

SODALITY OF CHARITY NEWSLETTER

In the soul, like sun, reigns Charity alone



Sodality

1/2022 January ▪ www.sodalityofcharity.net ▪ 4900 Rialto Road, West Chester, OH 45069

Dear members and friends of the Sodality of Charity,

The exiting news of the month is the announcement of the date of the upcoming priestly ordination. On January 6, the feast of Epiphany, Bishop Dolan ordained as deacons our four seminarians, Thomas Ojeka, John Okerulu, Thomas Simpson, and Anthony Brueggemann. They will be ordained priests on **Wednesday, May 4, 2022**. It's the first Wednesday of the month, a day which is a special one for our Sodality, since St. Joseph is such a special patron for us. And on first Wednesdays the faithful who perform some devout exercise in honor of St. Joseph can gain an indulgence of 5 years or a plenary indulgence under usual conditions.

May 4 is in this year also the Solemnity of St. Joseph, as well as the feast day of St. Monica, the mother of the great priest and bishop St. Augustine. Rev. Mrs. Ojeka and Okerulu are from Nigeria, and after finishing their studies, they will return to their home country, and help Fr. Nkamuke. He has served this huge country in Africa by himself several years now, and is in great need of help. Rev. Mr. Simpson is from Ohio and Rev. Mr. Brueggemann from Kentucky. Both of them have attended St. Gertrude the Great church for their whole lives and are also related to many of our Sodalists.

So make room in your calendar for May 4, to

attend this great and happy occasion of the ordination to the holy priesthood. Pray also that our Fr. Nkamuke could come to this happy event. We need to pray hard for this intention; intercontinental travelling is very challenging and hard on these days.



On January 22 we had our Holy Hour in reparation for the sins of abortion. After that some of our members prepared Rosaries for our upcoming Seminarian Sunday, which will take place on **Lætare Sunday, March 27**. So that is another date you should all look forward to. This event will be organized to raise money for our Seminarians, to provide them with the necessities for their priesthood, like

chalice, Mass vestments, etc. If you are able, donate goods and services or raffle items, work for the event, help out where and how you can, but please support this important event.

The First Wednesday of February falls this year on February 2, Candlemas. At St. Gertrude's we have our traditional evening Mass with blessing of candles and procession, starting at 5:30 PM. These festivities are followed by our Winter Soup Supper. Hope to see you all there. Our next Sodality monthly meeting will be on Saturday, February 26. It is the feast day of St. Margaret of Cortona, and also the *Mardi Gras* weekend.

Yours in Christ and Mary,

Fr. Lehtoranta

January 28

The Blessed Charlemagne, Emperor

by Fr. Prosper Guéranger
From his *The Liturgical Year*, 1904 edition

In many Churches, especially in Germany, there is kept, on the second Feast of the Martyr Agnes, the Feast of the pious Emperor Charlemagne. The Emmanuel, who is come into this world, is to receive the title of *King of kings and Lord of lords*; he is to gird himself with the sword, and bring all nations into subjection; what could be more fitting than that he should lead to his Crib the greatest of Christian Princes, who ever made it his glory to use his sword in the service of Christ and his Church?

Before the Reformation, the name of Blessed Charlemagne was inscribed in the Calendar of a great many of the Churches in France; the Breviaries of Rheims and Rouen are the only ones that have retained it. The Church of Paris ceased to keep his Feast, in order to satisfy the prejudices of several Doctors of the University, in the early part of the 16th century. Protestantism had, naturally enough, an antipathy for a man, who was the noblest type of a Catholic Prince; but more than thirty Churches in Germany still keep the Feast of the great Emperor. His dear Church of Aix-la-Chapelle possesses his Relics and exposes them to the veneration of the people. The University of Paris, strange to say, chose him for its Patron in 1661; but his Feast, which had been given up for more than a century, was only restored as a national holiday, without the slightest allusion being made to it in the Liturgy.

We affirm, with Bossuet, that the morals of Charlemagne were without reproach. In his *Sermon on the Unity of the Church*, this great Bishop declares:

Charlemagne was valiant, wise, and moderate; he

was a warrior without ambition, and led an exemplary life. This I say, notwithstanding the reproaches heaped upon him by ignorance, in times past. His prodigious conquests caused the kingdom of God to be spread, and, in everything he did, he showed himself to be a perfect Christian.

