

Session 30: Bearing Witness: Living as a Catholic

HYMN: For All the Saints



For all the saints, who from their
labours rest,
who Thee, by faith, before the world
confessed,
Thy name, O Jesus, be for ever
blessed.
Alleluia! Alleluia!

Thou wast their rock, their
fortress, and their might:
Thou, Lord, their Captain in the
well fought fight;
Thou in the darkness drear, their
one true light.
Alleluia! Alleluia!

O may Thy soldiers — faithful,
true, and bold —
fight as the saints who nobly fought
of old,
and win, with them, the victor's
crown of gold.
Alleluia! Alleluia!

And when the strife is fierce, the
warfare long,
steals on the ear the distant
triumph-song,
and hearts are brave again, and arms
are strong.
Alleluia! Alleluia!

PRAYER:

Let us pray:
God, our Father,
look upon us with love.
You redeemed us
and made us Your children in Christ.
Give us true freedom
and bring us to the inheritance
You promised
Through our Lord Jesus Christ,
Your Son,
Who lives and reigns with You
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
God, for ever and ever.
— Amen

READING:

Mt 5:13-16

The Lord be with you.
— *And with your spirit*
A Reading from the holy Gospel
according to Matthew
— *Glory to You, O Lord*
Jesus said to His disciples,
"You are the salt of the earth.
But if salt loses its taste,
with what can it be seasoned?
It is no longer good for anything
but to be thrown out
and trampled underfoot.

"You are the light of the world.
A city set on a mountain
cannot be hidden.
Nor do they light a lamp
and then put it
under a bushel basket;
it is set on a lampstand,
where it gives light
to all in the house.

"Just so, your light must shine
before others,
that they may see your good deeds
and glorify your heavenly Father."
The Gospel of the Lord
— *Praise to You, Lord Jesus Christ*

IN BRIEF: WHAT THE CHURCH TEACHES

All Christians,
by the example of our lives
and the witness of our word,
have the obligation
to manifest the new man
we put on in Baptism
and to reveal the power
of the Holy Spirit,
Who strengthened us
at our Confirmation.

We must not only keep the faith
and live accordingly,
but also profess it, spread it,
and confidently bear witness to it,
never being ashamed of it.

If the message of salvation
is to demonstrate
its truth and radiance,
it must be authenticated
by the witness of our lives.

We must seek
to order temporal things
according to God,
and shape the world
with the power of the Gospel. —

Session 30

In particular, our chastity —
whether we be consecrated or lay,
married or single —
witnesses to God's fidelity
and loving kindness.
That witness,
performed in a supernatural spirit,
has great power to draw men
to the faith and to God.

In the Sacrament of Matrimony,
married Christians give witness
of the fidelity of Christ
to His Church.

It can seem difficult,
even impossible,
to bind oneself for life
to another human being.
However, that makes it
all the more important
for married couples
to proclaim that God loves us
with an irrevocable love
and that they share in this love.

Spouses who witness
to God's faithful love
by their own fidelity,
often in very difficult conditions,
deserve the gratitude and support
of the Church and the world.

The lives of those
consecrated to God
are seen as special signs
of the mystery of Redemption.
In following Christ closely
and clearly manifesting
His Self-emptying,
consecrated persons
make themselves deeply present
to their contemporaries.
They bear striking witness
that the world cannot be transformed
without the spirit
of the beatitudes.

BIBLE READING

Lk 11-24

In your Bible reading this week,
you will read Christ's instruction
on how to love our neighbour:
the parable of the Good Samaritan.
"Love of God and Neighbour"
is the topic of next week's talk.

Bearing Witness: Living As a Catholic

Introduction

"There are not over a hundred people in the United States who hate the Catholic Church. There are millions, however, who hate what they wrongly believe to be the Catholic Church."¹ They draw this belief from hearsay and the media.

To counteract their ignorance, we must "not only keep the faith and live in it, but also profess it, confidently bear witness to it, and spread it."²

Keeping the faith means knowing the truths of our faith, like those in the Creeds,³ in an adult way, not just childish. Professing it means affirming our belief in it and our allegiance to it "without equivocation" — clearly, without ambiguity or double-talk.⁴ Bearing witness to it means living and acting according to our belief.

All this takes courage, for, as Christ said, "the *world*"⁵ hates us because of Him.⁶

Witness with pride

"Bearing witness" is also called "testifying" or "giving testimony." Jesus told Pontius Pilate that He had come into the world "to testify to the truth."⁷ Paul told Timothy never to be ashamed of his "testimony to our Lord."⁸

"If anyone in this faithless and corrupt age is ashamed of Me and My doctrine," "the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when He comes with the holy angels in His Father's glory,"⁹ Jesus said. "Whoever disowns Me before men I will disown before My Father in Heaven."¹⁰ And those whom Jesus disowns are damned.¹¹ "I never knew you," He will say. "Out of My sight, you evildoers!"¹²

We should be proud to bear witness to Christ,¹³ for it "makes an extraordinarily valuable contribution" to society: it helps to ward off "the most dangerous crisis" that can afflict the world, namely a "confusion between good and evil."¹⁴

If we live what we believe, we are public benefactors. Christ called us "the salt of the earth,"¹⁵ "the light of the world,"¹⁶ and He told us to let our light "shine before men" so that they may see goodness in us and give praise to God.¹⁷

If we are questioned about our faith, then, we can answer with proud confidence: yes, we believe in God, for atheism is *not* a reasonable alternative;¹⁸ yes, we are convinced Catholics, for only the Catholic Church has the fullness of the truth that God has revealed to humans.¹⁹

Martyrdom

The ultimate witness to Christ is *martyrdom*. "Martyr" is a transliteration of a Greek word that means "witness." It was originally applied to the apostles because they had been eye-witnesses of Christ's life, death, Resurrection, and Ascension.

1 Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen: *Radio Replies*, Volume 1, Foreword

2 CCC 1816. "All Christians, by the example of their lives and the witness of their word ... have an obligation to manifest the new man which they have put on in Baptism (see Gal 3:27) and to reveal the power of the Holy Spirit by Whom they were strengthened at Confirmation" (Vatican II: *Ad Gentes*, 11).

3 "Faith" can also mean the virtue, or habit, of faith. See the talk on "Virtue."

4 See CCC 2471.

5 One of the three "enemies we must fight against all the days of our life" (*The Penny Catechism*, 348). See the talk on "Sin and Forgiveness."

