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CHAIN PRAYER

Every now and then there seems to be an epidemic of chain prayers. At present we understand that a chain novena is being circulated in a certain section of the Rochester diocese.

A prayer of this kind is supposed to be said so many times by the person who finds it, and then passed on to so many other persons.

The Catholic Church absolutely condemns chain prayers. To believe that miraculous efficacy is attached to such prayers is rank superstition. Almost invariably the note accompanying them suggests that "bad luck" will come to the one who breaks the chain. This is nonsense. Anyone who receives a chain prayer through the mail or happens to pick up a copy planted in a church pew should not hesitate to destroy it. Not to do so would be to promote superstition.

Usually chain prayers are declared to be infallible—you always get what you want; requests are always granted. Only weak minds will believe this; it is again a question of superstition.

No real prayer, of course, is in vain. God infallibly hears our prayers; "Ask and it shall be given to you" (Mt. 7:7) "All whatsoever you ask for in prayer, believing you shall receive." When we pray for others, however, we have no definite assurance that God will hear us. He does not force the free will of any man. A sinner may be obstinate in rejecting the grace that God is willing to grant.

Temporal favors are frequently the object of our prayer. When the answer is not just as we expect, we act like spoiled children. We fret and fuss because God doesn't cater to our whims. But He is a wise Father. He knows much better than we what is for the good of our souls. He may see that the temporal favor we want will mean disaster to our spiritual life. A mother won't let her little boy play with a butcher knife and God won't let us fool around with temporal things that endanger our immortal soul.

MARTIN DE PORRES

Blessed Martin de Porres is a most striking example of the universal democracy of the Catholic Church. His life is proof that sanctity is the best solvent of race prejudice. Martin was a mulatto. His father was a Spaniard, a knight of Alcantara, his mother a freed Negro woman from Panama. He was an unwanted child; his father rejected him, his mother despised him.

Squalid poverty and sordid surroundings were the lot of this unfortunate lad. But in spite of the circumstances of his birth and the degrading conditions about him, Martin passed through his childhood without growing callous, hardened, and embittered. The young mulatto was humble and charitable. He made physical squalor the occasion of his soul's sanctification.

When Martin was twenty-two, he became a Dominican Tertiary; and nine years later, in obedience to his superior's wishes, he received the habit of the regular lay Brothers. Charly to the poor, care for the sick, and an insatiable desire to relieve distress in any form marked Martin's outward life. Devotion to Mary, St. Joseph, and St. Dominic characterized his spiritual life. Somehow Martin managed to spend seven hours every day in prayer and recollection. The miracles that he so frequently performed were fruit of his interior life.

Today the cause for Martin's canonization is making progress. We hope that this mulatto lad will soon be officially a Saint. If he does, he might well be the hope of his race in the United States. There are thirteen million Negroes in our country; and almost eight million of them have no connection with any church. Only two hundred and fifty thousand are Catholics. Under the inspiration of Blessed Martin, the Negro saint, we might make up for our neglect of the members of his race and earnestly work for their conversion. Essentially the Negro mind is religious. But atheistic communism is at work among the Negroes. Before it is too late, the Catholic Church must show her self to them as the protectress of the downtrodden, the champion of the weak. She must make the Negro see that in the church which honors at her altar the mulatto saint Martin de Porres, is the hope of the colored race.

Briefly Told

Denmark has hit the depths. A recent proposal in the Danish parliament to legalize the killing of unborn babies has shocked the so-called Christian countries who still hold human life as sacred. If the measure succeeds, it will mean that the prospect of losing a job will forfeit a life, if the mother desires to co-operate with medical assassins, who will wear the badge of the government. It will make Denmark a state by itself, a national executioner. —The New World, (Chicago).

Catholic Action faces a great responsibility in seeking to revive Christian ideals of living in private and public life. We can do nothing better than to direct its spiritual force upon the home. The family is the most important cell in the social organism. If it falls into decay, society will rot and die. —Catholic News (New York).

