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About The Prophets

One of the signs that marked Jesus as the promised Messiah, the longest for Redeemer of the world, was the manifest fulfillment in Him and His works, of the prophecies of the Old Testament. The first promise of His coming was made to Adam and Eve as they were driven forth from Eden in punishment of their sin. The seed of the woman was to crush the head of the serpent and he was to lie in wait for her heel. Adam and Eve handed on to their children and grandchildren this promise to keep the promise alive, God raised up Abraham and made him the father of the Chosen People. The Patriarchs under the light of divine revelation added detail to the first promise, foretold circumstances of time and place and family concerning the coming of Christ. Prophets were raised up by God to give further light on the Expected of Nations, and to direct the people in the way of God.

There were four Greater Prophets, twelve Minor Prophets. Their writings are in the Old Testament. All of them spoke of the coming of the Messiah; all of them urged on the people obedience to the law of God; the punishment of guilty nations, and the realization for all of the ancient promises. Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and Daniel, are the Major Prophets. The Liturgy of Advent emphasizes especially the words of Isaiah. He upbraids the people of Israel for their ingratitude to God, Who had made them His chosen people. He draws the picture of the Man of Sorrows, stricken for the sins of His people. He describes the sufferings and death of the Messiah, and His entry into glory. He tells of the gathering of the Gentiles to the Holy Hill.

We should harken today to the voice of the Prophets of old. God has been true to His promise, has not forsaken sinful man, has sent the promised Redeemer. Prophetic advice, exhortation to obedience to God, should find immediate reaction in our hearts. God has His promises for us; God is waiting for us to fulfill the conditions that will make us ready for His gifts. Perhaps in one short quotation from the Prophet Micah we can be summed up what all the Prophets asked of the children of Israel, and what God asks of us today: "I will show thee, O man, what is good, and what the Lord requireth of thee; verily to do judgment, and to love mercy, and to walk solicitously with thy God."

To Prepare The Way Before Me

This was the work of St. John the Baptist, to prepare the people for the preaching of Jesus Christ. Others had done the remote work, this was the proximate work or preparation. His task was an important one, far above that of the ancient prophets. And for that task he had been equipped from on high with bodily strength and spiritual forces, which he had developed by his own intense cooperation with God's designs. He merited the finest commendation any man could have, the words of Christ Himself testifying to his character and ministry. He was not yet shaken by the wind; he was no man clothed in soft garments; he was no ordinary prophet. He was God's Messenger! Of Him alone did Christ say: "Among those that are born of women, there hath not appeared a greater than John the Baptist."

The serious character of the work of preparation, its necessity if men were to profit by the coming of Christ, is evidenced by the type of man Christ chose to be his Precursor. John came to prepare the way before Christ. The world today needs another St. John the Baptist! One who can come into the places where men meet and fill them with that sense of sin, that spirit of repentance, that will fit their hearts for Christ's entrance. That we may receive Christ for our Redeemer, let us follow the exhortations and entreaties of the great St. John the Baptist. Let him prepare in our hearts a way for the Lord!

Selected

FIFTH COLUMNISTS (The Catholic Light, Scranton) Studying the downfall of European nations and knowing that it was not entirely due to military power, but rather to the subversive activities of fifth columnists, our country is awake. We are afflicted with this most venomous type of germ, but fortunately through federal investigation, and alien registration, we are gradually weeding them out. It is safe to say that when the pressure of federal power is felt, America will not have to face the disaster that came to other nations through the activity of these radicals. However, there is another type of columnist as dangerous as these so-called radicals—he is the internal one. There is no action of the President, no action of Congress, no local movement made, that does not criticize. His criticism is not only directed toward men in public life, but also at individuals, and in particular, at those of religious persuasions other than his own. To accuse him of being a fifth columnist would be open cause for libel, yet he is far more dangerous than those who openly profess their subversive activities. The United States is particularly broad in the freedom it grants to individuals, but this freedom should not be misinterpreted. We are all entitled to private opinion, but this opinion must never weaken our loyalty or militate against the best interests of our country. If we are to build a united front, we must be united within. The man who criticizes the policy of our President and the work of the legislators who constitute our Congress is a menace to the nation. They are there through the express will and will of the majority and it is our duty to back them up in every move they make. If the majority of our citizenry should see fit to make a change, political difference means little. They become our new national leaders and as such we must abide. The danger, the political agitator has no place among the citizens of America. Today in particular is a day of a united people, and if we are to survive, this unity must be strengthened to the extreme. The will of the majority must be our beacon, and it is high time that the agitator realize that all cannot be out of step but Jim."

