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Catholic Customs And Symbols

By Rt. Rev. H. T. Henry, Litt. D.
Incense

When the Ben Orest players presented "Everyman"—that wonderful affecting Morality Play of the fifteenth century—they included one startling feature which many of my readers will doubtless recall to memory. After his symbolical life had ended, and Everyman's obsequies were to be performed, a faint odor of incense crept through the auditorium, although no censer was swung nor could the billowing clouds of incense anywhere be perceived by the sense of sight. Catholics could immediately recognize the appropriateness of this feature. The "Absolution of the Body" after the Requiem Mass must have come vividly to mind, and the whole play, a sermon throughout, had its finest suggestion at this point. It is doubtful if the non-Catholics present could understand the meaning of the sweet odor of incense, for the Reformers banished from their religious services a thing sanctioned certainly for more than a millennium by Christian usage.

God commanded Moses (Exodus, chapter 30) to make an altar of setim wood overlaid with the purest gold, on which to burn incense—"sweet-smelling incense"—which Aaron was to light in the morning after dressing the lamps: "And when he shall place them in the evening, he shall burn an everlasting incense before the Lord throughout your generations." In the time of the second Temple, one among the inferior priests was chosen by lot for this purpose. It was at this function that, as St. Luke informs us in his Gospel (1:10), Zachary learned from an angel that Elizabeth should bear a son, John, the great Precursor of Christ. The angel appeared "on the right side of the altar of incense." The ceremony must have been most impressive. The people were removed from the Temple and from between the porch and the altar, and prayed outside amidst profound silence. It was doubtless with this sublime picture in mind that St. John describes, in the Apocalypse (8:1-4), the "silence in heaven" that followed the opening of the seventh seal: "And another angel came, and stood before the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given to him much incense, that he should offer of the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar, which is before the throne of God. And the smoke of the incense of the prayers of the saints ascended up before God from the hand of the angel" (verses 3, 4). Our prayers are like a sweet-smelling incense. From the quotations I have just made, we can perceive the beautiful symbolism expressed by the blessing of the incense at High Mass. The celebrant says "By the intercession of blessed Michael the archangel standing on the right hand of the altar of incense, and of all his elect, may the Lord vouchsafe to bless this incense, and receive it as an odor of sweetness. Through Christ our Lord Amen." He then incenses the bread and wine, saying: "May this incense, blessed by thee, ascend to thee, O Lord, and may thy mercy descend upon us." He then incenses the altar, saying "Let my prayer be directed, O Lord, as incense, in thy sight; the lifting up of my hands, as an evening sacrifice." This is a quotation from Psalm 140.

Other Uses During Mass

We notice at High Mass, however, the many other uses of incense. The Gospel is incensed before it is sung by the deacon; the celebrant, deacon, subdeacon, the attending clergy, and the congregation, are incensed; the relics upon the altar, and the crucifix are incensed. At Solemn Vespers, there is incensing. We are also familiar with the incensing, after Requiem Mass, of the coffin, remains, sepulchre. Indeed, the functions in which incense is burned are many. There are two times when it is not burnt. It is placed unburned into the "sepulchre" of consecrated altars; and into the Paschal Candle, in the form of five grains, whilst the priest says: "Therefore in the grace of this night, receive, O Holy Father, the evening sacrifice of this incense, which Holy Church presents to thee in this solemn oblation of this wax candle, the work of bees, by the hands of thy ministers. Now also we know the praises of this column, which to the honor of God the shining fire enkindles."

Now all this beautiful ceremonial in its gradual growth in the Church, despite the elevating symbolism of incense in the Old Testament. There is no proof that incense resistance. Their show of opposition was used liturgically during the first four centuries of the Christian era by one step. The Moslem aristocracy will frequent the courses of the new Hebrew Aikmanism in spite of their repeated declarations of racial hostility.

Holy Year Committee Sends Pilgrimage Booklet To Bishops

New York, Jan. 23.—The National Holy Year Committee, of which Rt. Rev. John J. Dunn, V. G. Auxiliary Bishop of New York, is chairman, has prepared and forwarded to members of the hierarchy of the United States a handsome booklet containing the information necessary for the conduct of pilgrimages to Rome during the year.

The booklet contains the letter of the Holy Father proclaiming 1925 as a Holy Year; a letter from Cardinal Pompili to the Bishops and Archbishops concerning the organization of the pilgrimages; a brief historical outline of the Roman Jubilees, and a portrait of Pope Pius XI. Affiliated with Bishop Dunn on the committee are Rt. Rev. Monsignor Daniel Burke, D.D., the Very Rev. Monsignor Joseph F. Rummel, D. D., Martin Conboy, George McDonald, George J. Gillespie, Joseph McAleenan, F. M. Beccari, James T. Hallinan, William Graham, Charles H. Ridder and Frederick J. Fuller.

