

Praise for *The Liber Christo Method*

“This field guide is just that, a manual to be carried and used to fight an ancient enemy with the ancient weapons of the Church. Dr. Dan Schneider writes with a military mindset drawing on his experience as an Army helicopter pilot and officer in Desert Storm. It is fitting that an Army soldier, now Catholic theologian, has teamed up with Fr. Chad Ripperger to provide an authentically Catholic program of liberation for the common man. They have given us a MOAB, Mother of All Books. This manual is a weapon of mass instruction, and it will truly equip the laity to go on the offensive as the Church Militant.”

—Jesse Romero,
Author of *The Devil in the City of the Angels*

“Dr. Dan Schneider is one of my favorite guests on U.S. Grace Force. He is a sought-after speaker and author. He combines the richness of Catholic tradition on spiritual warfare with practical examples based on real field experience. In a time when diabolical activity is on the rise, *The Liber Christo Method* is a sure guide to liberation and a must read for today’s Catholics who are serious about their Faith.”

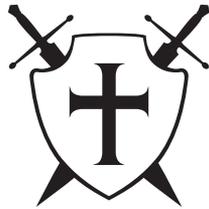
—Fr. Richard Heilman,
Founder of U.S. Grace Force

“As a member of Father Chad Ripperger’s team and as a professor of theology, Dr. Dan Schneider provides practical analysis and proven tactics to help you win the war against the world, the flesh, and the devil. This manual will help you grow in holiness and get you battle ready!”

—Doug Barry,
EWTN Host of Battle Ready

THE
LIBER CHRISTO
METHOD

T H E
LIBER CHRISTO
M E T H O D
A FIELD MANUAL FOR
SPIRITUAL COMBAT



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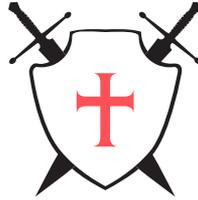
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Foreword

The last year that the Doloran priests personally kept statistics (now they are kept by our case manager) on the number of people that they were meeting was in 2015. That year, we had 2,000 contacts, we discussed the cases of 600 people over the phone, we saw 150 people, and of those 150 people, only 3 were possessed. About one-third of the people that we saw did have legitimate diabolic obsession and oppression issues. However, those can normally be taken care of by their pastor, and many people can actually self-liberate, if they do the right things.

The amount of time that is spent by the exorcist vetting the various cases to find the ones that actually need his help can become prohibitive. Furthermore, around the same time, there was a great deal of discussion by exorcists about what to do with what they called “aftercare.” This is essentially what happens with people after they have been liberated from possession. Many of these people are in a situation where they lack catechetical instruction—their only contact with a priest is the exorcist—and so they have no contact with the local parish or church. They often need psychological help or counseling as well, and during the liberation process itself, it becomes clear that they are at times in irregular marriages, have not received all of the sacraments, or have been struggling with some form of habitual mortal sin. The former issues become a problem because the priest, once the person has been liberated, must move on to the next case and so he cannot spend time with the person who was liberated. This is why there was such a protracted discussion about aftercare. As to the latter

issues, often a person's liberation was dragging out unduly because of sacramental issues or attachment to mortal sin. Again, this resulted in the exorcist having to spend extra time that could normally be used to focus on the possessed rather than on cleaning up ancillary issues.

Another issue that exorcists would regularly come across is that, of the people that were possessed, only about one-third would actually go the distance and become liberated. About a third would be informed of everything that he or she would have to do in order to become liberated and, in the end, decide not to begin the exorcisms because he or she simply just did not want to do and suffer what was required. Another third would start the process of going through the exorcisms, but once it became difficult, they would stop coming to the sessions because they simply did not have the sufficient virtue to go the distance.

It is for all of the above reasons that the Doloran Fathers worked with Mr. Clement in order to develop a protocol that would address these particular issues. To begin, the exorcist is analogous to a brain surgeon, and when one thinks he might have some type of cerebral issue, one does not go immediately to a brain surgeon, asking him to diagnose him or actually do a specific kind of brain surgery. Rather, one starts with his general practitioner, and he begins the process of vetting the problem so that the brain surgeon can focus on brain surgery. This medical model was adopted by Liber Christo to ensure that the various issues that did not require exorcism would still be adequately addressed and that people would be directed to where they can find help. At the same time, it would maximize the number of people that needed help actually receiving help.

Moreover, many people were able to self-liberate from lower-level forms of diabolic obsession and oppression simply by following the protocol, especially the prayer prescription. What became very clear over the time in which this protocol has been used is that most people who suffer from diabolic issues are spiritually undisciplined. The protocol is designed to develop the proper discipline and virtues in the individual so

that many of the diabolic issues, which do not require an exorcist or even a priest to pray over them, can simply be cleared up by the afflicted himself. The second phase of the protocol also started addressing issues such as lack of catechetical instruction and also the need for psychological help or counseling before they saw the exorcist, which also often clear up the specific problem that the person is suffering. Since a priest is required to accompany the individual through the various stages of the protocol, this solved the problem of people not having a connection to the local parish or other priests. Moreover, the priest would then also be able to help the person straighten out sacramental issues, which again often cause an amelioration of the diabolic afflictions.

