

Newsletter 2023-23

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He who obeys Me dwells in security, in peace, without fear of harm.



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<https://corps-of-renewal-and-charity.myshopify.com/collections/donation>



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This will be the last newsletter of the year, as we move toward Christmas. It's hard to do serious research in this season, so I'll keep it short and light. Merry Christmas; see you next year, when we will have exciting work to do!

Sheryl Gollmer, editor

December 20, 2023

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From the cockpit of the Subaru



CORAC founder Charlie Johnston travels from coast to coast in his trusty Outback to speak in person to those now weathering the Storm.

Back to the Manger

A little over 2,000 years ago the world was groaning in misery and despair. Not all were obviously miserable. The elites were doing just fine, thank you - at least in terms of the things and power they held tightly to themselves. But the great mass of people had few things, no power, and little hope. They were scarcely more than cattle, to be manipulated, abused and scorned at the whim of the elites. This was not in one country, but throughout the world.

The Jews taught a theology that gave hope of transcendent meaning, but Israel was held captive by Rome – and Jewish leaders were far too busy currying favor with the Roman overlords to pay much attention to Jewish teaching or the needs of the Jewish people.

Ordinary Jews could only hold onto the slim hope of ancient prophecies which foretold a coming Messiah who would one day redeem His people and wipe away all their tears. The rest of the world had not even that. There were only the elite and the enslaved, all desperately trying to scramble together some amusement and pleasure before the darkness of the tomb overtook them.

Then came one December 25th and the first great global revolution. At first it was only noticed by a few shepherd boys, alerted by an angel, and some obscure scholars from the east, alerted by an equally obscure celestial display. It started with the birth of a Child in a lowly manger.

It was certainly a slow-motion revolution. Completely hidden for almost 30 years, the early years of that Child's public ministry were an annoying irritant to both the Jewish leadership and the Roman overlords. But the man, Jesus, was picking up followers, people in whom He had sparked new and vibrant hope that life was much more than just a desperate scramble for power and things – a game they were not even invited into.

It infuriated many authorities that Jesus was convincing this rabble that they were important and beloved in God's eyes. So they did what most elite classes do when their primacy is challenged: they executed the man, Jesus.

For a few days this seemed to be the end of it. But then the tomb was found empty and great crowds reported sightings of Jesus teaching again throughout Judea. The disciples who had been in hiding in the first few days after His Crucifixion suddenly were preaching boldly again in His name, filled with the conviction that this was not the end, but the beginning. Jesus had not just conquered the Roman occupation; He had conquered death itself.

For several hundred years the Romans tried to suppress the movement, persecuting Christians wherever they found them. But like a balloon held beneath the water, they would not stay submerged. As Rome quietly became dependent on Christians to help care for the poor and sick, the Empire finally succumbed and declared Christianity a favored religion. The religion spread throughout the known world, spawning a great Western Civilization that progressively insisted that man is not made for bread alone, but to serve God by serving and caring for each other.

In the process, all nations who came sincerely to the man, Jesus, found prosperity and meaning in their lives. The rough edges remained: man will not be perfected on this side of the veil. But it was firmly established that the purpose of government is the good of all the people, not just the powerful elites – and that any legitimate government derives its just powers from the consent of the governed.

Now we are faced with a new global crisis. Once again a small cadre of elites seeks to impose its will on all people using means both fair and foul (but mostly foul) to refuse accountability to the people they are called to serve. They cagily declare all their depravities to be for the “common good” even as they enrich themselves and declare all dissenters to be enemies of the people. We who are genuinely Christian are not the aggressors in this godless battle for rule, but we are not without blame. All too often our only reflections on the manger have been sentimental and superficial. We have entered into the corrupt bargain of overlooking the sin in our neighbors provided they overlook the sin in us. We find ourselves swimming in a cesspool of sin.

From a temporal standpoint, just as it was a little over 2,000 years ago, the powers arrayed against us are too strong and orchestrated to overcome. But if we take to heart the image of that manger and the teachings of the man-God who emerged from it, we are unstoppable. We must care for each other, care for the sick, bind up the wounds of the injured, and commit our whole substance - not just our surplus - to accomplish it. We must live the Gospel every day of the week, not just for an hour on Sunday. It must fill our lives and animate our decisions. If we are once more to be a holy people, we must each decide to live holiness as best we can, neither excusing our sin nor being discouraged by its persistence.

In doing so, we will live a New Advent, looking back to the manger that we have neglected, just as the ancients, groaning under sin and oppression, looked forward to it. When we do that with our whole hearts, the Lord of Hosts will abide with us, with results as startling and improbable as in the First Advent. Those who put their hope in the things of this world – which are always passing away – cannot hope to overcome those of us who put our hope in the eternal Kingdom -which will never pass away.

