

Below is a transcription of the audio file of the Catechism Class given 12-05-10.

During the call last week, we were discussing in another way the Fourth Article of the Creed, “Suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried.” We were discussing in more particular details Our Savior, Jesus Christ, as He stood before Pilate and how Pilate compromised. But, Jesus Christ would not compromise, and the lessons we should learn from Jesus before Pilate.

I think in the last class we might have ended talking about Our Savior was sent to Herod, and then He was sent back with this vision of the Prisoner in His dignity and His patience, the words He spoke – all kept coming back to the mind of Pilate, although he had sent Him off to Herod. We can hardly doubt that he had peace of conscience because he knew that he had compromised. That is what happens in our lives every time we compromise. Our conscience warns us that we are not walking in the path of truth.

God’s grace was knocking at the heart of Pilate, and God’s grace, through our consciences, knocks in our hearts every time we compromise. As Pilate was reflecting and musing on all the things that happened that first Good Friday morning up to that time, the word was sent back to him that Herod had sent back Jesus. Herod himself did not consider Jesus deserving of any special punishment. We know from elsewhere in the Scriptures that Pilate and Herod became friends on that day, so Jesus works good out of evil even in such circumstances as these.

Not only was Pilate told that Herod had sent Jesus back for him to deal with again, but it was also announced to Pilate (or at least he knew) the Jews were again outside in the court clamoring to see the governor about the same case, because Herod also compromised (although he was not in the same sense doing what Pilate did). When we compromise, usually things go from bad to worse, and that is what happened here in the case with Pilate. He was vexed that he had to face this unpleasant question once more. His compromise of sending Jesus off to Herod did not solve his problems. When we compromise, it seldom if ever solves our problems.

Pilate asked, what am I to do now? What am I to do? I have this terrible thing and it is even worse. The innocence of Jesus was confirmed by Herod, so now not only had Pilate already proclaimed Jesus innocent more than once, Herod proclaimed him innocent. His innocence was certain by all civil authority even; but, there was still the clamoring crowd to be satisfied. Conscience called on Pilate to fulfill his duties as the Roman governor. This judge should have fulfilled his duty, but he did not; the same as the judges in the Supreme Court in our country and elsewhere seem to seldom fulfill their duties the way that surely their conscience must tell them they should act.

In our own case, when we have to judge as parents, superiors, helping others (whatever the case may be), our own conscience dallies around with temptations. Our conscience tells us one way to act, but temporal interest calls the other, or some pleasure, or some brute temporary pleasure is calling against our conscience. Are we going to be like Pilate and compromise over and over? We dream about this even, often we think of ways to get out of actually doing what our conscience tells us to do in the first place. Maybe Satan inspires us to think about a new way to compromise with our own conscience, just as for whatever way, Pilate hit upon a new plan of escaping his own difficulty.

Pilate had at that time a very notorious prisoner called Barabbas lying under sentence of death for robbery and murder. Pilate knew that according to the custom, the governor always released one prisoner on the festival day of the Pasch. So now he thought this would surely get him out of his problem. He would give the people their choice between Jesus, who had gone about doing good, healing the sick, raising their dead, curing all kinds of diseases, against this scoundrel, Barabbas. Jesus had done good to the people. Their vote would save his situation.

Pilate, therefore, went out to meet the people again as St. Luke records and he spoke saying” You have presented to me this man as one that perverted the people. Behold I have examined Him before you and find no cause in this Man in those things wherein you accuse Him. No, nor Herod either, for I sent you to him and behold, nothing worthy of death is done to Him.

Does that sound familiar in the way that we so often compromise with our consciences? We know that God has done no evil. Of course, our conscience tells us the truth. Others proclaim the truth to us the same way.

The Catechisms speak in our favor that we should not be doing what we are doing, just as Herod even told Pilate in a sense that Jesus was innocent.

