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Editorials

MATERNITY GUILDS

The Maternity Guild, devised by the Rev. Joseph J. Schagenmeyer, C. S. S. R., and sponsored by the Central Bureau of the Catholic Central Union of America, the Central Verein and the National Catholic Women's Union, in an attempt to realize the wish of His Holiness Pope Pius XI, expressed in His Encyclical on Chaste Wedlock, that pious associations of the faithful come to the aid of those who, because of economic considerations, find the financial burdens unavoidable in maternity cases. Its major purpose is to combat the new pagan teachings of birth control.

This enterprise was urged at the National and State Conventions of these organizations held in this city last week. The Maternity Guild is no longer merely a fond hope; it is a reality.

Guilds have been founded and are in active operation in many dioceses throughout the country. His Excellency, the Auxiliary Bishop of St. Louis, the Most Rev. C. H. Winkelmann, realizing the merits of the plan, has put it into effect in his diocese.

Convinced of the advantages the Guild offers, His Excellency, the Most Rev. Samuel A. Stritch, has lent the Guild his approbation, and has commissioned the members of the National Catholic Women's Union in his diocese to consider its promotion their special task.

The Maternity Guild may be defined broadly as a group of individuals who combine (in a parish) to build up a fund for the purpose of defraying the expenses incidental to childbirth in the case of any of its family members.

"Behind it stands the fact that many today are unable to procure competent care at the time of childbirth or can meet the expenses involved only with the greatest difficulty. Behind it also stands the fact that the loss of decent wedlock are organized to improve the economic lot of the married by sinful means; while we are not organized to extend assistance in a financial way to those who desire to observe the moral law."

While the Maternity Guild is intended to enlist the co-operation of as many members of a parish as possible in the struggle for the preservation of the family, its chief purpose is and should be to grant financial assistance to families who are unable to meet the expenses of childbirth.

For these reasons, the Rev. Edgar Schmiedeler, O. S. B., Director of the Rural Life Bureau of the National Catholic Welfare Conference and Director of the Family Life Section of the N. C. W. C., expresses the conviction: "The founding of many such guilds in the not far distant future should be a matter of prime importance to the Catholic family and to the Church."

THE CHURCH'S BUSINESS

Whatever in things human is of sacred character, whatever belongs, either of its own nature or by reason of the end to which it is referred, to the salvation of souls, or to the worship of God, is subject to the power and judgment of the Church. Whatever is to be ranged under the civil and political order is rightly subject to civil authority. Pope Leo XIII.

rightful performance of every industrial obligation, not to an earthly master, but to the one great Master of all.

The capitalist employer of our time may well take to heart the lesson of Job, in the Old Testament. The words of Job are not less pertinent today than in the day when they were uttered.

"If I have despised to abide judgment with my manservant, or my maidservant," says holy Job, "when they had any controversy against me, what shall I do when God shall rise to judge? And when He shall examine, what shall I answer Him? Did not He that made me in the womb make him also; and did not one of the same form me in the womb? Job XXXI, 13-15.

We have here the clear recognition of moral and religious obligations between employer and employee. Neither party may take unfair advantage of the other. All will be judged alike as common children of one Father, on whom the circumstances of wealth or power can make no impression. Only as the servant of God will the Christian employer make his decisions and only as the servant of God does the Christian employee carry them out.

Let us understand then that there is not one special law for business and another for private matters. The Commandments of God and the Sermon on the Mount make no exception for any condition, circumstance, or relation in human life.

"It is not easy to define the relative rights and the mutual duties of the wealthy and of the poor, of Capital and Labor. And the danger lies in this, that crafty agitators constantly make use of these disputes to pervert men's judgments and to stir up the people to sedition." (Rerum Novarum).

So it is that sound reason calls for the calm, wise, unbiased and experienced judgment of the Church which seeks above all other institutions the true, lasting and universal welfare of mankind.

OLDEST CHURCH

What are said to be the remnants of the oldest Christian church edifice thus far excavated were lately discovered in Mesopotamia. Twelve years ago the Russian archeologist Rostowzew inaugurated researches and excavations at what was considered the site of ancient Dura, with the result that the location of this city has been definitely verified.

The excavations, according to a German review, "Geistige Arbeit," reveal the network of streets to date back to the third century of the Christian era, showing, as it does, the Roman pattern of that time. A considerable number of parchments, of legal content, dating from about 105 B. C. were discovered in the ruins. They afford valuable information concerning Roman military affairs. Special interest, however, attaches to several of the buildings laid bare by the picks and spades of the expedition, edifices which had evidently been devoted to the purposes of divine worship, the one a Jewish synagogue, the other a Christian church.

According to Professor Rostowzew, the Christian church must have been erected in 232, and hence the remains represent the oldest Christian church edifice known. Numerous frescoes decorating the walls, resembling in style the paintings found in the Catacombs, are in good state of preservation.

