Prayer In **War-Time**

By Rev James M. Gillis. C.S.P.

Here is a phenomenon: an entire column by a staff writer on the editorial page of The New York Times on the subject of prayer. If this be an indication of the trend of thought in war time, one may say that the war is not an absolutely unmiligated calamity. The writer of the column, "Topics of the Times," says it is not strange that "in days laden with grief and danger men should pray more than ordinarily." He speaks of Lincoln in the desperate days just before Gettysburg, and quotes Lincoln's words: "I have been driven many times to my knees by the overweiming conviction that I had nobody else to go to. My own wisdom and that of all about me seemed insufficient." We are not to suppose that Lincoln turned to God only when and only because he could get no guidance elsewhere. But like all men, and like ourselves, he was driven to God with special force when things grew desperate.

The writer of that column also refers to a statea phenomenon: an entire column by Here is

The writer of that column also refers to a statement of Lincoln that is not so well known. It seems

The writer of that column also refers to a statement of Lincoln that is not so well known. It seems that on the eve of Gottysburg the President made what he himself calls "a solemn vow" to stand by God (I suppose he meant to be faithful to God) if God would stand by our boys at Gettysburg, Cathelics especially can understand that kind of prayer. We are accustomed to the making of not a solemn vow (which we should not make without the censent of our spiritual director) but a solemn promise to do this or that in return for some divine favor. It is no doubt easy to find fault with that kind of bargain between man and God. It could be interpreted as an attempt to bribe God or to cajole Him, and there might possibly be in the back of one's head the idea of running out on God (so to speak) if God doesn't give us what we ask. However, there is no need of being over-critical with people who make bargains with God It is very human. We all do it. And we know by our own experience that we don't cease to serve God because He sometimes seems to fail us. In our hearts is the sentiment expressed by the patriarch Job, "Though He slay me, still will I trust in Him."

But let's get away from such sermonizing and come back to the fact reported by the writer in The New Yerk Times. The fact is that the people, some of whom have not been too faithful to prayer when all went well with them and with their country, are now praying fervently and with faith. So much

all went well with them and with their country, are now praying fervently and with faith. So much

In that newspaper column I find one idea that I have often used in speaking and writing especially have often used in speaking and writing, especially to non-Catholics or to unbelievers: "Simplicity for the time has replaced artificiality." How many times have we priests tried to get that truth into the heads of those who imagine they have reasons—logical or psychological reasons—for not praying. They are victims of the artificiality of the civilization in which they live. Leave a man alone, don't clutter up his brain with skeptical philosophies; let him act just as he would and as he does when no atheighte or as he would and as he does when no atheistic or agnostic professors stand over him to tell him that he must not pray; let a human being be human, and

he will pray
The celebrated psychologist William James said in one of his books, "Some people give us reasons why we should pray, others give us reasons why we should not pray, nobody seems to remind us of the real reason for prayer; we pray because we are made that way" Precisely. When we are simple straightforward, natural, uninhibited, we pray we become affected, unnatural, artificial, we to pray. You may try out that truth. It tried but over and over again since man commenced. In calamity, in dan death, in a terrible trial a man tively. It is only when he become that he pretends not to believe "sophisticated" in prayer Prayer is the breathing of the as natural as breathing. It

Now that the war is g and later when the tragic b hight nearer to us, we shall on and our artificiality We ture and back to God. We shall facts of war will be be shed our sophistics shall get back to

pray.
So, thanks that writer in the Times. Thanks especially for its significant sentence. Simplicity re-

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Five Years Ago--

-in the files of the CATHOLIC COURIER

From Feb. 18, 1937, Edition Missioners from home were met in the Orient by

the Rev. John M. Duffy and the Rev. Leo C Mooney rnester enroute the work in a story sent by Father Mooney to the CATHO-LIC COURTER by clipper mail. In Korea they vis-ited with the Rov. Patrick Cleary of Ithaca, Maryknoll missioner. In Shanghai they met Sister Mary of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart, nee Anna Willig of Rochester. In Hong Kong they were met by the Rev. Charles P. Hilbert of Rochester, also a Maryknoll missioner.

As tension mounted in Mexico. Catholics forced the reopening of churches in Vera Cruz following the killing by police of two persons attending a clandestine Mass. At the same time hope was ris-ing in Washington circles for settlement of the tense Mexico church question.

Completely redecorated and remodeled. St. Theresa's Church of Stanley was reopened with special services to mark its flat anniversary.

