

Library Signpost

Ruined Temples

By Rev. Benedict Ehmann

The Old Testament prophet Jeremias has the honor of being taken by the Church during Paschaltide as a type of the suffering Savior.

He had the burden from God to foretell the impending invasion of his faithless country by the Babylonians, and the destruction of the Temple. He was despised and spurned as a trouble-monger, a pessimist, a "fifth-columnist." But he lived to see the Temple a wreck, the Holy City in ruins, and the flower of the people taken captive to the city by the Euphrates. To a pious Jew this was the ultimate tragedy; for it looked as if God had cancelled His Covenant and had forever wiped out its memorial. The Lamentations of Jeremias among the ruins were the heart-cries of a man in the dark night of the soul, to whom God gives no sign of dawning.

Six hundred years later, Jesus, the Prophet of prophets, spoke to Jerusalem "the things that were for her peace," but she would not listen. He foretold the invasion that would raze her to the ground, and said of the glorious Temple that "not a stone would remain upon a stone." Like Jeremias, Jesus wept over the city, seeing it as it would be, desolate and crushed, after the Roman siege.

The Church in Holy Week weeps over another Temple, fairer than the one of Jerusalem, brought low and destroyed by the hatred of men. It is the Temple of Jesus' body. He himself said of it to His enemies, "Destroy this Temple, and in three days I will rebuild it." And St. John assures us that He spoke of the Temple of His body.

So, like Mary with Jesus in her arms, the Church laments over the crucified body of her Spouse; and the words of her lament are those of Jeremias, weeping among the ruins of the first Temple.

"The ways of Sion mourn, because there are none that come to the solemn feast: all her gates are broken down: her priests sigh: her virgins are in affliction, and she is oppressed with bitterness."

"O all ye that pass by the way, attend, and see if there be any sorrow like to my sorrow: for He hath made a vintage of me, as the Lord spoke in the day of His fierce anger."

"To what shall I compare thee? or to what shall I liken thee, O daughter of Jerusalem? to what shall I equal thee, that I may comfort thee, O virgin daughter of Sion? for great as the sea is thy destruction: who shall heal thee?"

Pondering over these laments of Jeremias and of

Mother Church, there comes to mind the ruin of another Temple in this our own day. For all men are temples of God, and Christians are in a special way, temples of the Holy Ghost. But consider how these temples are being looted and desecrated.

Consider the refugees, homeless, starving, prostrate with grief.

Consider the castaways on the open seas, cruelly left to the violence of wind and wave.

Consider the bullet-ridden, flame-scared bodies of Negroes after a lynching party.

Consider the black holes of our industrial slums, breeding maggots of vice and hate.

Consider the sharecroppers, sold out by the predators.

Consider the white slaves, bottled up by panders.

Consider our young people, debauched by pagan teaching and erotic mass-suggestion.

"Pour out thy heart like water before the face of the Lord: lift up thy hands to Him for the life of thy little children, that have fainted for hunger at the top of all the streets."

"The child and the old man lie without on the ground: my virgins and my young men are fallen by the sword: Thou hast slain them in the day of Thy wrath."

"They said to their mothers: Where is corn and wine? when they fainted away as the wounded in the streets of the city: when they breathed out their souls in the bosoms of their mothers."

This pain is my pain. These people are a part of me. When the Holy Spirit is outraged in them, He stirs within me. I must make good their loss. I must lament for them. I must be haunted by them. I must storm heaven for them. My pain, my feeling, my suffering must go to buy back their lost souls.

Said John Donne, three hundred years ago:

"No man is an Island entire of itself; every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main; if a Clod be washed away by the Sea, Europe is the less, as well as if a Promontory were, as well as if a Member of thy friends or of thine own were; any man's death diminishes me, because I am involved in Mankind; and therefore, never send to know for whom the bell tolls; it tolls for thee."

And so, next week, when we hear the Lamentations of Jeremias during Tenebras, we shall be mindful not only of the desecrated Church on the Cross, but also of all those desecrated souls who crucifixion He epitomized on Calvary, the destitute, the abandoned, the violated, the trust-stricken—those in whom the fair image of God and of His Christ has been lacerated or looted.

And Christ will assure us: "As long as you lamented over me of these little ones, you lamented over Me."

Read: The Prophecy of Jeremias, and the Lamentations of Jeremias, in the Bible. Article on Jeremias in the Catholic Encyclopedia. Christ in His Exile, by Pius Plus, S.J.

