm. I closed my eyes, and then ... nothing ... a gentle touch to my cheek. I felt robbed.

I asked Sister afterwards if I was Confirmed, since the Bishop did not give me a wallop. I still remember her exact words: "Yes, Lad. You were Confirmed. The Bishop was just trying to teach you that the suffering would come later." How right she was. A soldier of Christ trying to defend and expand the traditional One True Faith founded by Christ in today's world is in for a multitude of sufferings.

Speaking of 'lessons' for the Spiritual Combat, never forget my **Three Rs of Modernism**: **Recognize** it; **Refute** it; **Return** to Tradition. We will need to be soldiers of Christ to fight against satan's red army of Modernists and Communists who have infiltrated our Church today.





Pope Pius XII (r. 1939-1958) witnessing the 'Miracle of the Sun' at the Vatican

## The Spiritual Combat in Our Time

Significant aspects of the Spiritual Combat since 1917 have been foretold by Our Lady of Fatima. Some of those prophecies have been fulfilled and others await their fulfillment. The Message of Fatima is a message for our troubled times, preparing us to recognize and wage war against the forces of evil.

[Prophecies of Our Lady of Fatima from 1917](#) that have been fulfilled include the following:

- June 13: *"I will take Jacinta and Francisco soon (to Heaven)."* They both died by February 20, 1920, less than three years after the apparitions.
- July 13: *"In October ... I will perform a miracle so that all may see and believe."* Our Lady would reiterate this prediction in the August and September apparitions as well. The great 'Miracle of the Sun' took place on October 13, just as She had said. Seen by some 70,000 people over a radius of 70 miles, even the Communists were forced to recognize it as a miracle.
- July 13: *"The war (World War I) is going to end, but if people do not cease offending God, a worse one will break out (World War II) during the reign of Pius XI. When you see [a night illumined by an unknown light](#), know that this is the great sign given you by God that He is about to punish the world for its crimes by means of war, famine, and persecutions of the Church and the Holy Father."* On the night of Jan. 25-26, 1938, the sky turned blood-red for many hours and was seen by half the world. Within two months of that unknown light, Hitler's armies invaded Austria during the reign of Pope Pius XI, who was not even the Pope in 1917.
- July 13: *"To prevent this, I shall come to ask for the Consecration of Russia to My Immaculate Heart, and the Communion of Reparation on the First Saturdays."* On December 10, 1925 the Child Jesus and Our Lady appeared to Sister Lucia at Pontevedra, Spain requesting the [Five First Saturdays devotion](#). Our Lady later came to [request the Consecration of Russia](#) at Tuy, Spain on June 13, 1929. Still yet, we must pray that the Consecration of Russia be done exactly as Our Lady of Fatima requested. We must continue to practice and promote the Five First Saturdays devotion.

This next section is what 'soldiers of Christ' need to be aware of as we enter today's battlefield to engage in Spiritual Combat. We have seen above that Our Lady 'keeps Her promises.' Take special note of the prophecies of Our Lady of Fatima from 1917, which are



in the process of being fulfilled. These impact the life of Holy Mother Church and our individual lives. These predictions of Our Lady of Fatima are the epitome of what the Spiritual Combat in our time is all about:

- July 13: *"If My requests are heeded, Russia will be converted and there will be peace; if not, she will spread her errors throughout the world, causing wars and persecutions of the Church. The good will be martyred, the Holy Father will have much to suffer, various nations will be annihilated. In the end, My Immaculate Heart will triumph. The Holy Father will consecrate Russia to Me, and she will be converted, and a period of peace will be granted to the world."* In 1931, [Our Lord told Sister Lucia](#) that eventually the Pope and bishops "will do it, but it will be late."
- July 13: *"In Portugal, the dogma of the Faith will always be preserved, etc."* This implies that the dogma of the Faith [will be lost](#) in other parts of the world.

On July 13, Our Lady also revealed to the three shepherd children what is popularly known as the '[Third Secret of Fatima](#)'. Part of that secret, which was made public by the Vatican on June 26, 2000, includes the following that should make us gird for the Spiritual Combat that lies ahead:

- In the Third Secret, the Angel cried out in a loud voice to mankind: *"Penance, Penance, Penance!"* This warning to a people who have lost all sense of sin, who no longer go to Confession, who receive sacrilegious Communions, who no longer believe in the Real Presence of Christ in the Blessed Sacrament, who deny the Sacrificial nature of the Holy Mass, who offend God with their *"outrages, sacrileges and indifference."* Our Lady of Fatima held back the wrath of the Angel.
- Then, the three shepherd children saw, in the Third Secret, a *"bishop dressed in white... afflicted with pain and sorrow... who passed through a big city half in ruins..."* who *"prayed for the souls of the corpses he met on the way"* going up towards the big Cross. At *"the top of the mountain, on his knees at the foot of the big Cross, he was killed by a group of soldiers who fired bullets and arrows at him, and in the same way there died one after another the other bishops, priests, men and women religious, and various lay people of different ranks and positions. Beneath the two arms of the Cross there were two Angels each with a crystal aspersorium in his hand, in which they gathered up the blood of the martyrs and with it sprinkled the souls that were making their way to God."*