Bishop McIntyre

Pope Pius XII has appointed the Chancellor of New York Rt. Rev. J. Francis A. McIntyre, as Titular Bishop of Cyrene and Auxiliary of the Archdiocese. Bishop McIntyre has served in the Chancery Office of the Archdiocese since 1923. His work has brought him into close contact with all the priests of the Archdiocese, and with the Archbishop. His previous business experience added to his career as Chancellor give to him an unusually valuable equipment for the duties of his new office. His zeal for the Church led him to give up a splendid prospect of success in the world of finance, that he might follow the call of vocation. His work as a priest has been outstanding, his service to the Church invaluable, his cooperation with the Cardinal and the Archbishop most loyal and effective. Now he is elected by the Pope to stand much closer to the center in making the problems and concerns of the Archdiocese of

Feast Days

- Sunday, Dec. 1.—THE FEAST OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION. Monday, Dec. 2.—ST. LEONARDIA. Tuesday, Dec. 3.—ST. EULALIA. Wednesday, Dec. 4.—ST. BALZARUS. Thursday, Dec. 5.—ST. VALERIE. Friday, Dec. 6.—ST. LUCY. Saturday, Dec. 7.—ST. NICASIVS.

On Christmas Cards

By REV. BENEDICT EHMANN

Catholics may be glad that their neighbors observe Christmas as a special day of brotherliness and cheer. But we may also be permitted to regret that the Big Brother whose birthday it is, is too often forgotten in the general festivity. Christmas cards are a fragrant example of this kind of fraternal brotherliness. They are sent to friends. This column urges all Catholics to send cards which are appropriately religious. By virtue of the Sacrament of Confirmation, our souls are sealed with the character of Christian witnesses. The Christian is more than a preserver of his faith; he is its witness. He must be an apostle of it, he must radiate it to others. There are, I am sure, a hundred ways in which the ambitious Catholic can make this radiation active. One of them is by the Christmas cards he sends. He will choose only the kind of cards which make the recipient stop and take notice of the Christmas "good news."

Library Signpost

Most of the commercial cards have jingles and ditties which give about as much honor to God as a paper-mache decoration on the altar. They are unworthy of the High Christmas message. We ought to have no traffic with them. Quite a few steps lower in the scale come the cards whose allegory, scotties, and other assorted gimmicks are as rude and ill-timed as a guttaw in church. As for the Bethlehem inn, there is no room on such cards for the Christ and His Mother. Thoughtful Catholics will not profane the Christmas season with such vulgarity. If any readers of this little fervor are really interested in sending artistic religious cards for Christmas, they won't mind if I make some recommendations. Two Rochester girls, Mary Catherine Finnegan and Mary Krenzer, now studying with Ade Bethune at 35 Thames St., Newport, R. I., have designed four very attractive cards, which they are offering at the price of \$125 for fifty. In the first, they dramatize a genuine Christmas message. They have the simplicity of the Christ-Child and His Mother. Uncle Sam's mailmen will thank you, too, for sending such "un-bulky" cards. They are ideal for the rank-and-file of your Christmas list. For "extra-special" cards, a queer selection, the assortment with the Communion is introducing this year is very good. I recommend particularly Nos. 1, 4 and 5; of these, No. 5 is splendid without

STRANGE BUT TRUE

Little-Known Facts for Catholics

By M. J. MURRAY

Advertisement for 'The Messiah' cards, featuring images of the Nativity and text: 'The best thoughts life ever free... And I will give you the Father, and in Eden's shade, it's true... He will give you another Paradise, O canon-Grecian-buro Ezeriel... He, that He may abide with you forever.'

PAGE MY PASTOR

Right Rev. Messrs Peter M. H. Winkler, Editor-in-Chief, Catholic Action in the South

A-Sermon-in-a-Roadster The little yellow roadster awoke to a stop. "Too-look-hey, Frances! The horns chimed as Mercedes pulled over to the bus stop where her friend stood. "Oh Cede, it's you. I was just beginning to feel flattered. An old schoolteacher like me still getting offers."