Then, Pilate made his proposal. Whom will you that I release to you, Barabbas or Jesus that is called Christ? Just as we act so often, Pilate again began by once more proclaiming the innocence of Jesus; but, mark the injustice of the compromise that follows. Pilate has power to release Him. Justice calls for His release; but no, He is put in the scales of opinion with a murderer and a robber – with Barabbas. After having declared Jesus innocent, Pilate compares Him to a man known to be guilty. Yes, the all-holy God, the good and compassionate Lord Jesus is put in comparison with a murderer. He had foreseen it last evening in the garden and Jesus had accepted it; not My Will, but Thine be done. It was for us and for our sins that Jesus had accepted this fresh injustice. Does that sound like a rebuke to our consciences?

We desire some pleasure that our conscience tells us not to take part in, but we are not willing to stand up for the truth. We prefer Barabbas, the brutal pleasure, to the all-holy God and His Divine Will. The Sacred Heart of Jesus has often received similar humiliations, for even those whom He has dearly loved have gone so far as to put His love and friendship in comparison with an earthly attraction, with something viler, perhaps than the wretched Barabbas and to decide against Jesus. Even for such, the Lord Jesus is unbounded in His goodness and He will come; He will even run to meet those who have put His friendship in the scales with a thing of this earth, IF ONLY they will turn to Him. That is the grace we need to pray for frequently every day: to turn to Jesus when we are strongly tempted and with every temptation; that we will return to Him and not prefer a Barabbas, some vile sinful earthly thing to the love of Jesus Christ. He will help us if we turn to Him, but we must do that as our part.

After this cruelty on the part of Pilate of comparing Jesus to a wicked murderer, he received yet another grace (as God often gives us grace after grace after grace). He gave it to Pilate with that vision of his own wife. While Pilate was waiting for an answer from the people (as appears from St. Matthew's gospel), Pilate gets this strong grace. He gets a warning of the gravity of his crime if he condemns this innocent Man. His wife told him not to condemn this Man. As he was sitting in the place of judgment, his wife sent to him saying: Have thou nothing to do with that just Man. I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of Him.

What was that vision that was so terrifying to this Roman matron that made her suffer so much? Was it possibly the vision of this just Man that Pilate was condemning to death coming again in the clouds of Heaven with great power and majesty, and calling all mankind; calling Pilate himself to appear before Him in judgment? Now Jesus was before Pilate, but Pilate will someday, with the rest of us on General Judgment Day, stand before Jesus as our Judge. Pilate has already received his particular judgment and on General Judgment Day, we will all be there. Was it the vision of the future of Pilate? His recall to Rome after three short years, the confiscation of his wealth, and his banishment into exile? The very words of the message tell us that the vision and dream must have been serious and terrible, and the warning fitted so well with Pilate's mind at the moment, that for him it certainly was a strong reminder of his duty. It was an appeal of grace.

I would think that each one of us on this conference call and those who might hear the recording hereafter will have to admit that when we have placed ourselves in an occasion of sin, especially in an unnecessary occasion of sin, we have received in most every instance, more than one strong grace from God telling us that we should not compromise. Telling us what is right, but we chose our own will to go contrary to God's will; just as Pilate kept doing on this morning of the first Good Friday.

Remember that Pilate had compared Jesus to Barabbas; then, he received this warning from his wife. In the meantime, while he pondered on this warning from his wife, the leaders of the Sanhedrin had meanwhile been very busy among the people, persuading them to ask for Barabbas. Accept the evil man before the innocent Man. We know from the Scriptures that their influence prevailed and soon Pilate heard the choice: Not this Man, but Barabbas. It was a public rejection of Christ by the whole people. It was a public rejection that has been reenacted by practically everybody since that time. Each of us can examine our own conscience in our past life to see how many times we, in effect, have called out the same horrible words of the people: Not this Man, but Barabbas. Not what our conscience tells us to do, but what fallen nature inclines us to do. That is the choice we make. Otherwise, we would never have committed a sin.