We MUST be prepared to fight and to [die as martyrs](#). Sister Lucia, speaking of the "errors of Russia" spreading across the world, [affirmed](#) that if the Consecration of Russia was not

done as requested by Our Lady, then every country without exception, including the United States, would be overcome by Communism. Are we not now at that fateful time?

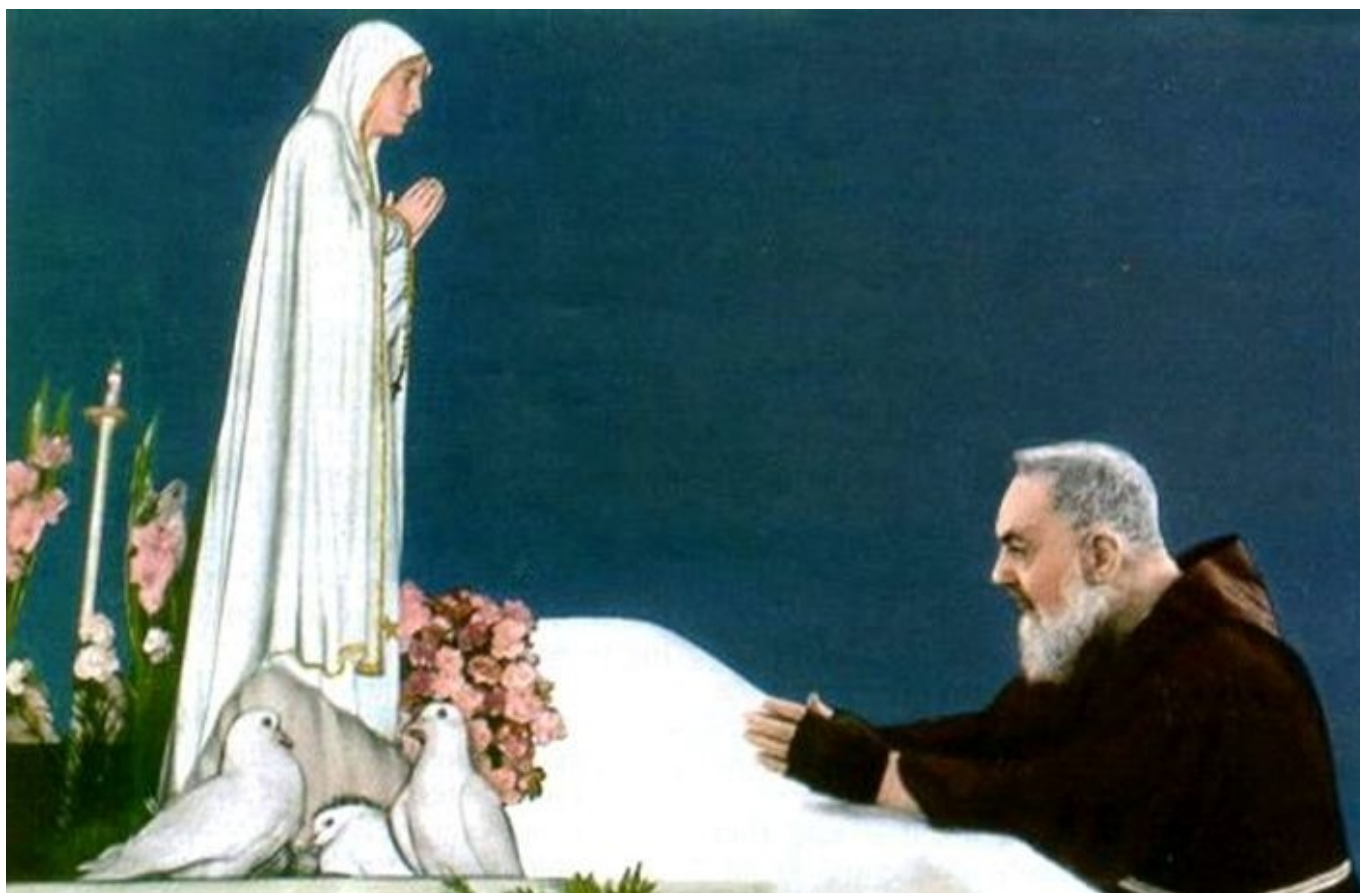
A Fatima-related prophecy that clearly describes our Spiritual Combat in the present time against the diabolical threat of Modernism, was spoken by a prelate very familiar with the Fatima Message. Before he became Pope Pius XII, Cardinal Eugenio Pacelli, as Vatican Secretary of State, in the 1930's [stated](#):