"This is a pickup, Fran. I have you got ten minutes? I want to apologize to you. It's a perfect day for a ride." Frances jumped into the car, settled down, and took off her hat as the car started.

"I'm sorry that I lost my temper the other day. It's been hard to reconcile what you told me about my dad's handling of the Epel. I was going to talk to my confessor about a good Protestant's risk of losing his soul—I am still a bit puzzled by what you said."

"Lambie-pte, please get these two things into your sweet little head. Here I am being a school-teacher again after hours! First, no one is suggesting you do anything that your dad is not a pince among men. He has a natural goodness. My father says he is one of the finest characters he's ever known. Secondly, I didn't mean to insult you, because I'm so sincerely interested in his welfare that you care less for him than I do."

Mercedes shifted jerkily. "You must admit it sounded odd. Yes, dear, but don't you know the reason for my interest? It's because of my friendship and affection for you that I want your dear ones to participate in things that God offers. It will add so greatly to their happiness and to your satisfaction and peace of mind."

Mercedes sighed. "You've told me that you're worried. Is your father's natural goodness enough? He is a Christian; he believes in God and Jesus Christ; he professes to be a Methodist; he goes to church. Of course," offered Mercedes, "but he doesn't feel it's necessary to attend church."

"That's all very well, but tell me, Cede, if a man claims to be a Democrat but doesn't vote, or anything to help the party or observes its rules, is he a good Democrat or a Democrat at all?" "Well I don't see."

"It applies to this church as well. Does he participate in any of his church's activities, does he belong to its societies?" "Oh no-o-o."

"Does he in any way get or mean to get, the influence of his religion?" "He believes in God, Fran. And he reads his Bible."

"Yet, in some instances, he does not bother about what God wants or wishes him to do. His Bible will tell him that the Lord demands that we keep holy the Sabbath day. Cede, you'll have to admit that your dad doesn't observe the Lord's day. He stays around the house on Sunday morning, reading the papers, or goes to his office for a while. He comes home for a good dinner, and then takes a long nap. In the evening, he takes your mother to the movies. Where does the Lord come into that program?"

"But surely there's no harm in it." "Doesn't his Bible also command honor thy father and thy mother? That implies: 'Respect and direct your children.' What has been the result of your father's religious indifference? Your two oldest brothers don't go to church, but their duties are more, because they never see their father go to church."

"Both mother and dad hope that that's just a phase and that Bob and John will outgrow their attitude." Mercedes looked hopefully and

The Blood-Stained Hand

By REV. JAMES M. GILLIS, C.S.P., Editor, The Catholic World

At the moment it would seem that negotiations against Hitler make a pact—any kind of pact—with an entente between England and Russia, are even between our own government and Russia, are definitely off.

"For this relief, much thanks," as Francisco said to Bernardine, "is due of course, to the Holy Spirit. Any pact in a storm. But there is other and better advice from the prophet, Isaiah, against making a covenant with hell. Doubtless it would be well that the British Empire, at least in present circumstances, should not perish. But if there were to be a coalition with Moscow, before and with the Empire and a coalition with Moscow and Stalin to help hold the Empire together, no high-principled statesman should hesitate. The proper choice is obvious. As for the theory that it is not the Empire but Christian civilization that is in danger of perishing, it is only a theory. Christian civilization has weathered a good many storms before and will come through this one. But even if it be true that the Church and religion were never in such peril as now it still would be irrational and immoral to seek safety in an alliance with anti-Christian forces. You may have noticed that while the Vatican has shown an scruple over a bond with Russia, the Vatican itself continues to inveigh against the monstrous atheism and immorality of the Soviet system.

It is pained and bewildered as to know that even while Hitler's agents were chatted with Stalin, agents from England were on his door step, bidding for his favor and it has pained and puzzled as much more to know that our own United States was willing and eager to enlist the help of Stalin, who has probably more crimes on his soul than Hitler.

People who pride themselves upon being realists, who approve the actions of the police, who sometimes play along with one gang of bandits in order to trap another gang, and who promise immunity to one criminal if he will squeal on another, a dubious method, to me it seems in line with the unethical means, the end justifies the means.