Although these people were now preferring Barabbas to Jesus Christ, still Pilate did not wish to proceed to the crucifixion of a Man against Whom he found no case, and Herod found no case because there was no guilt in Him. Even the good thief Dismas proclaimed on the Cross in rebuking the thief on the left: This Man has done no evil. This mysterious dream of his wife and the words of her message moved Pilate much, and he determined to make another attempt to avoid pronouncing the capital sentence but at the expense of a new and brutal injustice. Oh, for some trace of an honest man's generosity in the heart of the cowardly governor and the court would be cleared, the case would be over, and justice would be done. But, generosity is wanting in the life of Pilate and so often in our own lives.

Pilate would try another compromise, just as we so often do. First, he would speak in favor of Him Who he knew to be innocent. St. Luke records how, at this stage, Pilate again spoke to the people, desiring to release Jesus. Ah, these false and unreal desires that have no positive will behind them! Pilate did not want to crucify Him, but what did the people cry out? Crucify Him! Crucify Him! Therefore, Pilate said to them again the third time, why? What evil has this Man done? I find no cause of death in Him. I will chastise Him, therefore, and let Him go.

Pilate begins again by declaring the innocence of Jesus, but look at the logic of the compromise. If we look at our own consciences, we will find that there is never any true logic in our compromise if we weigh it in the light of eternity. I find no cause in this Man, therefore I will chastise Him. Why should he chastise an innocent Man? Why have we chastised and crucified again unto ourselves the Lord Jesus Christ by our sins? Pilate proclaims basically this Man has done no evil, therefore, I will scourge Him. Every time we commit our sins, we not only scourge Jesus Christ, but a mortal sin is crucifying again unto ourselves the Lord Jesus Christ, as St. Paul expressly tells us.

Our dearest Lord was now abandoned to the cruelty of the soldiers. Jesus was stripped of his seamless garment. He was bound to a pillar. He was brutally scourged. Profane history tells us what a Roman scourging was like, and we shudder to think of what our Beloved Lord suffered under the lash. But, do we really? Do we really shudder to think of what Jesus suffered under the lash? Then why do we not think of it enough to make ourselves cease to commit sin from this day forward? No, it is because we cease to reflect on this Fourth Article of the Creed: He suffered under Pontius Pilate. We do what Pilate did – over and over and over and over again.

If we only meditated seriously and prayed fervently, then we would no longer put Jesus under the lash. What does Our Savior do? Jesus bore it in patience. Jesus thought of each one of His children. He offered the pain of the scourging for all sins of wicked indulgence. His generosity in bearing all for us contrasts with the compromising spirit of Pilate. He had taken our sins upon Himself and hence, He was like a lamb before its shearers and He opened not His mouth. To atone for our disobedience, Jesus was obedient even unto death.

Pilate retired to reflect and rest during the scourging. He was weary of this case. His conscience bothered him terribly. Does that sound familiar to us? Surely the scourging would satisfy the people, surely some indulgence will take away the temptations; but no, that is not the way to overcome temptation by indulging ourselves saying, I will stop before I commit a mortal sin. It seldom happens. Sooner or later, you will fall into grievous sin if you have little or no fear of committing venial sins.

Pilate gave the soldiers ample time to work their will on the helpless Prisoner. Then, he once more summoned Jesus before him. The more we tarry with temptation, it is like Pilate giving the soldiers more and more time to scourge Jesus, to make Him what the prophets foretold long before: We thought Him as a leper, worm and no man, scourged from the crown of His head to the soles of His feet, we could find no soundness in Him. They have numbered all My bones because they scourge us with the hooks, like fish hooks, and tore the flesh off where you could number all of His bones. That is what we are doing when we compromise with temptations.

Finally, Our Savior was led in to Pilate, clothed in purple, crowned with thorns, and streaming with Blood. Pilate was moved. Grace spoke to him again. If we take time to meditate seriously on the Fourth Article of the Creed, "He suffered under Pontius Pilate," maybe our cold hearts will also be moved. Grace speaks to us at least during proper prayer and meditation. Pilate must have thought to himself (or maybe even said out loud)

these soldiers of mine have gone too far; but then, he realized another way he could compromise. At least the sight of the Man in this pitiable condition will certainly soften the people, and my difficulty will be settled.