Self-control, however difficult at first, becomes step by step easier and more delightful. It passes mysteriously a sort of dual nature, and there are few truer triumphs than to obtain thorough command of one's self.

Do not estimate people by some outside quality, for it is that within which makes the man.

It is not the magnitude of our sins, and, therefore, we should not be afraid of them. It is the habit that we have of committing them.

Current Comment

Profits, Dividends Rise Portentous

By The Rev. Raymond McElwain (Assistant Director, N. C. W. C. Dept. of Social Action)

Profits have gone up this far this year and are going higher and while that is a sign that business has picked up it is a bad sign, now and for the future. When so much goes to the property holders, not to the people who work and prices also are high. The result is continuing unemployment and a preparatory for another crash.

The public utilities are only slightly changed, but that is not remarkable since there has been little change in their total dividends all during the depression. The biggest increases are in motors and copper; motors' dividends the first half of this year are nearly three times as much as in the first half of last year, and copper over two times as much.

Steel is four fifths more, and small order houses nearly two thirds more. Motor equipment pays a sixth more, oils a fifth more, department stores and local banking an eighth more, and banks and insurance (which have always done well, thank you) a tenth more. Only tobacco and chain stores are paying less than last year, the first very little less and the second a sixth less.

Larger dividends the rest of the year are due, partly because the new tax law will penalize that which is not paid in advance, and that is a bad sign.

It has been proven over and over again that if property receives a large return, the result is unemployment, and social welfare is destroyed by high interest rates and large dividends. Interest rates are fortunately going down. Dividends on the other hand are going up. And the situation is the same in this respect.

Plus XI in his "Reconstructing the Social Order" declares that social justice demands wage and salary payments that meet a steady work and a good livelihood to everybody. He declares that to make social justice live, a social order of organized industries and professions in which employees are fully represented through their unions, and a governmental order of laws and their administration are necessary in the U. S. we have neither, and though we are struggling against great odds for both.

A part of the opposition now comes precisely from the desire of those who receive dividends and interest to get more and from the lingering belief that when property is well-paid, the country is prosperous. If property is to be kept as an institution and profession in which the poor and his income have to be reduced. Otherwise the country goes to rack and ruin or it revolts. The remedy is Plus XI's proposal. There is no other way out.

Catholic News High Lights

(From the Files of N. C. W. C. NEWS SERVICE)

FIRST WEEK IN AUGUST, 1936  
 The Most Rev. Michael L. Curley, now Archbishop of Baltimore, is reported to be in the city as the probable date of his assuming his archiepiscopal see has sent the following telegram: "I have no idea as to when a start will be made to Baltimore. Canon law allows four months." As the Holy Father's appointment makes Dr. Curley the Archbishop of Baltimore he is by virtue of the office, the rector of the Catholic University of America.

FIRST WEEK IN AUGUST, 1936  
 Five thousand Protestants, attending an open-air religious service at Peoples Park, Rochester, N. Y., were asked this week to pray for the persecuted Catholics of Mexico. The plan was made by the Rev. Arthur J. Watson, rector of St. Luke's Episcopal Church of Pawtucket.

FIRST WEEK IN AUGUST, 1936  
 Under the direction of the Most Rev. John Francis O'Hern, Bishop of Rochester, N. Y., a two-act motion picture educational film, "The Sacrifice of the Mass," is in the course of preparation in St. Patrick's Cathedral, with final "shots" being made on it this week. This is said to be the first complete motion picture made of the Mass in this country, although a previous film of "its kind" was made in Rome a year ago.

Spiritual Thoughts

When things go seriously wrong with us we cry out to God. What they go well we do not think of Him.

Let no one deceive himself. No one can ever excel in good things who does not first excel in small.

Do not estimate people by some outside quality, for it is that within which makes the man.

It is not the magnitude of our sins, and, therefore, we should not be afraid of them. It is the habit that we have of committing them.

STRANGE BUT TRUE Catholic Facts But Little Known

By M. J. MURRAY

So immense was the civilizing influence of the religious orders in the Philippine Islands that from the time of their entry in 1564 THE SPANIARDS DID NOT EMPLOY A GARRISON OF TROOPS in the archipelago until 1822.... Nearly 300 years!

