

Simple Analysis re Constance Thomson's Narrative

“Criticism of others is thus an oblique form of self-commendation. We think we make the picture hang straight on our wall by telling our neighbors that all his pictures are crooked.”

— Fulton J. Sheen, *Seven Words of Jesus and Mary: Lessons from Cana and Calvary*

Several days ago a woman named Constance Thomson decided to post online her personal story regarding her experience at OLMC. Mrs. Thomson's list of 80-something lines of a personal story regarding her disappointments in being a religious as SHE wanted things to go, is thoroughly subjective - through and through.

Firstly, she proceeded to publish her story in a most unusual way – she decided to itemize not only her alleged grievances but her entire narrative is a series of numbered bullet points. This supports the idea that the intention in doing so is to sway and mislead her readership into thinking that the number of things 'wrong' at OLMC is quite extensive. In reality, most of those numbered points have to do with her storyline (e.g. In 2015, I was doing and thinking this....)

Secondly, it is interesting to note that there is little-to-no way to corroborate nearly anything she writes. She refers almost completely to private conversations, essentially *he said-she said* conversations. So we are forced to assume she is being honest in all she writes and that it is not her personal opinion or variation of what occurred that is being projected onto us.

Thirdly, she was very wise to bring her list of 'grievances and allegations' to CathInfo, where most of the members, including the administrator, are heavily biased against OLMC, as is evidenced by most of the post there, dripping with vitriol and hatred for all things OLMC. She essentially admits as much when she says:

16. Based on the information coming in my direction, I became convinced that there is a persecution against the Boston KY effort, against Fr. Pfeiffer and Fr. Hewko. I base this on the evidence of service to Agatha by the Fathers, and the apparent wavering of Bsp Williamson, and the evident malice in many writings on Cathinfo.org. I remain very grateful to the OLMC Boston Fathers and seminarians.

So here she has a willing audience, all too hungry to devour what she offers them. This is again supported by the pages and pages of members writing in, patting her on the back, offering their sympathies, etc. all the while once again, slamming OLMC in most uncharitable ways and means. So this whole endeavor savors strongly of one who was very deliberate and calculating in the her telling of her story. It is not a simple narrative.

Once again, in all attacks against OLMC, no one is ever to substantially attack the doctrine of its priests. All attacks against them are in relation to those around them. Mrs. Thomson too, makes no attack on the doctrine of the priests of OLMC.

Unfortunately, she gives the very strong impression of someone who has become a disgruntled employee (the term 'going postal' comes to mind), very angry that things didn't work out her way. So in retaliation for her disappointments, she is using conjecture and a willing audience on CathInfo to unleash her anger upon the priests and faithful involved with OLMC. But in this she must be so careful.

As someone wrote to us:

In fact it is a serious sin. It is a mortal sin multiplied countless times depending on the number of people who read it AND PASSED IT ON - not only on the day it was published but every single minute of every day thereafter. For the sake of her own soul where is her Fear of the Lord?

Take note how throughout her whole narrative, Mrs. Thomson emphasizes over and over how things didn't go the way she wanted. But if we are examining this story in a Catholic light, then we must realize that God often lets us know something is not meant for us by allowing us many disappointments in our attempts to go in a direction not intended for us.

How often have we read in the lives of the saints, especially the female saints yearning to be the Spouses of Christ, that no matter what obstacles were placed in their way in terms of disappointments, they never went lashed out on the religious houses or persons who were obstacles in obtaining their goals. They NEVER retaliated with such lack of charity and such lack of love of one's neighbor. In all things, they praised God. They sought God's will in all things.

Consider the lives of the Saints who had their own ideas of how their lives should go but God showed them another path. And many times converted others in their lives by living as God intended rather than how they wanted to live. But it was their humble response to those graces and following the will of God and not their own that lead to their sanctification. Consider the life of St. Benedict. He wanted nothing more to be a solitary hermit. But God needed him to be the founder of the great Benedictine order – not solitary as he preferred but surrounded by fellow monks. Because of his obedience to the will of God, his order gave many saints to Holy Church and his Rule is still used as a golden standard for many monastic orders.

There were other visitors who were at OLMC during Holy Week and met Mrs. Thomson. Upon reading what she wrote they immediately noticed discrepancies in her narrative with what they saw and experienced. This is what others know who were there at the time:

According to Constance, one imagines she cooked, served, did the dishes, swept, and probably washed the windows all by herself! The seminarians were there at her beck and call to assist. What I remember, they served at table, they did the cleanup. Most likely they did more than I saw, for we weren't there as inspectors or reporters with notebooks. It looked to me that they had their assigned duties and they did them.