Suum Cuique

Bravo! Bishops Of Norway

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

Sometimes war seems an absolutely unmitigated calamity. But there is really nothing, however bad it may be, out of which Divine Providence cannot extract some good. The ancient pagan poet Terence wrote a familiar significant line (which, by the way, has been verified in the case of St. Augustine and ten thousand others who became disgusted with their sin) *ex fœto leporum surgit asperum aliquid*. I give the Latin because I know that these weekly items are read by many college students and graduates to whom the swing and the rhythm of a Latin line are a delight. For those who have no Latin let us translate into the less euphonious and more clumsy English, "Out of the midst of sinful pleasures emerges something better." True. But the obverse is also true. Out of the midst of hideous things emerges something noble.

The latest instance recorded in the newspapers on the day I write is that of the six Lutheran bishops who resigned in protest against the interference of the Nazis in the parental right to educate children. That action in itself is in the circumstances not only courageous but well-advised. To retaliate against tyranny with a verbal protest alone would have been futile; to incite their people to open rebellion would be suicidal. They have done the only honorable thing possible.

Still more important than the resignation of these Protestant leaders is the fact that they laid down a primary principle on which they based that action. The principle is one that Catholics have consistently preached in season and out of season, especially here in the United States where such preaching has been considered offensive, subversive and unpatriotic.

The bishops say: "Baptism confers upon parents the responsibility for children's education." There you have an echo of half a dozen Papal Encyclicals, especially that of Pope Pius XI on "The Christian Education of Youth." In defense of that principle we have built a vast system of parochial schools, in the face of long and bitter opposition.

The position of our opponents has been that the State should have primary charge of education. Consequent upon that tenet is the corollary that the State has the right to teach the children whatsoever seems good to it and in whatsoever way the State approves. Now the State has insisted that religion should not be included in the curriculum; that the public schools should go along with complete disre-

gard of the fact that religion is essential to civilization or to citizenship. If parents wished to teach their children religion at home that was their own affair. If the parents felt that religion should go hand in hand with other forms of intellectual and spiritual development; that religion should be given as much time as history and literature and modern languages; that neither by word nor by deed nor by omission should children be given to understand that religion was of secondary importance—if, I say, the parents held these views and in consequence set to work at great inconvenience and expense to erect a system of education in which those principles should be realized, they were scolded as being "un-American" and undesirable citizens.

But now we have an object lesson of what may happen when the State usurps the right and the duty of parents in the matter of education. And we have also from those brave Norwegian bishops a statement of the true principle—parents have an inalienable right, duty, obligation, responsibility to see to their children's education.

The "Church and Education Minister" in the Quisling government replied to the bishops that the State was the highest authority in the country. We have heard that Erastian principle many times before: "Nothing above the State, nothing outside the State, nothing beyond the State." There you have heathenism, paganism, Caesaropapism.

The Christian, on the other hand, insists with Pope Pius XI that "The family holds directly from the Creator the mission and hence the right to educate the offspring, a right inalienable because inseparably joined to the strict obligation, a right anterior to any right whatever of civil society and of the State, and therefore inviolate on the part of any power on earth."

Welcome, then, and praise to those Norwegian Lutherans who in the face of a galling and cruel tyranny have upheld the doctrine that upon the soul of parents rests the inalienable obligation to see that their children are properly educated.

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Five Years Ago--

—in the files of the CATHOLIC COURIER

From Mar. 15, 1937, Edition

In an Encyclical Letter addressed to the Bishops of Germany and inspired by a fatherly benevolence toward the German people, His Holiness, Pope Pius XI, put in bold relief, attacks upon Catholic doctrine contained in errors being widely propagated in the Reich and vigorously protested against the persecution of the Church in that country.

Final tribute was paid the widely-known pulpit orator, the Rev. William P. Ryan, professor of English and Sacred Oratory of St. Bernard's Seminary, at funeral services held in the Cathedral.

Many lessons learned from the life of St. Joseph can be applied to our own times and conditions, the Rev. George Vogt of St. Andrew's Seminary declared in the sermon at the St. Joseph's Day Mass of the Sisters of St. Joseph at Nazareth Mother-house, Pittsford.

"Christ is our Divine Supreme Being. He is our Leader in our Crusade (against Communism), know Him, love Him, follow Him," was the message left with 500 Knights of Columbus by State Deputy Michael J. Walsh of Buffalo at Rochester Council's annual Communion Breakfast.

'Quiz' Corner

Is it a grave sin to keep company with a divorced woman?

A divorced woman who has validly married in the first instance has made vows and promises to a definite man. These promises are dissolved only by the death of one or the other party. By deliberately associating with the divorced woman as you are placing yourself in a proximate occasion of mortal sin. Further you are running the risk of having your affections become so involved that you will lose your religion and your faith.