The fact that the synagogue was also found to contain frescoes is surprising, because such pictorial representations are forbidden by Jewish law. A close relationship is said to exist between the paintings found in the synagogue and those in the Christian church. Hence Rostowzew concludes that early Christian pictorial art was neither original nor independent, nor yet under the influence of the Hellenistic world. That it rather had its roots precisely in the art of the excavated synagogue at Dura in Mesopotamia reveals. This conclusion seems premature, to say the least.

Current Comment

It is no new complaint that Catholics have not taken their proper place in the tremendous expansion in the field of writing that has occurred in recent years. While every other school of thought, however formless it may be, has found expression in the public prints, Catholicity, especially in its application to problems of today, suffers for want of worthy exponents. It is not a need that we can hope to see supplied easily or hastily, for as a body we have too long neglected this means of developing our own ideas and converting others to them. But we should realize what is lacking, and realizing it, seek by study of the principals involved, and by encouragement of those who show talent in the sphere of writing, to provide that the Church take its proper place in the literary field. Every piece of careful, well-planned composition, no matter how brief, no matter how simple the theme, so it be a Catholic topic properly handled, is a step in the right direction.—The Pittsburgh Catholic.

"If power does not come from God, where does it come from? From the people? But where did the people get it? Out of the air, like nitrogen? But who put that power in the air so that the people could extract it? Who made the air? If the people have the power, they got it somewhere... where?"—James M. Gillis, C. S. P.

"Any permanent governmental structure must rest upon solid moral and spiritual foundations... our own country urgently needs a moral and spiritual awakening."—Cordell Hull, Secretary of State.

"We are now ready to begin a new Middle Ages... What is coming is a new Renaissance, a new revival, where the philosophy of the last four hundred years will be entirely obliterated and that other philosophy of Christianity will prevail."—Rev. Martin J. O'Malley, C. M.

"When Jean Nicolet set foot on Wisconsin soil 300 years ago, he found fairly-naked savages. If he were to come now, he'd find—nudist colonies!"—Catholic Herald (Milwaukee).

It is hard to educate and travel people to new concepts of Catholicism in the traditional Protestant fashion.—Hoffman Nickerson, non-Catholic.

Diocesan Recordings

Reconciliation of two widely known motion picture stars is considered big news by daily newspapers. After all these people are only fulfilling the obligations of the marital tie.

Copies of the 100 years old Catholic newspaper the CATHOLIC HERALD of Philadelphia mentioned in this newspaper last week were discovered in the back of pictures shipped here from Reading, Pa. Just another purpose served by the Catholic newspaper.

We would be more than ungrateful if we did not comment here time and again on the extraordinary and successful job, members of the Holy Name Union are doing throughout the diocese to increase the influence of your diocesan newspaper. Unselfishly and with the cause of the Catholic Press firmly fixed in their minds, these true, loyal, devoted laymen are giving unstintingly to the campaign now under way will not overlook a Catholic family in the diocese. Back of these men and women, for these are women serving in many parishes as auxiliary helpers, pastors and assistant pastor are lending a real help that is showing up in results obtained. The staff of the CATHOLIC COURIER is striving to make good the promises of the Holy Name men that a better publication will result. The entire movement is zealous Catholic Action. The result will be promotion of other phases of Catholic Action which means progress for the Church throughout the five deaneries of the diocese.

Encouraged by the study club sessions held at regular meetings of Rochester Council, Knights of Columbus during the past year, the knights are again planning to take up the work when the fall season opens. Others who contemplate a similar entrance into this particular field of Catholic Action could well take up a study of the resolutions passed by the Catholic Central Verein of America and the National Catholic Women's Union. Here in these resolutions are a guide for Catholic lay effort that is greatly needed. For instance, the Catholic Central Verein not only pledged support to the League of Decency campaign against indecent motion pictures but the organization recommended that the work be extended to include lending libraries, magazines, advertisements and certain newspapers. The lending library is a serious problem in the type of books we saw recently in a home of Catholic young people is an indication. Then there is the most important question at this time, capital and labor. The Church's pronouncements on the principles involved are contained in the Encyclicals of Pope Leo XIII on the Condition of the Working Classes and of Pope Pius XI on Reconstruction of the Social Order. With these as a guide the Central Verein in resolution scored both capital and labor for the use of "sheer force in industrial disputes." The timely question of the proposed Child Labor Amendment to the Federal Constitution is a subject for discussion and deliberation. The Central Verein opposes it not because they favor Child Labor but feel that it is a matter for the several States and oppose Federal control of youth. The growing tendency for birth control and sterilization legislation is another reason for Catholics to be alert. Such legislation is opposed by the Central Verein and will continue to be opposed by branches throughout the nation. The double taxation school question could be a special consideration of Catholic study clubs. The recent convention recommended that Catholic schools be allowed to share in public relief funds. There are several angles to this question that require intensive study and deliberate, well considered action. This matter of being a member of a Catholic lay organization requires a bit of sacrifice if the things are to be done that will redound to the credit of the society. Entering into this work, at first thought, considered laborious, will become intensely interesting and results will be forthcoming to the advantage not only of Catholics but of the community in which they live.

