

PIUS XII—FROM BOYHOOD TO POPE



In these pictures Eugenio Pacelli is shown at the age of eleven as a young Messenger attached to the Sacred Congregation of Extraordinary Ecclesiastical Affairs, at the Vatican; as an Archbishop, consecrated May 13, 1917, and as Pope Pius XII, crowned Mar. 12, 1939. (N.C.W.C.)

From 'Don Eugenio' to Pius XII: The Pacelli—'Romans of Rome'

Senior American Cardinal Writes of His Memories of Jubilarian Whom He Terms 'A Truly Saintly Pontiff'

By HIS EMINENCE WILLIAM CARDINAL O'CONNOR

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In this article we reminisce of the ranking Cardinal Priest of the Sacred College of Cardinals, Cardinal O'Connell, carrying back to that day in Rome when he first met a young cleric who was destined to become the Vicar of Christ on earth, the reigning Holy Father, twenty-fifth anniversary of whose pontifical jubilee is being celebrated throughout Christendom.

It is a great privilege to be a witness of a world-famous city, given St. Paul, a model of humility, took pride in his native Tarsus and gloried in the great teachers at whose feet he sat.

Of course, immensely greater than Tarsus ever was, is Rome, Rome, for centuries the greatest center of civilization, has won for itself the title of Cosmopolis. Add to that the fact that it has been the seat of the Papacy for nearly two thousand years, the ecclesiastical center towards which all Christianity turned for doctrine and spiritual direction and from which went the messengers of the Faith to the farthest part of the world. Its streets have been trod by citizens from every land under the sun. A Roman, all his life accustomed to see the ends of the earth meet in his home town, so that it is the most natural thing in the world for a Roman, born and nurtured, to have a world-view. To him there is nothing strange either in the turbaned Turk or the water of the tea or the bowler hat. Every known language of the world is spoken along its streets and piazzas. In a word, and a very truth, all roads lead to Rome.

Certainly then it is a great privilege for anyone to be born and nurtured a Roman of Rome. He is bound to have an experienced mind and a broad sympathy and, if so minded, can certainly acquire the loftiest and broadest and deepest mental training; and along with that, if so minded, he can rise to spiritual heights by the imitation of the Saints and martyrs who lived and died within the walls of that sacred City.

Distinguished Family

The Pacelli have been and are Romans of Rome. The members of this distinguished family have risen to great prominence in the arts and sciences, in the professions and in the financial life of Rome. But whether they attained greatness and conspicuous importance or not, they were always intensely Catholic. There was a time, not so very long ago, when the Romans were divided into three classes—the Blacks, the Whites and the Greys. The Blacks were those who retained a devoted attachment and the strictest loyalty to the Pope. The Whites were, while Catholic, politically nationalists. Not many of them were really Romans of Rome. They came with the House of Savoy from various parts of Italy and were attached to the secular court of the Kingdom though not necessarily opposed, or even in religious matters, disloyal to the Holy See. And there were the Greys who took no definite part in the political divisions of the others but remained a sort of good-natured neutral body whom one met socially in either camp.

The family of Pacelli was never anything but Blacks—"Neri" as the Latin goes—deeply attached to the Holy See, devoutly Catholic and intensely Papal. I had the great pleasure, and indeed honor, of having many friends among this distinguished family, the Pacelli of Rome. Some of them indeed were

my very intimate friends while I was Rector of the American College in Rome and afterward. They were all highly cultivated and very sociable. An hour or so of a very busy life spent in their society was not only delightful but profitable. They were very well versed in world affairs, and some of them had traveled very far from Rome. One of the many delightful and charming Roman afternoons that I remember so well was spent, in company with many distinguished Romans and foreigners, at the Pallavicini villa in the suburbs of Rome.

There was always brilliant conversation, exquisite manners and all the graces that make social intercourse both pleasant and profitable. It was at one of these family gatherings which still remains a beautiful picture in my memory, although it occurred nearly half a century ago, that I had the pleasure of saluting the oldest member of the Pacelli family, who on that occasion was celebrating his one hundredth birthday, and of meeting the youngest member of that same distinguished and delightful family in the person of a young cleric who was presented to me as "Don Eugenio," who by the grace of God is today the Successor of St. Peter, the Roman Pontiff, the exalted Head of the Roman Catholic Church, a true "Romano di Roma."

Genial Dignity Evident

I remember still very clearly the impression that the young cleric made upon me at the time. His slight, but many, figure was clothed in the simple black soutane of the Roman cleric. The expression of his face was highly intellectual and during our brief conversation I caught a glimpse of the energy and marvelous activity that have characterized his whole life ever since. His manner, while modest, was nevertheless stamped with a genuine dignity and his friendly smile and quick wit were evidences of the keen intelligence of which he has given so many distinct proofs in his later life.

Anyone who knows the simplicity, cordiality and genuine dignity of the Roman family life will testify to the charm, the geniality and the high quality of their social character. One of the memories that I cherish & eat in my long life is the delightful opportunity I had while Rector of our National College of meeting in their own homes and at their tables and in their own drawing rooms, several of the great Roman families whose names are world-famous—the Colonna—the Orsini—the Rospioglio—the Barberini—the Massimo—the Altieri. Their story is the story of Rome since the middle ages. Their palaces were superb in their architecture and in their decoration, but never in my life have I met such genuine cordiality and such genuine dignified simplicity. Among this group I remember also the Pacelli family, who, though not of the highest titled nobility nevertheless had all the qualities of the true Roman aristocrat. It seemed to me then, and the conviction has grown with the years, that the true Roman, above all

others, is the secret of what is best in social life. There is never a sign of anything savoring of affectation or what is generally styled "airs." That is precisely what made the social life of Rome such a revelation and a delight to all who were privileged to enjoy its hospitality. In a word, in the Roman world what is known as snobishness is looked upon as mere vulgarity, and the reason is clear. First of all, they understand the meaning of the word "Catholic"—that embraces all races and all classes; and, being Romans, they have no need to publish or advertise their high social standing.

