



Catholics United for the Faith

Affirming Authentic Catholicism in Milwaukee

St. Gregory VII Chapter
January, 2018

Come and hear Duke Pesta tell the truth about "The Crusades," on Sunday, January 21

Dr. James "Duke" Pesta, a Professor of Literature at UW-Oshkosh, is a well-known speaker on Renaissance literature and topics pertaining to education. Dr. Pesta received his M.A. in Renaissance literature from John Carroll University, and his Ph.D. in Shakespeare and Renaissance literature from Purdue University. He has also taught courses on the Bible, Russian literature and Christian Apologetics. He was raised in Catholic schools and taught for some time in a Catholic high school. Dr. Pesta is also the academic director of Freedom Project Education, an online, home school curriculum, rooted in Judeo-Christian values.

Among his students, Duke Pesta is a very popular and engaging teacher. An internet search found this quote from one of Dr. Pesta's students: "I have always despised having to take English classes, so I was pleasantly surprised when this class quickly became my favorite and one of the best classes I have ever taken." Our readers are encouraged to come and bring young family members – high school students and young adults – who might enjoy a very interesting bit of history, told by an excellent speaker. Please come, with family and friends, to hear Dr. Duke Pesta explain,

"The Crusades – The Truth"

WHERE: St. John the Evangelist Church Hall

8500 W. Cold Spring Road (enter from north parking lot)
Greenfield, WI 53228

WHEN: Sunday, January 21

TIME: 2:00 p.m. – Program 1:45 p.m. ~ Rosary

In This Issue

Page

1 Dr. Pesta will discuss

"The Crusades-The Truth"

2 Book of the month:

"Saints vs. Scoundrels"

By Dr. Benjamin Wicker

2 Contact CUF

3 "The Last Jedi: The First
Anti-Star Wars, Star Wars
Movie" by Jack Kerwick



Thank you, Fr. John Belmonte, S.J., for accepting the 2018 Msgr. Alphonse Popek Award

It is with great pleasure that we congratulate Fr. John Belmonte, S.J., and thank him for graciously accepting the 2018 "Msgr. Alphonse S. Popek Award." Fr. Belmonte currently serves as the Superintendent of Catholic Schools for the Diocese of Joliet, Illinois, a position he has held since July 2010. Prior to that Fr. Belmonte served as principal of Marquette University High School, here in Milwaukee, from 2004 to 2010. Fr. Belmonte was born in 1963, and grew up in suburban Chicago, where he graduated from Arlington High School in 1981. He graduated from Marquette University in 1985, with a B.A. in History, and then entered the Society of Jesus. He was ordained to the priesthood on June 14, 1996. In 2013, Fr. Belmonte was elected to the National Catholic Education Association board and presently serves as Vice-President of the Superintendent's committee. We thank Fr. Belmonte for his faithful dedication to Christ's Church, and his attention to strong catechetical programs. Please reserve October 14, and help us honor Fr. Belmonte!

With gratitude for your kind and generous contributions to the Chapter!

Again, we sincerely thank all the members who so generously support this CUF Chapter. Without your financial help, we would not be able to further our mission to "Affirm Authentic Catholicism in Milwaukee" and "To Support, Defend and Advance the efforts of the Teaching Church!" We have expenses that most people do not see, such as printing and mailing the newsletter, the \$100 fee for use of an auditorium, stipends and travel expenses for speakers when necessary, the postal fee for the "Bulk Mail Permit," etc. If you have questions, or would like to attend a meeting of our Board, do not hesitate to contact Al Szews at 414-321-9377.

Come to hear Fr. Kubicki, S.J., deliver our annual "Afternoon of Recollection" Feb. 18

As many of you already know, our good friend, Fr. James Kubicki, is no longer living in Milwaukee, but is serving as President of the St. Francis Mission, among the Lakota, in St. Francis, South Dakota. Of course, we are thrilled that he is willing to come back to Milwaukee to deliver our "Afternoon of Recollection" on Sunday, Feb. 18, at Sacred Heart Church on 49th and Wells St. Please reserve the date now, and encourage your family and friends to come and enjoy, as always, an excellent speaker with an excellent message. It is a privilege to call him a friend, and we are honored that he will make this trip.

Plan to attend the "Respect Life Mass" on Monday, Jan. 22, at Blessed Savior Parish

Bishop James Schuerman will preside at the 7:00 p.m. "Respect Life Mass" at Blessed Savior Parish, 8545 West Villard Avenue in Milwaukee, 53225. The evening will begin with the rosary at 6:30 p.m. Join the archdiocese in prayer for all life, from conception to natural death, as we observe the tragic Roe v. Wade Supreme Court decision, which has taken the lives of nearly 60 million children in the U.S. over the past 45 years.

