

EASTER BRINGS HOLY YEAR TO GLORIOUS CLOSING

Holy Places of The Passion

Scenes of the Sufferings of the Redeemer Preserved Through the Ages Despite Pagan Efforts To Destroy Them

By DR. ALEXANDER MOMBELLI (Written for N.C.W.C. Easter Supplement)

From the fourth until the fourteenth century tradition had localized the garden of Gethsemane at the right of the path which climbs to the Mount of Olives.

But after the invasion of the Persians who demolished the small sanctuary which was built over it, the precious rock was carried to a cave near the Tomb of the Blessed Virgin, and in the years that followed, the site of the Agony was fixed at that place.

The Basilica of Gethsemane, constructed anew by Modestus, was raised again under the persecution of Diocletian. By the time of the Crusaders it was represented only by a small oratory consecrated to the Saviour.

Towards the middle of the twelfth century, another building was erected at that place, but after the fall of the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem it deteriorated more and more until it was converted into a stable and collapsed altogether in 1332.

New Basilica Erected The Franciscan Custody of the Holy Land deemed it convenient to erect on the sacred spot a new Basilica, following the plan of the ancient one. But when, in 1920, the Friars Minor were able finally to start the excavation of the foundations, they discovered the ruins of a Church of the fourth century and the projects were therefore changed according to the designs of this more ancient building.

The journey followed by Jesus under the weight of the Cross, was called by the faithful the "Via Dolorosa." Along it fourteen Stations were distributed, the last five of which are within the actual Basilica of the Holy Sepulchre. They remind of the most moving scenes of the tragic journey of Our Lord. The itinerary of the "Via Crucis" starts at the northwestern side of the area of the Temple where stands an ancient Turkish barracks, built in part within the perimeter of the Tower Antonia. It was at this spot that Pilate placed his tribunal or praetorium for the trial and condemnation of Christ.

In a corner of the same building, near the entrance, a small octagonal chapel indicated in the past the place where Jesus was crowned with thorns.

On leaving the barracks, at present transformed into a Moslem College, one finds himself in front of a Franciscan Convent. Inside of it, at the right hand, stands a small Church which recalls the pains of Jesus when He was subjected to the cruel scourging. To the left, is the Chapel of the Condemnation, built anew in 1904, which stands on the Oriental side of the Lithostrotos. It is here that was situated the Gabbatha, where Pontius Pilate led Jesus and presented him to the people with the words: "Ecce Homo."

Near the monastery of the Friars Minor, the street is crossed by the Arch of the Ecce Homo, which is joined with the Sanctuary of the same name belonging to the Convent of the Dames de Slon. After a short distance, a column of marble is seen in front of the Austrian Hospice. This recalls the First Fall of Jesus under the weight of the Cross. Close by is the Church of Our Lady of the Spasm, belonging to the Armenian Catholics, which indicates the traditional place where at another short distance is the small chapel dedicated to the memory of Simon of Cyrene who helped the Redeemer to carry the Cross.

Continuing the ascent, after some seventy meters a crypt is seen indicating the Sixth Station. It is erected on the street becomes more difficult only. The Second Fall is marked by a modest oratory in a narrow crossway of the markets. Further on the street becomes more difficult and leads to the site where Jesus spoke to the Daughters of Jerusalem. Turning back some steps, the way leads to the South and arrives in front of the apse of the Basilica of the Holy Sepulchre where a column marks the spot where Jesus fell for the third time. The Via Dolorosa through the streets of Jerusalem ends here.

The epilogue of the Passion of Our Lord is venerated within the Basilica of the Holy Sepulchre.

Three Stations Recalled On entering the gate of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, one finds to the right the Golgotha to which lead two staircases of stone. The small Sanctuary is divided by pillars into two aisles. The one to the right belongs to the Catholics of the Latin Rite and recalls three Stations of the Via Crucis: Jesus stripped of His Garments, Jesus nailed to the Cross and the altar of the Stabat Mater. The other one is of the Greeks and venerates the place where Jesus died.

