

*Manfred von Pentz*



## *Defending our Children*

There is much earnest talk about saving the great Christian - European Culture from destruction and extinction. Many facts are brought to our attention, some indeed frightening, and all ask for urgent considerations. Yet there is one that seems to me of particular importance. Namely our care for the future standard-bearers of our great Western civilization. Because what use is there of bashing politically correct perfidy, officially sanctioned robbery or suicidal immigration politics, if our children and grandchildren will be too weak or too sick to hold a pen, let alone a sword?

The following piece was written years ago. Don't be put off by the somewhat flowery beginning. It gets less flowery towards the end.

*The Milan cathedral is one of the world's most resplendent monuments. Built in the sublime, soaring, triumphal yet deeply humane spirit of the Gothic era, does it blend northern serenity with southern gaiety into a testimony of the White Man's unsurpassed genius for beauty and perfection.*

*It is, in short, an overwhelming hymn to God's generosity to man, a shimmering statement of joie de vivre, an exuberant magnum opus of colour and form, a supreme union of gracefulness and light.*

*In winter the building presents itself in a more subdued fashion. The unending symphony of white marble loses substance in the cold mist, and the merlons, arcs, towers, statues and gargoyles retreat one by one into a low sky. The temple attains dream-like contours and kindles in the sensitive beholder a notion of unfamiliar dimensions, perhaps even a presentiment of Eternity.*

*Here, like elsewhere in the Christian world, the weeks before Christmas see more activity than usual, because the greatest feast of the year is soon to be celebrated.*

*Like on a cold morning in mid-December, when an icy wind swept through the trendy arcades and across the wide square. Only a few pedestrians were on the move, among them a tall but deeply bowed man in a worn overcoat and a thick woollen cap pulled over the ears. He quickly mounted the stairs, passed the anteroom and entered the central nave. Organ music engulfed him like a well-ordered tempest. Crossing himself, he went forward and sat down on a bench. Soon afterwards the music ceased. A few worshippers had gathered at such an early hour in the unheated cathedral, mostly elderly people, all scattered unevenly across the wide space, looking small and insignificant between the huge pillars.*

*Only further ahead, in front of the altar, huddled a large troupe of children with their escorts. Facing them stood a young priest, slim and unfinished, hands raised in solemn benediction while dispensing with a hardly audible sermon.*

*As the pedestrian looked ahead, he was overcome with quiet joy because children he loved much. Denizens of Innocence, he called them, one of God's most precious gifts, so frail and so delicate, assured of our unconditional protection, irreversibly, as guarantee of their happiness incarnate, and for the whole period of their unfolding. While the sermon wound its course, an elderly woman in a thick coat sat down at the other side of the bench.*

*The pedestrian inclined his head in a friendly greeting, but she took no notice. With a vacant gaze she turned her head and looked at the priest and the children instead.*

*Those had meanwhile begun to sing of a Silent Night, and a little girl in the first row accompanied it crying. It was a strange sort of lament, shrill and long-drawn without changing pitch, interrupted only by harsh sobbing intakes of air, all clearly manifest amidst the many small voices.*

*Odd seemed that nobody took notice, not even the young priest who went on conducting with a drawn expression as if he knew that the girl's grief could not be lessened, not even by the birth of our Gentle Saviour.*

*A cold hand touched the heart of the pedestrian. He turned with a frown and looked at the elderly woman, and as an answer to his unasked question saw a bright tear running down her wrinkled face.*

*Overcome by a nameless fear, he crouched as if pondering an escape, but then got up and walked soundlessly down the left aisle. In the shadow of a pillar he held in, stiff and apprehensive like sensing a gathering storm, and stared at the children.*

*Most seemed strangely lifeless and unmoved. Some had large swimming eyes and drowsy features, like addicts coming down from a trip. A few laughed and joked, but with subdued voices and detached, mask-like faces. A young mother in a luxurious fur coat had flung an arm around her small daughter, and the horror in her frozen face could never be put into words.*

*The little girl was still crying.*

*A gust of icy air, blown up from bottomless caverns, made the altar candles flicker, and for a heartbeat the temple filled with a formless dread as if the Evil One himself had risen from Hell to gloat over his terrible works.*

*Overcome with despair, the pedestrian slunk away like a thief in the night. In the anteroom he cast a last glance at the day's program that had been pinned on a blackboard.*

*Nearly every hour a mass was to be held for various groups and guilds like nurses, fire-fighters representatives of the fashion business, or airport personal. Highlights were the evening vespers, celebrated by the bishop himself for the city's wealthy notables and their entourage. A full house, well heated too, and the spectacle's conclusion Schubert's Ave Maria sung by the celebrated local soprano.*

*The day's first event, already well under way as our pedestrian had reason to know, was a Holy Mass for cancer-stricken children.*

Many summers ago, in the early 1960's, I absolved my obligatory *Grand Tour*, as it was still called then. Those were times when travelling could still be an adventure, even in Europe. And doubly so if funds weren't much on hand and the cheapest way was hitchhiking. Which had its disadvantages, like sleeping under bridges or getting stranded, sometimes for a day or more, on a godforsaken country road while lifting a thumb at the very few cars that passed by. But it was also greatly rewarding, because the people who picked you up were usually very nice and gave you a much better idea about the country and its mentality than those you would meet much later in expensive hotels or on the airplane.