- *"I am worried by the Blessed Virgin's messages to Lucy of Fatima. This persistence of Mary about the dangers which menace the Church is a divine warning against the suicide that would be represented by the alteration of the faith, in her liturgy, her theology and her soul...I hear all around me innovators who wish to dismantle the Sacred Chapel, destroy the universal flame of the Church, reject her ornaments and make her feel remorse for her historical past." He prophesied: "A day will come when the civilized world will deny its God, when the Church will doubt as Peter doubted. She will be tempted to believe that man has become God. In our own churches, Christians will search in vain for the red lamp where God awaits them. Like Mary Magdalene, weeping before the empty tomb, they will ask, 'Where have they taken Him?'"[1]*

Those who have eyes, see. Those who have ears, hear. Ephesians chapter 6 speaks to OUR TIME. We are facing "principalities and powers." We are going against "rulers of the world of this darkness." We will not yield to "the spirits of wickedness in high places!" As members of the Church Militant, we will: "put on the armor of God;" "take up the sword of the Spirit;" put on "the breastplate of justice;" gird ourselves with the "truth;" and have at hand "the shield of Faith!" We will be READY for Spiritual Combat.

As distressing as the current times are, we will not surrender. We will never give up. We will "fight the good fight." We will "keep the Faith." We will "finish the course." We will "fight with the vigor of a man struggling for his very life." We will remember that that no one who ever "called upon Our Lady with a lively faith was left unaided." May the "patient acceptance of the crosses of life be like a thread ... woven into the fabric of our spiritual lives." And, may we "either fight or die."

With confidence in God, while distrusting ourselves, we will follow the advice of Padre Pio who said: "Pray, hope, and don't worry." We will turn to St. Michael the Archangel to 'defend us in battle,' in our Spiritual Combat. Protected by the armor and shield of our Brown Scapular, we will use all of the spiritual weapons at our disposal, especially the Most Holy Rosary of the Blessed Virgin Mary.



## **This Week's Spiritual Weapon: The Holy Rosary**

There is a story about a young friar helping the elderly Padre Pio get dressed in the morning. Just when it seemed that all was in order, Padre Pio loudly proclaimed: "My weapon! Where is my weapon?!" The startled response was: "What weapon?" Pio responded: "My Rosary! Get me my Rosary!"

Someone once asked Padre Pio to draw up a prayer plan for their life. Padre Pio simply responded: "My child, the Rosary." Padre Pio would pray hundreds of Rosaries each day. Someone once asked Pio how many Rosaries they should recite in a day. Padre Pio responded: "When I've recited the Rosary 180 times, I rest."

In many photographs, he is shown with his right hand hidden within the pocket where he always kept his Rosary beads. He would pray them even as he was talking to people. Indeed, he urged all Catholics to "love the Madonna and pray the Rosary, for the Rosary is the weapon against the evils of the world."

Padre Pio had a great devotion to Our Lady of Fatima. He was healed of a deadly illness through Her intercession in 1959. He had a statue of Our Lady of Fatima in the sacristy above where he vested for Mass; another in the hallway leading from his cell to the choir-loft where he prayed; and installed another in the chapel of his Home for the Relief of Suffering.

Devotion to Our Lady of Fatima, Her message, and Her Holy Rosary are a winning combination for EVERY DAY in our life of Spiritual Combat. The Most Holy Rosary of the Blessed Virgin Mary is not just 'the Prayer of the Week,' it is THE DAILY WEAPON that will power the Church Militant to victory in the Spiritual Combat. For the Church Militant, in Our Lady of Fatima's Army, the Rosary is our weapon and the Brown Scapular is our shield.

Let us conclude with this traditional ending prayer of the Rosary:

*O God, Whose only begotten Son, by His life, death, and Resurrection, has purchased for us the rewards of eternal life. Grant, we beseech Thee, that by meditating on these mysteries of the Most Holy Rosary of the Blessed Virgin Mary, we may imitate what they contain and obtain what they promise, through the same Christ our Lord. Amen.*

Note: A plenary indulgence can be [obtained by praying](#) the Holy Rosary.

This article is part of a Lenten series. See [here](#) for Part 1, [here](#) for Part 2, [here](#) for Part 3, and [here](#) for Part 4.

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[1] Msgr. Georges Roche, *Pius XII Devant L'Histoire* (1972), pp. 52-53.