**Heralds of Hope, part II**

Hope vs. Despair

Lourdes Pinto 4/28/22

**HOPE**

* Hope implies desire, seeking, pursuing, and effort.
* Hope involves both an act of our will and God’s grace.
* *The love of God will stretch your love beyond your physical capacities. The expansion of the tent of your hearts is a most painful process. You have to choose to love those most difficult to love. You must always choose love, patience, and tenderness and never give in to anger and resentment. 3/1/11*
* In the Sacred Heart, the 1st Nail of the Cross (feet) 1/6/14

*You no longer do what you want to do nor go where you want to go, but now, you only go where I take you. You choose to live each day according to what is most difficult, not what is easiest. This will require a great discipline of your will. This is a complete dying to move in your will.*

* Hope is more than a feeling
* Therefore, we must **choose to hope as an act of our will when we do not necessarily feel hopeful. Feelings are fickle and fleeting, but hope as a virtue must be tried and refined through times of prosperity, spiritual or emotional aridity, or intense hardships.**
* Hope is the grace that allows us to see ourselves as we are while facing the God of Mercy who heals us.
* Faith is the foundation upon which hope and charity are built.

**DESPAIR**

* Hope is the opposite of despair.
* CCC 2091. The first commandment is also concerned with sins against hope, namely, despair and presumption: By despair, man ceases to hope for his personal salvation from God, for help in attaining it, or for the forgiveness of his sins.

Despair is contrary to God’s goodness, to his justice - for the Lord is faithful to his promises - and to His mercy

* *I promise you and my few faithful victim souls that My triumph is at hand. 1/4/22*
* *I promise you, My little one, if you remain attentive in prayer, obedient to My voice guiding you (and the few little souls also listening to My voice), you will remain faithful when the tribulation knocks at your door. Your faith and hope will be anchored in My love crucified…3/1/22*
* The primary threat to hope is despair. Despair is not simply a feeling of gloominess or depression. Rather it is the refusal to strive after God, the refusal to make Heaven our primary goal to work for it.[[1]](#footnote-1)
* The causes of despair can be narrowed down to two categories:[[2]](#footnote-2)

1. The first is excessive self-focus. We concentrate on our own strengths and our own weaknesses, and we realize that our own power isn’t sufficient for salvation, and so we give up on holiness and happiness. We figure we won’t be able to make it. We think, “I’m too weak, I’m too sinful, why bother trying anymore?”
2. The second reason we despair is attachment to sin. Often times we really don’t want to pursue God because we know it’s going to mean giving up certain sins to which we’ve grown accustomed. So, we choose the evil habits we’re used to over the promise of eternal joy.

* Despair manifests itself in various ways:

1. One of the most common symptoms of despair is sloth, classically called acedia. Acedia describes the condition of a person who resents the greatness to which he has been called because he knows it’s so different. It is the suppression of magnanimity by laziness: “I don’t want to be great, to be a saint, to be a child of God, to be a hero of the faith. Do you realize what a hassle that is and how many sacrifices it takes? No thanks, I’m happy just drifting by.”
2. Another frequent symptom of despair is distraction. A vast portion of the society settles for mediocre pleasures, mediocre achievements, mediocre loves. And yet, in the back of their minds, they know they should be pursuing higher things. So they turn to distraction in order to forget about those higher things.

That’s our society. We know we ought to spend our time on more noble aspirations, but we really don’t want to talk about it, and we don’t want to think about it. So we look for anything that can distract us, anything that can drown out the guilt. Maybe that’s why there’s so little silence today. Ipods, stereos, TVs, travel, and cell phones are there to occupy our minds with passing images of sight and sound. And yet people are bored and sick with worry because they know there are pressing demands on our lives that they are ignoring.

1. Presumption is a kind of hopelessness that is not often discussed. This is the vice of thinking that one is guaranteed to get to heaven: “I’m as good as saved already.” This, of course, inhibits the striving after God and Heaven and greatness. If you’re already guaranteed, why should you bother trying?

Many people suffer from presumption either because a) they are too confident in their own powers or b) they are confident that God will just “make everything all right” in the end. This latter error has become increasingly widespread today; it is assumed that a good Deity will welcome everyone into Heaven and that Hell does not exist.

