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Bishop of Rochester

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I generally speak for the CATHOLIC COURIER, which speaks for the vast majority of the people, and I fervently hope that it may carry into every home in the diocese the salutary influence of the Catholic Press. If Pope Pius XI could say for the whole Church, "I have been thinking for a long time of the Catholic Press, of having become for me personally, I feel that for this diocese I can say 'anything that you do for the Catholic Courier, I will consider as having been done for me personally.'" — Edward Mooney, Archbishop-Bishop of Rochester

Editorials

NO SUBSTITUTES

In the course of his New Year's Message, His Eminence Cardinal O'Connell of Boston said: "Philanthropy is no substitute for equal justice nor does it assuage resentment that moulders in the hearts of the aggrieved. When the suppressed combustion reaches the flaming point, revolutionaries take charge and dictators arise."

Cardinal O'Connell could have gone further and declared that neither is charity a substitute for justice.

Abbe Leon Garriguet, in his "The Gospel and Our Social Problems," refers to a criticism of the Gospel frequently made: "We often hear the Gospel criticized for not saying enough about justice, and for not exhibiting individual rights with due prominence. The idea most lacking in Christianity," writes Bougie, "is that of right, with all the latest combativeness it implies. It is idle to suppose that for this idea we may substitute the outpourings of charity. A hundred bushels of charity do not make a grain of the sense of justice."

"Of course justice and charity are perfectly distinct," continues the Abbe, "and both are great virtues. One certainly ought not to be sacrificed to the other; and as a consequence, before taking up charity, it is incumbent upon us first to discharge our obligations of justice. Moreover, it will scarcely be called in question that in point of fact, there are Christians who talk too much about charity, and too little about justice, justice apparently not being in such good favor with them. But we cannot admit that the Gospel is to be held responsible for the so-called Christians who may have partially lost sight of the notion of justice."

In QUADRAGESIMO ANNO, Pius XI emphasized the need of justice. Speaking of conditions induced by "dire poverty," Pius said:

"This state of things was quite satisfactory to the wealthy, who looked upon it as the consequence of inevitable and natural economic laws, and who, therefore, were content to abandon to charity alone the task of relieving the unfortunate, as though it were the task of charity to make amends for the open violation of justice, a violation not merely tolerated, but sanctioned at times by legislators."

You have observed in this statement of the Pontiff referred to those who regard poverty "as the consequence of inevitable and natural economic laws." On the other hand, there are those, as Pius notes in his Encyclical, who cannot bring themselves to believe "that so radical and unjust a distinction in the distribution of temporal goods was quite in harmony with the design of an all-wise Creator."

One of the strangest things we have ever come across is the attempt to find justification for poverty in the life and sayings of Jesus Christ. Of this distortion Abbe Garriguet says:

"Our Lord was born poor; He lived as a poor man among the poor; He manifested towards them a special love, showered on them marks of respect and consideration, commanded them blessed, and seems to have chosen the best place in His heart for them. Some have argued that, in His eyes, there is a thing to be desired, an advanced condition, an essential element in the Christian society, and an indispensable condition of salvation. But it cannot be proved with any show of truth that the Gospel regards pauperism as something naturally inevitable, of which one must take account, and which it would be childish not to do."

"The poor you will see." Was He in these words, declaring that poverty was a necessary part of the Christian life, or was He simply pointing out that the poor were to be seen everywhere? The latter is the only reasonable interpretation. The poor were to be seen everywhere, but poverty was not to be sought after as a goal in itself.

There are two kinds of freedom: the false, when a man is free to do what he likes; the true, when a man is free to do what he ought.

worry. I won't be with you long. After that you will have many opportunities to minister to the poor. You will always find them around."

Some have stretched this little colloquy of Our Lord with His disciples into an address to the ages.

Taking up Christ's meaning here, Abbe Garriguet says—

"It is in this last sentence, so simple, so clear and so natural, whose meaning has been strangely distorted. Some have found in it a commendation of poverty, and a setting up of wisdom by divine authority as a sort of institution. Starting from this common ground, one party has accused Christianity of lacking the social sense while the other has put itself at ease with regard to the obligations of charity. Their view is this: As there must always be poor people, it is idle to take any extraordinary pains to rescue one's fellow-men from their unfortunate state of destitution; for poverty is part of the plan of Providence."