6 See Jn 15:18-27. Also see Joseph Ratzinger: *God and the World*, Part III, 18, "New Dangers for Faith."

7 Jn 18:37

8 2 Tim 1:8

9 Mk 8:38

10 Mt 10:33

11 See Mt 25:12.

12 Mt 7:23

13 Peter and John "left the Sanhedrin [the Jewish court] full of joy that they had been judged worthy of ill-treatment for the sake of the Name [of Jesus]" (Acts 5:42).

14 Pope John Paul II: *Veritatis Splendor*, 93

15 Mt 5:13

16 Mt 5:14

17 See Mt 5:16.

18 See the talk on "The Contradictions of Atheism."

19 See the talks on "What is the Catholic Church?" and "Divisions Among Christians."

For example, when Peter proposed electing someone to take Judas' place, he specified "one of those who was of our company while the Lord Jesus moved among us," who will be "witness with us to His Resurrection."²⁰

For Jesus had given His apostles a mandate: "You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes down on you; then you are to be My witnesses in Jerusalem, throughout Judea and Samaria, yes, even to the ends of the earth."²¹

However, as opposition to Christianity spread, "martyr" came to include people who had been persecuted for their belief, and finally it came to be reserved for those who had suffered death — which included all the apostles except John.

From the beginning, martyrs were specially honoured, and martyrdom was considered to be a "Baptism of blood," equivalent to normal Baptism.²²

Many Christians have welcomed martyrdom. On his way to Rome in 107 to be thrown to the lions, Ignatius of Antioch wrote to the Romans, "My birth is approaching. Do not hold me back from living."²³ Polycarp, who died about 155, praised God for judging him "worthy" to be counted among His martyrs.²⁴ Teresa of Avila (1515-82) said that as children, she and her brother "settled to go together" to "the country of the Moors," that they "might there be beheaded."²⁵

St. John de Brébeuf, a missionary to the indigenous people of North America who was martyred in Canada March 16 1649 by the Iroquois, made a vow to God that he would not try to avoid martyrdom, and wrote in his diary: "Two days in succession, I have felt in me a great desire for martyrdom, and for enduring all the torments the martyrs have suffered."²⁶

Since about 200 AD, the Church has celebrated the memory of a martyr, as far as possible, on the anniversary of the day he died: his heavenly birthday.

Charles Lwanga

Martyrdom is not just ancient history, as Charles Lwanga found.²⁷

In 1879, King Mtesa of Uganda allowed the Missionaries of Africa (called the White Fathers) into the country. In less than a decade, they built up a community of about 200 Christians, many of whom lived at court.

In 1885, Mtesa was succeeded by Mwanga, a violent man and a pedophile. The Christians, led by the king's chief steward, a 25-year-old Catholic named Joseph Mkasa, were kept busy trying to protect the king's pages and attendants.

When the king killed a Protestant missionary and his companions, Joseph confronted him. The king had always liked Joseph, but now he struck at him with a spear and ordered him killed. When the executioners tried to tie Joseph's hands, he said, "A Christian who gives his life for God is not afraid to die." He was beheaded and then burned on November 15 1885, but first he forgave Mwanga and made a final plea for his repentance.

After Joseph's death, Charles Lwanga became leader of the Christians at court. The following May, when Mwanga asked his page Mwafu where he had been, Mwafu explained that he had been receiving religious instruction from Denis Sebuggwawo. Mwanga sent for Denis and killed him by thrusting a spear through his throat. Then he had the royal compound sealed and summoned his executioners.

20 Acts 1:21-22

21 Acts 1:8

22 See CCC 1258.

23 See Ignatius of Antioch: *Ad Romanos*, VI, 1-3.

24 See CCC 2474.

25 Teresa of Avila: *Life*, 1

26 See [moses.creighton.edu/kripke/jesuitrelations/relations_34.html](http://moses.creighton.edu/kripke/jesuitrelations/rerelations_34.html) "Chapter V Some Remarks on the Life of Father Jean de Brébeuf." For accounts of the martyrdom, see (on the same website) "A Veritable Account of the Martyrdom and Blessed Death of Father Jean de Brébeuf and of Father Gabriel L'Aléman, in New France, in the Country of the Hurons, by the Iroquois, Enemies of the Faith"; "Chapter III Of the Capture of the Villages of the Mission of St. Ignace, in the Month of March in the Year 1649"; and "Chapter IV Of the Blessed Deaths of Father Jean de Brébeuf and Father Gabriel Lallement."

27 What is known about these martyrs comes principally from J.L. Ddiba: *Religion in Uganda*, published in 1935. Father Ddiba interviewed contemporaries of the 1886 massacre, including three who were spared execution at that time so that they might warn others.

Knowing what was coming, Charles Lwanga baptized four catechumens that night, including a 13-year-old named Kizito. The next morning, Mwanga summoned his court and separated the Christians from the rest by saying, "Those who do not pray stand by me; those who do pray stand over there."

Fifteen boys and young men, all under 25, declared that they were Christians. Besides Kizito, they included Mbagwa, the son of the king's chief executioner, who was offered a chance to escape but declined; Andrew Kagwa, a Kigowa chief, who had converted his wife and several others; and Matthias Murumba (or Kalemba), an assistant judge. Mwanga ordered that they be taken on a 60-kilometre trek to Namugongo and executed there.

On their way, they passed the home of the White Fathers. One of the priests gave them absolution as they marched by. Kizito was laughing and chattering, the priest said later, and James Buzabaliawo, a soldier who had joined the rest voluntarily, lifted his bound hands and pointed upward, asking, "Why are you so sad? This is nothing to the joys you have taught us to look forward to."

"No doubt your god will rescue you," the king's chief counsellor said sarcastically to Matthias. "Yes," Matthias answered, "but you will not see how He does it, because He will take my soul and leave you only my body." In a rage, the counsellor ordered him to be cut up there and then.

In fact, as the trek proceeded, the counsellor became so furious with Andrew that he vowed he would not eat until Andrew was dead. As the executioners hesitated, Andrew said, "Don't keep your counsellor hungry — kill me."

On June 3, seven days after the caravan reached Namugongo, Mbagwa was killed, by his father's order, and the rest were wrapped in reed mats and placed on a pyre to be burned alive. In all, 13 Catholics and 11 Protestants died, calling on the name of Jesus and declaring, "You can burn our bodies, but you cannot harm our souls."