A VALUABLE COMMENT ON THE LOVE OF KNOWLEDGE WHICH IS, SOMETIMES SUPPOSED TO HAVE INSPIRED THE "REFORMATION" IS CONTAINED IN THE FACT THAT BEFORE THE OUTBREAK OF THE REFORM THEY DISPOSED OF 3,000 VOLUMES MORE QUICKLY THAN THEY NOW SELL 600.

The Tomb of Rachel near Bethlehem is SOME 4,000 YEARS OLD and thus must be the oldest obelisk, mausoleum in the world.

What was the PILGRIMAGE OF GRACE? 1936

SAINT MARK IS THE ONLY ONE OF THE FOUR EVANGELISTS WHOSE TRADITIONAL RESTING-PLACE IS KNOWN TO BE IN THE MAGNIFICENT BASILICA DEDICATED TO HIM—SAINT MARK'S VENICE.

THE LIBRARY SIGN POST

We want to thank our Corning correspondent for her note in regard to the book reviewed last week. "The Breviary and the Lady." After inquiring at three Rochester Catholic book stores we regret to say that none of them have this booklet in stock. We would be glad to get it for you but it would be easier for you to write direct to The Liturgical Press, Chicago, Illinois. The price is thirty cents.

We also asked about English translations of the Breviary. Because of the expense, and the fact that we have almost forty of them on our shelves, but very few of them could order a set for you.

Not one of us realize as deeply as you should the immense significance of the Incarnation. We seem incapable of appreciating the fact that God became Man. The Divinity of Christ has often been attacked in its being, and we have almost forgotten His Humanity. But if we would only realize that Christ is a person, a man like to us in all things save our love for Him, would be the warm after-imagery that He wants. Books can't give us all we need, yet no one who reads the "Public Life of Christ" and the "Passion and Death of Christ" by Archbishop Alban Goodier can help but come closer to Christ as Man for those who are discouraged by the length of these books, we recommend "The Manhood of Christ." This is also by Archbishop Goodier. It belongs to the Treasury of the Faith Series.

Chief among the excuses of fabled by those who do not read books is the old standby "I have no time." It is futile perhaps to attempt to persuade such people that they can make time for reading if they really want to but it might be noted that Latin is one of the most frequent languages from the Library of Congress during the days of the Civil War. Included in the books they read were many of the classics of some of the political states, and a surprising number of books that we would call light reading. Certainly if the President of the United States could find time to read while he was in office by the tremendous problems of the Civil War the men and women of today cannot claim that they have no time to read. Such a flimsy excuse is only a form of intellectual laziness.

Again we want to call the attention of the C. E. Library patrons to the "Vocation Privilege" Books may be drawn from the library and stamped for return at a date determined by the person going on vacation. The charge for such books is one cent a day since, even if it is not necessary, and no fines accumulate.

In meeting strangers have a care to then of danger to beware of Old Mother Nature.

Friends are the flowers of joy that grow unbidden in the path-way of our lives.

Scholastic philosophy would be the only philosophy in the world, if it would wear both instead of chain mail. O'Malley.

THE CATHOLIC EVIDENCE LIBRARY RECOMMENDS

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH AND THE MODERN MIND By Robertell Morrison, S. J. Although this was written for use as a college text-book in religion, the casual reader will get a great deal out of it. Answers to modern objections against the doctrines of the Church are clearly stated and convincingly refuted.

THE SCANDAL OF FATHER BROWN By G. K. Chesterton. George Shuster, the competent Commissioned critic, thinks that the Father Brown stories are the best Catholic propaganda the general G. K. ever wrote. But this fact does not prevent them from being excellent detective stories. They will satisfy those who want just a story and those who like to read between the lines.

THE VOCATION TO MARRIAGE By Bede Jarrett. It is a curious fact that while most young men and women look forward to life in the married state, few books are written which treat marriage as a vocation. The eighteen discourses in this book cover the subject admirably.

