



CHRISTENDOM COLLEGE

EULOGY FOR DR. WARREN HASTY CARROLL, RIP

Delivered by Timothy T. O'Donnell, STD, KGCHS

Tuesday, July 26, 2011

Hearken, my people, to my teachings;
 Incline your ears to the words of my mouth.
I will open my mouth in parables,
 I will reveal the secrets of past ages.
What we have heard and known,
 And what our fathers have told us,
We will not hide from their children,
 To the coming generation we will declare
The praises of the Lord and His might
 And the wonders He has wrought.
For He has set up a precept in Jacob
 And established a law in Israel,
Which He commanded our fathers
 To make known to their children.
That to the coming generation,
 Children yet unborn,
Should know that they should rise
 And tell their children
To put their hope in God, and
 not forget the works of God,
but to keep his commandments.

Psalm 77



The words of the Psalmist certainly may be applied to our beloved Warren Carroll. All of us here have precious memories of Warren. He was a husband, a friend, a warrior, a founder, a historian, a teacher, and an author. As a founder, a teacher, and an author, he was also, in the full sense of the word, a father to the thousands of graduates, students and those who read his books.

His love for our Lord, His Blessed Mother and the Church affected everything he did after his conversion. The Faith – our Catholic Faith – was the deepest thing in him. God, in His Providence, chose him to found Christendom College, and he responded to that call, just like Ransom in C.S. Lewis' Space Trilogy, which he loved so dearly. Despite the difficulties, the challenges, the woundings, he continued to move forward, one step after another, with a dogged determination which comes with the charism of being a Founder.

Warren had the gift of always seeing things in a radiant light, extolling and embracing the heroic in history and in ordinary life, in the struggle of good against evil, light against darkness, truth against falsehood, the knight battling the dragon.

Some thought this rather naïve – antiquated – rejecting such categories, preferring the shadowlands of uncertainty and the false comfort of a timid agnosticism so characteristic of our modern era.

But Warren was a true visionary, and he would have none of this. This vision he passed on to his students in his courses on Western Christian Civilization, History of Ireland, the French Revolution, Commie Rev, Hispanic Peoples, and others.

His five-word cannonade at the beginning of every class is known by every one of his students:

“TRUTH EXISTS...THE INCARNATION HAPPENED!”

His was a Catholic vision of history. It was not just a viewpoint – Catholicism is the prism of truth, revealing God’s providential action in time.

Through his work at Triumph Magazine, the Christian Commonwealth Institute, and Christendom, he manifested his deep love for the *res catholica* – the Catholic thing. Alumni still speak of and recall his lectures, such as Pelayo at Covadonga crying out against all odds, “Our hope is in Christ. This little mountain will be the salvation of Spain!” And other heroes of Christendom – Constantine, Athanasius, Leo the Great, Godfrey of Bouillon, Isabella, the Catholic Queen, Don Juan of Austria, Philip II, Red Hugh, Jean Valette – always in his classes revealing how one man can make a difference. It doesn’t matter how little you have, even if all you have is just five loaves and two fishes – give it to Him and let the miracle happen. That’s what Warren did. His teaching will live on in the minds and hearts of his students and those he reached by his books, which are solid, scholarly, orthodox and balanced.

It is hard to exaggerate the affection of his students in the early years of the College. Cathy and I will always treasure his visits to our home, when he would spend the night – and the morning. You see, Warren was not like other men – he seemed to wake up and become fully alive at 2:00 in the morning! After a dinner, wine, and a good conversation, around 2:00 a.m. he would say things like, “Did I ever tell you the story of Bonnie Charlie and the Catholic Island of Barra?” – and he would go on straight till 4:00 a.m.

We were also blessed to have traveled with him several times to Rome, to Ireland (which he loved), and to the Holy Land. I share with you one memory of a night in Assisi – when Warren smoked his first cigarette sitting on the hill overlooking the Basilica of St. Francis, bathed in the light of a full moon. He spoke quietly that night with a still purpose about the work God had given him to do in establishing Christendom College. Throughout my time at Christendom he was always so supportive. He was always there with a word of encouragement as a father, a mentor and a very dear friend.

How can we forget his love of festivity? On St. Patrick’s Day, his impassioned reading of the Easter Proclamation. I will never forget returning home with him after a Catholic Rendezvous, hearing him belt out to an amazed seminarian John Heisler in the back seat of our car all four verses of O’Donnell Abu. Can we forget him singing Roddy McCorley with his fist clenched in the air – “True to the last – True to the Last!” For Warren, “truth is a fixed star....”

Warren was a man who loved greatly. He loved the good and the true. It is not an accident that he converted to the Catholic Faith in 1968 – the year of revolution, chaos, disorder, betrayal. He

came in and stood in the breach during those difficult days. Many at that time were leaving the Church. It was the year of *Humanae Vitae*. Many were saying, “This saying is hard. Who can bear it!” And so they walked with Him no more. Our Blessed Lord, with a broken heart, turned to His own and said, “Do you wish to leave also?” Warren Carroll responded to the grace given him and made a conscious decision to stand with and for Peter, and to cry out with Peter, “Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of everlasting life and we have come to believe and to know that Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God.”

