

The Catholic Courier and Journal

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LENT

Wednesday of this week was the beginning of Lent, a solemn period of fasting and of prayer, during which the Church reminds us of that divine warning: "Remember, man, thou art but dust, and unto dust thou shalt return."

Special services are being held in all churches during Lent. We should attend them faithfully, eliminating social, theatrical and other diversions as far as possible from our lives during this period.

Fasting and abstinence, in themselves, mean little or nothing. But if we do them for God, if we deprive ourselves of some of the luxuries, because we abstain from food and offer the abstinence to God for our sins and for the sins of the world,—then, the rewards are priceless, the results beneficial.

As the athlete goes into intensive training for the development and strengthening of his body, so should the Christian for the development and strengthening of his soul.

CATHOLIC STATISTICS

The 1931 edition of the World Almanac carries some church statistics that make interesting reading. In the classic language of the announcer for Amos and Andy, here they are:

In thirty-three of the forty-eight states the Catholics outnumber any other denomination. In forty-four of the fifty largest cities in the United States Catholics are more numerous than any other denomination.

In Kansas the Catholics are only six thousand behind the Methodists in membership. The Methodists lead in West Virginia, with the Catholics third. Southern Baptists are in the lead in six states: North Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Kentucky, Tennessee and Oklahoma.

The Jews lead all churches in New York City, with 1,765,000 members; while the Catholics are a close second, with 1,733,954 members.

Reliable press dispatches tell us that Pope Pius was visibly concerned and quite nervous at the start—"like a young priest about to preach his first sermon," he whispered to Signor Marconi; but that he grew

A Prayer

I do not ask, O Lord, that life may be a pleasant road. I do not ask that Thou shouldst take from me Aught of its load. I do not ask that flowers should always spring Beneath my feet; I know too well the poison and the sting Of things too sweet.

Alabama, Mississippi, Arkansas and South Carolina, with the Southern Baptists and Methodists generally second and third, Mormons are the leaders in Utah and Idaho, with Catholics next.

These are interesting figures. They are an inspiration to continued sacrifices, ceaseless labors and untiring zeal. The Church has great mission fields in America, especially in the South and West. Good will and respect for the Church are growing even in these sections.

THE POPE'S RADIO SPEECH

"Ad universam creaturam: Quia arcano Dei consilio succedimus in loco Principis Apostolorum"—thus to our ears came the magic first words of the first Radio talk ever given by any human being to the entire civilized world.

Back to the Prophet Isaias we go, for the key to the second paragraph of his speech—"Hear, O ye Heavens, and give ear, O Earth, for the Lord has spoken!"

And one thought: "If Radio's slim fingers Can pluck a melody From night and toss it over A continent or sea;

And one could not help thinking, as one listened to the voice of the successor of St. Peter, that in very truth the whole world was tuning in on a broadcasting from Heaven.

Italy is fortunate in having the inventor of wireless to help in putting it on the radio map. Little did Guglielmo Marconi realize back in 1891, when as a youth he sent and received signals at Bologna, Italy, that some day, forty years later, he would be linking his native land with all other nations of the earth by means of the spoken word and the music of that sunny clime.

"Religion and Morality Indispensable"

"Of all the dispositions and habits, which lead to political prosperity, Religion and Morality are indispensable supports. In vain would that man claim the tribute of Patriotism, who should labor to subvert these great pillars of human happiness, these firmest props of the duties of Men and Citizens."

JOHN BARRY, A COUNTY WEXFORD IRISHMAN, A DEVOUT CATHOLIC, A CLOSE FRIEND OF WASHINGTON'S, A LOYAL FIGHTER FOR LIBERTY, WAS MADE THE FIRST COMMANDER OF THE AMERICAN NAVY.

The Pontiff's address lasted fifteen minutes. When one read the translation afterwards the thought came:

"And this the secret is of all his art: He sees life wholly, others but in part."

One estimate has it that the Pope was heard by three-hundred millions of listeners. An official translation of his talk is given in full in this issue of the Catholic Courier and Journal—a much better one than we were able to obtain last week.

A splendid and kindly sentiment was evidenced towards the address by Protestants and Jews throughout the world. Many ministers made it the subject for their sermons on the following Sunday, and confessed they were strangely thrilled.

The English translation of the Pope's talk was given over the Radio from the Vatican City by the Rt. Rev. Msgr. Francis J. Spellman of Boston. His aged father and mother, Mr. and Mrs. William J. Spellman of Whitman, Mass., heard their son's voice, recognised it and sat spellbound while he told the world what the Pope had said.