Between the Calvary and the Sepulchre there is the Stone of the Anointing. It reminds of the spot where the body of Our Lord was laid and embalmed before being laid in the tomb. The block of red marble which is seen to-day was placed there by the Greeks at the beginning of the last century.

The real heart of the Basilica is represented by the Tomb of Jesus, fourteenth and last Station of the Via Dolorosa. It is excavated in a rock, separated from the small hill to which it was originally attached. Now it is enclosed in a little chapel under the big dome of the Church.

On entering it, one crosses a small vestibule called the Chapel of the Angel, which has replaced the ancient atrium. In its middle stands a little column bearing a piece of the stone on which stood the divine messenger when he announced to the pious women the Resurrection of Christ.

In front of this Chapel is a low door which leads into the sepulchre chamber which measures 2.07 meters in length by 1.93 meters in breadth.

In the Crypt of the Sepulchre of Jesus, the Latins, the Greeks and the Armenians have equal rights of office. They contribute also in equal part to the ornamentation of the Tomb of Our Lord.

On the opposite side of the Basilica, but on much lower level is situated the Chapel of the Cross or Church of St. Helena. It is a vast oratory to which leads an iron staircase. It was in this spot that the pious mother of Constantine found the precious Cross on which Jesus died.

EASTER CUSTOMS IN GERMANY

By DR. MAX JORDAN (Written for N.C.W.C. Easter Supplement)

Multifold and colorful are the traditions of German folklore in connection with the great religious feasts during Holy Week and Easter. Many of these popular customs have reached far all over the world and have been adopted eventually by other nations. Yet, as in the case of the German Christmas free and Santa Claus, their German origin can seldom be concealed.

As Easter mostly coincides with spring and the re-awakening of nature in a gorgeous pageant of flowers and sunshine, the symbols created by the people both for a reverent expression of their faith in the Resurrection of Our Lord and for their joy over the end of winter are frequently combined.

The Easter egg, of course, stands (Continued on page 12)

EASTER-GLADNESS

Easter—a synonym for Gladness. So strongly does the heart crave gladness that, even had we no revelation to tell us paradise lost, we would have known that it ought to be man's normal state. And so would it be—except for sin. But Easter brings the triumph over evil and sin, the guarantee that when our own passiontide is over then shall we recover what was our divine heritage at the start, and so shall "gladness" reign forever in the hearts of men.

Happy Easter! Blessed Prophecy! Consoling Pledge to men of good will! Christians, be heartened! As Christ Our Lord hath risen, so too shall we. May the joys of this Eastertide renew in all hearts this strengthening hope, for the sorrows of today are not worthy to be accounted with the Gladness to come.—The Field Afar.

Nineteen Hundred Years Ago



Easter Sunday this year sees the close of the Extraordinary Holy Year of Jubilee proclaimed by His Holiness Pope Pius XI to commemorate the 19th Century of the Redemption of Mankind. Moreover, the Catholic world, at the call of the Holy Father, has just observed the 19th Centenary of the Institution of the Holy Eucharist. The year 1934, then, places special emphasis upon the commemoration of the Resurrection, the Redemption, and the Institution of the Holy Eucharist.

Stone at Sepulcher In Early Centuries

(By N.C.W.C. News Service) St. Cyril of Jerusalem, in 388, described the stone which closed the entrance to the Holy Sepulchre as being in the shape of a millstone. It was still intact and in its place. Pilgrims also reported the stone to be in its place in 570. It is believed to have been broken during the passage of the Persians, as Arculf, in 870, reports that half of the stone formed the altar that was set up before the door of the tomb.

WRITERS OFFER REASON FOR COLORING OF EGGS

(By N.C.W.C. News Service) One explanation of the custom of gaily-colored Easter eggs offered by some writers is that eggs once were forbidden during Lent, and were colored red to symbolize Easter joy when they were brought to the table on Easter Day. This custom, the writers say, was fairly widespread.

