

Site of First Crib a 'Bethlehem'

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there St. Francis and his brothers would establish their abode. St. Francis began to pray, a child took a stick from a burning pile and hurled it into the air. While everybody thought that the stick would travel only a very short distance, it seemed to take flight in the air and actually came to rest against a rocky corner of the mountain. On that spot was built the monastery, and it exists today and is occupied by the Friars. A monastery? One should see the rooms open to all the winds, exposed to the rigors of the winter season which is most severe in this locality deprived of everything that might even vaguely recall the comforts of life.

OUR ANNUITY PLAN

INVEST your gift to God in the Society for the Propagation of the Faith. We will pay you all the money you can earn in safe and sound securities—from 3 to 5%—as long as you live. After your death the gift is applied to aid the missions in their spiritual and corporal works of mercy.

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SOCIETY FOR THE PROPAGATION OF THE FAITH

Inquiries cheerfully answered by REV. LEO C. MOONEY

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Catholic Near East Welfare Association

His Eminence Patrick Cardinal Hayes, President. Very Rev. Messrs. James G. O'Reilly, Ph.D., National Secretary Rev. John J. Corrigan, Assistant Secretary

An Altar

Surely any Catholic would have tried to improve the manger in which Christ was born. Today He is on our Altars. In the Near East so many Catholic Altars are hideous. They are merely boards covered over with cloths. Fifty Dollars will pay for the erection of an Altar in a mission chapel. Would you give one to Christ?

THE PRIEST'S WORK

The priest continues the work of Our Blessed Lord. He offers the same sacrifice and dispenses to men the gifts of God. He is truly the other Christ for his work is the same and so is his message. The priest is the mediator between God and man, he is the pastor who leads the flock to the Eternal Home.

The missionary goes out to strange people, gives his life to save them. He announces the good tidings of Redemption and tells the beautiful history of the birth and life of Christ. Many listen and accept Christ, others turn away, some are hostile.

We need priests to continue the work. Young men must be prepared to shoulder the cross and carry on when others die. In the Near East the Bishops have students whom they believe will make zealous and holy priests. We must help to support and train these students.

It costs Six Hundred Dollars to put a young man through the major seminary. The course is six years. One hundred dollars is needed for every year. Would you think of sponsoring one student? It would mesh so much if you did. Perhaps you can't—then do it for a year. Send us the amount required to suit your convenience. Every ten dollars will support a student for a month. Perhaps you can afford this. If not, then do what you can. Help us to train other Christs.

OUR LADY AND CHRISTMAS

Christmas Day is the Feast of the birth of Our Blessed Lord. But it is also a great day in the life of Our Lady. What joy filled her heart as she gazed for the first time on the face of her God and her Son! As should be expected, Our Lady is revered and loved in the Near East. The missionaries and religious would certainly be pleased to have statues of Our Lady for their schools and chapels. Fifteen dollars will purchase a large Statue in the Near East.

FOR ONE CHAPEL

The following furnishings can be given for one chapel: An Altar, A Chalice, A Missal, A year's supply of Candles. All these can be given for Seventy-eight Dollars. This would be a welcome gift for some missionary.

ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS

We are now in the Holy Season of Advent. We are awaiting the Feast of Christmas, the Birth of the Divine Child. In these days we should be more alert to the real meaning and spirit of Christmas. It is a religious feast and should be anticipated by a spiritual preparation.

And if in that so-called monastery, one looks for the little cells which are the rooms of the Friars, one will find little holes in the rock. One shivers at the thought of the sacrifices that St. Francis and his companion underwent. Today visitors come from all parts of the world to view this monastery.

When, at Christmas time in the year 1223, St. Francis inaugurated the custom of erecting the Christmas crib, he had just returned to Greccio from Rome, radiant with joy because Pope Honorius III had approved the Franciscan Rule.

Six New Tunes St. Francis, who was at the monastery of Fonte Colombo, went to Rielti in 1225 while Pope Honorius III was at that very city. The "Poor Little Man" of Assisi had such a worn-out and torn tunic that he could no longer decently wear it and he said to a companion: "I would be pleased, brother, if you could get me some cloth to make a tunic."

Next morning the brother went to collect offerings and confident Providence would allow him to find the material for a tunic and just as he left the house he saw a man standing at the door with a parcel in his hand who said to him: "Brother, here is some cloth to make six tunics, one of which you will keep for yourself and five the others to whom you like."

The brother, full of emotion and admiration returned to St. Francis who thanked God saying: "We render thanks to Him who takes such care of us." At Rielti itself, St. Francis, sick and suffering, found himself in the house of Teobaldo called the Saracene, in a room with a window which can still be seen. One day St. Francis asked for Brother Pacifico, nicknamed the "King of Verses" because before he became a brother he had been a poet and musician, and said to him: "Brother, the people of the world do not understand holy and divine things, because they use those musical instruments which should serve to praise the Lord for their pleasure."

Therefore wish you would borrow a sither and sing honest verses so as to give less pain to my poor brother's body, discouraged by suffering." The brother refused as he feared that that song might give

the people an opportunity of accusing the saint of frivolity. St. Francis replied: "It is better to pronounce an honest pleasure than to scandalize one's neighbor."