Not long afterward, the king expelled the White Fathers from Uganda. However, the lay Christians carried on, translating the catechism into their own language and giving instruction in the faith secretly. When the White Fathers returned after King Mwanga's death, they found 500 Christians and 1000 catechumens waiting for them.

The Ugandan martyrs were beatified in 1920 by Pope Benedict XV and canonized²⁸ in 1964 by Pope Paul VI. Their feastday is June 3.

Maria Goretti

Many Christians have preferred martyrdom to apostasy, "in which faith itself is lost." However, we deny Christ by *any* mortal sin.²⁹ Accordingly, Dominic Savio³⁰ took the motto "Death rather than sin!" It aptly describes Maria Goretti's choice.³¹

Maria was born October 16 1890 on a small farm at Corinaldo, near Ancona, Italy. The third of seven children, she was, in the words of her mother Assunta, "happy, good, open-hearted, without whim, but with a sense and seriousness beyond her years, and never disobedient."

In 1896 the family moved to Ferriere di Conca, where her father formed a partnership with the Serenelli family. Three years later, he died of malaria, and the family moved on to the Serenelli farm in order to survive. Maria did housework and looked after the younger children while her mother worked on the farm.

Before long, 19-year-old Alessandro Serenelli, the son, began making advances to Maria. She repulsed him, but said nothing about it because he threatened to kill her and her mother if she did. Finally, when she was 12, Alessandro attacked her outright. She resisted him, crying out, "No, it is a sin! God does not want it! You will go to Hell!" Furious, Alessandro stabbed her fourteen times. Several blows passed right through her body.

28 See Appendix 1.

29 See Pope John Paul II: *Veritatis Splendor*, 68.

30 1842-1857

31 What is known about this martyr comes principally from the testimony given by her murderer, Alessandro Serenelli, toward her beatification.

Maria was rushed to the hospital at Nettuno, but nothing could save her life. The next morning she was given Holy Communion,³² but first she said clearly that she forgave Alessandro, that she would pray for his repentance, and that she wanted to see him in Heaven. She died on July 6 1902.

After eight years in prison, Alessandro repented. Released for good behavior after 27 years, he begged forgiveness of Maria's mother and became a Capuchin lay brother. He gave evidence at the Church's enquiry into Maria's life and, along with Maria's mother, brothers, sisters and some 250,000 other people, saw Pope Pius XII beatify her in 1947 and canonize her July 25 1950. Her feastday is July 6.

Alessandro died in 1970 at age 87, leaving the following letter, written in 1961:

"I am now almost 80 years old. I am close to the end of my days.

"Looking back at my past, I recognize that in my early youth I followed a false road — an evil path that led to my ruin.

"Through the content of printed magazines, immoral shows, and bad examples in the media, I saw the majority of the young people of my day following evil without even thinking twice. Unworried, I did the same thing. There were faithful and practising Christian believers around me, but I paid no attention to them. I was blinded by a brute impulse that pushed me down the wrong way of living.

"At the age of 20, I committed a crime of passion, the memory of which still horrifies me today. Maria Goretti, now a saint, was my good angel whom God placed in my path to save me. Her words both of rebuke and forgiveness are still imprinted in my heart. She prayed for me, interceding for her killer. Thirty years in prison followed.

"If I had not been a minor in Italian law I would have been sentenced to life in prison. Nevertheless, I accepted the sentence I received as something I deserved.

"Resigned, I atoned for my sin. Little Maria was truly my light, my protectress. With her help, I served those 27 years in prison well. When society accepted me back among its members, I tried to live honestly. With angelic charity, the sons of St. Francis, the minor Capuchins of the Marches, welcomed me among them not as a servant, but as a brother. I have lived with them for 24 years. Now I look serenely to the time in which I will be admitted to the vision of God, to embrace my dear ones once again, and to be close to my guardian angel, Maria Goretti, and her dear mother, Assunta.

"May all who read this letter of mine desire to follow the blessed teaching of avoiding evil and following the good. May all believe with the faith of little children that religion with its precepts is not something one can do without. Rather, it is true comfort, and the only sure way in all of life's circumstances — even in the most painful."

Thomas More

Thomas More, whose life is accurately portrayed in Robert Bolt's play and the film *A Man for All Seasons*, tried his best to avoid martyrdom.

Trained as a lawyer, Sir Thomas More (1478-1535) became Lord Chancellor of England under King Henry VIII in 1529. When Henry declared himself "head of the Church in England"³³ and Parliament supported him, More resigned.

In the play, his daughter Meg tells him that the king is going to administer an oath. "It's about the marriage, sir," says his son-in-law Will Roper, referring to the king's marriage to Anne Boleyn after his divorce from Queen Catherine.

"What is the wording?" More asks.

"We don't need to know the wording," says Roper; "we know what it will mean!"

"It will mean what the words say!" More replies. "An oath as made of words. It

32 Maria had received her First Communion June 16 1901. However, in spite of the Church's teaching, daily Communion had become uncommon for fear that it would be received unworthily or merely out of habit.

Between 1905 and 1907, Pope St. Pius X issued ten documents advising everyone to receive Communion frequently — even, if possible, daily. In 1910 he issued a decree restoring the ancient practice of having children receive their First Communion as soon as they reached the age of discretion.

33 See the talk on "Divisions Among Christians."

may be possible to take it. Or avoid it. Have we a copy of the bill?"

Then, seeing Roper still truculent, he explains, "Now listen, Will.... God made the angels to show Him splendour — as He made animals for innocence and plants for their simplicity. But man He made to serve Him wittily,³⁴ in the tangle of His mind! If He suffers us to fall to such a case that there is no escaping, then we may stand to our tackle as best we can, and yes, Will, then we may clamour like champions ... if we have the spittle for it."

"But it's God's part, not our own, to bring ourselves to that extremity! Our natural business lies in escaping — so let's go home and study this bill."³⁵

More found that he could not take the oath. He was arrested, imprisoned in the Tower of London, tried, and condemned to death.