Easter Song

By The Rev. John McLarny, O.P. Christ has risen ere the morning grey! Hands of Angel roll the stone away! Under hills of Juda quake, Trembling guards in fear awake, Dreads of sin and sorrow break In the dawning day.

Holy women come with spices sweet, Hear the Angel, see the winding sheet! Victory of hope forlorn Sheds the evil tongue of scorn, Magdalen has ceased to mourn, Kneeling at His feet.

Sound the alleluias of the free! Glory be to God in Galilee! Royal Master, truly wise, Monarch splendid in surprise, Sun of Justice in the skies, Bid us rise with Thee! (N.C.W.C. Easter Supplement)

Custody of Holy Land Given to Franciscans Seven Centuries Ago

(By N.C.W.C. News Service) The Custody of the Holy Places in Palestine was entrusted to the Franciscans more than seven centuries ago. St. Francis visited Palestine in 1219 and was welcomed by a number of his disciples whom he had sent there two years before. In 1230, they erected their first friary and soon after, at the express wish of Pope Gregory IX, began a glorious career destined to outlive the vicissitudes of the next 700 years and to earn for the Franciscans the enviable title of Custodians of the Holy Places.

Catholic Action is another name for doing your duty to your Church.

St. Peter Lighting To Honor Don Bosco

Vatican City.—On April 1, Easter Sunday and the day of the canonization of Blessed Don Bosco, there will be a complete illumination of the cupola, facade and colonnade of St. Peter's.

Following the close of the Holy Year, the paving of the central nave of St. Peter's will be renovated.

MAXIMUM ATTENDANCE IS SOUGHT FOR OBERAMMERGAU PASSION PLAY

Munich.—(NCWC)—All efforts are being made by the Oberammergau municipal authorities to scale down the rates of tickets as well as lodgings so as to attract as many visitors as possible from all over the world this year for the Jubilee Passion Play.

The price level can already be said to have been reduced by about fifty per cent as compared with former years. A front seat in the playhouse can be had for 12 Marks (about \$5); the cheapest tickets are sold for 3 Marks (about \$1.15), and all measures have been taken to prevent speculators from taking advantage of prospective visitors. Those who come in groups and remain in Oberammergau for three days will not be charged more than 6 Marks per day for room and board (about \$2.30), and those who come to purchase the special tickets for 18 Marks (first class) and 16 Marks (second class) so that room and board will not cost them more than between \$36.15 and \$7.20. Railroad tickets to Oberammergau can be purchased at a 60 per cent

SOLEMN EVENTS AT VATICAN REVIEWED AS JOYFUL EASTER CEREMONIES CLOSE JUBILEE

Significance of Holy Year Emphasized By Many Canonizations, Observance of Centenary of Holy Eucharist, and Devotion of Faithful Pilgrims

By MSGR. ENRICO PUCCI (Written for N.C.W.C. Easter Supplement)

With Easter of this year closes the Holy Jubilee period which His Holiness Pope Pius XI proclaimed in order that the whole Church should remember with gratitude the Redemption accomplished nineteen centuries ago by the Son of God at the cost of His Passion and Death.

On April 2, Easter Monday, as the Sovereign Pontiff closes the Holy Door of the Vatican Basilica, he has good reason to look back over the twelve months which have passed since he opened it in the midst of the throbbing expectation of the faithful. During this time millions of the faithful have crossed the sacred thresholds; have brought to the Tomb of the Prince of the Apostles the homage of all peoples, from the nearest to the farthest; have repeated the profession of the Roman Apostolic Catholic Faith; have purified their souls by participation in the Holy Sacraments; have received the blessing of the Vicar of Christ and, heeding his words, have returned to their homes with the resolution to lead a renewed and intensified Christian life.