One other issue that required a great deal of time on the side of the exorcist was interviewing the people and doing prayers with them for a while to determine what the actual status of the case was; that is, he had to do a sufficient diagnostic. Again, this required a certain amount of time so that he was not able to spend it actually helping people but rather diagnosing cases. The Liber Christo protocol was designed to provide an initial diagnostic so that by the time it became clear that person actually needed to see the exorcist, much of the knowledge that is necessary in order to solve the case was already known.

It is the hope of the Doloran Fathers and the members of Liber Christo that this book will provide a basic outline for those who are going through the protocol as well as for priests to be able to guide people through the protocol.

It is also our hope that even those who do not go formally through the protocol will be able to make use of this book so that in following the prayer prescription and having a knowledge about how to become disciplined in the spiritual life so as to engage spiritual warfare, they will be able to avoid spiritual problems in the future but also work out the problems that they may have already. May God bless those who read this book, implement its counsels, and to follow the protocol.

Fr. Chad Ripperger, PhD



Preface

This manual is part of a three-book series on the strategy and tactics of spiritual warfare. By definition, a manual is a handbook or an instruction book to guide its reader to mastery of a particular subject. Accordingly, this book is intended as a tactical field manual, or a *how-to* book, for those in close engagement with the enemy. For those unfamiliar with military terminology, “tactics” include “the art and science of employing all available means to win battles and engagements.”¹ Accordingly, this book is intended to teach the reader how to engage, and win, the spiritual battles of this present day.

Successful tactics on the battlefield do not need to be complicated. To this day, the US Army Rangers still deploy the tactics of Robert Rogers’s *28 Rules of Ranging*, a manual on guerrilla warfare written in 1757. In Rogers’s rules, you read such things as “all Rangers must be ready on any emergency to march at a minute’s warning” and “when pushed upon by the enemy, reserve your fire till they approach very near, which will then put them into the greatest surprise and consternation, and give you an opportunity of rushing upon them with your hatchets and cutlasses to the better advantage.”² His first standing order, however, shows the need for simplicity, preparedness, and attention to detail in combat. It reads simply, “Don’t forget nothin’.” Although warfare has changed considerably since Rogers wrote these rules, the basic principles are the same. All soldiers, for example, have a pre-combat checklist of the things needed to conduct combat operations. That list includes not only a clean

¹ Department of the Army, *Army Tactics*, ix.

² Dunnigan, *Perfect Soldier*, 40.

weapon and ammunition but also water and even extra socks (wet feet get infected and infected feet cannot march). This manual is intended to teach you the basics of spiritual warfare.

Although it may not appear so to the observer, all warfare is conducted by rules of engagement. Thus, Rogers begins his instruction with, “All Rangers are to be subject to the rules and articles of war.” Bear in mind three essential factors of effective tactical engagement vis-à-vis the demon; that is, the demon is a strictly ordered, spiritual being who follows the rules of engagement as established by God through natural law and divine positive law. This means that he will either yield or not yield according to the answer to three questions:

1. Does this person have requisite authority?
2. What is the state of merit of the petitioner, and is he or she in a state of grace?
3. What specifically is the petitioner asking?

The reader should notice these three principles referred to throughout this book.

As Rogers’s rules show, the battle is won by paying attention to detail, strictly adhering to standard operating procedures, which allow for safe and effective fighting, and knowing the rules of engagement. This manual is part of the Liber Christo method, which is a four-phase diocesan protocol for handling cases of diabolic affliction as developed by Fr. Chad Ripperger and the Society of Our Most Sorrowful Mother (SMD). As such, it is the fruit of the field experience of Father Ripperger and that of his long-time assistant, Kyle Clement.³

While the SMD teams use this manual in their apostolate, it can also be used by Catholics seeking to “clean up” any lingering effects of spiritual affliction. The reader who employs these prayers and tactics should do so upon consultation with his local pastor or spiritual director. Apart from the old

³ I will sometimes write in the first-person plural, such as *we* and *our*, which refers to our collective thoughts and experience.

television show, there is no such thing as a lone ranger. A soldier works within a hierarchy of command and control, and for most Catholics, this begins with our parish priest. A wife should also speak with her husband about these prayers and let him be the “team leader” on this spiritual campaign.

A Catholic approach to liberation always involves the sacraments. Our approach is based upon this reality, while also including many prudential elements as a result of years of experience which, in our judgment, maximizes the effectiveness of the protocol. The reader should also note that this manual represents the second phase of the four phases in which we help to identify and remove obstacles to grace. Equally important is this first phase, whereby the household follows a strict prayer discipline for thirty consecutive days before picking up this book. This first phase prayer regimen is listed briefly in appendix A. Our experience is that the demon responds as much to the imposition of order as he does to the prayers themselves. That first phase is, by analogy, a pre-combat checklist which ensures one’s readiness to sustain the duress and demands of battle. Thus, a life ordered to prayer presupposes the ability to effectively engage the enemy. Accordingly, one should not see this manual as a “quick fix” which contains special prayers previously unknown to Catholics. Rather, this is a plan for sustained tactical operations.

