

Newsletter 2026-6

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Lord, let us never be separated from You.

Happy, blessed Easter, everyone! Like many others, I took a vacation from news-hawking during Holy Week. I haven't completely reimmersed myself. The "fog of war" is thick, the competing voices are deafening, and in the great information war, we are the pawns that get sacrificed early in the game. It's difficult-to-impossible to know who to trust. For that reason, I'm going to focus this issue on non-contentious and helpful information. It seems a good time to appreciate the goodness that God bestows on us, and ways we can cooperate with Him.

Sheryl Collmer, editor

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Opinions expressed in this newsletter, unless otherwise attributed, are my own.



From the cockpit of the Sienna

CORAC founder Charlie Johnston travels coast to coast speaking to groups. His long-suffering Subaru has retired with 350,000+ miles, and he's motoring around now in a Sienna van.

The End of Materialism

The Enlightenment, for all its pretended...ahem...enlightenment...was one of the darkest projects in human history. In practice, it set off a new dark ages from which we are now just beginning to recover.

It started with a complete failure to understand the nature of man. It posited that man was just a complex animal – and that when his needs for food, shelter, and companionship were met, he was fulfilled. It completely denied that man had any spiritual nature at all, or posited that it was an irrational need to be fed with pabulum.

It dismissed the idea that man might be made in the image of God, as the Bible says, because it dismissed spiritual realities altogether as illusions and psychoses. If man is made in God's image, he shares, in a subordinate way, in God's fundamental nature. God's fundamental nature is, through the love processing among the Trinity, to create.

Man's highest fundamental nature is as a creator. Think about it: when do you most fully recover the joy and wonder of childhood? When you are eagerly lost in the favored work of your own hands. Some people are lucky enough that their jobs are that favored work. Others have to adopt hobbies to enjoy that favored work. But whether a job or a hobby, men would revel in the creation they love, whatever the circumstances or pay. It is because we are made in God's own image.

The impoverished definition of man's fundamental nature was a consequence of the Enlightenment determining that everything could be explained by natural, physical means. This is philosophical materialism: the belief that there is no spiritual dimension to reality. They ran into a problem. Some things could not be explained by mere physical means. Their blustering response was to insist they could not be explained YET. If they could never be explained, then such phenomena were merely an illusion, which we could explain. Of course, I could develop a philosophy that posited there was no such thing as trees; they are just illusions. This "belief" would avail me little if I crashed, at high speed, into one of those illusions.

What the Enlightenment really was was the new, more subtle Tower of Babel. It was the formal philosophical investiture of the oldest trap in the book for man's vanity: "You shall be like gods." In fact, you shall be gods.

But not all men. Just some “enlightened” men. For all its babble about the “rights of man,” the Enlightenment was just the reestablishment of the divine right of kings – only with different kings, philosopher kings that were completely untethered to any sense of responsibility or accountability to any god but themselves.

Enlightened men (sometimes called experts) would rule absolutely over the poor rabble of complex animals that comprised the bulk of what was euphemistically called mankind. And if the ungrateful wretches were not satisfied when their needs for subsistence level food, shelter, and companionship were met, it was time to open the prison, labor, and death camps so they did not become too troublesome for their enlightened masters.

The modern scientific method was largely pioneered by men of faith as a means to illuminate the dazzling complexity of God’s works. It took form with that powerful impetus in the 17th Century. This was the fruitful time of the marriage of faith and reason, where one built up the other. With the Enlightenment’s establishment of philosophical and scientific materialism, that marriage was severed. It has had myriad consequences, almost all bad.

The American Revolution was the final philosophical flowering of the marriage of faith and reason. The French Revolution was the firstfruit of the Enlightenment’s philosophical materialism, the forerunner of all the murderous ‘isms that have plagued the world since. We shall be like gods indeed. Prolifically murderous gods, I suppose.