My first objective was Ithaca, the ancient kingdom of Odysseus, him the number one hero of my boyhood dreams. There I planned to write an epos of great distinction, Homeric on the whole but slightly less bloodthirsty. For which purpose I was carrying an ancient portable Remington typewriter with the letters *M* and *m* missing. After a string of interesting adventures, some unbelievable, I limped on a cold January

morning into Brindisi in southern Italy and boarded my ferry, a rusty and much battered trawler named *Glaros*, meaning *seagull* of all things. In its smelly bowels I passed uneasily through a stormy day and night, and made landfall the next morning just after sunrise. As I disembarked and went down on both knees and kissed Ithaca's sacred earth, a few islanders stood by and clearly thought me demented. But I was the first, or perhaps third, foreign visitor since Lord Byron, and therefore exciting news. A lucky circumstance that led to my immediate invitation into the next *taverna* where I greatly underestimated a local wine called *Retsina*. Which caused, around midday, my falling into the murky waters of the harbour while taking a leak.

A feat that made me instantly famous across the whole island, which turned out to be, after my abrupt sobering and rescue, rather small. In fact so small that I had serious difficulties to adjust my dreams to the visible reality. But I was young and full of optimism, and soon found myself enamoured with the islanders and their neat little town.

As you may have noticed, the planned epos didn't materialize, and as a result I regaled the Remington to a friend on the day of my departure. What I took along instead was far more valuable, namely the memory of my hosts, their calm sanity, their honesty, their friendly reserve, their generosity, their dignity and, perhaps most surprising, their generally good health. As far as I can remember, I never saw anybody sick during the six months I stayed on Ithaca. Modern afflictions like heart disease or cancer were unheard of. Most people looked lean and springy, the ancients included. Everyone seemed busy with some task or other. Food was simple, limited to dark bread, white cheese, fruit and vegetables from the gardens, occasionally some chicken or goat, and of course nearly every day fresh fish.

Already then it occurred to me that there must exist a correlation between clean, simple food and a generally good health. An observation confirmed later on by every nutritional scientist with a clear conscience and an independent job.

Many years went by since my visit to Ithaca. I have never returned, for fear of spoiling the memory of those happy months. From what I was told, and what else could be expected, progress has not spared the lovely little island, just as it hasn't spared the rest of the world. Which brings me to the heart of the matter.

Why, you may ask, might our children and grandchildren be too weak or too sick to hold a pen, let alone a sword?

*Because of this!*

Never before in the history of Man have the very foundations of our physical existence, namely the daily nourishment, deviated so totally and terrifyingly from

God's original blueprint. Whatever you buy in a huge supermarket is in some way or other adulterated, poisoned, spoiled, tainted or completely denatured. No fruit or vegetables without traces of pesticides and herbicides, provided they aren't genetically modified in the first place. No food or drink without some of the *fourteen thousand* officially listed chemical additives, all manifestly harmful, and a great number demonstrably carcinogenic, no matter if the FDA agrees or tells you otherwise. And if that weren't enough, more hideous substances are lurking in many kinds of meat that lands on your table, be it a steak, a sausage or a hamburger. Meat from inhumanly abused animals kept day and night in stinking dungeons, propped up with antibiotics, hormones, steroids and what not, because otherwise they would drop dead even before their gruesome short life has ended in the slaughterhouses. Poisonous substances that embed themselves with infinitesimally small amounts in every cell of your body, your semen included, and slowly, very slowly begin their devastating work, in this generation, the next one, or latest the one after.

Did you ever wonder what caused the Swine Flu? Aren't you shocked when you people in the streets which are so enormously fat and heavy that they hardly can walk? Don't you have a suspicion that Mother Nature might is showing us a strong hint of Nemesis for all the Hubris we have created with our cruelty, stupidity and greed? Do you think we can mock God and get away with it? Isn't it a logical conclusion that those poor pigs and their offspring must get utterly diseased the way they are kept? Do you really believe that the super-resistant bugs who originated in their overcrowded stays have passed us by without any future recurrence?

Surely not! They will return, perhaps in a new disguise, and each time more powerful. And the only *lasting* protection is a strong, healthy body nourished with lots of natural fruit and vegetables, all producing enough potent vitamins to battle the diseases that Nature holds in store for those who have blatantly sinned against her rules.

Which brings us back to the children. Who can't have sinned, since they are innocent by definition. Yet there are so many who suffer already at an early age, be it from obesity, heart defects, leukaemia or other diseases, and their number is growing alarmingly. As for the culprits, we only have to look into a mirror. Because the overwhelming cause of their afflictions, estimated by serious nutritionists at about eighty percent, is their daily food and drink from the next giant supermarket. Bought by their parents in good faith, since they believe all those marvellous adverts to be true.

So what to do? *Easy!* In every suburb or town thrives, or hardly survives, a shop that sells organic food and drink and other strictly natural products, supplied by local farmers or large manufacturers and retailers who are committed to a stringent ethical code as concerns quality of produce and a fair treatment of the producer. Their number is growing, much to the displeasure of giant krakens like *Walmart, Aldi, Tesco* and

other China outlets who are ruthlessly strangling local producers and destroying jobs nationwide with the sole reason to satisfy the urge of a few billionaires whose pathological greed is insatiable.

Now you may say that it is so much more expensive to buy the weekly provisions in a health food shop, particularly if you have to feed a whole family. Which is true if plenty of donuts, sweets, cokes and whatnot are part of your shopping list. But if you subtract those, and tell your kids what they really contain and will eventually cause, your purse will be a lot less strained. And what you get instead is clean and healthy stuff far more nutritious than the supermarket fakes that are about as nourishing as an old newspaper.

And sooner or later you'll see the results, namely a generally improved well-being, which in turn causes a happier and clearer mind.