CATHOLIC EVIDENCE LIBRARY

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

HOURS—Afternoon—3:30 through to 9:00 Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday.

DAILY RENTAL—One cent for each book. Phone, Stone 2837

Diocesan Recordings

OVER ZEALOUS' newsmen flash stories from foreign capitals to their newspapers in the United States, headlines scream forth and hasty opinions are made by readers. The Father Coughlin incident last week is a case in point. The implications placed upon the status of Father Coughlin varied as each news story broke. Those who support the famous radio priest took one side and those opposed to his methods were quick to utter their opinions. The affair is just another evidence of the necessity for careful, accurate and authentic publishing of facts. A Catholic newspaper cannot compete with the dailies in spot news of this kind and will not attempt to do so. Our purpose is only served when the true facts are ascertained. Some readers expect their Catholic newspaper to rush into print on matters of this kind little realizing that time is required to get the true facts in the matter of Father Coughlin a cable story from Rome prepared by Mgr. Enrico Pael Vateca City correspondent of the N. C. W. C. News Service, dated July 25, proves that no authoritative ecclesiastical pronouncement on the recent incidents in regard to the radio priest has been made. In the main this newspaper relies on the N. C. W. C. News Service rather than the big news distributing agencies because our Catholic news service is not gathering news simply for the sake of sensationalism and speedy printing but for informing our readers correctly and with the authority of Holy Mother the Church.

DEATH OF TWO noted Catholic publishers during the past week. Henry Kader, publisher of the Catholic News of New York and Edward P. McIntyre vice-president and general manager of the Catholic Sun of Syracuse brought sorrow to publishers, editors and offices in the Catholic press field who had known these men or had heard of their achievements. Both were outstanding Catholic laymen imbued with the spirit of unselfish energy for the cause of the Catholic Press. They faced the vexing problems that confronted them with a zeal that brought success. They were highly esteemed in their respective communities. Their passing is a distinct loss.

AN ORGANIZATION is only as strong as its individual members. This thought was left with the Central New York Chapter Knights of Columbus meeting in Cortland last Sunday by the Rev. Donald Cleary of Ithaca. Catholic laymen banded together in an organization can only attain the goal sought in the field of Catholic activity when each and every member does his part. While paying dues takes care of the financial problems of the organization it is the influence the energy, the interest and the good example of each member which counts in his talents that count.

IT HAS BEEN SAID and you perhaps have heard it that the Irish are not able to organize. Here is what an Englishman has to say. Speaking at the Congress of the Catholic Truth Society of Ireland in Tuam recently on the success of the Congress, Frank J. Sheehy, English publisher, and a visitor here a few years ago said the representative of the Irish Independent. "The Irish are the finest organizers in the Catholic Church. In common with my friend, G. K. Chesterton, I found the most impressive feature of the Eucharistic Congress in Dublin to be the magnificent organization. Last week I went down to Tuam and there was a strikingly efficient. It was illuminating to an Englishman."

DEADLINE for news during August will still be Tuesday. Those who bring in publicity items after that time will understand why they do not appear.

THOSE WHO DRIVE a speeding automobile through the city streets do not have small children of their own.

WITH CIVIL WAR news from Spain spread across the pages of our newspapers last week, commemoration was made on this side of the Atlantic of another Civil War in this country 75 years ago.

It matters little how we are judged by men, and especially by men who judge of matters before they understand them.

Calendar of Feasts

- Sunday, August 2—ST. STEPHEN, POPE AND MARTYR.
- Monday, August 3—THE FINDING OF ST. STEPHEN'S RELICS.
- Tuesday, August 4—ST. DOMINIC, FOUNDER OF THE DOMINICAN ORDER.
- Wednesday, August 5—THE DEDICATION OF ST. MARY AT NIVES.
- Thursday, August 6—THE TRANSFIGURATION OF OUR LORD.
- Friday, August 7—ST. CAE-TAN.
- Saturday, August 8—ST. CYRIL-AUS AND HIS COMPANIONS, MARTYRS.