Therefore, Pilate ordered Jesus to be led after him and went forth again and said to them: Behold, I bring Him forth to you that you may know that I find no cause in Him. Jesus, therefore, came forth bearing the crown of thorns and the purple garment, and Pilate said to them, “ecce homo,” behold the Man. It is sad that we do not take more time to look at the Crucifix and behold the Man, the Lamb of God, crucified for us. “Ecce homo” should be a thought that comes to our mind when temptations come to our mind. If only we would go to Mount Calvary, stand there with the Blessed Virgin Mary and Saint John and Mary Magdalen and the holy women, and truly think about and ponder Jesus crucified (as we pray in the Creed). Then, we would overcome those temptations by prayer and grace and mortification. But, that is our problem. We do not have Pilate bringing the scourged Jesus before our minds in a vivid manner, but even that did not soften the harden hearts of those Pharisees and proud people. They were not humble enough to acknowledge that this scourged Man standing before them was God Who redeemed them, created them, and some day will judge them.

Let us reflect on the condition to which Jesus is reduced. Is He not punished enough, or must we keep scourging Him day after day by our willful venial sins? Hopefully, at least, we are not committing willful or any mortal sins. The pitiable state of Jesus in this condition should soften our hearts. It should soften everyone’s heart. But, we know from what goes on in the world, people do not realize and do not compare the truth. They do not think of the Passion, and therefore, they crucify again unto themselves the Lord Jesus Christ hour after hour, day after day, most of the days of their lives.

Where is our faith if it does not move our hearts to turn them to Jesus? What else could Jesus suffer and do that will convert us? Our dear Jesus, our Redeemer, our King, our God, crowned with thorns and streaming with blood. Let us look into His Sacred Heart as He stood there before the crowd. Jesus had been the subject of compromise all the morning, and Jesus has been the subject of compromise ever since that first Good Friday. How many times have we compromised during our lives?

The compromise in that first Good Friday had ended in the deadly scourging and the shame of the cruel crowing with thorns, the ignominy of the purple garb, the spitting in the Face; but that Sacred Heart was unchanged. They ripped His flesh off, but they did not take the love out of His heart. Jesus still looked on His sufferings and looked on us. Having loved His own who were in the world, Jesus loved them to the end. There was no compromise in Him. If we were put through such a trial in preparation for martyrdom, would we be able to be like Jesus and forgive those who ripped our flesh off with cruel scourges or tortured us in some other way?

If we do not pray for that grace to accept holy martyrdom every day, the most probable thing is we will not accept it if it comes our way. Knowing the situation in the world, it could very likely be that we should be offered the opportunity of martyrdom some day for the Truth Faith. Will we accept it? I say, probably only if we pray for that grace to accept it. This is what it means when we pray and meditate on the Apostles Creed.

The sight of Jesus in this most wretched condition had no effect on the hearts that were hardened by envy or blinded by prejudice. St. John records that when the priests and their followers saw Jesus, they cried out again: Crucify Him! Crucify Him! Jesus was rejected in public for the second time. Have we committed more than one mortal sin (anybody on this conference call)? How many times have we rejected Our Savior and yelled out to crucify Him with our mortal sins? Compromise does not solve problems, just as the governor’s plan had once more failed. Pilate had tried to serve two masters, his conscience and temporal interests, and he had failed as Jesus Christ had said he must fail for no man, including you and I, can serve two masters. Either we serve Jesus Christ all the way, or if we compromise, we are no better than Pilate.

As Pilate heard that shout, crucify Him, he saw the surging crowd. They were ready to break into a mob. He still hesitated. He would have liked to deliver Jesus Christ because his conscience told him what to do, but he would not risk his promotion in doing so. Take him, you, and crucify him for I find no cause in Him, he cried out to them. He found no cause for the crucifixion, but he was still willing to let them take care of this crucifixion. How often do we hideaway in secrecy (so to speak)? We say I am not willing to commit such an evil thing, but I do not mind if others dress immodestly, steal things, indulge in passions in food and drink

beyond what it should be and so on and so forth. I do not want to crucify Jesus, but I am not willing to stop others from crucifying him in their false religions, their evil practices, their satanic way of living. I am not willing to stop people from taking dope and all the things that I could stop.