Visiting her father in prison, Meg said passionately, "But, in reason! Haven't you done as much as God can reasonably want?" And More replies, "Well ... finally ... it isn't a matter of reason; finally it's a matter of love."³⁶

More was beheaded July 6 1535, declaring that he was dying "the king's good servant — but God's first." He was beatified by Pope Leo XIII in 1886 and canonized by Pope Pius XI in 1935. His feastday is June 22.³⁷

"A matter of love"

"Whoever loves father or mother, son or daughter, more than Me is not worthy of Me,"³⁸ Christ said. "Do not suppose that My mission on earth is to spread peace. My mission is to spread, not peace, but division."³⁹ "They will hale you into court; they will flog you in their synagogues. You will be brought to trial before rulers and kings, to give witness before them and before the Gentiles on My account.... You will be hated by all on account of Me."⁴⁰

However, the martyrs have always argued like Christ: "What profit does a man show who gains the whole world and destroys himself in the process?"⁴¹

This is how Susanna reasoned in the Book of Daniel. When the judges threatened to testify falsely against her if she did not give in to their lustful desire, she replied, "I am completely trapped. If I yield, it will be my death;⁴² if I refuse, I cannot escape your power. Yet it is better for me to fall into your power without guilt than to sin before the Lord."⁴³

This is how Thomas More reasoned at his trial. In the play, as Sir Richard Rich leaves the witness stand after his perjury, More says, "That's a chain of office you are wearing. May I see it?"

Reluctantly, Rich stops and More examines the medallion.

"The red dragon," he says. "What's this?"

Told that Rich has been appointed Attorney-General for Wales, he says, with pain and amusement, "For Wales? Why, Richard, it profits a man nothing to give his soul for the whole world.... But for Wales — !"⁴⁴

In canonizing martyrs, the Church confirms "the truth of their judgement, according to which the love of God entails the obligation to respect His commandments, even in the most dire of circumstances, and the refusal to betray those commandments, even for the sake of saving one's own life."⁴⁵

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34 That is, by using his wits.

35 Robert Bolt: *A Man For All Seasons*, Act Two

36 Robert Bolt: *A Man For All Seasons*, Act Two

37 The day on which St. John Fisher, Bishop of Rochester in England, had been beheaded by King Henry VIII for the same reason as More.

38 Mt 10:38

39 Mt 10:34

40 Mt 10:21-22

41 Mk 8:36

42 See Lv 20:10; Dt 22:22.

43 Dn 13:22-23

44 Robert Bolt: *A Man for All Seasons*, Act Two

45 Pope John Paul II: *Veritatis Splendor*, 91

Daily witness

Martyrdom is the "supreme" witness to Christ,⁴⁶ but "relatively few people are called" to it. As Thomas More said, it is God's part, not ours, to bring us to that extremity. However, we are all called to give daily witness, sometimes with "heroic commitment," even "at the cost of suffering and grave sacrifice."⁴⁷

I know a very attractive black woman from Africa. She is tall and she dresses beautifully in the fashion of her country. People notice her. Because she is black in a largely white community, she is always "bearing witness" for the black people.

"If I do anything wrong," she said, "people blame the whole of Africa."

It is not fair; but it is true.

When we were baptized, we became "a new creation."⁴⁸ And it shows — or it should show — in our dress, our conversation, our work, our recreation, *etc.* If we are known to be Catholics in a non-Catholic society, we are always "bearing witness" for Christ, whether we like it or not.

If we do anything wrong, people blame the whole Catholic Church.

It may not be fair; but it is true.

For example, I know a woman who realized that if she turned left off Como Lake Road (in Coquitlam) on to All Saints Church property across a double yellow line, anyone seeing her would blame the Church. So she started going another way.

There are "three enemies we must fight against all the days of our life:"⁴⁹ the *world*, the flesh, and the devil. However, it is our fight against "the *world*" that makes us stand out, for "the *world*"⁵⁰ is "everybody." In the face of "the *world*," bearing witness to our faith requires the courage to be different.

For example, it can mean

- missing a game or turning down a job in order to go to Mass on Sunday.⁵¹
- crossing a picket line when the strike is illegal or immoral.
- withdrawing from the "inner ring" if the group starts bullying.
- being fired because we refuse to sign a false document.
- dressing unfashionably in order to be modest.
- excusing ourselves from a get-together involving a dirty or anti-Christian movie.
- losing a boyfriend or girlfriend rather than commit fornication.
- sitting idle or praying silently in a waiting room instead of reading gossip magazines.⁵²

When the *world* cries, "Everybody does it," we have to answer, courteously, but firmly, "No. I don't; I'm a Catholic."

We must not be self-righteous, "holier-than-thou" prigs. Whatever we do, we must do out of love, whether we remain silent, speak, correct, or forgive.⁵³ If anyone asks us the reason for our behaviour, we must be "ready to reply, but speak gently and respectfully,"⁵⁴ not presuming to judge anyone else's conscience, and always more aware of the "plank" in our own eye than the "speck" in our neighbour's.⁵⁵

Daily witness to the faith means prudently avoiding even the appearance of wrongdoing.⁵⁶ For example, an unmarried couple may live together chastely, but they tempt others to judge rashly⁵⁷ or "justify" their own immorality.⁵⁸

46 Pope John Paul II: *Veritatis Splendor*, 89

47 Pope John Paul II: *Veritatis Splendor*, 93

48 2 Cor 5:17

49 *The Penny Catechism*, 348

50 Meaning the false maxims of the world and the society of those who love the vanities, riches, and pleasures of this world better than God (*The Penny Catechism*, 350). *Worldliness* is the mental attitude of a person who is guided by secular principles rather than religious principles, whose primary concern is for well-being in this life rather than in the life to come.

51 See the talk on "The First Three Commandments."

52 See the talk on "The Last Seven Commandments."

53 See Augustine: *Homily 7 on 1 John 4:4-12*, 8.

54 See 1 Pt 3:15.

55 See Mt 7:3; Lk 6:41.

56 That is, prudence in avoiding scandal. See the talk on "The Last Seven Commandments."

57 See CCC 2477.

58 See 1 Cor 8.

Dress

The way we dress sends a strong message about who we are. For example, when I dressed up as a nun for Halloween, I was amazed at the way it drew people's attention to Christ. Father Vince's "clericals" have the same effect.⁵⁹

For lay people, daily witness to Christ means dressing modestly, even if modesty is out of fashion. "Modest dress" is hard to define, for it varies with time and place. But we all recognize dress that is designed to be "sexy," to call attention to parts of the body that normally arouse sexual desire.⁶⁰

I once heard one girl tell another, as part of a story, "Of course the guys were all still after her, because of the way she was dressed." Some time later, when a student taking Photography showed me a photo he had taken of a girl dressed and posed like a model, I showed it to this girl, saying, "What does that picture say to you?" She looked for a moment, grinned, and said candidly, "Come and get me."

Immodest dress tempts us and others to sin, in thought, if not in word or deed.