The goal of our program is not the cessation of pain but reconciliation with God the Father. By *reconciliation*, moreover, we mean two interwoven concepts. Properly speaking, reconciliation is the process by which divine friendship is restored after having been lost due to grievous sin. Thus, referring to the sacrament of Penance, the Council of Trent refers to “the *reconciling of the faithful* who have fallen after Baptism.”⁴ Reconciliation, then, is defined as the conference of grace which produces the salutary effect of “deliverance from the guilt of sin and, in the case of mortal sin, from its eternal punishment; hence also *reconciliation* with God, justification.”⁵ First and

⁴ Council of Trent, Sess. XIV, c. I.

⁵ Hanna, *Catholic Encyclopedia*, 623.

foremost, then, this program leads you to the most important form of deliverance—that is, from the guilt and eternal punishment due to mortal sin.

The former chief exorcist of the diocese of Rome, Fr. Gabriel Amorth, affirmed the power of the sacraments when he asserted emphatically that “confession is stronger than exorcism!”⁶ According to the late exorcist, “Satan is more enraged when we take souls away from him through confession than when we take away bodies through exorcism.”⁷ He asserts that sacramental Penance is “the most direct means to fight Satan.” This sacrament, he says, “tears souls from the demon’s grasp, strengthens against sin, unites us more closely to God, and helps to conform our souls increasingly to the divine will.” He counsels all Catholics—especially those afflicted by evil spirits—to make frequent, even weekly, confessions.⁸

Many seeking deliverance, therefore, first need to return to the state of grace through a good confession. By *state of grace* is meant the restoration of divine friendship and, thus, the condition of a soul as pleasing to God because it is free from mortal sin. To be clear, mortal sin leaves the soul completely unprotected from the wiles of the devil. What about those individuals, however, who are in a state of grace and still find themselves spiritually afflicted due to curses, abuse, previous occult activity, or living in infested homes? This person still requires reconciliation, but in a nuanced sense. By way of analogy, consider the canonical process that must take place when a church building is violated. By definition, a church which has been desecrated in some manner (a fact which is more commonplace among today’s anarchic, anti-Catholic movements) must formally be *reconciled*. In canonical parlance, this type of reconciliation means “the act of reblessing or reinstating.” By definition, “it must be reconciled by the bishop before it can be used for sacred services.”⁹

⁶ Amorth, *An Exorcist Tells His Story*, 86.

⁷ Amorth, 67.

⁸ Amorth, *An Exorcist: More Stories*, 195.

⁹ Nevins, *Maryknoll Catholic Dictionary*, 481.

Those in a state a grace who still suffer diabolic affliction as the result of being “violated” by other people through curses, abuse, et cetera may also need reconciliation. As in a desecrated church, where the demon is invited into a sacred place through an evil act, the demon’s presence to such a person is ultimately offensive to God, even though He permits it at times. Thus, by *reconciliation*, we refer not only to the restoration of divine friendship to those who had lost it due to mortal sin but also to the process of removing the demons from the person’s body, exterior goods, et cetera. This person also needs reconciliation as the presence of the demon (analogously) is a violation of a sacred space (a soul possessing sanctifying grace), just like the violation of a consecrated church building. Due to the institutional nature of the diabolic presence, both instances are offensive to God, and both require an *institutional and ecclesial response*. Our four-phase protocol is part of that formal response by the local church.¹⁰

As for the individual in need of reconciliation of either (or both) types, sometimes God asks him to suffer, for in that suffering he taps into the redemptive power of Calvary. As suggested by Father Amorth above, penance (both sacramental and the sacrificial, interior disposition and practices which atone for sins) helps in spiritual combat by assisting us *to conform our souls increasingly to the divine will*. The process of reconciliation, moreover, means bringing oneself and one’s spiritual faculties into conformity with the will of God. Although the presence of diabolic affliction may have prompted you to seek help, liberation in the Catholic sense means reconciliation at the level of the soul (the removal of the obstacles to grace) and the spiritual faculties (conformity of intellect and will). Bear in mind this nuanced definition of *reconciliation* as you read this manual.

Just as Rogers’s rules presupposes that the ranger is physically and mentally fit, having completed both basic training and specialty training in guerrilla warfare, so too does this

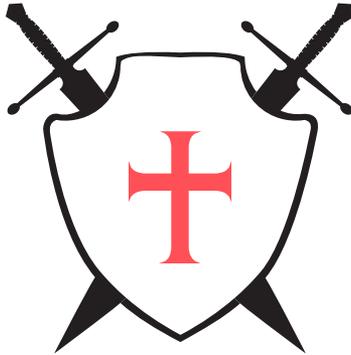
¹⁰ A summary of our medical model and four-phase protocol is found in appendix A.

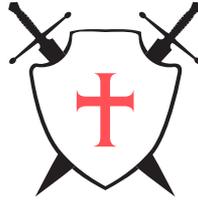
book presuppose a baseline of psychological, emotional, and spiritual fitness. Those with a history of mental health issues should consult with their mental health professional in addition to their parish priest. For more, see your parish priest or visit <https://www.liberchristo.org/>.