A bureau of information concerning the pilgrimages has been opened at the Catholic Charities building, 477 Madison avenue, this city.

The calculation is made by the central committee, in Rome, that between four and five hundred thousand pilgrims are to be expected in the course of the year, the Committee made known today. How many will go from this side of the Atlantic has not been indicated as yet, they announced, but the steamship companies report that reservations are being made in considerable numbers, and most of them are making plans against the time when first and second class space has been exhausted.

As ordinary tourist traffic is expected to be heavy this year, it will not be wise to defer the preliminary arrangements for intended pilgrimages much longer, the committee warns. It is believed, it says, that three-fourths or more of the members of the hierarchy will visit Rome this year, and there will be pilgrimages in larger or smaller numbers from every diocese.

Detroit Society Contributes \$700 To National Shrine

Washington, Jan. 23.—Announcement has been made by Dr. Bernard A. McKenna here that a contribution of \$700 to the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception has been received from the Detroit Chapter of the Salve Regina Society. The money is transmitted through Mrs. John Sullivan, president of the chapter, and Mrs. McNamara, the treasurer, and includes \$500 given by Mrs. McNamara in her name and that of Mr. McNamara, for the memory of their families, living and dead.

Information also was received of the annual meeting of the Detroit chapter of the Society at which the Rt. Rev. Joseph C. Plagens, Auxiliary Bishop of Detroit, spoke. Further plans were made and reports received concerning the mosaic work at the Shrine, which the chapter is financing. Bishop Plagens has for years been a friend of the Shrine project, giving Dr. McKenna a particularly cordial reception on the occasion of the showing of the Shrine pictures in Detroit some time ago.

Continued vigorous strides in the Shrine construction are announced by Dr. McKenna. As work is about to begin on the five altars of the northern apse of the crypt, the order has been given for the five in the eastern apse. In addition, the contract has been given for the foundations for the transept and the elongation of the present expanse of the crypt, and work will begin as soon as the two southern piers are in place. With the completion of this work, 100 feet will have been added, making a total stretch of 304 feet on the single level, with a transept width of 240 feet.

Another large consignment of jewelry contributed to the Shrine has been sent away to be melted for sacred vessels for the great edifice. It includes no fewer than 236 articles, as follows: twenty-one gold watches, eight silver watches, twenty five gold bracelets, one silver bracelet, eighty-five gold rings, six silver rings, eleven gold collar buttons, three gold studs, fifteen gold breast pins, seven pairs of gold earrings, three gold pencil holders, ten gold lockets, one silver locket and chain, twenty-nine gold chains and seven silver chains. Precious stones from many of these gifts have been deposited for use to adorn the sacred vessels.

Men prominent in all walks of life and beautiful thing, however it may be perverted to wrong uses, belongs to God, and as circumstances permitted. It is planned to conduct more and more used by the Church to dignify the service of God.

Deaths of the Week

Funeral services were held from the respective churches on dates given. May their souls rest in peace.

Monahan—Ward Monahan, died at the home of his aunt, Mrs. P. J. Monahan, No. 404 Plymouth avenue, January 26, aged 16 years. Funeral from the Immaculate Conception Church January 29.

Walulis—Joseph Walulis died January 28, aged 53 years, at the home on Stone road, Pittsford, N. Y. Funeral January 31. Interment in Holy Sepulchre cemetery.

Colligan—Mrs. Ella M. Colligan, died at her home, No. 662 Lewiston avenue, January 28, aged 65 years. Funeral from Holy Rosary Church January 31.

Kuhn—Peter Joseph Kuhn, died January 27, aged 65 years, at the family home, 79 Mohawk street. Funeral from St. Andrew's Church, January 30.

McBride—Owen McBride died January 27, at the family home, No. 158 Mt. Hope avenue, aged 43 years. Funeral from St. Mary's Church, January 30.

Miller—Elizabeth Riesenberger, Miller of No. 38 Weaver street, died January 28, aged 58 years. Funeral from Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church January 31.

Aspenleiter—Margaret Behan Aspenleiter, died January 25, at the family home, Stop 25, St. Paul Boulevard. Funeral from St. Joseph's Church January 29.

Anglicans Given Many Privileges By Orthodox Head

By Dr. Alexander Mombelli,
(Jerusalem Correspondent, N.C. W.C. News Service.)

