

Seton Home Study School Newsletter follow-up *(not yet in print, used with permission)*

By Fr. Constantine Belisarius

A year ago we carried in the Seton Newsletter the story of one of our class of 2000 seniors in Minnesota who had died as the result of being hit by a car and yet had been seen by a credible witness, at the very same time, attending Mass on the feast of Saint Joseph, the patron of the dying. That young man, Charles Anthony Francis Untz continues to fascinate, intrigue and solicit the friendship of people all over the country one year after his death. With that in mind I thought that I would attempt to bring you, our Seton families up to date on one of our very own.

Charles has appeared several times to a Protestant lady in Vermont whose computer he used to fix. She says that he appeared smiling, without his acne, in a chest-up apparition that gave her the assurance that he is in heaven and is watching out for her and her son. She was healed through his intercession of a serious head injury sustained in a fall on the ice which is medically verified.

A lady in California called to say that she had, in a sense, consecrated her family to Charles. I would say that she has taken him for a patron for her family. When a marital situation arose with one of her daughters and a very undesirable male type she turned confidently to Charles. She asked him to intervene and at just the time she asked, the young man went away.

A teenage girl in Michigan has a real big brother relationship with Charles. She is convinced that on several occasions he has protected her from physical harm. She invites him to come with her to adoration and she feels his presence with her during adoration. She has asked Charles to teach her how to pray and he seems to be doing just that! Contemplative prayer.

We have available a beautiful CD that was made by Steve and Ellen Untz, Charles' parents, of the prayer vigil and the sermons at Charles' funeral of which I spoke in my first article. In this the two priests closest to Charles advocated his beatification and canonization as a saint. We ask a small donation for the CDs but they are certainly worth any offering you would want to make. One has the sense that a great adventure has started with the entrance into eternal life of this young man whose friends used to sit around and discuss whether or not he had ever committed a venial sin. Hear that? A venial sin! Another friend ventured the remark the likes of which this priest has never heard or read in fifty years of reading about the saints. When he heard of Charles' death he said, "the quality of life in heaven has just gone up."

Charles, never a man of many words seems also to speak the well-chosen word or two when needed. A mother of seven young children, a home schooling mother, was caught up one day in one thing and another and recalled to herself that she had not noticed her next to youngest son ((of which she has six) for an uncomfortable period of time. She mobilized all of the other children to look for this tyke and they could find him nowhere. There were many dangerous possibilities, not the least of which was the road about two hundred yards from their house. She rushed out to the road and could feel the panic rising in the face of her fruitless search. She turned to Charles, recalling his own mother's anguish. Quietly but firmly she heard an interior voice say, "Look inside." As she returned to the house, having sent the children to "look inside" they told her that they had found the little boy asleep under one of the big beds on the second floor of the house. Mom thanks Charles and asks him how he does that (talk to those needing his word). He tells her that is God's gift to the faithful through him.

A friend of Charles recounts the story of the time when he was suffering the pangs of love and he asked Charles if he had ever had a similar experience with a young lady. He replied that he had a friend who was a girl but they both loved God and in that love they were close and confident friends.

Some months ago our Catholic community of Front Royal was shocked to hear that a sophomore at Christendom College and his fiancée were in a serious automobile accident right at the entrance of Christendom, coming home from Mass. Everyone knows where that is and it is a tricky location, just down the road from my own apartment building