While we were there we helped in the cleanup, as well as in food preparation when we learned that she was filling in temporarily. A former seminarian as well, was there helping Constance in the kitchen. He found he did not have a calling for the religious life, but he appreciates the seminary enough to return for Holy Week and help. She doesn't mention any single person that was helping in the kitchen.

After the beautiful Easter vigil, some of us assisted in putting out the food but she went to bed. Before Easter midnight Mass some of us visitors spent several hours with her in the kitchen helping with preparing the food. There was a great turnout for Mass and for the gathering in the refectory after Mass.

There was a an overloading sink full of dishes, etc., which is to be expected when we celebrate

a great Feast with lots of people. The seminarians cleaned it all! In no time the kitchen was clean and sparkling. I watched as I was talking with some of the seminarians, and trying to do a little bit myself here and there. Not knowing myself where washed items belonged, they just took what was dried and put things away themselves. Often it's faster and easier to let those who do know move in. They were all so excited and happy! It was a joyful scene. They take pride in their seminary, even their kitchen. **On the other hand, when the seminarians were there in the kitchen and Constance was there, she cringed at all these "men" in her kitchen. She complained to us visitors several times, how she disliked "all these men in her kitchen."**

The only mention of prayer for those she finds offensive in that 80-something points that I found is a comment in last line: *Of course, we will pray for all involved. Oh God grant us Holy Priests.*

The Carmelites Constance wants to emulate are known to pray much for sinners, including public ones. Their love for souls is so great - indeed, they are not repulsed by them. Remember how St. Theresa gained a soul for God through her quiet prayers for a criminal. The greatest lovers in the world are those in convents and monasteries.

It's childish thinking to expect perfection in everyone else around you (That's a clue to her mentality isn't it, to find fault with everyone else.)

There is absolutely no doctrinal error at OLMC and if she were sincere and wanted to help Priests who are exhausting their life, making sacrifices constantly, and yes for her too, when they answered her call for their dying roommate.

A sincere person would have prayed and been a help, even when she returned home, instead of broadcasting all her perceived grievances. To imitate Our Lady of Mt. Carmel is to forget self and pray for others. Read what Constance wrote again, it's all about 'I did this, I did that,... I, I, I'.

She does not listen well. As she wrote, Father told her "**these things take time to develop.**" How true! One doesn't make themselves superior, or found a convent, before she even knows if she has a religious calling!

Our Lord said, "I choose you, you do not choose Me." She's a convert and does not know how the Church works. Had she pondered in her heart, like Our Lady, she would have come to understand what Father was explaining. That first Father Pfeiffer had to see if it was God's will. Anger blinds, so that even though Fr. tried to explain, she didn't get it.

Reading what Constance wrote gives us an good idea of what hell is. Blame everybody else for their guilt, for their sins. Her open letter is a piece of hell.

The second person in contact with Constance during Holy Week at OLMC wrote the following:

I read it. It almost made me vomit!!

SERIOUSLY?!! Lies and nonsense... we were there...if we weren't I may be tempted to believe it. Yes. I agree Pablo can be harsh, but if he wasn't a little bit, would anything get done there?! It takes a tough man to deal with all the 'haters' that come around.

I find it funny she didn't once mention she did have HELP in the kitchen during Holy Week.

The way I see it, maybe she had second thoughts after she sold her business and went back or maybe someone sent her there...hmm...

Too say I am angry is putting it mildly... I find her testimony of Kentucky absolutely DISGUSTING!

There were many of us women there, all interacting with Pablo. We were all treated with the utmost respect. We all hugged him as we were leaving. NO inappropriateness!

This is a woman who clearly hates being around men. (see Constance's #34 and other places where she states her distrust of men- for whatever reason, never-the-less it's a real distrust)-By her own words, she admits this. She repeated this to several others while she was there. And yet her decision to relocate to the middle of a seminary is a guarantee that she would experience personal strife while being there. At a seminary what would one expect but to be surrounded by men.

Mrs. Thomson also speaks of Fr. Pfeiffer's "**ingratitude**" -supposedly for the cooking she agreed to take on. But *ora et labora*, how did she assume her time would be spent? Even contemplatives must work. How can a woman, who hopes to be a religious, speak of her spiritual superior in this fashion? Again, have we ever heard of the saints speaking of the ingratitude of others who were their superiors? This is not consonant with one who feels they have a religious calling.