We will cite but one example of this Christian firmness in repressing scandal. In a *Capitulary*, given during the Pontificate of St Leo the Third, Charlemagne thus decrees:



We forbid, under pain of sacrilege, the seizure of the goods of the Church, and injustices and immorality of whatsoever sort; for we know, that by such things kingdoms and kings, yea and private subjects, do perish. And whereas, by God's help, and the merit and the intercession of the Saints and Servants of God, whom we have at all times honoured, we have gained a goodly number of kingdoms, and won manifold victories, it behoveth us

all to be on our guard lest we deserve the forfeiture of these gains by the aforementioned crimes and shameful lewdnesses. We know, of a truth, that sundry countries, wherein have been perpetrated these seizures of the goods of the Church, these injustices, have lost their courage in battle, and their firmness in the faith. Any one may learn from history, how the Lord hath permitted the Saracens and other peoples to conquer the workers of such like iniquities; nor doubt we that the like will happen likewise to us, unless we abstain from such misdeeds; for God is wont to punish them. Be it, therefore, known to all our subjects, that he who shall be taken and convicted of any of these crimes, shall be deposed of all his honours, if he have any; that he shall be thrown into prison, till he repent and make amends by a public penitence; and, moreover, that he shall be cut off from all communication with the faithful; for we shall grievously fear the pit whereinto we see others be fallen.

This brave warrior, when he had become the mighty Sovereign, unceasingly practicing, not only sobriety, which was a rare virtue among his countrymen, but fastings, which would bear comparisons with those of the most fervent anchorites wearing a hair-shirt even to the day of his death – assisting at the Offices of the Church, day and night, even during his various campaigns, when he had the Divine services performed in his tent – and giving abundant alms, (which, as the Scripture tells us, covereth a multitude of sins), not only to all the poor of his dominions, who besought his charity, but likewise to the Christians of Africa, Egypt, Syria, and Palestine, for whose sakes he more than once exhausted his royal treasury? But, what is above all this, and, in the absence of every other proof, would testify to Charlemagne's possessing every virtue that could adorn a Christian Prince, is his making no other use of his sovereign power than that of spreading the Kingdom of Christ on the earth. It is the one single end he proposed to himself in every battle he fought, and every law he made.

This monarch, to whom were subject France, Catalonia, Navarre, and Aragon; Flanders, Holland, and Friesland; the provinces of Westphalia, Saxony, as far as the Elbe; Franconia, Swabia, Thuringia, and Switzerland; the two Pannonias, (that is, Austria and Hungary,) Dacia, Bohemia, Istria, Liburnia, Dalmatia, and even Slavonia; and finally, the whole of Italy, as far as southern Calabria – this Monarch signs himself, in his glorious *Capitularia*:

I, Charles, by the grace of God and the giving of his mercy, King and governor of the Kingdom of the French, devoted defender of God's Holy Church, and her humble Champion.

So many other Kings and Emperors – who are not to be compared with him in power, and yet are objects of men's admiration in spite of all their crimes, which are artfully palliated by every possible excuse – have made it their one grand aim to enslave the Church. History tells us of even some otherwise pious Kings, who were jealous of her Liberty, and sought to curtail it. Charlemagne ever respected that Liberty, as though it were his own mother's honour. It was he, that, following the example of Pepin, his father, so nobly secured the independence of the Apostolic See. Never had the Roman Pontiffs a more devoted or a more

obedient Son. Scorning petty political jealousies, he restored to the clergy and people the episcopal elections, which were in the hands of the Sovereign, when he began his reign. He waged war mainly with a design to favour the propagation of the faith among infidel nations. He marched into Spain, that he might free the Christians from the yoke of the Moors. He brought the Churches of his Kingdom into closer union with the Apostolic See, by establishing the Roman Liturgy in all the States that were under his sceptre. In the whole of his legislation, which he framed in assemblies where Bishops and Abbots had the preponderance, there is not a single trace of what have been called *Gallican Liberties*, which consist in the interference of the Sovereign or civil Magistrate in matters purely ecclesiastical.

Bossuet, in his aforementioned sermon, declares:

So great was Charlemagne's love for the Roman Church, that the main point of his Last Will was the recommending to his successors the defense of the Church of St Peter, a defense which was the precious heirloom of his house, handed down to him by his father and his father's father, and which he was resolved to leave also to his children. It was this love of the Church which prompted him to say, and the saying was afterwards repeated in a full Council, held during the reign of one of his descendants, that if the Church of Rome were, by an impossibility, to put on us a burden which was well-nigh insupportable, we ought to bear it.

