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"I am the Bread of Life. He that cometh to Me shall not Hunger." (Jn 6:35). Day and night Jesus dwells in the Blessed Sacrament because of his infinite love for you!



Our Lord to Berthe Petit Contd. "In Her co-redemption lies the nobility of My Mother and for this reason I ask that the Invocation which I have demanded ['Sorrowful and Immaculate Heart'] be approved and spread through the whole Church. Contd..."

J.M.J.

The Passion of Pleasure

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Does our age, steeped in hedonism as it is, need any education in pleasure? Very definitely so. Hedonism is self-deluding. It prides itself in thinking it perfectly understands pleasure, whereas the fact is that it has pleasure all wrong. No one is so thoroughly misinformed on the true nature of pleasure as the devout and dedicated hedonist. **To make everything of pleasure, which the hedonist does, is, among other attendant difficulties, almost a sure-fire way of transforming it into pain.** This is one of the little tricks life plays on us when we ignore the rule of reason.

As a sensitive appetite or passion-one of the basic emotive powers of the soul-**pleasure, considered in itself, is good. And though, like pain, it can certainly cause us problems it is something which, also like pain, we literally could not live without.** Whatever else a life completely without pleasure might be, it certainly would not be a human life.



Pleasure, I said, "considered in itself," is good. We can think of pleasure in its pure state, as it were, abstracted from the conditions which give rise to it, but when we do this we have to remind ourselves that we are operating on an entirely theoretical level. In the world of really existing things, **pleasure never exists "in itself."** Pleasure never presents itself to us as a detached, self-producing and self-sustaining reality.

Pleasure always accompanies human acts as the effects of those acts, be those acts internal (e.g., remembering something) or external. This is a very important point as far as the moral life is concerned, for **in order to determine whether a particular pleasure is morally good or evil we have first to determine the moral quality of the human act which is the cause of that pleasure.**

Pleasure is a very potent force in our lives. **The passions, we recall, serve us as they should only when they are under the control of reason. When they usurp the role of reason, controlling instead of being controlled, then trouble inevitably ensues. This is especially the case with the passion of pleasure in the form of sensual pleasure, given its peculiar potency, in particular as pertaining to the sense of touch. If sensual pleasure takes command it has a way of so narcotizing reason that reason simply ceases to function properly and gives itself over completely to rationalization.**

People who are captivated by the sensual pleasure which is caused by sinful activity easily convince themselves that, because the pleasure is good, therefore what causes the pleasure must also be good. And so we have the "This can't be bad because it feels so good" fallacy. The superficiality of this kind of reasoning is obvious enough, and **what it comes down to is the argument that the end justifies the means.** If the outcome is acceptable, whatever brought about that outcome is likewise acceptable. This is essentially the same mode of misreasoning which is employed by "pro-choice" advocates in their attempts to justify abortion. It is worth noting, however, that **when the sensualist attempts to justify his commitment to illicit pleasure by the expedient of sanitizing the cause of that pleasure, he is, for all his bad reasoning, at least implicitly acknowledging the inseparable bond which exists between pleasure and its cause.**

Our Lady of Confidence



My Mother,

When we make moral determinations with regard to pleasure, then, it is not pleasure itself which is the test, but it is precisely pleasure which has to be tested. It is just here where the hedonists make their key mistake. For them pleasure is the test, the standard, against which any action is to be measured in order to decide whether or not it is morally appropriate. If an act gives pleasure, it is good. If it does not give pleasure, or if it is actually productive of pain, it is evil. By this criterion any sacrificial act would have to be considered foolish at best. But in fact **pleasure is not the test; it is that which has to be tested against the act which produced it.** The formula is simple enough: **the moral quality of the act determines the moral quality of the pleasure associated with the act. The pleasure following upon a disordered act is**

poisoned pleasure, and though it might provide temporary, diversionary excitement, in the end it can only result in bitterness of heart and sickness of soul. But if the act from which pleasure comes is a good act, then it can be said, quite without irony, Enjoy!

The hedonist lives only for pleasure, which means that he gives total attention to the accidental while ignoring the substantial. This is to set reality on its head, and the consequences of such a reversal are as predictable as they are tragic. Those who put all their eggs in the basket of pleasure eventually discover that what they took to be a basket was only a mirage. Our aim should be to live for goodness, not for pleasure. It is only when we cease making pleasure everything that it becomes something truly significant in our lives: the reassuring smile of being.

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Jesus, Mary, I love you, Save Souls

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