The Jews answered Pilate, we have a law and according to that law He ought to die because He made Himself the Son of God. That might have been the first time that Pilate heard this accusation. The Prisoner had claimed to be the Son of God? Then at once it rushed into his mind all he had heard about the miracles of Jesus, and this vision of his wife, the patience of Jesus, the majesty He had shown, the Kingdom that was not of this world. This must have terribly bothered Pilate because St. John even records and tells us expressly that when Pilate had heard this saying, he feared the more. Was this Prisoner perhaps more than man? It was another grace! Few people can ever justly say that God only gave them a slight grace to overcome their temptations. No, grace; and strong grace after stronger grace is given to us to do what is right; but, we always have our free will to do our own will opposed to God's will.

Pilate entered again into the hall and called Jesus. He was subdued now and fear was in his heart, and with something approaching reverence, he said to Jesus: Whence art Thou? Jesus gave him no answer because Pilate could find the answer he wanted in his own heart. Pilate, therefore, said to Him: Speaketh Thou not to me, knowest Thou not that I have power to crucify Thee and I have power to release Thee? Yes, indeed. Pilate had that power to release Jesus. That is why he was the Roman governor. All power comes from God, and God gives just power to certain people to rule others.

Pilate had the power to do what was right just as we do. God always gives sufficient grace to overcome every temptation, as we are specifically told in the Scriptures. We have the grace. We have the power to conquer, if only we will use it. It was just the possession of this power that made Pilate uneasy and anxious in conscience; it is just our power to overcome temptations that will accuse us on our particular judgment if we compromised and gave in to those temptations. Jesus reminded him that this power which he possessed would have to be accounted for before God: Thou shouldest not have any power against Me unless it were given thee from above. Therefore, he that hath delivered Me to thee hath the greater sin. By these last words, Our Savior let Pilate see that He read his heart, and that in His justice, He distinguished his sin from the sin of the Jews.

God knows all the circumstances of everyone on earth. We do not judge just judgments most of the time, but God always judges just judgments. God reads our hearts just as he revealed to Pilate here that He read his heart. He knew what Pilate's conscience was telling him to do. God knows what our conscience tells us to do. Why? because virtue came out from Our Lord, again, and moved Pilate as St. John tells us: From thence forth, Pilate sought to release Him. Although he had been, in a sense, attempting to release Him all the time, now he was determined. Grace seemed to have conquered.

The governor was very determined to do what was right and to exercise his power in the interest of justice, but when he came before the people, he was greeted with the last threat: If thou release this man, thou art not Caesar's friend. It was all over now! How often do our good resolutions come to nothing when we go with bad companions and evil company. We know what we should do, but when we go there (especially when we have fallen into sin with certain people before: persons, places, and things that are temptations for us in particular), if we do not avoid them, then we will most likely be just like Pilate. It will all be over for us. We have resolved to tell a friend, some intimate (or whomever) this should not continue. We are not walking on the true path to sanctity; but then, the compromise comes into place and the sin does go from bad to worse.

Pilate's weak and half-hearted good resolutions could not face the prospect called up by these words. The displeasure of the Roman Emperor, the displeasure of the man that ruled the world meant ruin for Pilate, so he cast justice and virtue to the winds, and through fear of temporal loss, yielded consent to the very crime which he had been weakly trying to avoid all the morning. That is what happens to our resolutions if we are not praying properly and applying the grace God gives us to our lives. All our weak resolutions mean nothing if we do not pray for the grace to put them into execution. We are like Pilate who gave sentence that it should be as they required. We are like Pilate and we give our consent to crucify again unto ourselves the Lord Jesus Christ by our compromising with temptations. Pilate sentenced Jesus Christ to be crucified. How many times since that day has the thing happened over and over and over again?