What is the dignity of the hier of ordinar?

The law of celibacy flows out of the Christian sense of the dignity of the priesthood. It was voluntary in the apostolic times but made a law of the Church in the fourth century. It was enforced under severest penalty by Gregory VII in the Roman Synod of 1074. This legislation was nothing more than a revival of the old discipline of the Church. The law of celibacy is a matter of discipline and not of dogma.

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the money they receive. They have no right to ask \$600.00 for something that they can produce with reasonable profit for \$400.00. When they ask the unreasonable price, they are stealing; they are taking money for value not given.

It is a peculiar morality that looks to unfair increases in the salaries of officers and employees as an alibi for injustice in dealing with the government. It were well for the world to return to a just appraisal of right and duties as taught by the natural law and made not clear by the moral teachings of the Catholic Church.

NOW IS THE TIME!

For what? For doing all we can to unify efforts looking to maximum production of war-products. Yes! For anything else? For destroying all that labor has earned and secured for his protection during the past fifty years? For throwing out all protective legislation, much of it passed precisely to neutralize predatory methods of unscrupulous employers? For destroying unions and the right of workers to organize, depending on a venal press to play up the abuses of a few and to suppress the patriotic service of the many?

Now is the time for every true American to come to the help not of his party, but of his country! American justice for all, American respect for the fact that all men are created equal. American insistence on the right of the worker to keep for himself even in time of war those legislative gains that interpret for present conditions his inalienable rights. Let labor-baiters consider this a time-out for their activities: let enemies of the closed shop, the control of hours and wages, the setting of right labor conditions, consider this a time for listening to the President, who states clearly his finding that on the whole present conditions in the labor world are satisfactory and conducive to labor's effective and patriotic cooperation in our war-work.

Now is the time for preservation of every labor guarantee secured by national or state law, with labor ready to cooperate with the President in every policy that will add to our effectiveness in increasing war-production.

TO PRESERVE SHRINES IN THE HOLY LAND

Shrines are of two kinds; those erected anywhere to honor Our Lord or His saints; those marked by historic events that sanctify them forever as holy places.

The shrines of the Holy Land are sacred because they witnessed the life of our Lord, His birth, hidden life at Nazareth, His public life in all Judea and Samaria and Galilee, His sufferings and death on Calvary.

For many centuries the care of the Shrines in the Holy Land, and the maintenance of them as places where Christians may visit and show their devotion, has been in the hands of the Franciscans. They act as agents of the Church, representatives of the Holy Father, in this work.

Good Friday is an appropriate day for the world-wide collection for support of the Franciscans in this work. The collection of this day is known as the "HOLY LAND COLLECTION." It is taken up in every parish church by decree of the Holy Father. We show our love for Pope Pius XII and our regard for these Holy Places by the offerings we make on Good Friday for this cause.

GO, GUARD IT AS YOU KNOW!

The very intensity of the desire to destroy Christ forever, to erase all memory of Him, is turned to good purpose by Almighty God. The enemies of Christ knew His words, knew His promises, knew that He said He would arise from the dead.

Therefore, they besought Pilate to send a guard to watch over the sepulchre of Christ. They wished to protect that tomb against despoliation by the Apostles; they feared that that distracted body of weak men would return after the horrors of the crucifixion to steal the body of Christ; that they would lie about Him to the people; that they might make the first error,—the life and preaching of Christ and His hold on the people,—give way to a more serious one, the last error.—His acceptance by the people as one risen from the dead.

Pilate would set no guard; these men already had a guard, granted them by their Roman masters—"You have a guard—go guard the tomb as you know."

So they set the guard! So they provided for future ages the guarantee that Christ could have come forth from His tomb only through His own power: since the power of the Jewish Religious Leaders and the power of the Roman soldiery, was on hand in full panoply to prevent any attempt on the part of the fearful Apostles to steal the body.

God's will prevail! He sent His Divine Son into the world to live for men, to die for men, to arise for men. No earthly power could interfere with God's plans. The divinity of Jesus Christ was a power that was ready in God's own good time to become manifest in His Resurrection from the Dead, in His appearance to men, in His revelation to men of His living saving almighty power that could never more know death nor the seeming surrender of Himself to the wickedness of His enemies.

Quote--End Quote

"If we have Thee, what more would we? Art Thou not enough for him who loves?"—St. Bonaventure.

"I don't think much of a man who is not wiser today than he was yesterday."—Abraham Lincoln.

"Man is the fountain from which the waters of grace must be drawn, the treasury from which we must provide ourselves with the necessary help, for the Christian life."—The Reverend Fr. Augustus [unclear].