Many in our society have lost our inborn sense of modesty. Often it was killed by our mothers when we were small. As a result, we may have to ask others whether or not our dress is "sexy." At Madonna House in Combermere Ontario (a community of lay people living Gospel-type lives) the young women once asked the young men that question. They found the answers, they said, to be eye-openers.⁶¹

I once lay in the nurse's office at school, trying to stop a nose-bleed before class, and reading a poster on the wall. "Don't feel guilty if you've been raped," it said. "You have the right to go where you want, when you want, dressed as you want, on your own or with whomever you want, without being attacked."

True. We also have the right to leave whatever valuables we want in unlocked cars, parked wherever and whenever we want, for as long as we want.

But both these "rights" remind me of an old jingle: "Here lies the body of Jonathan Jay, who died maintaining his right of way. He was right, dead right, as he sped along, but he's just as dead as if he'd been wrong."⁶²

Suppose you are waiting to turn left. An approaching car slows down and flashes its headlights, so you start to turn. But the car keeps going and runs into you.

The problem is that flashing headlights can mean over a dozen different things.⁶³ The way you understood the signal is not the way the other driver meant it.

Sexual signals, including dress, can be similarly misunderstood.⁶⁴ The solution is to learn the language — not just what we mean by it, but also what others understand by it⁶⁵ — and then use it to help everyone remain chaste.⁶⁶

Conversation

We bear witness to Christ in our conversation not only by avoiding sins like lies,

59 See Appendix 2.

60 See the talk on "The Last Seven Commandments." In 1956, Father Timothy Elliott OFM walked into Aitape, a part of Papua New Guinea where virtually no one had ever seen a white man. "One of my first problems," he chuckled, "was for me, a fit young fellow, to get used to the lack of clothes on the women. But it was my problem, not theirs. When the girls noticed my embarrassment, they would turn away modestly. Within a short time I had become accustomed to it and it no longer bothered me. They are not promiscuous. In fact, you sometimes see a young fellow going round with an arrow sticking out of his calf because his eyes had strayed the wrong way" (see *The BC Catholic*, September 13 1987).

61 See Appendix 3.

62 Anonymous.

63 It can mean "Go ahead, merge" or "turn," but also "stay back, I am not slowing down." It can indicate the intention to overtake or pass, protest or support the purpose of a nearby public gathering, or inform passing drivers that they can return to the proper lane. It is used to thank other drivers, intimidate them, signal one's presence to them, acknowledge their presence or action, warn them of dangers like stalled cars or police speed traps, inform them of problems like burned out lights, berate them for their behaviour, request or insist that they speed up or clear the way, and help drive deer off the road.

64 For example, in April 1991, BC Supreme Court Judge Sherman W. Hood said in a judgement that "at times, 'no' means 'maybe' or 'wait for a while.'"

65 Mothers used to teach their children this language. For example, little girls were taught to sit with their legs together and not to lie on the floor. Little children were told to shut the bathroom door and to approach a woman, never a man, if they were lost.

66 See Appendix 3.

detraction, *etc.*,^{6 7} but also in positive ways.

For example, when I went back to work on Easter Tuesday after the four-day weekend, everyone would ask casually, "How was your weekend? Did you do anything special?" Yes! I assisted at Baptisms, Confirmations, and receptions into the Church! Of course I would mention it; it would have been hard for me to hide it.

But we do not have to talk about church-type things. We can state what we think when someone tries to "force a conversational card on us" — that is, talks as though *of course* we, like them, approve of something evil, or disapprove of something good, or find virtue amusing,^{6 8} or condone crime and violence.

Not everybody likes to talk to strangers, but I do, and I often ask them where their accents come from; they usually seem ready and even eager to tell me. "Italy," a young woman replied once. "I've been here three months."

"Oh, so you're probably Catholic?" I said. "Yes? So am I. Do you know that three parishes in our diocese have Mass in Italian?" I looked up the schedules when I got home, made a copy, and gave it to her the next time I saw her.

Often people say they "used to be Catholic"; then I tell them about this course. If they say they *are* Catholic, I say, "Great! Which parish are you in?" Often they say they don't go to Mass; then I tell them about this course.

If people know we are Catholic, they will talk to us and ask us about our faith. And we should "be ever ready to reply, but speak gently and respectfully."^{6 9}

Work

The *world* defines "work" as what we do to make money, and it is hard to break that habit of thought. Accordingly, we must state, right now, that "work" includes the work of a mother, a homemaker, or a volunteer — none of which is paid.

We work because God created us in His image.^{7 0} "My Father is at work until now, and I am at work as well," Jesus said.^{7 1} In the Parable of the Silver Pieces, He commanded us to work with the talents God has given us.^{7 2} Through our work, we fulfil our potential (in part)^{7 3} by helping to bring creation to the perfection God planned for it.^{7 4} "Work is for man, not man for work."^{7 5}

We can bear witness to our faith 1) by choosing work that is worth doing, even if it does not pay well, and 2) doing our work well even if we are not paid extra.

"Work is not, primarily, a thing one does to live, but a thing one lives to do," said Dorothy Sayers. "It is, or it should be, the full expression of the worker's faculties; the thing in which he finds spiritual, mental, and bodily satisfaction; and the medium in which he offers himself to God."^{7 6}

We should think of our work as we think of our "hobbies, our leisure interests," and "the things we make and do for pleasure." If we think like this, we will ask not whether an enterprise will pay, but how good it is; not what a person earns, but what his work is worth;^{7 7} not whether products will sell, but whether they are useful and well made; not how much a job pays, but whether the work exercises our faculties properly.^{7 8}

In one kind of job we can say truly, "I am doing work that is worth doing. It

67 See the talk on "The Last Seven Commandments."

68 "Only a clever human can make a real joke about virtue...; any of them can be trained to talk as if virtue were funny. Among flippant people the joke is always assumed to have been made. No one actually makes it, but every serious subject is discussed in a manner which implies that they have already found a ridiculous side to it" (C.S. Lewis: *The Screwtape Letters*, 11).

69 See 1 Pt 3:15-16. If we do not know the reply, we should promise to discover it — we can be sure there is one — and keep our promise.