Unless otherwise specified, the suggested prayers are either public domain or come from Father Ripperger's book *Deliverance Prayers for Use by the Laity*. Each lesson includes some basic prayers with additional ones located in the appendix which is tied to each chapter.

“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me. Wherefore he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor, he hath sent me to heal the contrite of heart, to preach deliverance to the captives, and sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of reward.”

—Luke 4:18-19, DV





Overview

Slaying Your Giants

“The Philistine then moved to meet David at close quarters, while David ran quickly toward the battle line to meet the Philistine.”

—1 SAMUEL 17:48

A prime example of guerrilla warfare from the Old Testament is the popular story of David and Goliath (see 1 Sm 17), where a young shepherd boy uses unconventional methods to defeat a seasoned Philistine warrior. While the weapons used by soldiers in warfare have advanced over the ages, soldiering itself is rather timeless. David’s choice of weapon was primitive but effective—the common shepherd’s sling and stones smoothed by the running waters of a wadi. Ancient armies also utilized slingers. Archeologists have discovered primitive slingstones engraved not only with military unit insignia but also messages such as “take that!” or “ouch!” or “for Pompey’s backside.” Modern soldiers also inscribe their rockets and missiles with flags, unit markings, and similar messages. Before etching the cross of Christ onto your stones, however, let us first show you how to wield the sling safely and accurately.

Christians have long seen David’s defeat of Goliath as a symbolic prefiguring of Jesus Christ’s defeat of the devil on the cross.¹¹ In the second century, for example,

¹¹ The early Christian exegetical tradition of re-reading the battle between

Saint Hippolytus of Rome wrote that just as David dispatched the giant by cutting off his head, Jesus “crushed the head” of the devil (an allusion to Gn. 3:15) whom Hippolytus referred to as “the demon Goliath.”¹² For Hippolytus, the five stones of David were symbolic of the five wounds of Christ. The staff prefigured the authority of “the King and High Priest, Christ” and the sling which launches the stone is the new Law (the old Law was contained in five books of Moses) and, therefore, “the laws of the Church.” These, as I wrote elsewhere, are the armaments of victory—the cross of Jesus Christ, priestly authority, and the teachings of the Church. Goliath’s defeat prefigured Christ’s victory over the devil, sin, and death.¹³ Thus, the cross of Jesus, where He received His five wounds, is not a sign of defeat but rather of ultimate victory. In a similar way, Saint Augustine specifically linked the sword of David to the cross, noting that “having smitten and overthrown” the Goliath with the sling, David “took the enemy’s sword, and with it cut off his head. This our David also did, He [Jesus] overthrew the devil with his own weapons.” We do the same, Augustine wrote, when we reject the devil’s lies and profess the ancient Christian faith.¹⁴ These are your weapons—stones, slings, staff, and sword.

David and Goliath for a Christian performance dates to the second century AD. Specifically, several early Fathers of the Church (some cited here) used a typological interpretation of the Bible story as symbolically pointing to Christ’s defeat of the devil on the cross. I presented an analysis of this at the 2022 Midwest Region of the Society of Biblical Literature conference, “Warfare in the Biblical World,” in a paper entitled “Weaponry in Biblical Warfare: David’s Defeat of Goliath as Prefiguring the Cross in Augustine of Hippo.” I am also grateful to Kyle Clement who presented a modern application of the spiritual battle in light of David and Goliath, which built upon the patristic and rabbinic traditions in a presentation in Omaha, Nebraska in 2018. This present book fleshes out into further lessons the patristic use of David’s stones as metaphor for confronting evil, systematizing the praxis and prudential experience of Father Ripperger and Clement, as well as my own.

¹² Hippolytus of Rome, *On David and Goliath*, 34. Schneider, “Weaponry in Biblical Warfare,” 3.

¹³ Schneider, “Weaponry in Biblical Warfare,” 4.

¹⁴ Saint Augustine of Hippo, *Exposition on Psalm 144*, 1.

“When the Israelites saw [Goliath],” however, “they all retreated before him, terrified” (1 Sm 17:24). The demon’s first weapon is fear. David, however, sized up his opponent, calculated the risks, and acted in faith. You must do the same. First, however, you must know your enemy, his origins, and his weapons and tactics. A *demon* is a malevolent, non-bodily, invisible creature of whom Saint Peter says prowls around “like a roaring lion looking for [someone] to devour” (1 Pt 5:8). The Fourth Lateran Council (AD 1215) affirms that “the devil and other demons have indeed been created by God as good by nature . . . [but] they, of themselves, became evil.” Thus, a demon is a fallen angel who was created good by God but fell from heaven due to pride and disobedience.

The same council also said that “man . . . sinned at the suggestion of the devil.” Accordingly, one of the names that Bible uses for the devil is “the tempter” (see Mt 4:3) who entices us to sin. According to Saint James, “Blessed is the man who perseveres in temptation, for when he has been proved he will receive the crown of life that he promised to those who love him” (Jas 1:12). The devil continues to tempt, however, by luring and enticing a person with “his own desire. Then the desire conceives and brings forth sin, and when sin reaches maturity it gives birth to death” (Jas 1:14–15). Thus, before “devouring” a spiritually dead soul, he first lures and entices it into sin.