What could prompt this spirit of Christian moderation, which made Charlemagne so respectful to the moral power of the Church – what could temper down the risings of pride, which, as a general rule, increases with the increase of power – what save a most saintly tenor of life? Man, unless he be endowed with the help of a powerful grace, cannot attain, much less can he maintain himself his whole life long, in such perfect dispositions as these. Charlemagne, then, has been selected by our Emmanuel himself to be the perfect type of a Christian Prince; and we Catholics should love to celebrate his glory during this Christmas season, during which is born among us the Divine Child, who is come to reign over all nations, and guide them in the path of holiness and justice. Jesus has come from heaven to be the model of Kings, as of the rest of men; and so far, no man has so closely imitated this divine model as "*Charles the Victorious*."

us, the ever August, the Monarch crowned by God."

We will borrow from the Breviaries of Germany the liturgical history of her great Apostle:

The father of the Blessed Charles was Pepin, who was the son of the Duke of Brabant, (afterwards elected to the throne of France,) and of Bertrade, daughter of the Greek Emperor. He merited, by his glorious deeds and his zeal for the Christian Religion, the surname of Great; and by one of the Councils held at Mayence he was called the Most Christian Monarch. Having driven the Lombards out of Italy, he was the first to have the honour of being crowned Emperor by the Vicar of Christ, Pope Leo the Third. At the request of Adrian, Leo's predecessor, he entered with an army into Italy, and restored to the Church her patrimony, and to the West the Empire. He avenged the injuries done to Pope Leo by the Romans, during the chanting of the Litany, and he expelled from the city such as had taken part in this sacrilege. He passed many laws tending to the honour of the Church; among the rest, he re-established the law which provided that civil suits should be referred to the judgment of the Church, in case of one of the parties demanding it. Though of a most gentle disposition, he was very severe in suppressing vice, more especially adultery and idolatry, for which he established special tribunals vested with extraordinary powers, which exist to this day in Lower Saxony.

After having waged war for thirty-three years with the Saxons, he at length brought them into subjection, imposing no other law upon them, than that they should become Christians. He obliged all land-owners to erect a cross of wood in their fields, as an open confession of their faith. He rid Gascony, Spain, and Galicia, of idolaters, and restored the sepulchre of St. James to what we see it at this day. He upheld the Christian Religion in Hungary by an eight years' campaign, and in fighting against the Saracens, he always made use of the victorious Spear, wherewith one of the soldiers opened our Saviour's Side, God seemed to favour, by many miracles, all these efforts made for the spreading of the faith. Thus the Saxons, who were laying siege to Sigisburgh, were struck by God with fear, and took to flight: and in the first rebellion of the same people, there sprang up from the earth a plentiful stream, wherewith was refreshed Charles' whole army, which had been without water for three days. And yet, this great Emperor could scarce be distinguished by his dress from the rest of the people, and almost always wore a hair-shirt, never appearing in his glided robes save on the principal Feasts of our Lord and the Saints. He gave alms to the poor and to pilgrims, not only at his regal residence, but in every part of the world, by sending them monies. He built twenty-four Monasteries, to each of

which he sent what is called the Golden Letter, weighing two hundred pounds. He founded two Metropolitan, and nine Episcopal Sees. He built twenty-seven Churches, and founded two Universities, one in Pavia, the other in Paris.

As Charles himself was fond of study, in which he had Alcuin as his master, so, likewise, would he have his sons trained in the liberal sciences, before he permitted them to turn either to war or to the chase. In the sixty-eighth year of his age, he had his son Louis crowned king, and devoted himself wholly to prayer and alms-deeds. Each morning and evening he visited the Church, and oftentimes he repaired thither also in the night, for he was exceedingly fond of the Gregorian Chant, and was the first to introduce it into France and Germany; he had obtained Cantors from Pope Adrian the First, and took care to have the hymns of the Church copied in every place. He made copies of the Gospels with his own hand, and collated them with the Greek and Syriac versions. He was extremely sparing in what he took to eat and drink. If he fell sick, he sought a remedy in fasting, which he sometimes observed for seven continuous days. At length, after suffering much from malicious men, being then in his seventy-second year, he fell sick. He received the consolation of Holy Communion at the hands of Bishop Hildebald. He signed his whole body with the sign of the cross, singing the words: *Into thy hands*; which done, he rendered to God his soul rich in merit, on the fifth of the Calends of February (January 28th). He was buried in the Basilica of Aix-la-Chapelle, which he had built and enriched with relics of the Saints. There he is honoured by the devotion of numerous pilgrims, and by the favours granted by God through his intercession. His Feast is kept in most of the dioceses of Germany, by the consent of the Church, ever since the time of Pope Alexander the Third; it is kept as the Feast of the principal propagator of the faith in the North.