70 See CCC 2427.

71 Jn 5:17

72 See Mt 15:14-30.

73 See CCC 2428.

74 See CCC 302.

75 Pope John Paul II: *Laborem Exercens*, 6

76 Dorothy Sayers: *Creed or Chaos?* "Why Work?"

77 In absolute terms, not dollars.

78 Dorothy Sayers: *Creed or Chaos?* "Why Work?"

would still be worth doing if nobody paid for it. But as I need to be fed and housed and clothed, I must be paid while I do it."⁷⁹ In the other, "people do work whose sole purpose is the earning of money: work which need not be, ought not to be, or would not be, done by anyone in the whole world unless it were paid."⁸⁰

If we have any choice, "we shall be after the same jobs like greyhounds and stick there like limpets." We shall try to earn our living by doing well what would be worth doing even if we did not need the pay. We will have to restrain our avarice, for the insane jobs usually pay the most and demand the least.⁸¹

Recreation

We bear witness to our faith in our recreation by

- avoiding excess which endangers anyone's health or safety — in food, alcohol, tobacco, speed, sports, expense.⁸²
- rejecting the neo-pagan "cult of the body" which idolizes physical perfection and success in sports and favours the strong over the weak.⁸³
- refusing entertainment that is immodest, impure, or degrading to humans.
- putting our religious duties before recreation.

Refusing to co-operate with evil

We bear witness to our faith not only by rejecting evil, but also by refusing to co-operate with it: for example, to order, advise, facilitate, approve, or praise it.⁸⁴

However, we are all sinners.⁸⁵ We can argue, therefore, that we co-operate with evil when we eat in a restaurant whose owner is unfair to his employees, or rent a house to a common-law or cohabiting couple.⁸⁶

In fact, we can be said to co-operate with evil just by co-existing with others in a sinful world.⁸⁷ "Sins give rise to social situations and institutions that are contrary to the divine goodness"; these "structures of sin" make us "accomplices" in evil.⁸⁸

At what point must we refuse to co-operate with evil? Consider these examples.

1) When the BC Teachers' Federation became a union,⁸⁹ some teachers refused to join — thereby risking their jobs — because the BCTF supports abortion. However, other anti-abortion teachers did join, arguing that no one would suppose they were pro-abortion just because they were members and that their dismissal would leave public schools with no teachers except pro-abortionists.⁹⁰ *Who is right?*

2) In 1982, *United Way* granted membership to *Planned Parenthood*, which is pro-abortion.⁹¹ Accordingly, Archbishop James Carney of Vancouver announced⁹² that Vancouver's *Catholic Charities* and *Catholic Community Services* would accept no more funding from *United Way* as of January 1 1983. *What would you have done?*

3) In *Fiddler on the Roof*, Tevye, a Jew, gives in when his first daughter wants to choose her own husband and again when his second daughter wants to marry without his permission. But when his third daughter wants to marry a Christian, he

79 "Everybody should be able to draw from work the means of providing for his life and that of his family, and of serving the human community" (CCC 2428).

80 C.S. Lewis: *Screwtape Proposes a Toast*, "Good Work and Good Works"

81 See C.S. Lewis: *Screwtape Proposes a Toast*, "Good Work and Good Works."

82 See CCC 2290.

83 See CCC 2289.

84 See CCC 1868.

85 "If we say, 'We are free of the guilt of sin,' we deceive ourselves" (1 Jn 1:8). "There is no just man, not even one;... All have taken the wrong course" (Ps 14:1-3; see Rom 3:10-12).

86 That is, a couple who are not married but are living together as husband and wife.

87 "The consequences of original sin and of all men's personal sins put the world as a whole in the sinful condition aptly described in St. John's expression 'the sin of the world' (Jn 1:29). This expression can also refer to the negative influences exerted on people by communal situations and social structures that are the fruit of men's sins" (CCC 408).

88 See CCC 1869.

89 In 1987.

90 And in the classroom pro-abortionists cannot hide their beliefs any more than pro-lifers.

91 See Abby Johnson: *Unplanned*.

92 In "A Pastoral Letter to the Priests, Religious, and Faithful of the Archdiocese of Vancouver," entitled "A Commitment to Life," dated January 1983.

refuses, saying, "If I try to bend that far, I'll break."⁹³ *What would you do?*

4) In Ukraine, the Soviet Union outlawed the Catholic Church but not the Orthodox Church. When the Soviet Union broke up, many Orthodox priests became Catholics. Presumably, they had stayed in the Orthodox Church so that the people would have access to the Sacraments. *What would you have done?*

5) From 1957 on, China had a government-approved "Catholic Church," which rejected ties to the Vatican and ordained and appointed bishops without Vatican approval.⁹⁴ She also had an underground Catholic Church, which was loyal to the Pope, but persecuted. *Which would you have joined?*

6) In 1988, Father Vince, then editor of *The BC Catholic*, spent time blocking access to an abortion clinic. He was arrested, tried, and sentenced to time in prison. *Did he do the right thing?*

7) Many of our relatives are living in conjugal intimacy with people they are not married to. *How should we treat them?*

8) One sister invited me to the Baptism of her daughter as an Anglican. Another was invited to the wedding of a man who had told her he was divorced. Two Catholics I know have been asked to homosexual "weddings." *Should we accept?*

9) Many people practise yoga for physical exercise. However, its specific benefits are often said to be based on the non-Christian philosophy of its eastern roots.⁹⁵ *To what extent should we practise it?*

Drawing the line

Somewhere we must draw a line in our co-operation with evil. But it is hard to see where. When we have drawn our own line, then, we must not criticize or condemn others for drawing theirs somewhere else.

On the one hand, we must care about our neighbour's "true good" and "authentic freedom," which we will not foster by "concealing or weakening moral truth."⁹⁶

On the other hand, we must never separate our "clear and forceful presentation of moral truth" from "a profound and heartfelt respect."⁹⁷

On the one hand, "charity toward souls" demands that we "omit nothing from the saving doctrine of Christ."⁹⁸

On the other hand, we must present this doctrine "with tolerance and charity."⁹⁹

Jesus, Who came "not to judge the world but to save it,"¹⁰⁰ was "uncompromisingly stern toward sin, but patient and rich in mercy toward sinners."¹⁰¹ *Where do we draw the line?*

Paul gives some helpful advice. Speaking about eating meat that has been sacrificed to idols (false gods) he says, "Eat whatever is sold in the meat market without raising any question on the ground of conscience." And "if an unbeliever invites you to a meal, and you are disposed to go, eat whatever is set before you without raising any question on the ground of conscience."¹⁰²

This means, for example, that if we are invited to a wedding, we do not have to investigate whether the couple are free to marry, what they mean by their vows, etc.