He then moves from tempter to accuser. A working definition of a demon is a “lawyer from hell.” That is, a legalistic and opportunistic prosecutor, he scours the horizon for any violations, waiting for the opportunity to pounce and levy an accusation. One biblical title for the devil is “the accuser,” as seen in Revelation where Saint John recounts that “the accuser of our brothers is cast out, who accuses them before God day and night” (Rv 12.10). What does he accuse? Especially grave sins such as sexual deviancy, abortion, abuse and incest, and participating in occult activity all open doors to diabolic accusation and allow the demon’s subsequent involvement in a person’s life. When you commit a grave sin, you grant a privilege to the demon who, in turn, now accuses *you* “before God

day and night.” That is, due to some sinful behavior of yours, he lays claim to you—“Look, God, he gave me *permission* to be here!” Accordingly, this program will teach you how to remove any so-called legal claims of the enemy by opening the lines of grace to your soul (which belongs by right to God the Father due to the baptismal seal).

This “legal battle” is fought in a most peculiar way. The demon responds to the imposition of order as much as to deliverance prayers themselves. As I stated elsewhere, those who seek lasting liberation must acquire “a continual and habitual practice of the Catholic faith built on a monastic foundation of prayer and discipline.”¹⁵ David did not pick up the sling for the first time when confronted by Goliath. Day after day, alone among the sheep, he practiced and perfected the skill. Following his example, the *Liber Christo* model accompanies you to the gunnery range, so to speak, to teach you how to fight your daily spiritual battles. A key to accuracy with your sling is the spiritual discipline of *asceticism*—that is, self-discipline and mortification. This includes a theology of suffering and the centrality of sacramental confession as two formidable weapons.

Accordingly, a sustained and lasting liberation must be preceded by a sacrificial and Eucharistic theology which imbues all aspects of your life (spiritual, sacramental, familial, etc.). This process will include saving not just you but your whole family. For that to happen, God may require that you learn to offer your suffering for them. Remember,

¹⁵ Liber Christo, “Companion Guide,” 6. The “Freedom Through Christ Companion Guide” is a 2019 self-published work by Liber Christo based on conferences and teachings of Father Ripperger and Kyle Clement. The “Companion Guide” was compiled for use by lay associates working on exorcist teams implementing the Liber Christo Four-Phase Protocol both for the Society of the Most Sorrowful Mother and local diocesan exorcists across the country. After its initial draft, I edited and re-wrote the manual several times to get it into its final form for the summer 2019 Liber Christo annual conference and its present use. For purposes here, I will cite the “Companion Guide” and denote for the reader the source of the material contained therein. When applicable, I also cite the development of a concept or its praxis in the exorcist community in recent years.

David's battle was single combat, which was a one-on-one fight to the death between two warriors who represented the best from each opposing side. The two men fought center stage, in the no-man's land between the two armies, while the other warriors looked on but did not engage. David was fighting not just for his own survival but for that of the entire house of Israel.

Similarly, you may be fighting for much more than yourself. Saint Faustina Kowalska stated, "If the angels were capable of envy, they would envy us for two things: one is the receiving of Holy Communion, and the other is suffering."¹⁶ If angels have a holy envy of our ability to unite our bodily suffering with that of Jesus Christ (or what many grandmothers simply called the "offering up" of life's difficulties) there must be something powerful to it. Thus, this program includes the neglected aspects of a penitential posture requisite for liberation. That is, while we will teach you set prayers that assist in liberation, there is no "magic bullet" or quick fix. As Father Amorth writes, "There is always a strong temptation for charismatics, sensitives and exorcists . . . of finding the quickest way to heal, by going outside the common sacred means to obtain grace." Those who seek quick solutions outside of the ordinary channels of obtaining grace, he says, "unwittingly fall into the trap of magic."¹⁷

Liberation is not static, nor is it merely the cessation of pain and suffering. On the contrary, as I wrote, "freedom *from* diabolic affliction and its effects . . . also means freedom *for* new life in Christ. The ultimate goal . . . is the salvation of souls—which is 'the supreme law in the Church.'"¹⁸ You will only slay your giants—the infernal and ancient enemy—with the Church's ancient weapons in hand. These ancient weapons include the sacraments and embracing suffering in reparation for one's sins and the sins of others, which we will flesh out in more detail.

¹⁶ Kowalska, *Diary of Saint Maria Faustina Kowalska*, no. 1804.

¹⁷ Amorth, *An Exorcist Tells His Story*, 162.

¹⁸ Liber Christo, "Companion Guide," 6. *Code of Canon Law*, no. 1752.

From Shepherd to Warrior

David was a shepherd boy whose father had sent to the battlefield to bring food to his brothers. The two armies faced each other, and David arrived just in time to see a Philistine warrior named Goliath mock and challenge the Israelite army. Standing nearly ten feet tall by some accounts, Goliath was a formidable opponent. The Philistine champion was not only a towering figure but also seasoned, “a warrior since his youth” (1 Sm 17:4, 33). He challenged the men of Israel with a showdown seen only in Homeric epics. The stakes were high: “He stood and shouted to the ranks of Israel: ‘Why come out in battle formation? I am a Philistine, and you are Saul’s servants. Choose one of your men and have him come down to me. If he beats me in combat and kills me, we will be your vassals; but if I beat him and kill him, you shall be our vassals and serve us’” (1 Sm 17:8–9).