"Such an interpretation of our Lord's words is not only wholly erroneous, but it stands in complete opposition to His mentality and teaching, and is scarcely intelligible except on the hypothesis of carelessness, ignorance or want of candor. A rapid glance at the context suffices to demonstrate that this cannot be the meaning. An interpretation like this is wholly foreign to the obvious sense of the text."

You will recall that Our Lord on the Mount did not bless the poor generally, but the poor in spirit. A man may be rich and yet be poor in spirit. On the other hand, a man may be poor and yet be avaricious, greedy of gain.

Detachment, then, is the thing, for detachment, not poverty, is a virtue.

JOHN E. MASSIE

REUNION

The appeal for reunion with the Roman Catholic Church, made by the American Commission of the Church Unity Overture Council, an Episcopalian group, which announced in the press at December 26, has brought protests from several Protestant quarters.

It was foreseen, of course, that the charge that "Protestantism is bankrupt, ethnically, culturally, morally and religiously," that "it is disintegrating rapidly," would be strongly challenged.

What does all this challenge in the statement, "The front of the anti-Christian attack falls on Rome." This is clear to anyone who is conversant with world affairs. And how can the reason be given—"for the enemy knows well where the centre of Christianity really lies."

Herein, says AMERICA of January 1, is found "the fifth mark of the true Church."

Some of those taking exception to the statements of the Unity Overture Council, strengthen rather than weaken its charges.

"Protestantism is more than a protest; it stands for positive principles, freedom in religion and freedom of interpretation," says Reverend Dr. Charles E. Tuke of the Philadelphia Episcopalian Diocese.

This is old stuff. Yet it still is so, it appears to the unthinking. Freedom is always a word of magic. But the extent to which Dr. Tuke and his confreres have carried freedom into religion is what has accounted for the "bankruptcy," the "disintegration" of Protestantism.

In his own day, Martin Luther saw the drift to disintegration. The logical results of "freedom in religion, freedom of interpretation," were even then showing themselves. In 1525 Luther said—

"There are as many sects and beliefs as there are heads. This fellow will have nothing to do with Baptism; another denies the Sacrament; a third believes that there is another world between this and the Last Day. Some teach that Christ is not God; some say this, some that. There is no rustic so rude but that, if he dreams or fancies anything, it must be 'the whisper of the Holy Ghost, and he himself a prophet.'"

Freedom? Yes, as promised by Jesus Christ—"And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John VIII, 32). Free from what? From such doubts and divisions in regard to fundamental truths of Christianity as Protestantism most unhappily has begotten.

Always the struggles of those seeking the light should be met with our sympathy, and especially our prayers. Special incentive and opportunity for such prayers will be given us during the Church Unity Overture, January 18-25.

One of the difficulties confronting High Church Episcopalsians as they consider becoming Catholics has been met by the convert, Father Selden Delany, recently deceased. In his book, "Why Rome?"

Current Comment

RELIGIOUS INFY

DELINE DOETS CASE I PION STAR OF BETHLEHEM

A reply by Dr. W. D. MacMillan of the University of Chicago to a reporter that astronomy agrees with the Star of Bethlehem never existed, has drawn editorial comment from the Ottawa Journal and La Press.

The Ottawa Journal, recalling old mistakes from the famous story of the Star of Bethlehem, the New York Sun to the title girl who died of the story's "saint" took notice.

"Not believe in the Star of Bethlehem." You might as well not believe in Santa Claus. These are convictions for which we do not need the authority of science and mathematics. Our most profound beliefs are placed upon the void operations of scepticism and doubt.

"Not believe in the Star" shall we take the word of a hard realist who can't big enough to go beyond the facts into the realm of the supernatural? Or of a scientist, as Dr. MacMillan, the University of Chicago. It is a case of the things men and women for many centuries have believed to be true.

That by virtue of this implicit faith have become a part of that very life, that are immutably more important in their effect on human lives than the hard facts and the most irreducible of logic.

Seen by Wise Men

Of course there was a Star of Bethlehem. Perhaps the Chicago professor couldn't have the Star of Bethlehem in his mind when he wrote the article. It may have no place in the charts of records of celestial bodies—it may not accord with the theories of science. But the Wise Men saw it. And millions of believers know it was there, in their minds have seen it hovering over the holy manger.