What thoughts the angels must have had as they gazed on this scene with adoring love, seeing the weakness of humans and the love of God? Jesus, the all-holy God, the just Man. Jesus is condemned to death, condemned to the Cross, condemned as one unworthy to walk upon His own earth, condemned by a cowardly judge at whose heart God's grace had been knocking all that day, who received warning from Heaven and warnings from his own conscience. That is why we begin the Creed, "I believe in God, the Father Almighty, the Creator of Heaven and earth." This same God, the same just Judge is calling on us every day, every day to overcome our temptations. Yet, we still have that free will to do our own will, and go against God's will.

Certainly, Pilate had been warned, but the warnings were not heeded. The voice of conscience was stifled. Grace was resisted and the result was that now Pilate was condemning the innocent One to death. He knew it; the same with us. We receive grace. Our conscience tells us what to do. Just that little voice whispering in the ear of every man, woman, and child, what is right and what is wrong. So, when we commit sin, we know it. That is why it is a sin, because we choose to do evil. We choose to go contrary to our conscience when we compromise.

For even at the moment of giving the sentence, Pilate's conscience so smote him that he tried even then to shift responsibility of his act to other shoulders. So, taking water, he washed his hands before the people saying: I am innocent of the Blood of this just Man, look you to it. A vain ceremony, which only testified to his guilt in condemning One Whom he called anew to be a just Man. The whole people answering said: His blood be upon us and upon our children. That is why that nation is so far out today. They called this curse upon themselves, and only at the end time will these manifest great numbers of Jews supposedly be converted.

Jesus was rejected a third time by His own people, but how many times in our lives has Jesus been rejected? How many times have we preferred a vile pleasure, a dislike for others, a temptation, to God? For the judge, compromise had ended in crime. Beaten and humbled, Pilate turned and entered his palace. When we sin, we may think that we have pleasure now. We may think that we enjoy the indulgence, but our conscience tells us we have been beaten. We are humbled.

We also know from Sacred Scriptures that less than two months later (not far from this same spot where Pilate compromised), a fisherman stood and faced the crowd and said: Ye men of Israel, the God of Abraham, hath glorified His Son, Jesus, Whom you indeed delivered up and denied before the face of Pilate when he had determined to release him; but, the Author of life you killed, and God hath raised from the dead. They always talk about going to Heaven and standing before the pearly gates and meeting St. Peter. What will he say to us? Jesus Christ, the Author of Life, Whom you killed, you crucified again by your sins.

The story of Pilate is a story of those who are ungenerous in God's service. It is a story of everyone who tries to serve two masters: conscience and earthly interest; conscience and pleasure; conscience and self-will. Those who want to make a compromise when God calls him to be sincere and true. Such a man may keep off sin if he fears it for a time, but sooner or later, he will be driven from his illogical position and carried on to the very sin he was at first determined to avoid – carried on like Pilate to crucify again unto himself the Son of God, and make a mockery of Him; as is done by every mortal sin.

There always seems to be a great deal to be said in favor of compromise. In this great deal to be said, that constitutes the temptation. There is apparently a lot to be said in favor of every temptation. If there were not, it would cease to be a temptation. There are many in hell today whose ruin began by compromise with conscience. Their parents told them not to join and go into bad company, but they compromised. Their conscience was warning them what their parents told them, but they were compromising. They enjoyed these evil companions that corrupted good morals. From that association, eventually they ended up in hell.

The voice of God speaking in their conscience called them to the right; the voice of God calling to us always tells us what is right from what is wrong. It leads us to do what is right. Whereas the world in its spirit, its comfort, and ease and convenience, pleasures and joys; in a word, self-seeking, calls us to the left. We want to serve two masters. We always want satisfaction in this life and salvation in the next, but we are going to fail because such a thing is impossible as Jesus Christ, the Eternal Truth, has said. If we attempt to compromise, we will curse our folly for all eternity. "Therefore, we have erred" is the cry of all the damned souls. Therefore, we have erred. We compromised when we should have stood up for what our conscience told us was right.

