



**Cardinal Gibbons Assembly 783**  
**Newsletter**  
**February 2014**



**SNAKE HANDLING AND OTHER MISCONCEPTIONS**

SK Chris Cooper

The ability some people have to misinterpret and/or completely ignore certain Bible verses is astounding. The number of misconceptions is mind boggling. Snake handling is still persistent in the Appalachian mountain. (Duin, 2012) This ritual for obvious reasons occasionally results in death of the practitioners. Among Fundamentalists there is the assertion the Bible does not support the concept of Holy Water. (Catholic Answers, 2014) An assertion such as this one raises doubt as to how well some Fundamentalists read their Bibles. Here is a question from the clueless of the clueless, "Where in the Bible does it say that abortion is wrong?" (Catholic Answers, 2014) Upon reading this question it is obvious the inquisitor has not opened a Bible once in their life. Well, let us address these questions and clear up some misconceptions. Snake handling is the first in the cue.

Snake handling is a Pentecostal Church ritual of literally handling poisonous snakes during church services. According to CNN it originated in east Tennessee in 1909 AD. (Duin, 2012) The result of this practice is the death of one hundred people since 1909 AD. This dangerous practice is based on a misinterpretation of the Gospel of St. Mark chapter 16, "17. These signs will accompany those who believe: in my name they will drive out demons, they will speak new languages. 18. They will pick up serpents [with their hands], and if they drink any deadly thing, it will not harm them. They will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover." (The New American Bible - St. Joseph Edition, 1986) This passage does not assert for an individual to go out and needlessly place their self in danger such as haphazardly handling deadly snakes. There are two passages in the Bible that warn against engaging in unnecessary dangerous practices. The first is from the book of Deuteronomy chapter 6, "16. Ye shall not tempt the Lord your God, as ye tempted him in Massah." (The Holy Bible - King James Version, 1976) The second is from the Gospel of St Matthew chapter 4, "Jesus said to him: It is written again: Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God." (The Holy Bible - Douay-Rheims, 2005) Two individuals of note should have heeded the proceeding passages.

The late Pastor Mark Randall "Mack" Wolford wanted to revive the practice of snake handling. (Duin, Serpent-Handling Pastor Profiled Earlier In Washington Post Dies From Rattlesnake Bite, 2012) This practice is dying out among younger people generally under 40 years old. He went to the fringe edges of Christianity to draw large crowds. After the fatal bite Pastor Wolford waited approximately eight hours before allowing family members to call for medical aid, but by that time it was too late. A Bible passage to adhere to is Proverbs 16:18, "Pride goes before disaster, and a haughty spirit before a fall." (The New American Bible - St. Joseph Edition, 1986) Pastor Wolford passed away at the age of 44. His father died at the age 39 also from a fatal venomous snake bite during a snake handling ritual. Misinterpreting the Bible has tragic consequences as the Wolford family found out the hard way, but the next question to cover is a more benign subject, Holy Water.

Surprisingly some Fundamentalists do not believe in Holy Water. (Catholic Answers, 2014) Furthermore they believe it is superstition. The misconception they follow is that there is no basis in the Bible for the concept of Holy Water. The Bible does plainly state the use of Holy Water in Numbers 5:17, "And the priest shall take holy water in an earthen vessel; and of the dust that is in the floor of the tabernacle the priest shall take, and put it into the water:" (The Holy Bible - King James Version, 1976) Numbers 5:17 is basically the same in both of the Catholic Bibles, *The New American Bible – Saint Joseph Edition* and *The Holy Bible – Douay-Rheims Version*, but with slightly

different wording. The question that befuddles the mind is how do Fundamentalists miss this passage? Another item that escapes some people is the Bible's prohibition against abortion.

On Catholic Answers (www.catholic.com) an individual posed the question, "Where in the Bible does it say that abortion is wrong?" There is no commandment in the Bible stating, "Thou shalt not commit abortion." There are several verses in the Bible that address abortion. The first verse is Jeremiah 1:5, "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you..." In this verse God establishes the unborn as human beings. The second verse is Exodus 20:13, "Thou shalt do no murder." (Exodus, 2014) Here God forbids committing murder. Both verses taken together establish abortion is wrong and commits murder on the unborn. The Bible is very clear abortion is wrong.

On a side note most Catholic Churches I have visited there is some type of Pro-Life monument present. Jeremiah 1:5 is on the Pro-Life Monument at St. Michael the Archangel Maronite Catholic Church, Fayetteville, NC. St. Maron Council 12640. With Father Jack Morrison's approval the Monument was placed just to the right of the entrance to the Church. These monuments are a reminder to the Faithful that the unborn are people and that abortion is murder.

There are many misconceptions based on a misinterpretation of the Bible. One misconception is focusing on only one passage such as Mark 16:17-18 used to justify snake handling during church services. Another misconception is not reading the entire Bible and missing the concept of Holy Water. In the case of abortion the misconception comes from not connecting several Bible verses together to arrive at the right answer. To quote my parish priest, Father Sam Najjar of St. Michael the Archangel Maronite Catholic Church, "When it comes to the Bible just read the whole thing. It'll do you some good."

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## **DEGREE CEREMONIES**

**Third Degree Ceremony:** 22 February 2014. Location: Council 3574, Jacksonville, NC. For more details go to: [http://www.kofcnc.org/09\\_10Files/calendar.htm?pli=1](http://www.kofcnc.org/09_10Files/calendar.htm?pli=1)

**Fourth Degree Exemplification:** 15 March 2014. Location: Council 15250, Watters Family Life Center, Corner of Knox St. and Randolph St. Ft. Bragg, NC 28310. Due to increased security, everyone, including those with a Military ID card, must pre-register with Ft. Bragg Security. For instructions on how to register with Ft.