On the other hand, St. Paul said, if someone *tells* you that the meat you are eating comes from an animal sacrificed to an idol, then, "out of consideration" for the other person, you have an obligation to show your disapproval, to set a good example and avoid giving scandal.¹⁰³

93 Joseph Stein: *Fiddler on the Roof*, Act 2, Scene 6

94 With the provisional accord on the nomination of bishops signed by China and the Vatican September 22 2018 and now in effect until October 22 2022, all government-appointed bishops have reconciled with the Vatican, and five have been ordained with joint approval.

95 See the talk on "The First Three Commandments," Appendix 7.

96 Pope John Paul II: *Veritatis Splendor*, 95

97 Pope John Paul II: *Veritatis Splendor*, 95

98 Pope Paul VI: *Humanae Vitae*, 29

99 Pope Paul VI: *Humanae Vitae*, 29

100 See Jn 12:47.

101 Pope Paul VI: *Humanae Vitae*, 29

102 See 1 Cor 10:25-31.

This means that if one of the wedding couple *tells* you that he is already married and divorced, you might have to decline the wedding invitation so as not to "condone an ambiguity" about the nature of marriage.¹⁰⁴

Positive signs

Finally, we can bear witness to Christ by

- displaying statues, crucifixes, and saints' pictures in our homes, offices, cars, *etc.*
- wearing crucifixes, scapulars, or medals of Mary and other saints.
- making the sign of the cross when we pass a Catholic church.
- saying a prayer when we start driving.
- saying a prayer when we hear a siren.
- saying grace before and after meals, even in public.
- being friendly to everyone, "but especially those of the household of the faith."¹⁰⁵
- objecting — gently, in charity — to the misuse of God's name.

Conclusion

We bear witness to Christ best not by preaching, but by the way we live; *e.g.*

- no extra-marital sex.¹⁰⁶
- lifelong marriage.
- no artificial contraception.
- "accepting children lovingly from God."¹⁰⁷
- Mass every Sunday.
- regular Confession.
- no meat on Fridays.¹⁰⁸
- modesty in dress.
- identifying dress (for a priest or a nun).
- no dirty talk, movies, jokes, magazines, or Internet images.
- honesty in business.
- no illegal strikes.
- reporting all our income.
- always telling the truth.
- no calumny, detraction, or backbiting.
- no speeding, jaywalking, illegal parking, *etc.*
- no appearance of approving evil, by silence or by speech.¹⁰⁹

We must "reacquire the consciousness of belonging to a minority" that is opposed to the spirit of the *world*.¹¹⁰ We must "find again the courage of nonconformism, the capacity to oppose many of the trends of the surrounding culture."¹¹¹

If we are indistinguishable from the rest of today's society, we are not following Christ. *He* stood out.

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103 See 1 Cor 8, 10:25-31.

104 See Pope John Paul II: *Ecclesia de Eucharistia*, 30. See the talk on "Mass: Sacrament and Sacrifice," Appendix 1.

105 Gal 6:10

106 See the talk on "Matrimony."

107 See the Catholic marriage service.

108 See the talk on "The First Three Commandments."

109 See the talk on "The Last Seven Commandments."

110 See 1 Cor 2:12; Eph 2:2.

111 Joseph Ratzinger: *The Ratzinger Report*, Two

Appendix 1: Beatification and Canonization of Saints

"Canon" comes from the Greek *kanon*, meaning "standard" or "measuring rod." In the early Church, people were "canonized" by popular acclamation; hence the custom of calling all the apostles "saint." Since the 10th century, however, the process has been longer and much more formal.

The Church does not "create" saints. Rather, she applies the standard of Gospel holiness to people who are in Heaven — their presence there being revealed by God principally through His performance of miracles through their intercession.

St. Thomas Aquinas said that "those effects are rightly to be termed miracles which are wrought by divine power apart from the order usually observed in nature";¹ that is, "beyond the order or laws of the whole created nature."²

The Bible uses three different Greek words for miracles. *Semeion* ("sign"), used 78 times, means an event with divine significance.³ *Teras* ("wonder"), used 16 times alone but also in combination with *semeion*, means something amazing, astonishing, out of the ordinary.⁴ *Dunamis* ("power"), often used in combination with *semeion* or *teras*, emphasizes that God is the source of a miracle.

Formal procedure

Canonization is described in Pope John Paul II's 1983 *Divinus Perfectionis Magister*. It was summarized by the Vatican Information Service September 12 1997.

In the interests of balance and objectivity, a candidate's "cause" must wait for five years after his death. Through the *postulator*, who lives in Rome, the group promoting the "cause" (diocese, parish, association, religious congregation) asks the bishop of the diocese in which the candidate died to open an investigation.

Once the bishop has received the Holy See's *nulla osta* ("no impediment"), he forms a tribunal to substantiate the candidate's "heroic" exercise of Christian virtue by gathering documents and calling witnesses.

At this point, the candidate may be given the title "Servant of God."

Next the results of the diocesan investigation are forwarded to the Vatican Congregation for the Causes of Saints, where a public copy is made for use in further work and, under the direction of a *relator* of the Congregation, the postulator monitors the preparation of a summary, called the *positio* ("position").

Nine theologians examine the *positio*. If a majority are in favour, the *positio* is sent to the cardinals and bishops of the Congregation, who meet twice a month.

On the Congregation's recommendation, its prefect (or head) then presents the entire cause to the Pope. The Pope gives his approval and authorizes the congregation to draft the relative decree for public reading and promulgation.

For the beatification of a confessor (one who acknowledged or "confessed" the Catholic faith but did not die a martyr), the Church requires that God perform, after his death, a miracle attributable to his intercession. The miracle is verified by a canonical investigation similar to the one that verifies heroic virtue. This investigation, too, concludes with the relative decree.

Once the two decrees have been promulgated, the Pope decides on beatification: the concession of public honour, although limited to a particular sphere. With beatification, the candidate receives the title "Blessed."

For canonization, the Church requires that God perform, after the candidate's beatification, another miracle attributable to his intercession. Again, the miracle is verified by canonical investigation.

Canonization, an infallible papal decree, is the concession of public honour by the universal Church. With canonization, the candidate is given the title "Saint."

1 Thomas Aquinas: *Contra Gentiles*, III, c11

2 Thomas Aquinas: *Sacra Theologiae* I, 102, 4

3 For example, Jesus called His resurrection a "sign" when He said, "An evil and unfaithful generation seeks a sign, but no sign will be given it except the sign of Jonah the prophet" (Mt 12:39).

