

Scriptural Reading Should Mark Observance of 'Bible Sunday'

More Vitally Needed Than Ever Is Catholic Press In Crisis—Bishop Gannon

By Most Rev. John Mark Gannon

(Episcopal Chairman, Press Department, National Catholic Welfare Conference)

We are at an all-time low on earth in human relationship. Almost all nations have resorted to death and destruction of each other to settle their contentions.

No doubt, a new Magna Charta must be created to adjust and harmonize the relations between groups of men and between nations.

The Catholic Church is deeply concerned, over the plight both of her children and of society, with which she has labored for centuries and over the new civil instrument to be created by statesmen as a chart for the future government of the human race.

Under those towering skies, once more I come to the Catholic body of the United States at Catholic Press Month. It is a grave moment ahead the fateful acts and decisions for God and Country.

At this same moment too, a survey shows that many units of the American Catholic Press have soared to the highest circulations in their histories. Many evidences indicate that our Press has otherwise attained to greater influence and prestige.

I thank God this is so! I hail the editors and other workers whose tireless labors under many difficulties, have made this vigorous advance for the welfare of the Church and our Country.

And I congratulate the beneficiaries, the Catholic people themselves. At a time when, as never before, they have needed to be informed of the tumultuous, often tragic, news of the Church, and the reports and counsels of its august head, the Vicar of Christ, and its Episcopal leaders everywhere, the Catholic Press has not been found wanting. Nowhere but in Catholic papers in the last year has there been printed the full record of such news.

While I congratulate the ever-widening millions who read the Catholic Press, I devoutly wish—for their own sake as well as for the common good—that these readers may be multiplied. More and more, non-Catholics are coming to look to the Catholic Press for a rounded information. In such a time, a Catholic to be at all adequately informed must be a reader of his own Press.

Let us consider the grave questions before us, which so urgently impel us to keep ourselves posted: Since the beginning of the present World War, the Bishops of the United States have been cautious and prudent in casting final decisions. Until recently, all the elements of many problems facing the world were not clearly known. Many events had to transpire before a whole picture could be obtained and ultimate judgment passed. Thought and sentiment of the people were in flux and much indecision temporarily prevailed. As a consequence, reports ranged over a wide field of thought and speculation, without specific unity and purpose.

Suddenly, however, two events took place: the one, the statement of the American Bishops on the Crisis of Christianity, published in November; the other, the infamous attack by the Japanese at Pearl Harbor in December. At once, as by an electric shock, the thought and policy of this country crystallized into a hard and solid unity of plan and action. The United States was at war.

The Catholic Church, with traditional loyalty, pledged its resources, its institutions, and its consecrated personnel to the President of the United States for the preservation of our nation and the destruction of the evil influences dominating our enemies. More, it pledged its powerful and constant prayers to God Who orders all things. What was a jigsaw puzzle, baffling intelligence on account of parts that were wanting, was now a clear and definite problem, with no parts wanting, with minds cleared of doubt and definitely shaped, and objectives fixed. While a solution of the problem is now being worked out by our civil authorities, the millions of American Catholics are giving every ounce of loyalty and support, spiritual and material, to the President and the Nation that a victory of peace with justice may crown their efforts.

In all this disturbing period, Catholics were constantly made aware of the religious aspects of the situation through the Catholic Press. I cannot too greatly emphasize that in the months to come, it will be imperative that our Catholic people read and ponder the information supplied in our Catholic newspapers and magazines. Let us now analyze the world situation. The Supreme Head of the Catholic Church has definitely condemned the brutal anti-religious totalitarianism rampant into the world today. The American Bishops have re-echoed that teaching. Of course, paganism has long been condemned. With the success of the axis powers, there is grave menace of the Catholic Church throughout the world and, undoubtedly, the darkest period of persecution and despoilment ahead that the Church has ever experienced. This is evident from the German Bishops' Pastoral, issued from Fulda in June of 1941. With the success of the Allied powers, we may entertain hope, at least for the emergence of a world order in which

(Continued on Page 3)

Heads Community

Rock Hill, S. C.—The Very Rev. Vincent Scharf, Congr. Orat., has been named Major Superior of the Oratorian Fathers—here, Father Scharf, who is a native of Woodhaven, L. I., succeeds the Very Rev. Paul Hatch, Congr. Orat.