Bragg Security go to: [http://www.kofc15250.org/4TH\\_DEGREE\\_CEREMONY\\_2.php](http://www.kofc15250.org/4TH_DEGREE_CEREMONY_2.php) For more details on this Exemplification go to: <http://www.kofcnc.org/FOURTH%20DEGREE/Exemplification%20Page.htm>

**Second Degree Ceremony:** 20 March 2014. Location: Council 12640, Fayetteville, NC. For more details go to: [http://www.kofcnc.org/09\\_10Files/calendar.htm?pli=1](http://www.kofcnc.org/09_10Files/calendar.htm?pli=1)

**Third Degree Ceremony:** 29 March 2014. Location: Council 7406, Mooresville, NC. For more details go to: [http://www.kofcnc.org/09\\_10Files/calendar.htm?pli=1](http://www.kofcnc.org/09_10Files/calendar.htm?pli=1)

If your Council is hosting a Degree Ceremony send an email to [COOP5614@yahoo.com](mailto:COOP5614@yahoo.com) with the information and I will place it in the next Assembly Newsletter and on the website Calendar page.



### **CARDINAL GIBBONS ASSEMBLY HONOR GUARD**

### **UPCOMING HONOR GUARD EVENTS**

There are no Honor Guard Events Scheduled at this time.

### **BENEDICTINE MONASTIC ORDER**

SK Chris Cooper

The Benedictine Monastic Order was among the first of the western monastic orders. This Order takes its name for the founder, Saint Benedict of Nursia (480 – 550 AD). (EWTN) St. Benedict is the founder of western monasticism. He dedicated his life to God and prayer. In 530 AD he wrote the *Rule of St. Benedict* to guide members of the Benedictine Order in their daily lives and to govern monasteries and abbeys of the Order. The Rule of St. Benedict covers the different Orders and titles. (Fish Eaters) Let us begin with a quick biography of St. Benedict.

St. Benedict was born about the year 480 AD at Nursia, in the province of Umbria, in north central Italy. (EWTN) His family was probably wealthy nobles. He had a twin sister named Scholastica, who is the Patron Saint of Nuns. (American Catholic.org) St. Benedict's parents sent him to Rome for his education. He soon became disenchanted with his surrounding especially the debauchery his classmates indulged in. Eventually St. Benedict left Rome to find a place of solitude so he could pray and contemplate about God. The place he found was an area called Subiaco which is 45 miles east of Rome. (Encyclopedia Britannica) Subiaco is also known for a villa the Emperor Nero had constructed there. St. Benedict met a monk named Romulus who helped him on his way to monastic life. Over time St. Benedict gained a following. During his stay in Subiaco, St. Benedict founded twelve monasteries. After an assassination attempt on his life St. Benedict along with several followers traveled to Monte Cassino.

In Monte Cassino St. Benedict established the famous Monte Cassino Abbey in 520 AD. (EWTN) Monte Cassino Abbey is built on the site of a pagan temple dedicated to the god, Apollo. This Abbey was destroyed and reconstructed many times since St. Benedict founded it. The most recent time is during World War II. The Abbey has been rebuilt. For more information on about the Abbey go to Montecassino Abbey <http://montecassinoabbey.org/> In 550 AD St. Benedict passed away. He was laid to rest on the Abbey grounds next to his sister, St. Scholastica. Before his passing St. Benedict compiled the *Rule of St. Benedict* in 530 AD.

The *Rule of St. Benedict* is rather lengthy. His Rule contains 73 chapters. The Rule of St. Benedict is available at the two following websites:

Eternal Word Television Network: <http://www.ewtn.com/library/PRIESTS/BENRULE.HTM#Contents>

Fish Eater.com: <http://www.fisheaters.com/ruleofstbenedict.html>

The *Rule of St. Benedict* explains the different Orders and titles.

The Benedictine Order has three Orders as well as titles for the members. (Fish Eaters) The First Order is made up of men. It consist of monks, friars, or brothers. The Second Order is made up of women. Nuns or sisters belong to this Order. The Third Order is made up of the laity both men and women. If they live in a religious community they are considered “regular.” If not, they are considered “secular.” Monks and nuns are cloistered. Friars, brothers, and sisters are non-cloistered or “...work in the real world.” (Fish Eaters)

A long rich history encompassed the Benedictine Monastic Order. The founder, St. Benedict, gained a following in the sixth century resulting in the establishment of numerous monasteries and abbeys. St. Benedict created the rule named after him, *The Rule of St. Benedict*. The Rule governs the running of the Benedictine Order. This Monastic Order broken down into three smaller Orders including the religious and the laity along with titles. There is one last point to sum up the Benedictine Order. The Order has a strong work ethic. St. Benedict was a firm believer in work as he stated in Chapter 48 of his Rule, “Idleness is the enemy of the soul.” (St. Benedict, 530 AD)

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#### **IN MEMORIAM:**

Please keep in your prayers for the repose of the souls of:  
Deceased Knights of Columbus and U.S. Armed Forces.

#### **ARTICLES FROM THE ASSEMBLY MEMBERSHIP**

Any Sir Knight who wants to add his article to the Newsletter, submit the article to Faithful Scribe, SK Chris Cooper, at the next Assembly meeting or send it via email to [COOP5614@yahoo.com](mailto:COOP5614@yahoo.com).