We hold in our hands the power to spark the second great global revolution of charity and brotherhood. To do so simply requires that we deny ourselves, take up our cross, and follow the same Master who sparked the first global revolution. Let us turn our faces resolutely toward Bethlehem.



Charlie Johnston

If communication goes out for any length of time, meet outside your local Church at 9 a.m. on Saturday mornings. Tell friends at Church now, in case you can't then. CORAC teams will be out looking for people to gather in and work with.

A SIGN OF HOPE BLOG – Analysis and reflections from Charlie Johnston

<https://corac.co/newsroom/#c-media-a-sign-of-hope>

Journey Back to Bethlehem

Three Crises

Cast Into The Deep

REVEILLE – In-depth interviews with special guests

<https://corac.co/reveille-2/>

Kyoshi Scott Maczuga Interview on Christian Warriors

Jesse Romero Interview on Defense

BRIEF UPDATES – Charlie's short reflections on video

<https://corac.co/charlies-brief/>

What a Glorious Christmas!

Dare Greatly

Leave the Gun; Take the Cannoli

News

BISHOP STRICKLAND

America's "cancelled" bishop has been on retreat for several weeks. Upon his return, he published *A Letter to My Brother Priests*, which is now on his website, <https://bishopstrickland.com>. He urges priests to become more Eucharistic and Marian, just as St. John Bosco did. You can read about Bosco's dream of the twin pillars of Mary and the Eucharist here: <https://www.catholiccompany.com/magazine/vision-john-don-bosco-two-columns-mary-eucharist-5978> Bosco's dream envisioned a dangerous, storm-tossed time, and I think we're there.



LATEST WHIPPING FROM ROME

In what feels like serial punishment from the Vatican, *Fiducia Supplicans*, *On the Pastoral Meaning of Blessings* specifically for homosexual couples and irregular unions, was published on December 18, with the approval of the pope. Good luck getting through this self-contradictory declaration from Cardinal Fernández: https://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_ddf_doc_20231218_fiducia-supplicans_en.html It basically affirms the traditional teaching on marriage, while allowing actions that undermine the traditional teaching on marriage. That is a particular strategy, to affirm one thing in action and the opposite in words. It's been done multiple times in this papacy.

The 2018 book *The Dictator Pope* gives an explanation of this strategy: "He is Juan Perón in ecclesiastical tradition." Perón's signature style was to agree with everyone, even in direct contradiction. For example, as President of Argentina, Perón closed the country to Jewish refugees during and after World War II. But then he would allow a boatload of Holocaust survivors for the good press, while granting entry to hundreds of Nazi war criminals escaping justice. He played both sides. His yes didn't mean yes, and his no didn't mean no.

You can see Perónism on display in *Fiducia Supplicans*. Cardinal Fernández, a fellow Argentinian, is the prefect for the Dicastery of the Doctrine of the Faith. He was actually under investigation for his theology by the former CDF, and may have an axe to grind now that he holds power. He proves to be a willing protégé of the pope in the art of double-speak.

Video commentary of Robert Royal and Fr. Gerald Murray:

<https://www.thecatholicthing.org/2023/12/18/podcast-will-the-church-now-bless-same-sex-couples-with-fr-gerald-murray/>

Thorough explanation and background on the Declaration from The Pillar:

<https://www.pillaratholic.com/p/fiducia-supplicans-what-does-it-say>

Commentary from Fr. Thomas Weinandy on The Catholic Thing:

<https://www.thecatholicthing.org/2023/12/19/gods-blessings-and-magisterial-teaching/>

Bishop Strickland asks for all bishops to present a united front:

<https://www.complicitclergy.com/2023/12/18/watch-bishop-strickland-urges-brother-bishops-to-say-no-to-francis-blessings-of-homosexual-couples/>



THE 10 NEWS STORIES YOU DIDN'T HEAR THIS WEEK

[#10 - Alex Jones makes a series of terrifying predictions coming to the West.](#)

[#9 - John Kerry farts loudly while lecturing about reducing emissions.](#)

[#8 - Tucker Carlson explains why you'll never get an apology for what happened during COVID. #7 - Super scary "white lung disease" turns out to be an adverse event of special interest in Pfizer's COVID-19 vaccine documentation.](#)

[#6 - Vivek Ramaswamy calls the climate change agenda a "religion" and a "hoax" — and proves Nikki Haley doesn't know basic Ukraine geography.](#)

[#5 - 49-year-old develops severe heart problems after new 5G antenna installed.](#)

[#4 - Robert Kennedy Jr. unmasks the 'principal villains' behind the COVID cover-up.](#)

[#3 - Slovakia shocks the world: new prime Minister rejects signing the WHO pandemic treaty.](#)

[#2 - Hunter Biden indicted on multiple felony tax charges, including "office expense" deductions for "over-the-hill" strippers.](#)