Kudos to Bishop Robert Morlino of Madison for requiring the St. Michael Prayer

According to the January 4, 2018, issue of *The Wanderer*, Bishop Robert Morlino, in a letter to the diocese, "asks Catholics to combat the evil encroaching upon our world by enlisting the aid of St. Michael the Archangel." He has asked for particular petitions "to be added into the General Intercessions at all Sunday and Solemnity Masses...with a particular prayer to St. Michael the Archangel, who in Scripture is called the 'great prince' and guardian of God's people." The Bishop has not only asked the faithful to include the St. Michael Prayer at Sunday Masses, but also in their daily prayers.

Congratulations to Fr. Eric Nielsen, Bishop Morlino, and the St. Paul Catholic Center!

After ten years of planning, many years of construction, and 28 million dollars, the new St. Paul Catholic Center is now open, and being enjoyed by students in Madison! This impressive, five-story building (in the middle of campus), on State Street, across from the library, was dedicated on November 12. The Chapel is breathtakingly beautiful, and the very presence of this Catholic edifice on this liberal campus, is an act of God. With Catholicism being faithfully taught, it is an excellent place for your young college students! If you can't drive to Madison to see it, check out the website at uwcatholic.org

Catechetical Corner: How can we make a good examination of conscience?

Answer: We can make a good examination of conscience by calling to memory the Commandments of God, the precepts of the Church, the seven capital sins, and the particular duties of our state in life, to find out the sins we have committed. *Baltimore Catechism Three*, #751



Catholics United for the Faith

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Book of the Month: *Saints vs. Scoundrels*

Author: Dr. Benjamin Wicker

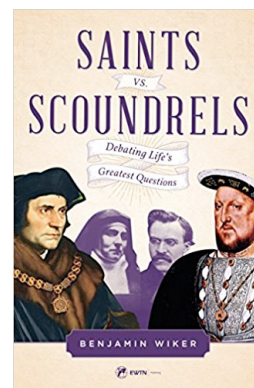
Publisher: EWTN Publishing, Inc., 2017

"In *Saints vs. Scoundrels*, Dr. Benjamin Wicker invites you to interact not just with the ideas that have shaped history, but with the people who created and spread those ideas.

By reading this collection of lively and imaginative conversations between the great truth-tellers and the great error-peddlers of history, you will come to appreciate the personalities behind the "Great Conversation" that has shaped Western Civilization. These people may never have met in real life, but the ideas they represent and the movements they started have interacted throughout history and shaped our present.

How fascinating would it be if they had ever shared a living room? This is the question Dr. Wicker answers with deep research and dynamic storytelling. Enjoy this unique opportunity to join the conversation!"

Contributors of \$12 or more per year to the Chapter receive discounts on books displayed at CUF meetings, and receive the Newsletter by First Class Mail.



"The Last Jedi: The First Anti-Star Wars, Star Wars Movie"

By: Jack Kerwick

Townhall, Jan. 1, 2018

Having fallen in love with *Star Wars* from the time that I first saw it in the late 1970s, it brings this 45 year-old no pleasure to concede that, for various reasons, the latest installment in the *SW* saga is simple **not** a good film. Much has already been written about *The Last Jedi's* poor story-telling, sorely underdeveloped and misused characters, and rampant Political Correctness. Most of the commentary has been spot-on in these respects. However, little to no attention has been drawn to that which is most disturbing about *TLJ*: It is the first **anti-star Wars Star Wars** movie. *TLJ* essentially deconstructs the whole *SW* saga. The classic tale of the perennial battle between Good and Evil collapses in on itself, here being revealed as an epic delusion begotten by the monumental arrogance of those – the Jedi – who thought themselves heroes. By insisting upon a hard and fast distinction between the dark and light sides of the Force – by insisting that morality is an objective feature of the universe – and positioning themselves as guardians of the Light, the Jedi, in their “hubris,” as Luke Skywalker says, gave rise to all that had gone wrong in the galaxy.

In other words, it is the Jedi Order that is the “root cause” of evil (if we can even coherently speak of evil in connection with *TLJ*). To put it more exactly, it is **civilization**, its traditions and institutions, from which all corruption springs. Freedom, Equality, and every other virtue can come about only after the old civilization has been razed, burnt to the ground along with its literature, those Jedi texts to which Yoda takes the proverbial match in *TLJ*. This idea that civilization is corruptive of nature extends back centuries in Western thought. Its most prominent representative is the 18th century French philosopher Jean Jacques Rousseau. It was Rousseau who famously remarked that “man is born free, but he is everywhere in chains.” Civilization enslaves. Specifically, the institution of **private property**, the cornerstone of civilization, is the origin of all cruelty, vice, and horror. Rousseau’s remarks on this subject

say it all: *“The first man who, having fenced in a piece of land, said ‘This is mine,’ and found people naïve enough to believe him, that man was the true founder of civil society. From how many crimes, wars, and murders, from how many horrors and misfortunes might not any one have saved mankind, by...crying to his fellows: Beware of listening to this impostor; you are undone if you once forget that the fruits of the earth belong to us all, and the earth itself to nobody.”* Private property engenders material inequalities and hierarchies, the “chains” that enslave. The Jedi, to hear *TLJ's* Luke Sky-