Musical on Zitter But the following night, as relates Brother Tommaso da Celano, the first and most authentic biographer of St. Francis, while the saint was watching and praying, he heard a marvellous sound, he went to the window and saw a player with either who came and went under his window. St. Francis listened in wonder and rapture and next morning told Brother Pacifico: "The Lord, who takes care of the afflicted did not wish to leave me without consolation and in place of the sither I have had the happiness of hearing angelic melody."

In Rielti St. Francis gave over to his following the noble Chevalier Angelo Trancredi, who was one whom, as soon as he saw him he had said: "Messer Angelo, it is already too long a time to wear belt, sword and spurs, you must now change the belt for the cord, the sword for the Cross, and the spurs for the dust of the road. Follow me so that I may make you a knight of Christ." Angelo dismounted at once from his horse, abandoned all his wealth and embraced poverty following St. Francis. The last of his first twelve companions.

Franciscan Sanctuaries The two most celebrated and important Franciscan Sanctuaries of the Valley of Rielti are those of Fonte Colombo and Greccio. The name of the first place comes from a copious spring which gushes out water there and from the rich lady Colomba who possessed it and who gave Friars Minor and therefore it is considered by his sons as their Sinai and over the entrance to the Sanctuary the words are written that St. Francis said to Moses when he gave him the law on the Holy Mount: "Put off the shoes from thy feet, for the place where thou standest is holy ground." The time that St. Francis spent in that place was perhaps the saddest of his life. He was ill and almost blind and therefore had to lessen somewhat his customary rigid penance. He did it, asking pardon of his body because he had to do so, and he said to then: "Rejoice, brother body and pardon me since I will willingly second thy desire and hasten to give in to thy just complaints."

Once the doctor came to visit him there and the saint at once ordered that a good breakfast should be brought him but there was very little, only a little bread, a little wine, a few vegetables. But while the brothers were preparing the poor repeat, behold a woman presented herself at the door with a basket full of excellent bread, fish and delicate victuals, grapes and honey. It was received as a gift from God. It was in that place that the surgeon, to cure St. Francis of malady of the eyes, wanted to cauterize the temples with red-hot iron, as they used to do in desperate cases. Francis at the sight of the brazer and the fiery iron, was disturbed for a moment, but immediately turning to the fire, he said: "Brother Fire, more noble and useful than any other creature, be kind to me in this moment for the affection I have for thee and I will bear thee for the love of Him Who has created thee." And he signed the fire with the sign of the Cross. The operation over, the saint said he had felt no pain and that if it were necessary he would be ready to undergo it again.

Incidentally the first unit of the "Agrarian Army" has been organized in Jalisco, with about 2,000 peasants belonging to the League of Agrarian Communities and the State Syndicate of Peasants, all of whom are well armed and equipped. This corps will be the disposal of Gen. Soto Lara for fighting Lauro Rocha.

To all appearances, Lombardo Tolezano and his Confederation of Mexican Workers (CTM) are attempting to dictate the policies of Congress, the Supreme Court, the Cabinet and the President.

PERSECUTION OF PRIESTS IN MEXICO ON INCREASE

Mexico City—Information from a reliable source has reached the Capital telling of increased persecution of Catholic priests in the Archdiocese of Morelia in that portion of the archdiocese lying within the boundaries of the State of Guanajuato.

Catholics from all over the State have protested to the authorities of these committees, insisting that these priests are exercising their ministry without violating the Law on Religious Worship in force in Guanajuato.

So far no attention has been paid to those protests and the persecutions instead of waning, are increasing. The priests continue to be molested and charged with alleged violations of the law.

SENTENCE CHURCH THEEVES Crossfield, Alberta—Sentences of two and a half years in penitentiary was imposed on two men, one from Toronto and the other from Montreal, when they were found guilty here of theft of altar ornaments from the Catholic church in this town.

The Story of the First Crib Built by St. Francis Assisi

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"And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth into Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and family of David, to be enrolled with Mary his espoused wife, who was with child. And it came to pass, that when they were there, her days were accomplished that she should be delivered. And she brought forth her first-born son, and wrapped him up in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger."

Spread Over World The Saint, having sung these words, knelt down to meditate upon the sublime mystery of the Incarnation. Then the wonderful miracle took place. The throng of worshippers saw a brilliant light shine around the kneeling figure. Gazing upon the Divine Child in the reverent awe, they beheld an apparition of the heavenly glow, resting in the arms of God's poor little man.

REBEL MOVE GAINS FORCE IN MEXICO

Arrest of Two Officers Reveals Munition Plot To Aid Rebel Forces

MEXICO CITY—Messages from Guadalajara, capital of the State of Jalisco, tell of further activities of accomplices of the rebel leader Gen. Lauro Rocha.

Following the arrest of Miguel Luna, Lauro Rocha's aide, and 22 Jaliscoans, some of whom had been active in the Cristero rebellion, two officers of the Federal Army have been charged with selling ammunition to the rebels.