Ironically, science itself is undermining the underlying precepts of Enlightenment materialism. It is the nastiest little secret atheist scientists are doing their dead level best to suppress right now. Science, itself, is pointing away from materialist answers and towards intelligent design – God - as the most likely source of the universe and all the things in it. For a book that is easily accessible to laymen on this subject, read Eric Metaxas’ *Is Atheism Dead?* For a more challenging and technical series, read the works of Dr. Stephen C. Meyer, *Darwin’s Doubt, The Signature in the Cell, and The Return of the God Hypothesis*.

Secular sites, including Wikipedia, smear Meyer (an accomplished geophysicist) as an ignorant creationist, etc, etc, but they never grapple seriously with his data or evidence. They hiss like a vampire confronted by sunlight. Secularists are furious at hard evidence that they are not actually gods, and have no right to rule, intellectually or otherwise.

As many of you know, I have been contemplating Artificial Intelligence (AI), its proper uses, its limitations, and what consequences it is likely to have for mankind. AI is materialism on steroids.

There is a proper role for philosophical materialism. Remember, the modern scientific method was designed to illuminate how the wonders of God physically work and what the rules of the universe are. The problem with materialism is that it is all but incapable of going beyond conventional thinking and making the intuitive leaps that have been the drivers of most major human progress. AI faces the same constraints – but is able to make up supporting documentation to falsely prop up its conventional thinking.

If you use a GPS system when you drive, you are using a form of AI. What conventional thinking is good for, and AI excels at, is completing tasks. Actual thinking and intuitive leaps are beyond it. Of course, at bottom, the philosophical materialists believe there is no such thing as an intuitive leap. Those dadgum trees!

Many people are hopefully positing that AI will open a bold new age of wisdom and enlightenment. It will, but not in the way people think. If you have any substantial experience with AI, you know how impressive it often is. You also know it is often wrong. But it is wrong under the color of authority.

Though much more sophisticated and complex than traditional computational systems, AI suffers from the same fundamental limitation: *Garbage in, garbage out*. When our illusions are dispelled, as they ultimately – and painfully – will be, AI will not be the beginning of a new age of enlightenment. Rather, it will be the end of materialism, in both senses of the word, “end.”

As people realize the limitations of materialism, they will come to know anew that genuine enlightenment is the province of nature and nature’s God. That will be the beginning of real wisdom and enlightenment.

Charlie Johnston

GO FORTH

Look for ways you can be helpful to those directly around you. When you start looking, opportunities pop up regularly, but if you need a jump start, take a look at these great ideas: <https://corac.co/category/go-forth/>

PHYSICAL HEALING

The next Physical Healing Prayer Service will be **Wednesday, April 29** at 7:00 pm Central. To register, email: maryjanekeppler@gmail.com.

More information here: <https://corac.co/2026/03/26/april-29-physical-healing-prayer-session/>

NEWS

LINKS FOR NEWS

Jeff Childers, news with a witty delivery in *Coffee and Covid*: <https://www.coffeeandcovid.com>

Elizabeth Nickson, hard-hitting in Welcome to Absurdistan: <https://elizabethnickson.substack.com>

Clandestine who looks at news hopefully: <https://bioclandestine.substack.com>

Vigilant Fox who covers current general and health news: <https://www.vigilantfox.com>

We all have our trusted sources for news, so I doubt I need to link any further recommendations.

LIFE LESSONS ON CORAC WEBSITE

A new series, *Lectio Vitae*, literally, “life lesson,” is up on the website. Hosted by MP Murray, our executive director, this is a series that might be called Christian self-growth. We pray to God to be “perfect in Him” but we have a part in the transformation. This particular time may be a period of preparation, anticipating a time when we will be more challenged than ever before. It is therefore a good time to grow personally.

Ep 1 The Focus Effect <https://corac.co/2026/03/06/the-focus-effect/>

Ep 2 The Discipline Challenge <https://corac.co/2026/03/13/the-discipline-challenge/>

Ep 3 The Perseverance Test <https://corac.co/2026/03/20/the-perseverance-test/>

Ep 4 The Adaptability Advantage <https://corac.co/2026/03/27/the-adaptability-advantage/>

Ep 5 The Growth Mindset <https://corac.co/2026/04/03/the-growth-mindset/>

Ep 6 The Emotional Intelligence Edge <https://corac.co/2026/04/06/the-emotional-intelligence-edge/>

PERSONAL GROWTH FOR CATHOLICS

I have always been interested in motivational books, personal growth seminars, the whole ethos of being your best possible self. Often the personal growth space is occupied by secular, anti-religion or profane authors and speakers. They may have good information, but lack a solid foundation and express themselves in ways that jar our sensibilities. For example, David Goggins is a beast when it comes to taking on daunting physical challenges, but he is near impossible to listen to for the frequency of major profanity bombs.