Vassals is a polite gloss for “slave.” The Greek word used is, in fact, the lowest form of menial slave, or *doulos*. Many demons have attested to, under command by an exorcist in solemn session, a very sobering reality to the victor of this spiritual battle. To wit, if a person dies in a state of mortal sin, that person will be the slave, for eternity, of the demon who enticed him to mortal sin. The torment of enslavement, both experienced now and for eternity, is the goal of the demon.

What keeps most people enslaved is fear. Because of fear, the story continues, not a single soldier from the Israelite army accepted the Philistine’s challenge. Even King Saul, who himself “stood head and shoulders above the people” (1 Sm 9:2), was afraid to meet Goliath in battle. In fact, Scripture tells us that King Saul himself “was tormented by an evil spirit” due to his own disobedience to God’s commands and pride (cf. 1 Sm 13:13–14; 15:12; Dt 17:20). An astute reader may note how the sacred author describes the inner disposition of Saul that was not only the source of his fear but also that which attracts the demon. The king was not only disobedient (see 1 Sm 15:19) and proud (erecting a trophy in his own honor,

see 1 Sm 15:12), he was vain (fearing man rather than fearing God, see 1 Sm 15:24), angry and resentful (see 1 Sm 18:8) to the point of rage (see 1 Sm 18:10), murderous (see 1 Sm 19:1), melancholic (see 1 Sm 16:14) to the point of despair (see 1 Sm 28:5), performed liturgical rituals that only a priest should do (a usurpation of authority in 1 Sm 13:8–9), and finally abandoned God and consulted a witch (see 1 Sm 28:8–11) in direct violation of God’s command against conjurers, fortune tellers, and the like (see Dt 18:10–14). He exhibits what we term as “psychological compatibility with the demon,” and these things must be eradicated from a soul as prerequisite for liberation. Simply stated, if you want to attract the demon to you, and quickly, do the things that Saul did.

David, conversely, was “a man after God’s own heart” (1 Sm 13:14) who replaced Saul as king. His fearlessness flowed from his deep faith in God. Only David, a shepherd boy who had become the king’s armor bearer, accepted Goliath’s challenge. Do not be surprised, however, if you find little encouragement in your desire to find liberation. The demon will do everything in his power to keep you in fear and under his control. No one thought that David could defeat the Philistine giant, not even his own brother, who ridiculed him just as he was walking out to face Goliath. Listen to this voice and you may hear echoes of the tempter who tries to keep you from seeking liberation: “When Eliab, his oldest brother, heard him speaking with the men, he grew angry with David and said, ‘Why did you come down? With whom have you left those sheep in the wilderness? I know your arrogance and your dishonest heart. You came down to enjoy the battle!’” (1 Sm 17:28).

Even King Saul reminded David that he is a mere youth while Goliath “has been a warrior from his youth” (1 Sm 17:33). Thus, it is often those closest to us who seek to prevent us from seeking liberation.

On the plains of Bethlehem where David tended sheep, however, he himself learned how to fight off apex predators like bears and lions—not with swords and spears, but with something both advanced and primitive: a slingshot. Casting

off Saul's armor, David applied guerrilla warfare tactics similar to Rogers's rangers. He went to a river and picked out "five smooth stones" and put them into his ammo pouch (1 Sm 17:40). This does not imply that David lacked faith but rather showed his preparedness for any contingency in battle (not unlike like Rogers's rules which said that each ranger must have "sixty rounds powder and ball and be ready to march at a minute's warning"). Although not mentioned in the narrative account of the battle, some speculate that David may have known that Goliath had four brothers (or sons), also giants, according to later accounts of the Philistine Wars. According to the Old Testament, there were four other Philistine giants in Gath who "were born as descendants of the giants in Geth, to Rapha, as a household, and they fell by the hand of David and by the hand of his slaves" (2 Sm 21:22 LXX).

More than likely, however, the sacred author's mention of *five* is a symbolic reference to the Torah (the Law of God) which is found in the first five books of the Old Testament (or Pentateuch, in Greek). In addition, *stone* was considered the most lasting writing material in antiquity, and thus, the Ten Commandments were written on stone tablets (see Ex 24:13). Because the contents of stone vessels were not subject to impurity as were earthen vessels, stone jars were used for ritual purification (cf. Jn 2:6).

The flowing water of a wadi would have produced the smoothest stones, which increases the accuracy of the projectile. This is a key principle to liberation. The "smooth stones" that are imbued with the power of God are to be found in adherence to the Law of God. The waters which produce the stones point to the waters of Baptism, and the *five* points to the five wounds of Christ (as the early Church Fathers noted). Baptismal dignity, fidelity, and adherence to the doctrinal and moral teachings of the Catholic Church are essential elements of liberation. To the extent that one strays from these, he presents vulnerabilities for the demon to exploit. While we have had many cases where liberation consisted in saying a specific prayer, albeit not known which one until much later in

the process, there is no quick path to liberation. Victory lies in right belief (orthodoxy) and right practice (orthopraxy).