CYO Board Elects

New York—Daniel P. Higgins, Sr., was elected President of the Board of Directors of the Catholic Youth Organization, of New York, at the annual dinner meeting just held here.

CLEAN, N. Y.—(N. C.)—

The Bible is "God's book and man's book alike," the Very Rev. Thomas F. Plasmann, O.F.M., President of St. Bonaventure's College and President of the Catholic Biblical Association of America, says in a statement issued here today.

Father Plasmann issued his statement in anticipation of Septuagesima Sunday on Feb. 1, which has been selected by the Association, at the request of the Episcopal Committee of the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine, for the annual observance of Biblical Sunday.

It is recalled by Father Plasmann that Septuagesima Sunday was "the day in the early Church when the monks, the clergy and with them Faithful opened the Holy Bible on its first page and thereafter continued the reading of the sacred volumes throughout the year." "Septuagesima opens the most sacred season of the year," he added, "a season set apart for devout prayer and meditation, a season of penance and sacred solitude."

Asserting that "the Fathers of the Church called the Holy Bible God's message to His children on earth," Father Plasmann says "like the sun in the firmament it was meant for all men, but only a small proportion have availed themselves of its priceless treasures."

"Christ stands between the two Testaments," Father Plasmann adds "He draws from the old to prove His mission. And the new gives testimony thereof. The Church which He founded appeals to both as her character, her constitution and the document of her spiritual heritage. Guided by her unbroken apostolic tradition, she gathered the books of the Old Testament and the booklets of the new and bound them into one volume, and placed upon it the seal of her infallible authority, testifying to the whole world that this was God's inspired word . . ."

"The present tremendous output of literature of every kind strongly urges us to accord the place of honor and dignity which belongs to God's own classic. Recently our American scholars have spent many days on the sacred text of the New Testament to make it more understandable and attractive to the least among us. Our spiritual leaders have approved the new version and in their eagerness to bring God's ancient message in our own disturbed age to every heart and every home, they have set aside Septuagesima Sunday as Biblical Sunday, which occurs this year on Feb. 1."

Father Plasmann adds: "May Septuagesima Sunday of the year 1942 bring the Holy Scriptures to every Catholic home. In order that all who labor and are burdened may find on its hallowed pages spiritual comfort, rest and holy peace."

The Bishop's Appointments



FEBRUARY

- 1 Sunday—St. John's Spencerport—Closing Novena Service—7:45 P. M.
- 2 Monday—St. Patrick's—Blessing of Candles, Low Mass—9:00 A. M.
Chamber of Commerce—St. Mary's Hospital Campaign Dinner—6:00 P. M.
- 3 Tuesday—St. Mary's Hospital—Low Mass, Blessing of Throats—8:30 A. M.
- 4 Sunday—Our Lady of Lourdes, Elmira—Opening Triduum Service—8:00 P. M.
- 10 Tuesday—Elmira Priests' Holy Hour—3:00 P. M.
- 11 Wednesday—Our Lady of Lourdes, Elmira—Low Mass, Closing Triduum—8:00 A. M.
- 12 Thursday—Hotel Seasons—K. of C. Fourth Degree Dinner—7:00 P. M.
- 16 Monday—Nazareth Academy—Operetta—8:00 P. M.
- 18 Wednesday—Pro-Cathedral—Low Mass—9:00 A. M.
(The Most Rev. Bishop will celebrate Mass daily at 9:00 A.M. at the Pro-Cathedral during Lent.)
Holy Rosary—Sermon—7:45 P. M.
- 20 Friday—Corpus Christi—Sermon—7:45 P. M.
- 25 Wednesday—Holy Rosary—Sermon—7:45 P. M.
- 27 Friday—Corpus Christi—Sermon—7:45 P. M.