Major Ignacio Santa Fria, Captain Miguel Sabagottia Barron, Melchor Fernandez Mora, Sebastian Corona Garcia and Carlos Adams were arrested at Mexico City by agents from the Office of the General Inspection of Police. Corona Garcia has confessed that he bought ammunition for delivery to Mariano Uribe, Simon Lopez and an employe of the Universal Bazaar, who in turn confessed that he got it from the Captain who had acquired it from the Major. The Major held to the supply under his command.

List of Contributors Of those arrested at Guadalajara, Jose Allano Calderon is said to have had many documents on his person, a seal bearing the inscription "Popular Union of the Liberator Miguel Aleman." The Major had contributed money to support the future rebellion and correspondence to Senora Guadalupe Torres, Sebastian Uribe, Simon Lopez and Luisa Gonzalez, all of whom have been arrested.

This plot is said to have ramifications in many towns of Jalisco. Meanwhile, there is a rumor current that Miguel Aleman has been in jail in any event the Agent of the Public Ministry has called upon the Prefecture of Police to show cause why Miguel Luna has not been brought before the Court. The same agent has called upon the Prefecture for information as to whether the ammunition involved is new or old.

Situation in Spain The latest attempt along this line is to demand that Minister of Foreign Relations Eduardo Hays investigate the conduct of the Mexican Ambassador in Spain, Gen. Perez Trevino, and remove him immediately if the charges made against him by the CTM are found to be true. These charges include harboring of "dukes, marquises, counts and other personalities of the Spanish nobility responsible for the revolution. The CTM alleges that the Ambassador gave cards showing Mexican citizenship to "many Spanish Fascists." On the other hand, the CTM has asked the Mexican Government to furnish war supplies to the Madrasa Government and has called upon Mexican workers to contribute a day's wages to the Popular Front in Spain.

When called upon for a press statement, Minister Hays said the document had not yet reached his hands, but that meanwhile he deemed it advisable to state that the asylum afforded by the Mexican Diplomatic Mission in Spain does not implicate us in any complicity, complacency or undue political sympathy.

The Bique of the Chamber of Deputies will continue to hold a special session at which Deputy Gilberto Flores Munoz presided, to receive members of the Spanish militia whose recent arrival in Mexico provoked considerable discussion. Two members of the delegation, Carmen Mercader and Lena Imbert, were seated beside Deputy Flores Munoz. The session was devoted to praise of the Aztec Government and attacks upon Generals Franco and Mora.

Slavic Yuletide Celebration Lasts For Entire Month Observance of Christmas extends over whole month in Czechoslovakia.

Slavic Yuletide Celebration Lasts For Entire Month

The celebrations really being on St. Barbara's Day, December 4, and the Feast of St. Nicholas, December 6, is a great day for all the children, with gifts being exchanged.

From that time until Christmas Eve, the children are told stories of the coming of the Christ Child and adults lend aid to one another in their preparations for the coming feast.

Christian Christmas Customs Owe Little To Pagan Yuletide

While a number of Christmas customs observed today are traced back by some to pagan origins in Rome and in the observance of the Yule among the Northern peoples, authorities point out that these are purely social customs observed among non-Christians as well as Christians and have no relation to the fundamental meaning of Christmas.

Yuletide Legend Of Honeysuckle

There is in the south of France a tradition that happens and as soon as the infant rested upon it, the flowers flushed with happiness, recognizing Him as the Creator of the world.

THREE YULETIDE MASSES DENOTES THREE FOLD BIRTH

The Priest says three Masses on Christmas to indicate the three-fold birth of Jesus Christ, Our Lord, according to the distinctions of the two natures, and also of the grace which He confers on us.

CATHOLICS HONOR JURIST

Jerusalem—Director Richmond of the Palestine Department of Antiquities entertained the representatives of the Jerusalem Catholic Community with an "At Home" at the American Hotel to bid farewell to the retiring Chief Justice and Lady McDonnell.

Christmas Stacking Practice Begins In France

The practice of stacking shoes before the fire and of hanging stockings on the mantel Christmas Eve is held by some authorities to have originated in the early part of France.

Be Smart and Get Yourself a Perfect Christmas Present

Why not give yourself a Christmas present this year? Just job your own name down on your list and then, when the time comes to play Santa Claus, take yourself over to Rochester's famous Value Corner of St. Paul and Andrews, and treat yourself to the best gift of all—that prosperous look for 1937! The Holt's Clothing Company's factory and showrooms will make you feel that there really is a Santa Claus—yourself!

Two interesting Christmas customs may be noticed in Ireland. One is the practice of having candles burning in the windows to light the Christ Child as He way, and the other is that of leaving the door ajar for the good angels and to be visible to enter.

Some BRIGHT Ideas FOR CHRISTMAS

These new I. E. S. Better Light—Better Sight lamps are gifts that will brighten up every evening hour and help guard eyesight, too. End table, floor, wall, and study lamps in a variety of handsome styles and low prices. Every home needs several to help prevent eyestrain—every member of the family should have one to read by. And while you're about it, get one for yourself too.

Look for the I. E. S. tag. It is your assurance of scientific design and quality workmanship.

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