Science tells us that no one has ever seen a star like that. But some astronomers say that some of the stars have been counted, others believe the number surpasses 100,000,000, but it makes little difference to people who see them in so many cases.

How does science know that the Star never appeared to the Magi? Never existed over the Stable of Bethlehem? Let us go to the words of the Bible, the words of the Virgin Mary, the words of the infant Jesus, and let us see what the Bible has to say about the Star.

Let us recall the words of the Holy Bible, the words of the Virgin Mary, the words of the infant Jesus, and let us see what the Bible has to say about the Star.

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STRANGE BUT TRUE  
Catholic Facts But Little Known

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By M. J. MURRAY

AD 1936 This means ANNO DOMINI 1936 — the Latin for 'YEAR OF OUR LORD'. The system of calculating the years from the date of Our Lord's birth did not originate until the 6th century. Previously the ecclesiastical years were reckoned after the era of Diocletian, also called the "Era of Martyrs."



Bishop Otto Raible, P.S.M. VICAR APOSTOLIC OF KIMBERLEY, NORTH WEST AUSTRALIA, has a territory which covers 120,000 square miles in which there are but 1,000 Catholics!

The Chasuble, worn by the priest at Mass, is an adaptation of the ordinary outer garment commonly worn throughout the Roman Empire in the early Christian centuries.

JOE is commemorated in the Martyrology of the Church on May 10th every year.

Preserved in the Vatican Library is this letter sent to Pope Paul II in 1541 by the then Emperor of Abyssinia. It appeals for a Nuncio or Missionaries from Rome. Amongst many striking phrases are:

Hear us, O Holy Father, Paul, Patriarch of Rome, to whom the seven Kings of Christianity are obedient: a dear father, does he forget any of his children? We are truly Christians....

THE LIBRARY SIGN POST

Now that Twelfth Night has passed and the Christmas holidays have been a success, it is time to turn our attention to the New Year. The Librarian of the Catholic Evidence Library (great in number) The Missing Masterpiece (a novel) collected poems.

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THE CATHOLIC EVIDENCE LIBRARY RECOMMENDS

By Rev. J. G. Sweeney, S.J. The author's personal letters to Catholics, their delightful essays are rich in the Catholic history, with a splendidly general and practical knowledge of general history.

SAVED BY THE BELL: A story of the conversion of the Emperor Diocletian and his conversion to the Catholic Church.

LIFE: A story of the conversion of the Emperor Diocletian and his conversion to the Catholic Church.

WITH HAWTHORNE: A story of the conversion of the Emperor Diocletian and his conversion to the Catholic Church.

CATHOLIC EVIDENCE LIBRARY HOURS—Aftersoon—3:30 through to 9:00 Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday.

PLACE—Lobby of Columbus Civic Centre Building, 50 Chestnut Street, Rochester, N. Y.

DAILY RENTAL—One cent for each book.

Diocesan Recordings

As the new year begins, it is a time of reflection and prayer for the entire Church. The Diocese of Rochester is no exception. The people are encouraged to look back on the past year with gratitude and hope for the future. The Bishop of Rochester, Most Reverend Edward Mooney, has called for a renewed commitment to the Gospel and to the service of the poor. He has urged the people to embrace the teachings of the Church and to live lives of holiness and charity. The Diocese is pleased to report that many parishes have responded to these challenges with enthusiasm and devotion. The people of Rochester are truly a people of prayer and faith, and their dedication to the Church is a source of great joy and inspiration.

Spiritual Thoughts

A good conscience is the best of all. It is the witness of God's grace in our hearts, and it is the light that guides us in our darkest moments. We must strive to keep our consciences clear and pure, for they are the mirror that reflects our true selves to God. When our consciences are clear, we can live with integrity and peace. When they are clouded, we live in a state of inner conflict and despair. Therefore, let us be diligent in our spiritual lives, for a clear conscience is the foundation of a healthy soul.

Let us pray for the souls of those who have passed on, and let us seek their forgiveness. We are all sinners, and we all need the mercy of God. Let us not be afraid to seek forgiveness, for God is always ready to forgive and to show us a better way.