Armed, then, with the Law and in the name of God the Father Almighty, David came confidently against Goliath. He had recounted to King Saul the reason for his confidence. As a shepherd tending sheep, “whenever a lion or bear came to carry off a sheep from the flock, I would go after it and attack it and rescue the prey from its mouth. If it attacked me, I would seize it by the jaw, strike it, and kill it” (1 Sm 17:34–35).

Having killed both a lion and a bear, he knows how to kill this giant—with faith in the living God and human effort, cunning, and skill. With his trust totally in God, David *raced toward* Goliath and cried out: “You come against me with sword and spear and scimitar, but I come against you in the name of the LORD of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel that you have insulted” (1 Sm 17:45). Moving in at close quarters, waiting for the precise moment, he used unconventional tactics that would make Robert Rogers proud: “David put his hand into the bag and took out a stone, hurled it with the sling, and struck the Philistine on the forehead. The stone embedded itself in his brow, and he fell on his face to the ground. Thus David triumphed over the Philistine with sling and stone; he struck the Philistine dead, and did it without a sword in his hand. Then David ran and stood over him; with the Philistine’s own sword which he drew from its sheath he killed him, and cut off his head” (1 Sm 17:49–51). Seeing their hero killed, the Philistine army turned in flight and were cut down by the Israelite soldiers (see 1 Sm 17:52–54).

Do you believe that you have the skills to defeat your enemy, however huge he may seem, and that God will guide your stone? We will show you tactics that are as the slingshot was to David, both primitive and advanced at the same time. You, however, must have the faith and courage to “put your hand into the bag” and reach for the stone. You must also *race toward* Goliath with the ancient weapons of the Catholic Church in hand. The stakes are high: slavery to the loser but peace and the reward of eternal life with God in heaven to the victor.

Many early Christians saw this epic fight between David and the Philistine as symbolic of the victory of Jesus Christ on the cross and also each Christian's battle against evil spirits. As David proclaimed to Goliath, "All this multitude, too, shall learn that it is not by sword or spear that the Lord saves. For the battle is the Lord's, and he shall deliver you into our hands" (1 Sm 17:47). Accordingly, this manual will walk you through twelve lessons designed to take you, like David, from shepherd to warrior. Think of this manual likewise as placing "five smooth stones" into your ammo pouch: (1) Renouncing of Evil Influences; (2) Repentance, Metanoia, and Forgiveness; (3) Examination of Conscience and Confession; (4) Learning Power and Authority; and (5) Prayer, Weapons, and Tactics. David took five steps in preparing to meet his opponent—he chose a stone, placed it into the sling, armed with a spinning force, aimed, and finally released the projectile. The chapters of this book will follow a similar five-fold inner logic.

Learning the Rules of Engagement

"All Rangers are to be subject to the rules and articles of war." Part of the enemy's strategy is to keep us from knowing the rules of engagement. Recall how Saul tried to give his armor to David, but the heavy conventional armaments were too cumbersome for the young shepherd, so David "stripped them off" (1 Sm 17:39). So, too, this battle you are about to engage in requires a "stripping off" of much of what you thought that spiritual warfare entails. For this reason, we have also included individual lessons within the five stones, which build one upon the other. We have deliberately chosen twelve lessons because the biblical number twelve represents the power and authority of God. Specifically, it symbolizes God's power and authority as seen in ecclesial governance. Just as "five" symbolized the Law, so "twelve" represents the appointive and jurisdictional authority of God on earth as

seen, for example, in the twelve tribes of Israel (see Gn 49:8) and the twelve apostles chosen by Jesus to guide the Church (see Mt 10:1), who gave us twelve articles of faith in the Apostles' Creed. Thus, as you pick up each of the five "stones," you will receive instruction on how to wield them safely and effectively within the authority and credal belief of the Church.

As Father Ripperger noted in his foreword, most people who struggle with spiritual affliction do not need an exorcist and can self-deliver through a return to the practice of the Faith. By *self-deliverance*, we mean the liberation from diabolic influences by tapping into the stream of grace afforded to Catholics. A simple definition of *grace* is *divine life*—the life of God—at work in the life of a Christian. The Greek word for grace is *charis*, a word that means "grace, favor, delight." Implied in the word also is a "vitality"—the very life and power of God vivifying and purifying everything it touches. In the divine economy, grace flows through the seven sacraments of the Catholic Church. You can receive more or less of this divine vitality, however, depending on the disposition of your soul and the impediments present there. This disposition means a dispossession from the things of the world so that you can better identify and remove any impediments.

To that end, you must identify the accuser and how he entered your life whether by sin, trauma, curses, or the occult. In addition, your participation in the sacraments restores and strengthens divine friendship and the flow of God's vitality. It is possible for a person to be liberated and not sanctified and to be reconciled and not sanctified. However, even as reconciliation (in the sense of the church analogy above) may come and go, a key feature of liberation is that it flows from sanctity of soul. The primary goal is reconciliation with God the Father, but this fits within the ultimate goal of the Christian life as sanctification, or the pursuit of holiness.