By Order of The Most Rev. Bishop Lawrence E. Casey

Tires For Clergy Ruling Follows Msgr. Ready's Plea

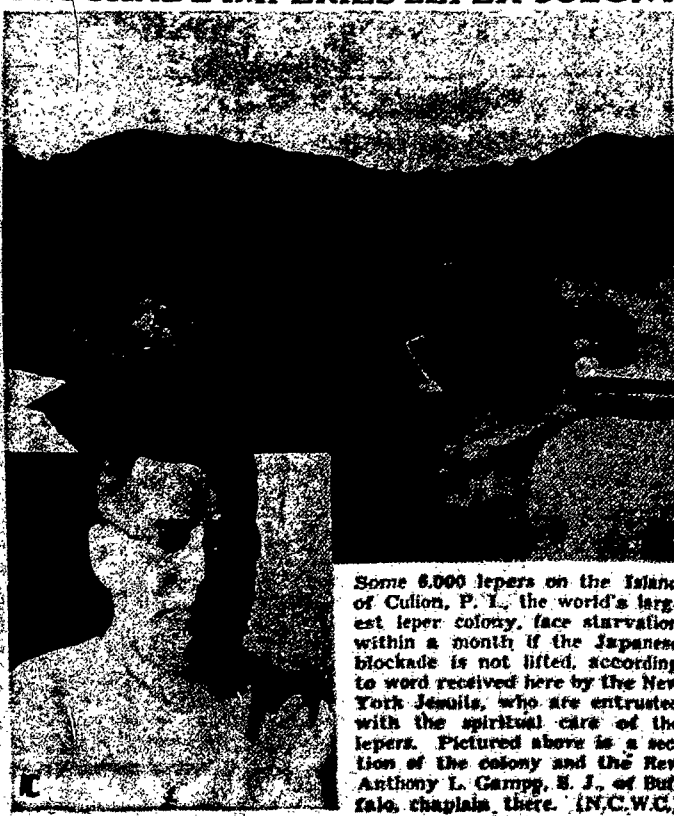
WASHINGTON — (N. C.) — Representations by the Rt. Rev. Msgr. Michael J. Ready, General Secretary of the National Catholic Welfare Conference, to Leon Henderson, Administrator of the Office of Price Administration, preceded the announcement last week that clergymen will be placed on a par with doctors and other "essential services" in the administration of the tire rationing program.

Socialists Asked To Apply Plenary Indulgences To Those Slain In War

ST. LOUIS, Mo.—Socialists are asked to apply the plenary indulgence they may gain, under the usual conditions, at the general Sodality Mass in February, to "one who has given his life to preserve our democracy."

Urgent in the need for new St. Mary's Hospital funds. Give.

BLOCKADE IMPERILS LEPER COLONY



Some 6,000 lepers on the Island of Cullion, P. I., the world's largest leper colony, face starvation within a month if the Japanese blockade is not lifted, according to word received here by the New York Jesuits, who are entrusted with the spiritual care of the lepers. Pictured above is a section of the colony and the Rev. Anthony L. Camp, S. J., of Buffalo, chaplain there. (N.C.W.C.)

Monsignor Ready on Jan. 8 called to Mr. Henderson's attention the fact that the national defense program has put additional burdens upon the clergy, who, even in normal times, must be ever-ready to answer emergency sick calls, and in some cases to care for numerous churches and missions over wide areas. This has been rendered more difficult by the enrollment of so many priests in the Chaplain Corps of the Army and Navy. He stated that the Bishops and priests of the United States were worried about their ability to meet the added demands, in the face of tire rationing, and that some specific exemption should be granted for those engaged in pastoral ministry and who labor for the salvation of souls.

Provisions are now being drafted, Mr. Henderson said, under which members of the clergy of all denominations who use automobiles in carrying on their ministry will be allowed to buy new automobile tires. The new provision will become part of the tire rationing order.

"Clergymen in many communities, particularly where the population is scattered," said the Price Administrator, "are compelled to depend upon their cars to reach the sick or dying, or to conduct services that are essential to the spiritual welfare of the public."

Representatives of other church bodies were reported also to have called attention of the O. P. A. to the omission of clergymen from the provisions of the tire rationing order.

URGES ALL CITY CHURCHES SOUND ANGELUS DAILY

TUCSON, Ariz.—Catholic churches of this city are ringing the Angelus daily to remind people that God's help is needed to win this war. At a recent citizens' defense meeting it was suggested that all the other churches of the city follow the lead of the Catholic churches. The recommendation was made by Dr. Tetras, of Arizona University, a member of the Citizens Defense Council's board of cooperation and spiritual welfare.

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