

Fr. Perozich comments —

Humility among leaders is less common in my experience. Certainly people rush to them for comments, but often receive self promotion instead. Some clergy can't resist a press conference or a microphone, not to promote Jesus and His salvation, rather to promote themselves and a parallel message.

Personally, I do not care who gets credit for any promotion of the gospel message or any accomplishment in the church. Cardinal, bishop, or monsignor are not titles to which I aspire. I like the simple life.

What I do crave are opportunities, like this simple comment to you, to promote Jesus and the Catholic faith to those who will listen for their edification and growth in love with the Holy and Immortal Trinity in imitation of Mary.

As the author quotes Proverbs below, “Where there is no guidance, a people falls; but in an abundance of counselors there is safety” (Prov. 11:14).

In our Catholic church today, there is so much guidance about secular issues which takes away from the spiritual life. It seems we clergy cannot get enough time in print, in the media, in front of a microphone in order to promote gun control, climate change, open borders, alternate sexual expressions, and on and on.

Jesus came to save us from sin for good works, from death for eternal life, from isolation for communion with God and one another.

*1 Cor 1:22ff: “For Jews demand signs and Greeks look for wisdom, **but we proclaim Christ crucified**, a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, but to those who are called, Jews and Greeks alike, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. For the foolishness of God is wiser than human wisdom, and the weakness of God is stronger than human strength.”*

*At a deacon's ordination, each newly ordained deacon then goes to the bishop and kneels before him. The bishop places the Book of the Gospels in the hands of the newly ordained, saying, **“Receive the Gospel of Christ whose herald you have***

become. Believe what you read, teach what you believe, and practice what you teach.”

This is our Catholic faith and message to be shared by laity and clerics, many who seem to have forgotten it and now promote secular values instead, or who use Christ for their own worldly agenda.

May Mary show us humility to bring Jesus to the world.

THE HUMILITY OF MARY’S HEEL

JONATHAN B. COE AUGUST 15, 2019



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For several years now, it has become obvious that we have entered into the era of the Incredible Shrinking Catholic Church. All the [metrics](#) in places like the U.S., Europe, and Latin America are heading in the wrong direction.

Even the [weekly Mass attenders](#) have an alarming number of people who embrace heterodox beliefs and practices. With some [priests](#) and [prelates](#) departing from the sacred deposit of the faith, this shouldn't come as a surprise to anyone: the acorns don't fall very far from the oak tree.

If there is a bright side to apostasy, it is that the small, faithful remnant is being revealed amidst all the infidelity in doctrine and practice. Mary's Heel has come to the fore and is being displayed like a diamond on a very dark background.

For those who aspire to be a part of Mary's Heel, the top of their agenda should be occupied with, by the grace of God, building a substantial foundation of humility. It's no coincidence that Jesus *began* the Sermon on the Mount with "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven" (Mt. 5:3).

[Augustine](#) advised Dioscurus that "...although many virtues are commanded by the Christian religion, study to give humility the highest place, because all virtues are acquired and maintained by humility, and without humility they vanish away." St. Thomas agreed: "Acquired humility is in a certain sense the greatest good."

If the roots of the rebellion in heaven (Is. 14:12-14) and then in Eden was pride, then the roots of righteousness must be in profound humility. This is why Augustine called humility "the foundation of all other virtues," and [Cassian](#) (quoted by Mother Teresa) said it was "the mother and mistress of all the virtues."

Since the Mother of God is the perfection of humility, it makes sense that her Heel would also be very humble in order to move in concert with her in all her designs in these last days. The Head and the Heel must be synchronized if the head of the serpent is to be crushed under her feet.

And just as the fullness of grace is poured out on Our Lady because of her humility, so shall the grace of God be lavishly given to her humble Heel, for God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble (James 4:6). In appearing to St. Faustina, Christ told her that "the meek and humble and the souls of little children... most resemble my heart...I pour out upon them whole torrents of grace."

With scandal and crisis within the Church and a toxic secular culture from without, Mary's Heel will need all the grace she can get. In the *Apothegmata*, Saint Antony comes out of his hermitage in the Egyptian desert and looks out and sees the many snares of the devil spread out over the entire world.

He cries out to heaven: "My God! How can anyone be saved?" A voice responds from heaven: "Humility."

Mary's Heel remembers Christ saying, "...apart from me you can do nothing" (Jn. 15:5b) and knows that they must be radically dependent on the grace of God, just as the Branches are dependent on the Vine (Jn. 15:1-8) for sustenance. For the practicing Catholic this means availing themselves to a robust orthodoxy, consistent devotional life, and engagement in the Sacraments.

Ancient Hebrew wisdom tells us: "When pride comes, then comes disgrace; but with the humble is wisdom" (Prov. 11:2). Aphrahat the Persian Sage said, "Humility brings forth wisdom and discernment; humble people possess prudence."

A group of devout Catholics may find themselves living in a diocese that is riddled with corruption and begin to dialogue about how they can be Mary's Heel in their neck of the woods. If they're humble, the first thing that they'll admit is that they don't know what they're doing.

Then they'll cry out to heaven (God, the Mother of God, the angels, and the saints) for divine assistance. Scripture tells us that when the *lowly* cry out, God hears them (Ps. 17:28; 33:19).

A second act of humility for Mary's Heel will probably involve seeking the wisdom and knowledge of other people who understand the difficult waters they are trying to navigate: "Where there is no guidance, a people falls; but in an abundance of counselors there is safety" (Prov. 11:14). With further prayer and thinking things through, their direction will become clearer and they will eventually launch out into the mission Our Lady has for them.

As a people "upon whom the end of the ages has come" (I Cor. 10:11), Mary's Heel will also have a spirit of martyrdom *rooted in humility* if she is to endure to the end. This is what Mary

displayed as the Lady of Sorrows at the foot of the cross in grieving for her Son who was driven to the most unspeakable death because of his humility.

For the vast majority of readers, this will not mean an *actual* martyrdom, but more of a *dying daily* as our lives are configured to the Passion in less dramatic ways (e.g., after a hard day, a husband does the dishes because his wife has had a harder day). With affliction both within and without the Church, a spirit of martyrdom is not an option if we hope to be in the company of those who endure to the end.

It's interesting to note that in Navy SEAL training, only about 10 percent of the original SEAL wannabees make it through Hell Week and become Navy SEALs. [A former SEAL](#) believes that the common characteristic that all the survivors have is an ability to look beyond their own pain and help their fellow soldier in need.

Put another way, those whose lives are more other-centered and rooted in humility, seem to have a special grace to endure what very few can. There's a lesson here for all who aspire to be a part of Mary's Heel in an [age of narcissism](#).



By [Jonathan B. Coe](#)

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