Like other converts, he brought a freshness, a zeal, and an enthusiasm for the Faith. He understood loyalty. He understood fidelity. I will never forget June 1, 1992, introducing him in a private audience to Blessed John Paul the Great as the founder of Christendom College. Warren fell to his knees, kissed the ring of the fisherman, and heard the Vicar of Christ say, “I thank you! Christendom is doing a great work for the Church.” We all could have died right then and there for joy.

That love for the Pope, not just his teaching office, but a special love for the person of the Holy Father, is something that he bequeathed to the College community and that continues to this day as a type of charism. Like Blessed John Paul, he loved young people, and they knew it. He knew that their youth was given to them, not for self indulgence, but for heroism.

Answering the question, “Why did God want Christendom College to grow and flourish?” Dr. Carroll responded, “Because Christendom College is educating and preparing young men and women who will bring what our great and holy Pope John Paul II calls ‘the new springtime of the church’.” He continued, “In the face of scandals and despair, believe in that springtime! It’s coming, and nothing can stop it! For proof, look at our history. Our graduates will be leading the new springtime.” And in 34 years, we have seen 64 priests, 43 religious brothers and sisters, and countless beautiful marriages raising families.

I have said Warren was a man who loved greatly. But if ever the saying was true that “behind every great man there is a great woman,” that saying is true of Anne Carroll! I know, Anne, you like to defer on this, but St. Paul tells us very clearly in his letter to the Corinthians, “the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the believing wife,” and it didn’t take long, if you were married in July of 1967 and he came in on December 7, 1968, that’s very impressive! Forty-four years of witness to the beauty and permanence of married love, a witness so needed today – a witness to a marriage in Jesus Christ. It was always beautiful to see your love, affection and the deep sensitivity you had for each other. Warren, I remember, especially in the early years, was always so attentive to you, and you, Anne, particularly towards the end, showed such love and attention to Warren. It was and will remain for all times a thing of beauty.

I remember you sharing how on your anniversary you would go and try a different restaurant each year – some of them sounded rather strange and exotic to me, and your ever-youthful desire to see together new things in God’s created world – planning your trips each year, whether to visit family and friends, or to travel to the distant Philipines, to Malta, or even to Easter Island, to name a few. Anne, you were always so sweet and so thoughtful. Thank you for your loving witness to Warren and to the beauty of Christian marriage.

I am not here today to say Warren had no faults. He would be the first one to say, please, please pray for me! And so we do, and so we will, and so we will continue to do. But how beautiful it was that Warren died on a Sunday – the Lord’s Day, the day of resurrection and the day of the

Church – and that the date was July 17, the feast of the Blessed Martyrs of Compiègne, of whom Warren wrote so beautifully in his work *The Guillotine and the Cross*. I somehow would have to believe that when this pilgrim warrior entered eternity, that the eighteen women of that heavenly Carmel took a special interest in him.

Although Warren died peacefully in his sleep that day, there is no doubt that he had his suffering and his calvary. For a man who loved conversation to have that heavenly gift taken from him at the end was truly a cross indeed. The last time I heard Warren lecture at Christendom, he spoke of Whittaker Chambers' book *Witness*. At that time, I was deeply moved and sensed at the end that through Chambers, he was speaking to me and in a very real sense to us all. He ended his lecture with this quote:

My children, when you were little, we used sometimes to go for walks in our pine woods. In the open fields, you would run along by yourselves. But you used instinctively to give me your hands as we entered those woods, where it was darker, lonelier, and in the stillness our voices sounded loud and frightening. In this book I am again giving you my hands. I am leading you, not through cool pine woods, but up and up a narrow defile between bare and steep rocks from which in shadow things uncoil and slither away. It will be dark. But, in the end, if I have led you aright, you will make out three crosses.... I will have brought you to Golgotha – the place of skulls. This is the meaning of the journey. Before you understand, I may not be there, my hands may have slipped from yours. It will not matter. For when you understand what you see, you will no longer be children. You will know that life is pain, that each of us hangs always upon the cross of himself. And when you know that this is true of every man, woman and child on earth, you will be wise.

Thank you – thank you, Warren, for your friendship, for your witness to the faith, your tender love for Anne. Thank you for your vision, your tenacity of purpose, your love of the good, and for all those whose lives you have touched and inspired through your teaching, your works, the founding of Christendom College, and your staunch, unwavering loyalty to the Apostolic See and the Person of the Holy Father. We make Blessed John Henry Newman's prayer our own:

May He support us all the day long, till the shadows lengthen, and the evening comes, and the busy world is hushed, and the fever of life is over, and our work is done. Then in His mercy, may He give us a safe lodging, and a holy rest, and peace at least.

Dearest Warren! Requiescat in Pace!