Instead, I’ve looked for motivation and personal growth books from Catholic publishers. I haven’t read most of these, but I’ve put them in my queue!

[Way to Inner Peace](#), by Archbishop Fulton Sheen (Pauline Press) The title and author alone recommend this book.

[The Catholic Gentleman](#), by Sam Guzman (Ignatius) Practical guide to virtuous masculinity.

[Introduction to the Devout Life](#), by St. Francis de Sales (TAN) The timeless classic

[Improving Your Body Image Through Catholic Teaching](#), by John Acquaviva. (TAN) How we have allowed everyone *but* God to determine the value of our bodies, and how this must change.

[You Are That Temple](#), by Kevin Vost. (Sophia Press) Integrates classic Christian wisdom with good nutrition, physical fitness and prayer.

[The Frassatti Field Guide](#), by Bobby Angel. (Ave Maria) Growing in heroic virtue alongside St. Pier Giorgio Frassatti, newly canonized in 2025.

[The Proving Grounds](#), by Benjamin O'Brien. (Ignatius) A firefighter balances a dangerous job with his commitment to God and family.

[The Well-Read Life](#), by Marcie Stokman and Colleen Hutt (Ave Maria Press) Self-improvement through the lost activity of reading books, and talking about them.

[A Catholic Perspective: Physical Exercise and Sports](#), by Robert Feeney (Ignatius Press) A spiritual guide to fitness and sports, with a recommendation from Cardinal George Pell.

[The God of Endurance](#), by Chase Crouse and Dan Burke. (Sophia Press) How fitness and wholesome nutrition assist you in elevating and intensifying your journey to Christ.

[A Beautiful Second Act](#), by Maria Johnson. (Ave Maria) Stories of older women who aged with grace, and how we can do the same.

LATEST FROM CHARLIE

Charlie's Blog: A Sign of Hope

Charlie's perspective on the issues of the moment.

- Imitate Him <https://corac.co/2026/04/03/imitate-him/>
- Do Whatever He Tells You <https://corac.co/2026/03/19/do-whatever-he-tells-you/>
- The Emerging New World Order <https://corac.co/2026/03/12/the-emerging-new-world-order/>

Brief Updates from Charlie

- The State of the Church (18 mins) <https://corac.co/2026/03/17/the-state-of-the-church-perspectives-and-possibilities/>
- The Real Lives of Saints (8 mins) <https://corac.co/2026/02/25/the-real-lives-of-saints/>

PRAYER

APRIL PRAYER INTENTIONS

*For all CORAC members who contribute excellent content to the CORAC website, and that very many will be drawn to explore and to find useful and inspiring information
<https://corac.co/>

*That our members be equipped to become leaders in their own communities
<https://corac.co/leaders-forum/>

*That we continue to say “AMEN” to Charlie’s prayer: “[T]hat, for everyone, whatever they do for or earnestly wish for another, it return to them twofold. For those of good heart, it is a blessing. For those of scheming hearts, it is a curse.” ~ *A Sign of Hope*, April 24, 2025

*That the Lord may heal many through the online Physical Healing Prayer Session (usually the last Wednesday of each month) and through online or downloadable prayer offerings on the CORAC website

<https://corac.co/#event-calendar>

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

*Prayers continue for Charlie’s inspiration, strength, and vigor to complete the CORAC manual: *Revival: A Handbook and Manual for Building Functional Communities*

*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

*That CORAC members desire and act to support financially our website and ministries

St. Gabriel, enlighten us.

St. Michael, defend us.

St. Raphael, protect us.

Ave Maria, Stella Maris!