All hail faithful and beloved servant of God, Apostle of Christ, Defender of his Church, Lover of justice, Guardian of the laws of morality, and Terror of them that hate the Christian name! The hand of the Vicar of Christ purified the diadem of the Caesars, and put it on thy venerable head. The imperial sceptre and globe are in thy hands. The sword of the victories won for God is girt on thy side. The Supreme Pontiff has anointed thee King and Emperor. Bearing thus in thyself the figure of Christ in his temporal Kingship, thou didst so use thy power as that he reigned in and by thee. And now he recompenses thee for the love thou hadst for him, for the zeal thou hadst for his glory, and for the respect thou didst ever evince to the

Church, his Spouse. He has changed thy earthly and perishable royalty into that which is eternal, and in this heavenly kingdom thou art surrounded by those countless souls, whom thou didst convert from idolatry to the service of the one true God.

We are celebrating the Birth of the Son of that Virgin-Mother, in Whose honour thou didst build the glorious Church, which still excites the admiration of all nations. It was in that sacred edifice that thou didst place the Swathing-clothes where-with She clad Her Divine Babe; and it is here, too, that our Emmanuel would have thine own Relics enshrined, so to receive the honour they deserve. O admirable imitator of the faith of the three Eastern Kings! present us to him, who deigned to be clothed in these humble garments. Ask him to give us a share of thy humility, which made thee love to kneel near his Crib – of thy devotion for the Feasts of the Church – of thy zeal for the glory of his divine Majesty – and of the courage and earnestness wherewith thou didst labour to spread his Kingdom on earth.

Oh! Pray for out Europe, which was once so happy under thy paternal rule, and is now divided against itself The Empire, which the Church confided to thy care, has now fallen, in just punishment for its treachery to the Church that gave it existence. The nations of that fallen Empire are now restless and unhappy. The Church alone can satisfy their wants, for she alone can give them Faith; she alone has not changed the principles of justice; she alone can control power, and teach subjects obedience. Oh! Pray that nations, both people and their governments, may return to what can alone give them liberty and security, and cease to seek these blessings by revolution and discord. Protect France, that fairest gem of thy crown, protect her with an especial love, and show her that thou art ever her King and her Father. Finally, O blessed Charlemagne! Ask our God that he arrest the progress of Russia, the Empire of schism and tyranny, and never permit that we become a prey to its intrigue and ambition.



FEBRUARY MONTHLY MEETING

Saturday, February 26

After the Second Mass
8:15 AM – 2 PM

This is the feast day of **St. Margaret of Cortona**.
We read from the Epistle of her Mass:

Aquæ multæ non potuérunt exstinguere caritatem, nec flúmina óbruent illam: si déderit homo omnem substántiam domus suæ pro dilectiône, quasi nihil despiciet eam.

Many waters cannot quench charity, neither shall floods overwhelm it: if a man shall give all the substance of his house for love, as nothing he shall despise it. (Cant. 8:7)

Read our news at:

www.sodalityofcharity.net



SODALITY OF CHARITY CALLS YOU TO DONATE TO THE

SEMINARIAN SUNDAY



Lætare Sunday
March 27

After the Morning Masses

Please come and raise money for our seminarians. Proceeds of this event will outfit them with necessities for the priesthood. Donate goods and services or raffle items, or volunteer to work for the day. Help out where you can, but support this important event.

WE NEED PRIESTS

God bless your charity

CALLING ALL SODALITY MEMBERS!

All members and friends of the Sodality of Charity are called to attend
The Ordination to the Priesthood of



Rev. Mr. John Okerulu
Rev. Mr. Thomas Simpson
Rev. Mr. Thomas Ojeka
Rev. Mr. Anthony Brueggemann

On Wednesday, May 4, 2022
First Wednesday of May,
Solemnity of St. Joseph,
and feast day of St. Monica

At 10 AM