And this doesn't even take into effect her ingratitude for the priests taking her in and consenting to take on her religious and spiritual formation, while already stretched to the max bringing sacraments. She never thinks how the actions of these priests speak volumes for their charity:

15. Masses are now picked up by Fr. Pfeiffer and Hewko in Birmingham MI area and the Fathers make 2 visits to our home in Windsor Canada (1 hour drive thru Customs) to provide for Last Sacraments for Agatha. She passed away Dec 22/15. **Fr. Pfeiffer and seminarians drive all night to arrive for a 6:30 am funeral Mass Christmas eve (before their busy Christmas circuit).** Thanks be to God!

Think about the time, lack of sleep, money for travel, etc for Fr. Pfeiffer and the seminarians to travel all night to bring the sacraments to a dying woman, Mrs. Thomson's best friend. This is true charity. And yet, this is barely given passing notice. Its all about Mrs. Thomson's feelings throughout this whole narrative.

She continues her uncharitable diatribe against a woman who assists OLMC. She goes so far to drag this poor woman's children into her ranting and raving. Its a golden rule to never drag children into adult arguments. How awful! Little does she know how much that woman and those children actually assist at OLMC. It was very painful to read of this new low. It shows how much hatred she holds in her heart that she is using children as part of her attack.

Another has written and made the following observations:

In overview, there are two red flags that do stand out to me, regardless who those allegations were made to, is that this person speaks of a religious vocation , and as being savvy to have her own niche business in the world.

Regarding her savvy and wits to run a successful niche business, one can not therefore put much weight in her account of "naivete" when she alleges she knew of "problems" happening from the start...and made major decisions upon that.

She knew to go to CI to share frenzy unbecoming to one with a religious vocation and a conscientious practicing Catholic in general. If she was really concerned, she should have gone to the proper channels, not to public opinion; the same goes for the allegations of Fr. Voigt wanting drama of public opinion than the proper channel. I do not give credence to such insincerity.

Therefore I question her motives as a first premise. The rest God knows and any others present.

Notice this fight of Tradition in their eyes is a religion of "personal barrage" and not on the target for the needs of the Church? The disfigurement of the Church does not just come by the atheists; it comes from her own.

CathInfo has made sure that Pablo's alleged 'assault' has stood out in high relief amongst all the allegations Mrs. Thomson's makes. Let us note, which is not mentioned by Mrs. Thomson, there were many other women visitors were present the latter half of Holy Week with Constance and Pablo and interacted with both. All five have reported there was never a issue with Pablo. He was completely appropriate with them during their time there.

Regarding Mrs. Thomson's report of her interaction with Pablo. No one really knows what happened. But here's what we do know about Pablo and Mrs. Thomson. Mrs. Thomson acknowledges herself to be a victim of past abuse. She found herself in an uncomfortable situation with a man alone, albeit with all the blinds up and all clearly visible to all passer-byes:

68. ...The lights are on, the blinds are up facing the grounds, and the door remains open. ... According to her own narrative, she never tells him to leave but consents to make a bed with a man watching her, again according to her own words. This is not right. She then states that Pablo when leaving, he started backing up and pushed against her front. She feels this was deliberate. This is difficult because both were wrong to be alone together in her living quarters. Trailers are small, confined spaces. So even with lights on and doors open, it wasn't right to be in that situation. What Mrs. Thomson does report is that she continues at OLMC another several days (eleven?).

Mrs. Thomson gives a lot of time to the fact she sold her business in an effort to leave the world and become a religious. As is right and proper. And as is right and proper, a dowry is usually given to the accepting religious house to assist with the housing and care of that same religious. In this instance, a separate home would have to be procured for a single or group of nuns, as is right and good. So the frequent insinuations that there were misappropriations of funds are misleading. Mrs. Thomson states that a voice recorder was a big dent in her budget but then notes later that she offered and did indeed pay for much of the food during Holy Week. So which is it? To complain about something (voice recorder) and then do that and even more (buy food for a large crowd), and complain about that too...again, not consonant with the love of neighbor and the charity required in the religious life.

It was particularly difficult to read Mrs. Thomson's complaints about the food that 'was going across

the street'. Here she seems to be referring to the Chief Administrator's home with her seven children. Apparently, it is unacceptable to Mrs. Thomson that the charitable distribution of food to others is allowed. Again, sadly we must question if this is the charity needed for the religious life. It appears that OLMC is not allowed to help others. They must not follow the example of Our Lord, who said 'Give all you have to the poor and follow Me.'

We will not address the other discrepancies as this has already gone on too long. But since Mrs. Thomson has publicly brought out this issues, they deserve a public response. And since she posted these issues on a forum, where debate rules the day, we have done so here.

“Whether, therefore, we receive what we ask for, or do not receive it, let us still continue steadfast in prayer. For to fail in obtaining the desires of our heart, when God so wills it, is not worse than to receive it; for we know not as He does, what is profitable to us.” -St. John Chrysostom