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We believe the good effect of the Radio talk by Pope Pius will be incalculable. It has stirred the souls of millions of non-Catholics. It has given them food for new

thought. It will help cement the fine and friendly feeling they now have for the Church. It will help promote harmony in religion the world over. It has brought the Pope, that mystery man of the world to many people, to the doors and into the homes of millions of people. They have heard the sound of his voice. They have felt the thrill of his words. They have sat under the spell of his sweet and kindly charity, and have breathed with him a spirituality that is of Christ.

WAYSIDE WHEAT

Brother Joseph Dutton, co-worker with the saintly Father Damien at the leper colony on the island of Molokai, and a devoted worker in that colony during all the intervening years, has just been elected an honorary member of the Spanish War Veterans Association. He is still confined in a hospital in Honolulu, suffering from defective vision and advanced age, after a life of great sacrifice and heroic labor for afflicted human beings.

The Providence Night Refuge and Home, in the east end of London, a Catholic shelter for homeless people, founded by the late Msgr. Gilbert, is now directed by his nephew, Sir John Gilbert. Free beds and free meals are provided here for all who apply.

Next year the two-hundredth anniversary of the birth of George Washington will be celebrated all over America. It will do America a tremendous lot of good if the story of his life, extracts from his letters and his speeches, knowledge of his ideals, and of his civic and moral principles are made known throughout the land.

Major General Clarence Ransom Edwards, war-time commander of the famous Twenty-sixth, or Yankee Division of the A. E. F., died in Boston Saturday and was given a great military funeral, with burial in Arlington Cemetery on Tuesday.

A beautiful church is to be erected at Curteen, near Galway, Ireland, in memory of Rev. Michael Griffin, who was brutally murdered in the midst of the "Black and Tan" regime in Ireland. Father Griffin was a heroic champion of the rights of his people. He "disappeared" from his little parish home one night, and his body was found on a lonely hillside next morning—a new martyr to a great land.

Congressman Harry Rowbottom of Indiana, indicted recently by a Federal grand jury, in connection with alleged frauds in postoffice appointments, climbed into power on the Ku Klux ladder. He was a comrade of D. C. Stephenson, who got the Indiana Legislature to pass a rabid dry law, then celebrated the event with a booze party, and who is now serving a life sentence in prison on the charge of murdering a girl, whom he criminally assaulted first. The State of Indiana sent a lot of other men of this ilk to prison, and

shook its skirts clean of these so-called one hundred percenters. Of Rowbottom we know nothing. But no man can carry the dirty flag of bigotry and hate, and escape the soot that falls from it.

During the World War the writer was present at a Liberty Bond rally at which four wounded Canadian soldiers were speakers. One of the boys had lost his right arm. Things were going badly with the Allies, and all America was trembling with apprehension.

"The question of applying conscription to Ireland was then under consideration by the British, and it seemed probable, according to views expressed more or less guardedly, that British troops would be required to enforce it. Inasmuch as such a measure might possibly have affected the attitude of American troops of Irish origin toward service with the British, our argument was strengthened regarding the desirability of keeping our own troops together and organizing them into an American Army at the earliest possible date."

In plain English, General Pershing did not want his troops brigaded with the British lest the very thing might happen which the wounded Canadian predicted. The English, apparently, feared the same thing, for they never dared enforce conscription in Ireland.

CURRENT COMMENT

POOR SPORTSMANSHIP

According to the best reports from Alabama, Mr. Hefflin, running as an independent, was defeated by Mr. Bankhead in an election as fair as elections usually are in this country. The ballot-boxes, it is said by Senator Black, were opened in the presence of Mr. Hefflin's representatives when the vote was counted.

For years this Senator, with "his bigotry, lack of religious tolerance and the lack of many of the courtesies expected between one gentleman and another," as the Alabama House said, bored the country with his speeches. Then he bored the Senate. Finally, he bored Alabama and made her ashamed.

THE POPE'S MESSAGE

Doubtless most people were more impressed by the very wonder of the Pope's message to all the world than by its substance and weight. It was a Papal benediction for all mankind, both within and without the fold of the Catholic Church, combined with exhortations to those in authority, whether ecclesiastical or secular, wholesome warnings to all citizens tempted to civil disobedience, and an ardent prayer for peace throughout the earth.