4 For example, Jesus said, "Unless you people see signs and wonders, you will not believe" (Jn 4:48).

Appendix 2: Clerical Dress

Vancouver

In a letter dated November 5 1993, Archbishop Adam Exner OMI of Vancouver instructed priests in his archdiocese to wear clerical dress.

He reminded them that Church law requires clerics to wear "suitable ecclesiastical dress in accordance with the norms established by the episcopal conference and legitimate local custom"¹ and quoted the Canadian bishops' decree that "clerics are to dress in such a way as to be identifiable as clerics."²

"The custom in the Archdiocese of Vancouver has been for priests to wear their Roman collar and black — or at least dark-colored — clerical suit, unless they are engaged in recreational pursuits," Archbishop Exner said. "I wish to reaffirm this local custom."

The witness and sign value of clerical attire is important in today's society, he said, quoting Pope John Paul II, "not only because it contributes to the propriety of the priest in his external behaviour or in the exercise of his ministry, but above all because it gives evidence within the ecclesiastical community of the public witness that each priest is held to give of his own identity and special belonging to God."³

Archbishop Exner urged priests to "be proud of [their] identity in a world that needs [their] presence."

Vatican

In November 1995 the Vatican re-emphasized that priests must wear clerical garb and said bishops should make sure the rule is followed.⁴

The Vatican issued a seven-point *Clarification* in response to a bishop's question about the legal weight of the norm on clerical dress contained in the Vatican Congregation for Clergy's 1994 *Directory on the Ministry and Life of Priests*, (66).

The *Clarification* said that the norm is not merely an encouragement, but is also "juridically binding," stating that the Vatican often uses directories to establish norms that have "clearly binding juridical force."

The *Directory* quotes Canon 284,⁵ which says that "clerics are to wear suitable ecclesiastical garb," but adds that when this garb is not the priestly cassock, it must be different from lay dress and must conform to the "dignity and sacredness" of the priest's ministry.

"The style and color should be established by the bishops' conference, always in agreement with the dispositions of the universal law," the *Directory* says. The resulting dress should make the priest immediately identifiable as such, to both Catholics and non-Catholics. Contrary practices "cannot be considered legitimate customs and should be removed by the competent authority," namely the bishop.

The *Clarification* adds that "the episcopal conference has the responsibility of helping the individual bishops in the fulfilment of this duty." Noting that the *Directory* has the approval of Pope John Paul II, it says that in light of its precise instructions, even the rules established by bishops' conferences on clerical garb "must be interpreted accordingly in case of doubt."

1 *Code of Canon Law*, 284

2 Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops: *Decree No. 25*, approved by the CCCB at its plenary meeting October 7-9 1986 and reviewed by the Vatican Congregation for Bishops October 10 1987. The decree does not bind deacons (see *Code of Canon Law*, 288).

3 Pope John Paul II: *Letter to Cardinal Ugo Poletti*, Papal Vicar for the Diocese of Rome, September 8 1982

4 Pontifical Council for the Interpretation of Legislative Texts: *Clarifications Concerning the Binding Value of Article 66 of the Directory of the Ministry and Life of Priests*, 266

5 See *Code of Canon Law*, 284.

Appendix 3: Modest Dress

To women, from a married man

Women are beautiful. Men find them very attractive. That is God's design.

God's design, however, includes the virtue of modesty: keeping hidden what ought to be hidden. A modest woman, who veils her body appropriately, does a great service to herself and to men: she protects herself from being viewed as an object and helps men avoid the sin of lust.

I believe that many women are unaware of how certain forms of their dress affect men, so let me be more specific. I speak as a normal married man who has striven for sexual purity for twenty years and enjoyed a happy marriage for sixteen.¹

Tight clothing on a woman, especially if it accentuates her chest, thighs, crotch, or bum, naturally tempts men to think about what they can do with those parts.

Tight pants or leggings (*not* a substitute for pants) tempt them to think about having intercourse with her: to start imagining what it would be like.

Do you want men to be tempted like that, to succumb to lustful thoughts?

Men's eyes are naturally drawn to a woman's chest. Clothing that reveals or closely accentuates her chest tempts a man to fantasize about touching her there.

Is that what you want?

Ironically, modesty is deeply attractive. If you dress modestly, men will treat you with greater respect, and you will help them to avoid sin.

You *are* your "brother's keeper."² Please help men to see you and treat you as Christ does: as beautiful and wonderful creations of our Father in Heaven.

To women, from a woman

We want men to appreciate us as persons, not just sex-objects — *but* we also want them to notice our sexual attraction, insofar as it is part of God's design.

Frequent excessive display of our sexual parts frustrates *both*. It not only makes us look like sex-objects, but also helps build immunity to our sexual attraction.³ Modesty, therefore, is a moral virtue *and* a practical consideration in attracting men.

Modesty should not make us paranoid about dress; like any virtue, it should be a habit that makes us automatically reject immodest styles and choose modest clothing.

However, as we form this habit, we might have to keep in mind a few cautions.

- We sit, stand, turn, lean over, bend down, reach up, climb stairs, and fold our arms — on or below balconies. We must look modest not only to ourselves, in a mirror, but also to people alongside, above, below, and behind us.
- A skirt looks shorter to those below us; a V-neck looks lower to those above us.
- A top long enough to reach the waist can expose the back or belly when our arms are raised; we may have to choose a longer one.
- Shorts that look long enough when we are standing look shorter when we sit.
- Shorts that are too loose can expose the crotch when we sit, especially if we do not keep our legs together.
- At the back, pants ride down and look tighter when we bend over, exposing or outlining our underwear.
- If a blouse or shirt is too loose, the neckline can droop away from our body when we bend over; the sleeves can expose the bust if we raise our arms.
- A blouse that buttons can have see-through gaps between the buttons, or may easily come unbuttoned when we move; we may need a tank top underneath.
- Light-coloured clothing makes it easier to see through it to our underwear.
- Bright sunlight can make skirts and dresses see-through; we might need a slip.
- Clothes made of shapeless, "drape-y," material may hang so close to the body that, in effect, they merely change its colour.
- Sloppy or "grungy" dress, even if it is modest, can seem to imply that we do not respect ourselves.

¹ This was written in October 2017.

² Gn 4:9

³ Speaking of "the increasing crudity of female provocativeness," C.S. Lewis said, "These signs of desperate competition fill me with pity" (*God in the Dock*, "We Have No 'Right to Happiness'").