[#1 - NZ whistleblower arrested for exposing the truth about the jabs: here's the data they don't want you to see.](#)

The Ten Stories series has become so popular, you can now listen to it on video:

<https://vigilantfox.substack.com/p/media-blackout-ten-news-stories-they>

See more at Vigilant Fox's Substack: <https://vigilantfox.substack.com>



THE HONG KONGER

The trial of Catholic pro-democracy activity Jimmy Lai began this week in Hong Kong. The Chinese Communist Party shut down his newspaper and arrested him three years ago, attempting to make an example of those who speak out for freedom. Lai has many supporters in the United States, who nevertheless have little hope for the fairness of his trial. Cardinal Joseph Zen and Jimmy Lai are good friends, and face similar tribulations in China.

National Catholic Register: <https://www.ncregister.com/blog/cardinal-zen-and-jimmy-lai-holy-warriors-who-need-our-prayers>

Catholic News Agency: <https://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/256298/trial-begins-for-jimmy-lai-hong-kong-catholic-activist-imprisoned-for-3-years>

EWTN: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9JJ77mA4mU0>

A feature film about Jimmy Lai: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8YwotPHoNm8>

CHRISTMAS COCKTAIL

Here's something to dress up your holiday party or dinner: the Kir Royale. It's a beautiful jewel-tone red, and it's got backstory for a conversation starter.

Kir is named after Canon Felix Kir, a Catholic priest in France during World War II. When the Nazis occupied Burgundy, they stole the cherished red wine, the pride of the Burgundian region and their livelihood. Canon Kir restored the spirits of the people when he took the local white wine and mixed it with Crème de Cassis, made from black currants, creating something that at least *looked* like the celebrated Burgundy wine. The encouragement of the people helped them resist despair under occupancy. The good Canon also helped prisoners escape from a nearby Nazi POW camp, for which he received the Legion of Honor award.



Add 2-3 teaspoons Cassis first to the glass, then fill with champagne or sparkling white wine. Make garnish by impaling a cranberry on the stem of a rosemary sprig. Cheers!

CHRISTMAS MOVIE

I would never have called it a Christmas movie, but it looks like *The Shift* might survive in theatres until Christmas. It's no "Wonderful Life" by a mile; it's different, thought-provoking and a little weird. If you need a change of pace from holiday sugar, this might do you. It's Angel Studios' first original production, though it's not a typical religious movie. I tell you more in this review: <https://truthforsouls.com/2023/12/08/shifted-on-the-shift/>

CORAC Website

Items are being added all the time. Keep exploring!

Health & Wellness <https://corac.co/health-and-wellness-teams/>

The team has just put up a ton of new information, including help for bedwetting, severe knee pain, hypoxia, where to buy essential oils, and much more. Check it out!

Sustainable Living <https://corac.co/sustainable-living-teams/>

New items include powering a well pump, respiratory disease in dogs and cloth diapers.

Communications <https://corac.co/communications-teams/>

New items include CB radios and a discussion of antennae.

Education <https://corac.co/education-team/>

See the "education cards," general guidelines and tips for a variety of homeschooling topics

Crisis Scenarios <https://corac.co/crisis-scenarios-team/>

See the "Disaster Deck" for solutions to a wide variety of scenarios

Prayer <https://corac.co/category/prayer-teams/>

A good resource to print out is "Catholic Prayers for the Dying."

Prayer

DECEMBER PRAYER INTENTIONS

- *For the prompt-enough prudent development of the CORAC Defense League, using trained personnel both at the local level to defend our communities, and at the national level to develop and share strategies
- *That all people of good will draw closer to Christ ~ the Way, the Truth, and the Life ~ during these days of confusion and persecution occurring even within religious institutions
- *That all of our loved ones will return (or come to) the fervent and joyful practice of our Judeo-Christian faith as quickly as possible
- *For healings and restoration to occur for all who are sick and battling disease in the body or mind, healing that will defy medical rationale and can only be explained by the healing power of our Lord, the Divine Healer
- *That our daily spiritual journeys to holiness be nourished by God's abundant grace: for more focused meditations, more pointed fasting, and more selfless charity to others ~ all to honor God's great love for us!
- *That existing and new CORAC members may strongly desire and find the means to participate in financial support for our vital ministries
- *For all intentions carried in the hearts of CORAC members and those posted on the CORAC Prayer Hotline, with gratitude for prayers answered in our daily lives

St. Gabriel, enlighten us.

St. Michael, defend us.

St. Raphael, protect us.

Ave Maria, Stella Maris!



PRAYER HOTLINE

Email prayer requests to the CORAC Prayer Hotline at prayerteams@coracusa.com, and we will post your request (using first names only) on the CORAC Prayer Hotline Signal group.