**LUKEWARM SOULS**

* Revelation 3:15-16, “I know your works; I know that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish you were either cold or hot. So, because you are lukewarm, neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of my mouth.”
* Pope St Pius said about lukewarmness, “All the evils of the world are due to lukewarm Catholics.”
* Lukewarm Souls, 12/30/21

The Lord approached me interiorly with tears in His eyes. He said, “*the final confrontation between the principalities of darkness and His followers*” is at hand. He explained that most souls are “lukewarm” and that these souls are the power of Satan because “*lukewarm souls live centered in themselves and in the things of the world*.” Then he said, “*because of this pitiful condition, all of humanity will suffer intensely for a certain amount of time. You live among the lukewarm. Suffer with Me for the awakening of souls.*”

I asked Jesus about the Illumination, “Won’t this grace bring forth their conversion?” The Lord explained that many souls would not respond; that is why He needs victim souls. He is asking me and all victim souls to suffer for the lukewarm…

* *…the hour of My mercy is coming to its end, and the hour of justice is upon you. All will be called to choose… Your faith will be tested. You will not be able to remain lukewarm any longer. You will be with Me or against Me. 5/26/12*
* Divine Mercy Novena, day 9

Today bring to Me SOULS WHO HAVE BECOME LUKEWARM, and immerse them in the abyss of My mercy. These souls wound My Heart most painfully. My soul suffered the most dreadful loathing in the Garden of Olives because of lukewarm souls. They were the reason I cried out: ‘Father, take this cup away from Me, if it be Your will.’ For them, the last hope of salvation is to run to My mercy.

* CCC 2094 – “lukewarmness is hesitation or negligence in responding to divine love; it can imply refusal to give oneself over to the prompting of charity.”
* God created us for Himself, to be one with Him, God Trinity. This is Love. When we have divine promptings calling us to love but fail to respond, that is lukewarmness.
* Picture God on top of a mountain –Stephen Foley

Picture God on top of the mountain saying, ‘Hey! Come up here and be with me.’ And we want to be with God, but yet we see that the mountain is pretty high, it’s going to be cold up there, it’s going to be a rough trip. And so we hear God calling, this prompting of love calling me to go higher and to reach God, but I don’t feel like taking on this journey. I don’t feel like paying the price to climb higher.

We get a little lazy, or we don’t really want to pay the price that love demands. Drawing closer to God is not easy; it calls forth a certain sacrificial element. So lukewarmness just lacks that corresponding fire of love to respond to God’s fire of love calling us to Himself.” (*What does it mean to be a lukewarm Catholic?* Stephanie Foley, 19/19/18)

* Lukewarm souls can be “good Catholics.” They go to Mass every Sunday, even frequent confession, yet they live the faith as a checklist. They lack the desire for Love and to strive for intimacy with God. They can be the “couch potatoes.” Their hearts lack the vitality, zeal, and enthusiasm of love as if they become like stagnant water, which becomes contaminated and dries up. They lack the flowing stream of God’s infinite graces and life-giving love for lack of responding to God’s impulses of love.
* *The Path*, is the formation manual for My saints of these times

*We are making all things new through My Blood and the blood of My victim souls. My little one, believe that the union of love in suffering with God produces one hundredfold. Trust in your beloved Spouse, who is making you a new creation in God and for God.* ***This Path (book) is My Light in the darkness, hope in despair****… It is My formation manual for My saints of these times. You (LC) have been entrusted with this treasure from God*. May 2016

* How is the *Path* hope in despair?

The *Path* constructs a new creation, new men and women; it pierces the darkness in us, thus transforming us into God’s light. Despair is rooted in self-love, self-will, pride, and obstinacy. Hope is rooted in humility, knowing our misery and nothingness, and relying entirely on God’s mercy and goodness. A cause of despair is self-focus. The work of the Holy Spirit through the Path is to bring us out of ourselves into Christ, to suffer with Him, and to focus on Him.

* Despair is rooted in fear; Hope is rooted in trust.

The *Path* moves us out of fear into trust, “believe.” The *Path* moves us out of self into living consumed in the Sacred Heart of Christ. Living the *Path* fills us with the life of Christ manifested in peace and joy, the fruit of faith and hope. Peace and joy, especially amid darkness and tribulations, radiate the Light of Divine Love.

* **Is. 40:31** “They that HOPE IN THE LORD will renew their strength; they will soar as with eagle’s wings; they will run and not grow weary, walk and not grow faint.”
* What is a Victim Soul? 9/11/19

*I, Jesus Christ, am a Victim of Pure Love. I am your Victim in order to receive your brokenness, sinfulness, and all your misery. If I had not received all your misery, you would be in a state of total darkness and with no hope of heaven, of the bliss of living in God.*

*For you to be a victim means you have chosen to follow Me in My footsteps. You, as victim, have chosen the greater path because only as My victim can you become ONE with Me – “No longer two but one.” This is My Kingdom on Earth because it is the purest essence of love that can be lived on earth.*

1. <https://www.catholicnewsagency.com/resource/55560/hope> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)