The wicked one does not mind the means he takes provided he does us harm. One man will be tempted to make a compromise with duty, with grace on one particular point, another will be tempted to compromise on a totally different question. In one form or another, we must all expect this temptation. So let us consider a few examples to strengthen ourselves, hopefully enough to help us overcome these temptations at least from this day forward:

\* How many compromise against the virtue of charity?

I have been very much offended or injured. Grace tells me how pleasing to God would be an absolutely generous forgiveness. On the other hand, retaliation is sweet to fallen nature. Now I would never wish to harbor serious hatred or desire of serious revenge, but between that and generous forgiveness, how many degrees of compromise? Alas! Alas! Self-seeking may take the way of compromise in this matter of charity and forgiveness. If you follow up the spiritual history of those that compromise from slight resentment, they pass to more serious resentment, and finally by word or deed, they satisfy this resentment. They give in to the very sin they were determined to avoid in the beginning.

Toward the end of the Catechism of the Council of Trent, we will cover the Pater Noster, the Our Father: Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. Someone does us an injury. Someone seems to get in our road from our self-seeking desires. Are we willing to forgive totally and generously or do we hold some slight revenge? Not willing to condemn ourselves because we would not forgive, therefore preventing God from forgiving us? Be very careful that you do not compromise against what your conscience tells you to do at the very beginning.

\* Other times we may be tempted to compromise in affection.

I noticed that there has arisen in my heart an inordinate affection for another person. I know that my intimate affections must be controlled. I would not for the world admit any affection that would seriously displease God. I know also that safety in grace and facility for prayer lie in the sternness with which I refuse myself all indulgence in this matter. Between these two, I may be tempted to try and stir a middle course, and doing so often ends in yielding to the very captivation which, in the beginning, was regarded with horror.

Young couples going out nowadays seem to seldom follow the wise advice of Holy Mother, the Catholic Church – never to have courtship without someone watching! Not to let young people be alone without a chaperone. How seldom do parents follow their conscience, their duty, their parental duty and not let their children go on dates, not meet those of the opposite sex without a chaperone watching at all times. Especially if they are engaged and soon to be married, the temptations become stronger; and if they are permitted to be alone together, often times they get married in the state of sin.

They would not compromise they say at the beginning, but the more we compromise and let these kinds of affections get away, the harder it is to overcome in the end. We get used to giving in to our self-will, which is opposed to God's Will, and just like Pilate, compromise again and again and again and again; until we have crucified unto ourselves the Lord Jesus Christ.

\* Other times we are tempted to compromise in our conversation.

Many there are who in the beginning of life were determined to preserve God's holy grace at all costs. They get among companions. They find themselves in society where the conversation is not what it should be, where all that is most sacred is spoken of with disrespect, where the holy practices and the wise laws of the Church are scoffed at, or where the conversation is such as to make the Angels weep. The warning voice of conscience is heard. Get out of there, their Angels tell them. Leave this company. Evil companions corrupt good morals, but they give in to human respect. It would be easy to express their disapproval at least by their manners by leaving the company or by speaking out their mind quietly when they know that they may do good in thus speaking. But no, human respect; compromise comes in the way. They keep silent. They say nothing. They are like Pilate; compromise over and over as the evil continues day after day.

They do not mean to approve of the sinful lives of those whose conversations they hear. They do not mean to commit a serious sin, but they fear what people would say. They want to satisfy conscience and human respect. They want to serve two masters, which is impossible. If their mother was insulted by words, they would not stand for it, but if Jesus Christ is insulted, alas, I will just compromise. Follow up the history of the

man who thus compromises. From cowardly listening, he passes to half-hearted but secret approval, and so on step by step until he is lead again to crucify by this sin, the Son of God and make a mockery of Him; to crucify the Son of God by the very sin he was determined to avoid in his first compromise. Now, he takes part and is like the rest of the gang, speaking evil. Bad companions corrupt good morals.

Parents keep your children under guard. That is your parental duty. Be very careful who they associate with, what they are saying, what they are doing. If you are put in the workforce, pray for the grace not to compromise.