Jerusalem, Jan. 12.—The movement towards union between Orthodox and Anglicans in the Holy Places, which began forty years ago, has become more and more evident since the World War. The Orthodox Patriarchs of Jerusalem show acts of courtesy and kindness towards members of the Anglican Church. Perhaps the most deeply appreciated of these freely given privileges has been the assignment of an altar in the school of the chapel of St. Abraham, immediately above the traditional site of Calvary, where the Orthodox Patriarch allows the clergymen of Anglican rite to celebrate their services.

This culminated last year in a declaration from the Patriarch that, so far as the involved international arrangement known as the "status quo" permitted, he would afford to Anglican visitors to the Holy Land the full privileges enjoyed by pilgrims of the Orthodox Church. To this must be added the adhesion of the Greek Orthodox Patriarch of Jerusalem to the declaration of the Great Church of Constantinople that Anglican orders possess the same degree of validity as those of the Roman and other historical churches separated from Orthodox. The declaration of the Patriarch Damianos makes all the greater impression as it is well known that in times past he had serious differences of opinion with Msgr. Miletos Metaxakis, the prime mover in this matter.

In order to become more closely acquainted with the Anglican Church, Msgr. Damianos sent one of his most promising young men, a compatriot from Samos named Pythagoras Thermelis, to complete his education at the University of Oxford and the Anglican Seminary at Cuddesden. Pythagoras Thermelis is now Timotheus Archbishop of Jordan, and on his initiative the Synod of Jerusalem last year took steps which resulted in the foundation of the Society called the Anglican and Orthodox Fellowship. This is a Society formed for the discussion of the dogmatic points at issue on which agreement must be reached before union can be attained.

Charleston Diocese Holds First Annual Retreat For Laymen

(By N. C. W. C. News Service)
Charleston, S. C., Jan. 23.—The first annual retreat for the laymen of the diocese of Charleston was held at Pine Forest Inn, Summerville under the direction of the Rev. Joseph Frankhauser, S. J., of New Orleans. The Rt. Rev. William T. Russell, Bishop of Charleston, celebrated the Solemn High Mass which brought the retreat to an end.

Men prominent in all walks of life and beautiful thing, however it may be perverted to wrong uses, belongs to God, and as circumstances permitted. It is planned to conduct more and more used by the Church to dignify the service of God.

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Funeral services were held from the respective churches on dates given. May their souls rest in peace.

Ascher—Wilhelmina Ascher, died suddenly, January 23, at St. Mary's Hospital, aged 26 years. Funeral from St. Boniface Church, January 27.

Wells—Harriet Emily Wells, died at her home, No. 12 Lambert park, January 25. Funeral from St. Peter and Paul's Church, January 27.

Foley—Helen Cunningham Foley, wife of Thomas F. Foley, died January 24, at the family home, No. 64 Cornell street. Funeral from the Blessed Sacrament Church, January 26. Interment in Calvary cemetery, Ontario, N. Y.

Fromherz—Mary Fromherz, died January 24, at her home, No. 67 Clifford avenue, aged 71 years. Funeral from St. Michael's Church, January 27.

Bertrand—John Charles Bertrand died January 25, at the family home, No. 551 Harvard street, aged 67 years. Funeral from Blessed Sacrament Church January 28. Interment was made in Pine Hill cemetery, Buffalo, N. Y.

Willig—Magdalena Willig, died January 26, at the home, No. 12 Borchard street, aged 72 years. Funeral from Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church January 29.

De Bree—Mrs. Emma De Bree died at the family residence, on the Creek road, Penfield, January 26, aged 46 years. Funeral from Our Lady of Victory Church January 29.

Balling—Joseph C. Balling, died suddenly, at the family residence, No. 82 Parkway, January 25. Funeral from St. Joseph's Church, January 28th.

Beaty—Charles Beaty died at his home, Greece, N. Y. Funeral from Our Mother of Sorrows Church, Greece, N. Y., January 26. Interment in Holy Sepulchre cemetery.

Franev—Martin T. Franev, aged 55 years, died January 23, at his home, No. 222 Aldine street. Funeral from St. Monica's Church, January 27.

Leary—Mrs. Agnes Hall Leary died at the family home, No. 183 Bartlett street, died January 22. Funeral from the Immaculate Conception Church January 26.

Pascucci—Joseph Pascucci, of No. 24 Nash street, died January 23, aged 4 years. Funeral from Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church, January 26.

Schled—Edward J. Schled died January 23, aged 40 years. The funeral took place from St. Joseph's Church, January 26. Requiem mass was sung by Rev. Ferdinand Schled, a brother of the deceased. Priests present in the sanctuary were: Revs. J. P. Schellhorn, Matthias J. Hargather, T. J. Winterroth, J. Emil Gefell, John Masseth, William Heisel, Edward Schled, George Schmitt, Michael Krieg, John Brophy, George Weinmann and F. X. Kuns. The active bearers were John Sullivan, S. M. Malone, Joseph DeFrez, Peter and Ferdinand Schled and Julius Heberger. Interment was made in the family lot in Holy Sepulchre cemetery.