Certainly no other Holy Year appears illumined by such splendor as that which now closes. And it could not be otherwise as the other 19 Holy Years celebrated in the Church from the time of Pope Boniface VIII, down to Pope Pius XI, in 1925, were periods of extraordinary piety and prayer to implore the most abundant grace of the pardon of erring humanity. The Extraordinary Holy Year of the Divine Redemption has recalled instead that period of time—more precious than any other in the existence of mankind—when the Son of God made Man fulfilled the most solemn and decisive act culminating in the Redemption, from the Institution of the Holy Eucharist and the Priesthood at the Last Supper to the torment of the Passion, the agony of the Cross during which Mary was made the adopted Mother of Man, to the Death, to the Resurrection, to the election of Peter as Head of the Church, to the Ascension, to the descent of the Holy Ghost and the first diffusion of the Church in the world.

In this Holy Year then, not only has the work of man been intensified to implore divine grace, but also the work of God to bring His Grace to men has been recalled with greater animation than at any other moment of history.

The climax of the present Holy Year seems to us to have been reached in this most solemn Easter with which it closes. In this Easter are united, as in a culminating point, the most expressive celebration of the Mysteries of the Redemption, the most significant canonization and the most imposing significance of pilgrimage.

Canonization of the Eucharist Joyously notable of Easter this year is its connection with the record of the centenary of the Institution of the Divine Eucharist and of the Catholic Priesthood. The memory of the Holy Mysteries of the Redemption has pervaded the whole of the Holy Year, but at certain moments the thought of the Church was concentrated around others of the great Mysteries. And, when Easter was approaching, the Pope called the attention of the faithful to that Eucharistic gift that Jesus made unto men at the Last Supper on Holy Thursday. The year celebration of Holy Thursday was preceded by days of adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. The Pope led before the Blessed Sacrament, to Blessed Sacrament. The Pope gave the example himself. Just as at the opening of the Holy Year, he had assembled before the Blessed Sacrament, this year, towards close holy period, he twice repeated the act, uniting first with the clergy and then with the faithful, to do himself what all the Catholics were to do.

In the following article, Father Buss relates some interesting facts about just one phase of the new Saint's life—his youth and the early days of his apostolate.

By REV. CHARLES BUSS, S.C. (Written for N.C.W.C. Easter Supplement)

On the morning of February 1, 1888, there appeared in the London "Times" the following announcement: "Don Bosco—the so-called miracle worker of Turin—the Vincent de Paul of the Nineteenth Century—died yesterday in Turin, Italy."

The Catholic Church, after 46 years of careful, painstaking scrutiny of Don Bosco's life in the slow process of his beatification and canonization, has clearly established his genuine holiness, heroic virtues and miracles, by raising him to the honors of the Altar in 1928, with

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reduction. Thus the famous Passion Play will be available even for the smallest purse this year, and a record audience is expected. The opening performance is set for Whitsunday, May 21, at 8 o'clock. Every performance lasts eight hours with a two hour interval. There will be a total of 88 performances this year, the last one being scheduled for September 23. A special commemorative medal will be coined for the occasion of the three hundredth recurrence of the institution of the Passion Play. In 1854, it was then that the villagers made a vow to the Blessed Virgin to present the play every tenth year in gratitude for being saved from the plague.

The rehearsals will begin as soon as all snow has disappeared from the open-air stage. In the meantime Alois Lang who will play the Christus and autograph hunters who will probably beset him again by the thousands. As a rule an average of 2,500 signatures are requested of him after each play. And he does his best to satisfy everybody.

Principal Feast of Year

(By N.C.W.C. News Service) Easter is the principal feast of the ecclesiastical year. Pope Leo XIII called it the "great feast" and said that Christians are to observe it only in preparation for the feast of the resurrection of the body. Easter is the center of the ecclesiastical year. The Order of St. Benedict's feast begins to the feast of the Ascension, Pentecost, Corpus Christi, the Feast of the Holy Spirit, the Feast of the Trinity, the Feast of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ, and the Feast of the Most Holy Eucharist.