Attorney Cornelius O'Dea, executive chairman of Elmira Catholic Charities) was named chairman of the annual Elmira Community Chest campaign.

The darkest hour in any man's life is when he sits down to plan how to get money without earning it. Horace Greeley.

The beauty of Thy peace: that is good, and I am sure that the old lady in the picture, as well as the little feller, knew what that peace was - a clean heart. W. P., in Catholic Freeman's Journal.

BU-T TRU. TRANGE By M. J. MURRAY



EDITORIALS

tinued from Page 18

First in War. The eng in treacherous fashion, has found us to given to construction ways of peace that our material en sufficiently developed along war and human resource have no lines to match their aps have been sunk, our men have died, our battles have by ight on uneven terms: victory has not been ours up to now. re not now First in War!

But the spirit George Washington still rules over America! His unfailing c his absolute trust in ultimate victory, are reflected todav It Roosevelt and in the might of America respondhis call 14 meet the loc. Man-power and productive power are given now 1 the one call, the call to defend our liberties against all who assail t em. America aroused answers the call of duty? Her

enemies shall is ow in the ultimate report that she is First in War.

May the Birmday of George Washington be the inspiration to all Americans to face the future bravely and intelligently. Absolute co-operation with our leaders in promoting the highest productivity of our industrial lants, the fastest development of tank and plane and ship, the quicker possible preparation of an army of free men ready and anxious to preserve for America that freedom first won for her by George Wass fington. He was First in War! May his example help us to be first 2. War! He was First in Peace! May his spirit help us to make reacy for the world a cessation of conflict that will mark our country anding all the nations as the Champion of Liberty, First

AND THE TEMPTER CAME

The devil knows when to tempt man. He comes when we are weak ened in spirit, when our defenses are down, when his appeal will sound most enticing.

So he came to Christ, when hunger showed its face after the fast of forty days and forty nights. The human nature of Christ was crying no answer to the body's lawful call for sustenance. The natural human catholics, Be sowers of the seed that you heard among other less active Catholics. . . among non-catholics, Be sowers of the seed that you heard about in the Cospel on Sexagesima Sunday. I don't he dignity of Jesus, wondering if He were truly the Son of God, tries Him Sirst with that temptation that would appeal to his hunger.

So Satan cornes to us. He loves to find us weakened for his approach. In material temptations he may look to our human appetites and offer us the unlawful opportunity to meet their demands; he can brand of religion at all, who allowed himself to be court-maritalled without revealing the guilty person. out for nourishment. No food, no drink, for forty days and nights: whatever other Catholic magazines you get

appetites as is Tawful.

But much more frequently does he approach us with spiritual temptations. He finds us hungry, because we have denied ourselves spiritual food. Forty days and nights have we fasted from things our souls need. Prayer has been absent, hearing of God's word has been avoided, meditation on His teaching wanting, reception of His Sac converts lucking: we are hungry, spiritually hungry, after avoiding all the spiritual food God places before us. Then the devil convert

Other temptations Satan put hefore Christ: vainglory, list for power, were suggested to Him. And the devil then as teday is ready with words of Holy Writ to holster up his temptations,

Leuten practices should help us meet Satan's temptations in the manner related of Christ in this Gospel for the First Sunday in Lent. His electing words may stand for us as a constant copy to every temptation: Begone Satan: the Lord God shalt thou adore, and Him only shalt thou serve!"

Book

Library Signposi

Reports

Introducing Father Francis X. Connolly's review f Windowept, current bast-seller by Mary Ellen

of Wisseswept current bast-seller by Mary Ellen Chase:

"Wisseswept is clearly an attempt to define they American way of life through a biography of the Marston family and of their home, a lovely house set en an included head on the count of Maine. Miss Chase has conjured an ideal family. Religious isjectant, intellectual, they are far removed from the vices of the bioleness world and the corruptions of the suburbs. They hefriend a Bohemian family and help them to dig their roots in America's sell. They read the Latin and Greek classics, form attachments with scholarly folk and simple fisherment. They are, in fine, all that is meant by the Greochment that the scholar tradition, as a gentle, studied Pratestant lady professor understands that tradition. In the course of her long novel, Miss Chase presents a Catholic nus, meat sympathetically, pessibly with the idea of premoting some of Mether Badeguid's views on life and education.

"For some reason not quite clear in the steery it.

views on life and education.