Staub—Anna M. Mattie Staub, died January 28, aged 64 years, at the family home, No. 1261 Portland avenue. Funeral from Holy Redeemer Church January 31.

Viox—Leopold Viox died January 28, at his home, No. 242 Avenue A, aged 59 years. Funeral from St. Michael's Church January 31.

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Villanova Gives Farewell Dinner To Father Driscoll

Philadelphia, Jan. 23.—On the eve of his departure for Oklahoma where, at the invitation of Bishop Kelley, he will establish a new Catholic institution of higher learning, the Rev. Francis A. Driscoll, O. S. A., was tendered a farewell dinner by the faculty, alumni and student body of Villanova College. Father Driscoll has been President of Villanova College for four and a half years and was Vice-President from 1913 until his promotion to the Presidency.

The farewell exercises were held in the College auditorium with the Rev. John A. Fleming, O. S. A., Prior, presiding. Farewells and good wishes for Father Driscoll were voiced by the Rev. James H. Griffin, O. S. A., on behalf of the faculty; Martin J. McLaughlin, representing the Alumni; and Daniel P. McLaughlin, on behalf of the student body. The Very Rev. Nicholas J. Vasey, O. S. A., Provincial of the Order, was one of the speakers. The Rev. Joseph A. Hickey, O. S. A., Regent of Studies and Professor of Ethics at the Augustinian Scholasticate, succeeds Villanova.

Marquette Extends High School Relays To Outside States

Milwaukee, Wis., Jan. 23.—Greatly extended in scope, the annual high school relays, conducted in the spring by Marquette University, this year and in the future will include high schools from states other than Wisconsin, and also will have a special group contest for military schools.

This is the announcement of Conrad M. Jennings, track coach at Marquette, who also made known that May 9 has been selected as the date for the relays this year. For the first time, the new Marquette stadium will be in use for the program.

The complete program has not been made out, but as it is tentatively arranged, there are twenty-five events. The relays will be divided into three sections, one open to Wisconsin, high schools, another to military schools and the third to outside high schools.

Priests To Sue Author

Paris, Jan. 16.—Twenty-five priests of the Saint-Pol de Leon district of Brittany, have decided to bring suit against a writer, M. Yves Lebever, who, in a novel, the scene of which is laid in Brittany, has made several priests appear in a very sorry role. The plaintiffs consider that an irreparable reflection has been made upon them. The case will probably come to court in a few days at Rennes.

Sister's Paper Read Before Scientists Elaborated In Book

(By N. C. W. C. News Service)
Monroe, Mich., Jan. 23.—Since the publication in the N. C. W. C. News Service dispatches of the fact that Sister Mary, of the Sister-Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary head of the Department of Sociology at St. Mary College here, addressed the American Association for the Advancement of Science at its meeting in Washington, she has received numerous inquiries from educators concerning her address. Her subject took her into a new educational field, with the result that the announcement created considerable interest.

The chief inquiry has been as to where the paper she read might be obtained. Therefore, it has been restated here that the paper, entitled "Research findings in the Moral Development of Children" is a brief review of Sister Mary's book entitled "The Moral Development of Children", published in 1923 under the author's name, Marie C. McGrath, by the Psychological Review Publishing Company, Princeton, N. J., where it may be obtained. The work is an intensive study of the moral knowledge of 4,600 children, as revealed through an exhaustive series of tests. The deductions may become the basis for a first course in moral instruction in schools.

Jews Aim to Control Higher Education In the Holy Land

By Dr. Alexander Mombelli,
(Jerusalem Correspondent, N. C. W. C. News Service)

Jerusalem, Jan. 15.—Three days before Christmas the English High Commissioner, several government functionaries and many representatives of different sections of Palestine were invited to celebrate the opening of the Institute of Jewish Studies. The next day the opening lectures were given. A large audience, apart from the students, was present.

The great intellectual battle which the Zionist revival is preparing to carry on along the whole front is at hand. The Hebrew University at Jerusalem aims at a monopoly of higher education in Palestine. The Jews are working in the Holy Places in earnest. The faculties of their universities are about to begin their new campaign for a spiritual renaissance. The Arabs can offer no real resistance. Their show of opposition was used liturgically during the first four centuries of the Christian era by one step. The Moslem aristocracy will frequent the courses of the new Hebrew Aikmanism in spite of their repeated declarations of racial hostility.