\* Other times we may be led to compromise in reading what we should not be reading.

How many there are who begin life determined to be good Catholics, to keep the Faith, to cling to the Church, to make sure of the one thing necessary, their eternal salvation? But books come in their way which are written in a spirit of secret hostility to the Faith and to the Church. When they have read the first few chapters, conscience speaks to them in no uncertain voice, and warns them that since they are not expert theologians, these books may be a danger to them, that the Church forbids such reading. Conscience calls one way when it would be easy for them to do the right thing, to shut the book and put it in the fire; but no, they compromise like Pilate.

How many people today used to keep the Faith, then they read these articles about unless a man receives baptism of water, he cannot be saved. At first, there conscience warned them. This does not sound right. This is a new theology. I never read that in my Catechism, just the opposite. No, they compromise and read it.

They read what this religion says. Maybe the Jehovah witness comes and give him some literature to read. Their Catholic conscience tells them, burn it immediately in the presence of the Jehovah witness, if necessary. Or of the Mormon missionaries and all others who bring this evil to you. No, they compromise. They accept it, and secretly they go and read it to see what does this religion really teach. Maybe I can learn something from it. They compromise like Pilate and in the end, they lose their Faith.

They do not mean to give up the practice of their holy religion. They mean to be good Catholics, but they object to the discipline of the all-wise Church, which restrains their liberty in reading such things. They want to be able to say they have read this book, which other people have read. They want to be with God and to be with God's enemies. They want to serve two masters. They want to serve God and to serve the world. Just follow up the history of those who thus compromise, and you will often find that they have given up all practice of religion. They have lost the treasure of treasures, their Faith, their holy Faith to which in the beginning, they were so determined to keep and to cling to It at all cost.

\* Others compromise in their duties of their state of life.

For example, a responsible position has been given to me and in consequence, a duty has to be done. By myself personally, it is my duty and I want to escape it, and yet, I do not want to see it neglected. So, I manage to pass it on to someone to whom it really does not belong just as Pilate compromised and sent Jesus to Herod. I think myself clever just as Pilate did. I wiggle out of the difficulty, but it looks like a compromise. It is simply self-seeking. It is going against my conscience. Just follow up in the history of that case. When this self-seeking view prevails, I will later on neglect the duty when I can find no one to do it for me; just as Pilate received Jesus back from Herod, and in the end, he totally compromised and had Him crucified after the scourging and everything else.

In the life of many religious, they compromise in living their vows, whereas if they lived their vows, they would die as a martyr basically. They had their resolution to keep their vows of poverty most carefully; they were willing to bear the sting of poverty, but a temptation comes. They wish to keep something or dispose of something. They want to satisfy self. They think some way or another of a way to have some sort of a permission, but it is a compromise. They are reminded in their conscience what they were told on retreats, but they compromise. The same goes for all of us. We are told to live our baptismal vows, but we compromise. Finally, we get a very strong grace from God, but we compromise. That is too much. Things have gone too far. I cannot help it, like Pilate said: See to it yourself. We never intended to lose our Faith, to crucify God; but, if we compromise, it will be done so many times during our lives.

So, let us learn this lesson from the Fourth Article of the Creed when Jesus suffered under Pontius Pilate. We should fear lest the spirit of compromise finds a place in our lives, for there is opportunity for it in almost everything we do. Continued willful compromise even in small things may be the turning point in our spiritual lives. It may break forever the chain of graces intended by God to conduct us to high holiness, so in place of almost unthinkable intimacies with God (which God Himself had designed for us even in this life), we may live a life of low spiritual attainment. In the end, we prefer lukewarmness and tepidity, and finally fall away from the Faith. We are like the people, not only on the first Good Friday, but in the world every day, who cry out: Not this Man, but Barabbas; not what my conscience tells me to do, but what my self-seeking indulged life inclines me to do.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost ...

Thank you for visiting <http://www.JMJsites.com>. Please tell others about this website and pray much more.