"For some reason not quite clear in the mery itsels. Miss Chase has Mother Radegund's nlees, Adrienne, allegedly the victim of the laxity of Werld War I merals, give hirth to a child in a servent. The circumstances are unreal to a literally ridiculeus degree. Eventually life beby is deposited by Mother Radegund with her friends, the Maratons, an evidence, we presume, that nuns are breadminded and human. This unfortunate lapse, . Rows' from the common American immaturity rencerning sex. Miss Chase apparently felt that she was being dramatic when she was slightly sophomoric." (Quoted from the Catholic Book Club Newsletter.)

The Commonweal editors cannily gave Miss

Quoted from the Catholic Book Club Newsletter.)
The Commonweal editors cannily gave Missi
Clusse's novel to a nun for review. Sister Maniella,
O.S.B., returned a sympathetic report without takeing the exception noted by Father Commily. Of the
convent phases of the book, she wrote:
"As memorphic as the nuns in Kate O'Brien's
"Land of Spices' is the charming humanist, Mother
Radegund, conspicuously more intelligent than holy,
Miss Chara know har convents. Executions for

Mass Chase knows her convents. Everything from the painstaking, unoriginal handwriting of alters to the pros and come of traveling with clergy-fars books has been accurately observed."

And that is all, Not a word, you see, about the incident which Father Controlly found so ridicuously unreal. I make no decision. But it seems to me that if a nun was not offended, we needn't balk about it. about it.

Father Joseph McSorley reports on John Gunther's

Isside Latin America:
On the credit side: colorful writing . . . often wait informed.

informed.
On the debit side: (1) often superficial, exaggorated, inaccurate. (2) Latin American protests have already come in on the book's inaccuracies. (2) There is strong bias against the Catholic religion. The author favors the phrase "violently Catholic," and assumes that the crippling of Catholiciam is a necessary preliminary to the complete rehabilitation of South America.
Comment: "Those Latin-Americans who are already disposed to entertain suspicions of the United States and to place more trust in the countries which

States and to place more trust in the countries which helped Catholic Spain in her hour of distress, will not be reasured by the books of men like John Gunther." (From The Catholic World, December, 1941.)

A propos of Catholic Press Month, Peter Gamon in the current issue of Maryknoll's excellent The Field Afar gives us a timely reminder of the early history of Catholic defense by men of letters. Some of the world's first books written to spread the Christian idea, were: Justin Martyr, Apology, A. D. 180; Tatian, Biscourse is the Greeks, A. D. 180; Athenagoras, Flea for the Christians, A. D. 177; Theophilus, Three Books to Autolychus, A.D. 180; Epistic to Diegnetus, A. D. 190; Minucius Felix, Octavies, A. D. 192; Tertullian, Apologetic, A. D. 197; Origen, True Discourse Against Celsus, A. D. 248; Lactantius, Institutes, A. D. 312; Saint Augustine, The City of Ged, A. D. 415-428.

"Let's stop defending. Let's take-the lead?"
That is Mr. Cosmon's plea to us Catholics. He proposes three avenues of action.

1—We must live. We must live richly and well our life of faith and good works.

2—We must talk. We must influence others by word of mouth. Nothing can atrike fiint better than the human voice. A propos of Catholic Press Month, Peter Cosmon

the human voice.

ine numan voice.

We must write or help to spread what is written. How about passing around your copies of the CATHOLIC COURIER, of the Catholic Werker, of

brand of religion at all, who allowed himself to be court-marifalled without revealing the guilty person, that he might shield an officer who was the father of a family, whereas he himself had no near relatives. ... and all, because one day in quarters he heard the Coapel of "Greater love than this no man heart the Coapel of "Greater love than this no man halb ... " heing read, and he took it to heart though he had no religious leanings at all. Such is the power of God's word. And it is in our keeping to sure the coare day. apread se generously, every day.

Note N

Feast Days

Sunday, Feb. 12.-ST. PETER'S CHAIR AT ANS TROCH.

Monday, Feb. 21.—ST. PETER DANIAN,
Theoday, Feb. 21.—ST. MATTHIAN APOSTLE.
Wednesday, Feb. 21.—ST. WALBURGA.
Thursday, Feb. 21.—ST. NESTOR.
Eriday, Feb. 27.—ST. GREEEL.
Saturday, Feb. 28.—SS ROMANUS AND LUPYOFIEM.
VACOTS.