right on Shenandoah Shores Road. Too close to home. As the word got out on that Sunday afternoon, the name of Paul Jalsevac surfaced on my answer phone at home, where I am lamentably, rarely to be found. Paul was not expected to live, he had been extracted from the car by the “jaws of life”, his liver had broken in tow and he was not conscious. Catholic pro-lifers all over the country, Paul’s classmates here at Christendom and the Catholic community in general went to their knees for Paul who is a young pro-life activist. The name “Jalsevac” I remembered from several months before. Paul’s mother, Bonnie, had called in the wake of my July 2000 article about Charles and wanted to know about him and get some holy cards, if possible. I had some and sent them to her after speaking with her for some time about Charles....and Paul, who was down here in our neck of the woods. I confirmed this Monday morning at Seton on our computers. The accident was on March 4th. I called down to the hospital and talked to Bonnie who had flown in from Canada. I encouraged her to confide Paul to Charles’ intercession and she told me that that very day was Charles’ nineteenth birthday (Tuesday)! To make a long story short, Paul has recovered spectacularly, I had the privilege of anointing him (along with several other priests), he was removed to Canada in April and continued his miraculous recovery. I kept in daily touch with his brothers, sisters and parents. This young fellow who was not expected to live in March, left the hospital on June 20th and his mother called Ellen Untz on that very day. Interestingly, Steven and Ellen Untz and their son, Bryant, were in Front Royal that day.

The first anniversary of Charles’ death was March 20th, 2001. I had hoped by that time to be finished with either a book or a booklet that I wanted to entitle, “My Lady’s Knight”. Everyone seemed to like this title both for the book and for Charles. My own feeling is that amongst home schoolers we should seek to revive the pristine idea and ideals of the knights and with models like Charles and other holy young men set before our boys a whole course of “growing up a man in Christ.”

One of the things I learned about Charles in doing the preliminary research for “My Lady’s Knight” was the incredible aptness of this title for this person. Charles was a very strong person physically and morally. Every day he climbed a mooring rope his Dad had saved from one of his tours of duty on a submarine, hand over hand, all the way up the very thick rope. He was pure and chaste in his dealings with young girls and women; he respected them and protected them, just as his heavenly Mother whose “favors” he wore in her scapular, would want. He loved horses and knew how to ride and how to care for horses; how to deliver foals and kid goats. Animals were in his genes; his mother had studied to be a veterinarian, and on their hobby farm he had plenty of occasion to learn “the discipline of the rising sun”. Animals need to be cared for if they are domesticated and he did just that. His parents had reached the point that they had no difficulty leaving the whole operation of the farm in Charles’ hands and knowing that an excellent job would be done.

As a scout he had reached the summit with Eagle Scout Award and the Order of the Arrow honor. One of the pictures I have in my mind of Charles’ reception in heaven on March 20th, 2000, is his being presented to Our Lady, the Queen of Heaven, by Saint Joseph, whose feast was the celebration of the day, Charles kneeling before Our Lady and she dubbing him with a sword of light, “My Knight”. Then she raises him up, kisses him on both cheeks and presents him to the Lord Jesus Christ as “My Knight”. The Lord greets Charles with, “Well done, good and faithful servant”, embracing him. Charles kneels and our Lord crowns him with a golden crown dazzling with its flashing gems, diamonds, emeralds, rubies and pearls. Saint Charles, Saint Anthony and Saint Francis bring the mantle, orb and scepter of a Prince of the Kingdom of God. Our Lord presents these to Charles and turns him to the whole Court of Heaven who express their joy with a goose flesh raising chorus of “Glory to God in the Highest”. This is a picture not far from the enthusiasms of Charles’ lighter moments. He enjoyed “Star Wars” and I am sure that if we could talk to him about it he would show us how that fantasy brought to life for him the very real invisible battle in which we are engaged every day whether we like it or not, whether we know it or not. His program of formation was simple and straightforward: stay close to Jesus and Mary, listen to them and “do what He tells you”. He went to Mass as often as he could; whenever possible this was preceded by a half an hour adoration of the Blessed Sacrament; he said the offices of the Church, sanctifying the day; he prayed Our Lady’s rosary: with the beads or a rosary ring; he consecrated himself totally to Our Lady at least once a year and often went to confession (the priests who heard these confessions are convinced that he preserved his baptismal innocence). Lastly but not least he kept the “Knights Vigil” with his King. He was ready to be dubbed “My Knight” by his Queen, whom he called “My Lady”.