In answer to birth controllers who look exception to this plan of furnishing checks to families having new babies, Stephen V. Duffy, president of the building material supply firm of J. P. Duffy Company, Brooklyn, when asked "don't you think that the laborers have a pretty hard time of it these days," replied: "Of course they have, but why not pay them decent wages. Every man is entitled to live in frugal comfort. He is entitled to enough to provide for his wife and family. These misguided birth controllers could buy themselves demanding justices for the workers, decent wages and working conditions, and then every home could be blessed with the happy laughter of healthy children." Mr. Duffy has inaugurated his plan as an answer to the problems of unemployed youngsters and it is probably the best answer," the Brooklyn Tablet declares. The plan adopted by his company is to present a check for \$149 to the parents whenever a child is born to any of its employees and the check is increased to \$250 when twins arrive. Such a practice should be appreciated by real estate men to say nothing of the business firms that will sell clothing, food and other items that growing children need.

STRANGE BUT TRUE Catholic Facts But Little Known

By M. J. MURRAY

Illustration of a church with a swastika symbol and text: 'This many-domed church of the Trinity at Novomoskovsk in the Ukraine is BUILT ENTIRELY OF WOOD / The SWASTIKA is a primitive form of the cross and it possessed a symbolically religious significance in ancient civilizations. It is still a sacred sign in India. Saint Peter's Basilica is not the PARISH CHURCH of the State of the Vatican City—it is the Church of Saint Peter, shown here. The flowering rod with which Saint Joseph is usually depicted refers to the legend that the High Priest was providentially guided to choose for Our Lady the suitor whose rod should sprout in this manner. It was traditional for suitors to carry rods. THE INTRODUCTION OF APPLES INTO ENGLAND—AND EUROPE—IS ATTRIBUTED TO JOSEPH LEARNED AND HIS FOLLOWERS. THE LEGENDARY BEARERS OF THE HOLY GRAIL TO CLARSTONE CASTLE, THEY BROUGHT WITH THEM THIS STRANGE PLANT. THE FRUIT—AND THE SEEDS—GREW IN ENGLAND!

THE LIBRARY SIGN POST. The Catholic Evidence Library will be closed on Labor Day. Within recent years we are becoming quite reconciled to the idea of American priest-poets. The famous Fr. Tabb first ploughed the green ground, which has since been tilled and cultivated by Fr. O'Donnell, Fr. Leonard Feeney, S.J. and Fr. James Daly, S.J. Fr. Feeney's "In Towns and Little Towns" and "Riddle and Reverie" as well as Fr. Daly's "Bosobol and Other Poems" are ample demonstrations that theology does not warp the humanity of its disciples. These priests are poets, not in spite of, but with and through, their sacred love. Fr. Leonard Feeney is preparing a new book in much more serious vein than any hitherto. He is reported as having said there was not enough meat in "Fish on Friday."

I must post the following few stanzas from a poem called "Mouse Trap" in Fr. Feeney's "Riddle and Reverie." They sound like Emily Dickinson come back to life (I was going to say "rediviva" but thought better of it). "I loathe an apprehensive mouse Whose phobia for traps Reduces life's philosophy To 'maybes' and 'perhaps'; Who holds that truth is relative, Who disbelieves in smell, And spreads despair in micedom And turns it into Hell. Give me a trustful little mouse Who chisels in and out And grinds his way to surety And chews away a doubt. And turns my house to splinters To satisfy his soul, And breaks his gallant little neck Exploring in a hole." Here are some further titles of novels on the O. E. shelves: The Shepherd of the North... The Heavenly Ladder... Viper's Tangle... Callista... Ghost House... Ultima Thule... The Blindness of Dr. Gray... The Graves at Kilmorna... My New Curia... Lullaby... The Queen's Will...

Spiritual Thoughts

Meekness is the fruit of Christian humility. Wrong principles lead to wrong actions. Jesus Christ Our Lord and Saviour has taught us how to live, how to die, and how to conquer death.

His Holiness gave me the impression of a spiritual leader who is living the daily life of all humanity, deeply sympathetic toward every effort to free the world from its present travail.—Frederick E. Murphy, Publisher of Minneapolis TRIBUNE.

QUOTATIONS

A comparison of academic freedom with civil authority should impress us with the value and need of authority, Divine and human, even in education. Are those amongst us less American who obey the Constitution and revere constituted authority?—His Eminence Patrick Cardinal Hayes, Archbishop of New York.

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