Besides, the method is dangerous. If the police coddle one gang in order to trap another, the result in the long run will be encouragement to criminality. As with municipal affairs, so with international transactions. If England and America in their zeal

to make a pact—any kind of pact—with an entente between England and Russia, are even between our own government and Russia, are definitely off. We need have no illusions about the Soviet army and navy. They are both probably a hollow shell. Stalin is a man of great energy, but he is afraid to put his own hands on his seven million soldiers for fear they might point the rifles at him, and that he dare not send his battalions to sea for fear that once the sailors were well away from land they might mutiny. The forces of the Kremlin may be unbroken, but if the English and the Germans keep on destroying one another, the Russians, no matter how weak they may be, will have strength enough to come in and take possession.

At any rate to make agreements and pacts with Stalin, either military or commercial pacts—and to save his armies and his money or of land for his friendship, or even for his neutrality, is just about the wisest business that England or America could engage in. So it was a pity that all satisfaction to read in the papers that Moscow had gone to Berlin to carry some message from Stalin to Hitler. That meeting may occur, but for those who are fighting Communism and Nazism, but that, whatever it may be and in whatever form it come, will be a lesser evil than making a gang of murderers to help save civilization and a gang of atheists to rescue the Christian religion.

It was shocking to read in a tabloid newspaper, and to have a circulation of over two million a day, to have vast influence with the people, an editorial under the caption, "Let's Play Some Power Politics." The Editor recommends that the United States should not ally with Russia with a view to negotiating some sort of non-aggression pact of the kind so fashionable now. He doesn't want, he says, an alliance with Russia. He doesn't want us to "drop a bit of the abhorrence most of us feel for Communism and Stalin's tyrannies." But he wants a pact.

Perhaps some hard-boiled, unfeeling reader will say, "Why not? Let's be realistic." The first answer is that any kind of negotiation with a slippery slimy scoundrel like Stalin wouldn't be worth the paper on which it was written. It wouldn't be worth the breath in which it was spoken. But the second and more important reason for remaining clear out of such negotiations is that to quote Isaiah again it would be a league with death, a covenant with hell.

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Catholic Marriage

By REV. DANIEL A. LORD, S.J.

It was just two months ago that I performed a wedding ceremony that still leaves me feeling as if it were the day of my life. The bride was lovely, though she was Marie Schueter, faithful secretary in our Parish Sodality Department and Glette to her friends, was the sort of gold and ivory bride that writes so idly describe and the rest of the manly and manly disposition of the groom, Roger Marsh. And wouldn't that, by the way, make a great name for a motion picture star?

It was something more even than the happy day that I recall. It was just the complete adequacy of a Catholic wedding. By happy design, this was the first wedding performed in Father Press' new church near St. Louis, a beautiful instance of country Gothic, thoroughly Catholic, thoroughly devotional. When the bells in the tower rang out the article of the bride the Catholic Church took the young couple in its arms and started their life with the most gracious charm and most compelling liturgy. I stood at the altar as they met the boy and girl near the sanctuary rail. The doors were wide open, for this was a moment of consecration and the girl had a right to approach the altar itself. They entered and stood before me, their love shining out of their eyes; their heads lifted to receive the blessings that would dedicate their love forever. So deep did the Church believe in love that it welcomed the young couple at God's altar and consecrated their love with its sweetest ritual. Then the young couple conferred the Sacrament of Matrimony on each other—and Sanctifying Grace, the life of eternal life, was increased in their souls, not through my actions but through their own promises, solemn words and gracious gestures. Hands were joined, words spoken with eager appreciation, the round ring which is the symbol of love that knows no ending, passed from his hands to her waiting finger. Holy water fell like rain in Paradise over their heads. And the blessing of the priest which was the transmitted blessing of the Holy Trinity rested upon them. I thought as the ceremony advanced of the hundreds of times that, in popular fictional jargon, I had planned over the speech of the hero or heroine. "Why should he be bothered with the mummery of a wedding? As if a few words mumbled by a priest over our heads made any difference to our love!" And then, in some hollow-the-corner fashion these pitiful little puppets of fiction dashed off to passion and quick remorse and disillusionment. Why, this before me was the way people from