“TLJ essentially deconstructs the whole SW saga...the perennial battle between Good and Evil collapses in on itself...”

walker tell it, created and perpetuated hierarchy and inequality vis-à-vis the Force inasmuch as they were either delusional or deceptive enough to presume that they alone had the right to protect it, as if it somehow belonged to them. And herein lay the true significance of Daisy Ridley’s “Rey,” the chief protagonist of Disney’s trilogy: She is a Rousseauian Hero, the Great Leveler, the quintessential champion of Equality. Rey is the most sagacious, potent, and capable of Force users, exceeding in these virtues even Yoda; yet she is no Jedi – at least she is not a Jedi in any **traditional** sense of this term. The criteria that aspiring Jedi were expected to satisfy before they could be recognized as “masters” by guardians of the old order have not only been relegated to the dustbin of history, but that history itself both the heroes and villains of *TLJ* agree also needs to be erased. Rey herself has no history or, what amounts to the same thing, no history worth talking about. This trilogy’s main villain, “Kylo Ren,” wayward son to Leia and Han Solo, nephew and former student of Luke, and grandson of Darth Vader, has a history; but, as far as he is concerned, it is inconsequential, a thing to be unequivocally repudiated. As he tells Rey:

“Let the past die. Kill it if you have to.” The heroes agree. The little green Socrates of *SW*, Yoda, emerges for one brief scene in *TLJ* to beat Luke to the punch by destroying all of the ancient Jedi Scriptures. Yoda tells Luke that all that Rey needs to know regarding the Force she already knows. “We are what they [students] grow beyond.” Rey already outstrips even *Yoda* in sagacity. In *The Last Jedi*, Light and Darkness, the Jedi and the Sith – these are for all practical purposes dismissed – relics of a bigoted past.

The Resistance indeed promises to continue fighting against the First Order, but unlike the misguided Rebellion and, before it, the Jedi Order, it is not concerned with restoring balance to the Force or the freedom that existed during the days of the Republic. No, the Resistance is about as interested in conserving the past as is Kylo Ren. It would appear that its point in fighting is to hit the reset button, to wipe the slate clean and write anew. This is no slight deviation from the *SW* mythos.

The Jedi and all of the heroes of the Old Republic were akin to the men of the American founding generation inasmuch as they fought for the sake of **conserving** an inherited way of life. In glaring contrast, the Resisters are more like the French Revolutionaries, radical egalitarians inspired by Rousseau and against whom Edmund Burke defined what would become known as conservatism. The radicals of the French Revolution were zealots who, for the sake of leveling the inequalities and hierarchies that were the legacy of the past, fiercely and indiscriminately used the guillotine against the members if the **Ancien Regime** that they sought to purge from their midst.

Most decent folks today, regardless of their politics or religion, share Burke’s assessment of the French Revolution. The radicals were many things, but they were not good. This, then, is another respect in which *The Last Jedi* underscores the arbitrary, the arguably artificial, character of our conceptions of right and wrong, good and evil: The Resisters are not good in any objective sense of this term. And neither is *The Last Jedi* a good film.

THE WINTER-SPRING-FALL SCHEDULE:

- January 21 **THE CRUSADES—THE TRUTH**, by Dr. James (Duke) Pesta (at St. John Church Hall)
- February 18 **AFTERNOON OF RECOLLECTION**, by Fr. James Kubicki, S.J. (at Sacred Heart Church)
- March 18 **POLITICAL CORRECTNESS AT MARQUETTE UNIVERSITY**, by Prof. John McAdams (at St. John Church Hall)
- April 15 **TO BE ANNOUNCED**
- May 20 **TO BE ANNOUNCED**
- September 16 **MEET SAINT AUGUSTINE**, by Dr. James (Duke) Pesta
- October 14 **MSGR. POPEK AWARD DINNER**----Recipient: Reverend John Belmonte, S.J.
- November 18 **TO BE ANNOUNCED**
- December 9 **MSGR. POPEK BIRTHDAY/CHRISTMAS DINNER**



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To Support, Defend and Advance the Efforts of the Teaching Church

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Join us on Sunday, February 18
“Afternoon of Recollection”
with Fr. James Kubicki, S.J.

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Dr. James “Duke” Pesta,
discuss,

“The Crusades – The Truth”

Sunday, January 21

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