The demon, meanwhile, will obfuscate. To prevent that flow of grace, he employs various tactics: hiding, trying to

convince you to stop praying, tempting you to return to past sins and destructive behavior, et cetera. Demons particularly hide, according to Father Ripperger, “in areas of weakness,” all the while “probing and testing the limits to see what they can get away with.”¹⁹ Thus, you can unmask the demon by a thorough Penance, the development of virtue, good mental hygiene, and learning how to *reject*, *renounce*, and *rebuke* the vices and spirits which afflict your soul.

Note the inner logic of this formula as it increases in severity according to the intentionality of the penitent.²⁰ In dealing with any vice or spirit:

1. Separate yourself from it with an act of the will.
2. Cut yourself free of any entanglements due to your participation with it.
3. Address it directly (and cast it away) in the name of Jesus Christ and from the authority given by God the Father over your own body and soul.
4. Once a demon and concomitant vice/spiritual defect is uncovered, you now reject, renounce, and finally rebuke it to allow grace to then do its work.

As Saint Paul wrote, “For freedom Christ set us free; so, stand firm and do not submit again to the yoke of slavery” (Gal 5:1). Your time of enslavement ends when you decide to do whatever it takes to get free. At no time, however, are you a passive recipient; you must remain vigilant and active in your own liberation. To paraphrase the words of Saint Augustine, “God who created you without you, will not save you without you.”

¹⁹ Ripperger, *Dominion*, 108.

²⁰ This formula is the fruit of the field experience of Kyle Clement, who authored this prayer in 2004 at the request of exorcist Fr. James Erving, OMI. The inner logic of the *ad hoc* rejection statement comes largely in response to the exorcist team working occult and *brujaria* cases in south Texas at that time. The formula was then shared at early conferences (2005) at Mundelein and the broader exorcist community.

“Have Your Musket Clean as a Whistle, Hatchet Scoured”

Before a soldier learns “guerrilla tactics,” he must first master the basics of soldiering. Lest we get ahead of ourselves, let the reader be reminded that conversion is the first movement of a person seeking healing and liberation. As Father Amorth affirms about the importance of conversion, “the efficacy of the exorcism is more directly related to the willingness to convert . . . than to the exorcism itself.”²¹ That is, repentance and metanoia precede liberation. We learn this from the words and deeds of Jesus. An astute reader of the Bible notes the significance of the first words and the first actions of Jesus. His first words to begin His public ministry should give us pause: “This is the time of fulfillment. The kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel” (Mk 1:15). That the “kingdom of God” is the Church is shown in Jesus’s first deeds where He calls the first disciples Peter and his brother Andrew (“Come after me and I will make you fishers of men,” Mk 1:17). Then, as if He is showing those disciples (and us) what the bringing about of the kingdom of God will look like, He immediately teaches, notably with such “authority” that it not only creates “astonishment” in his listeners but also evokes a manifestation by a possessed person. Jesus then immediately performs an exorcism (see Mk 1:21–28). In fact, His first day of public ministry was comprised of with preaching (v. 21) which led to an exorcism (vv. 23–27) and healing (vv. 29–31)—and more driving out of demons (vv. 32–34). Thus, we can suggest a pattern of the appropriation of the Gospel message as in the Church’s missionary activity: repentance and belief, the Petrine ministry, teaching, and deliverance from evil spirits.

Christ uniquely equipped “the Twelve” (that is, the apostles) to continue these three duties of teaching, exorcising, and healing, in what eventually became known as the threefold *munera* proper to the ordained priesthood. A *munus* is a duty,

²¹ Amorth, *An Exorcist Tells His Story*, 108.

office, or obligation, and Christ imposed this threefold duty upon the hierarchy of the Church—bishops and priests—to bring about the Kingdom of God, often amidst diabolic resistance. The demon recognizes this whether we do or not. We have encountered many priests, however, who are reluctant to engage in “deliverance ministry” for fear of retaliation. Quite simply, if a priest hears confessions, baptizes, and preaches, he is already in “the deliverance ministry” because the power and authority of the “Kingdom of God” continues through the agency of the Church. By performing the ordinary duties of his priestly ministry, therefore, the Catholic priest leads many souls to self-deliverance. Thus, we will often counsel you to “see your parish priest” because the pastoral and sacramental care of the local parish is where the graces of healing and self-liberation are dispensed.

The goal of this program, then, is to immerse you in the threefold missionary activity of the Church where grace is dispensed. As Catholics, our participation in the life of God has a bodily—sacramental and liturgical—aspect to it. Why? Man is a body-soul composite. That is, the human soul is united to the human body, and man acquires knowledge of sensible things through the bodily senses. This body-soul nature of man is that which renders us capable of union with God, who took on human flesh.

Thus, Rogers says that a ranger must “have your musket clean as a whistle, hatchet scoured” so that he is ready to engage the enemy at a moment’s notice. A dirty musket is not accurate, and an unsharpened hatchet will not cut. Our infernal enemy—who is a pure, preternatural spirit with far superior intellect and cunning—knows whether our spiritual “muskets” are “clean as a whistle.” He can sense the dullness of a dirty hatchet, so to speak. In the next section, we will discuss how to clean your musket and put an edge back on your hatchet.