Following His Footsteps. From that day to this I have followed the footsteps of "Don Eugenio" from a simple cleric to a secretary in the Department of State of the Holy See, an Archbishop-legate to Germany, an Envoy of the highest rank entrusted with most important messages to various parts of the world, a Cardinal Secretary of State and, as such, a welcome visitor to this country, and I am happy to say, a most welcome visitor to Boston, to the Seminary of the Archdiocese and to the residence of the Archbishop. Again, and for the last time, I met him at the great Conclave of 1939 in which Conclave I had the great privilege with all the other Cardinals, present from so many different parts of the world, of taking part in his election as Bishop of Rome, as Supreme Pontiff of the Universal Church, Pope Pius XII, now gloriously reigning. All through these years, I repeat, I followed step by step his advance and promotion from one post, of

Coat of Arms



Upon assuming the Papacy, Pope Pius XII adopted a Coat of Arms featuring the dove of Peace. The three sections of the shield represent the sky, the earth and the sea. The top section is azure for the sky, then a band of green for the earth, and a sea-green wavy base for the sea. The white dove holds an olive branch in its beak and stands on a tripartite silver "mountain." (N.C.W.C.)



Fifth Sunday after Easter

1942

My dear Peoples:

On Wednesday of this week, Our Holy Father, Pius XII, will celebrate the Silver Jubilee of his consecration as a bishop. With breaking heart, and tear-dimmed eye, he will offer his Jubilee Mass, while the world is torn asunder by bomb and shell, and death, disease and destruction work havoc in the hearts of men. Whatever consolation comes to him, will be derived from the prayers of his devoted children throughout the world.

Every priest in the diocese has promised to offer his Mass on Wednesday for the intention of the Holy Father. It is not expecting too much to ask every Catholic to attend Mass on Wednesday for the Holy Father's intention. Our Holy Father has asked us to help him carry his burden, by supporting him with our prayers. If those prayers entail personal sacrifice, their value is so much greater and I need not say that of all the forms of prayer we might choose, attendance at Mass is the best.

So, as a tribute from his loyal children, your Bishop asks that every one of you will attend Mass Wednesday, May 13, as your personal tribute to our beloved Holy Father on his Jubilee Day. I shall be very happy to see that word of your diocesan wide tribute is conveyed to Our Holy Father.

Your devoted Shepherd in Christ,

+ John E. Kearney  
BISHOP OF ROCHESTER

dignity and responsibility to another until finally he attained the highest honor, indeed the highest dignity on earth since it is hedged about by divinity itself.

Here is indeed a Pope, Head of the Roman Church, Supreme Head of the Universal Church, a "Romano di Roma"—Roman to the core in his unique upbringing, training, education and experience, with all the breadth of a Roman knowledge and intuition and all the depth of a Roman sympathy for everything human throughout the world. Today he lives and works and prays in the atmosphere of all the glorious history of the Rome that was and is; and without doubt his selection was the choice not only of the College of Cardinals but in a very special way of Almighty God Himself; for, considering the times, the awful world crisis in which we are living and the tremendous world problems whose solution is in the balance, God, in His great and infinite wisdom, prepared the way step by step for the coming and the reign of a Supreme Pontiff of His Holy Church in the person of him whom I remember with deep interest as Don Eugenio, now the Vicar of Christ, the Prime Minister of His Kingdom on earth, the guardian of sacred truth, custodian of all that is best in Christian civilization. Before that sacred figure I bow down in deepest reverence and affection.

We can well imagine the torment and the suffering which he endures at the sight of a bleeding world, of a world literally gone mad. I can see him, not in the great palace, but in the humble lodge in the gardens nearby, on his knees before the Tabernacle, beseeching Christ, his Master and his Lord, to hear the supplications of millions which come to him from every corner of the world to shorten this dreadful period of havoc and destruction; and to save what is best in civilization, the life of His Holy Church; and to bring finally and quickly the peace for which the world pleads so ardently and which it needs so pitifully.

Truly Saintly Pontiff. I trust that in this brief sketch I have been able to picture, at least in a feeble way, the noble figure, the great mind and heart and soul of the truly saintly Pontiff, who all his life long has given completely and without reserve his high intelligence, his saintly labors and his waiting zeal for the glory of Christ, his Divine Master, for the exaltation of Holy Church and for the welfare of the children of God on earth. In a few brief days, May 13, 1942, he will celebrate the twenty-fifth anniversary of his consecration as a Bishop of Holy Church. That anniversary will be to every Cath-

olic throughout the world a day of praise and thanksgiving to Almighty God for the saintly, wise and fearless Supreme Pontiff, who in these days of grief and sorrow and tribulation guides the bark of Peter over the stormy sea. From all sides the winds and the waves of adversity and opposition are beating against the ship; but with God's help and the assistance of the prayers of every Catholic, Christ will again bid the winds and the waves to cease and be still; and He will comfort and strengthen His Vicar on earth to face the dangers and difficulties which threaten the Kingdom of God on earth; and by God's mercy and the prayers of all Christendom, united in the blessed union of faith and hope and love, Christ again will triumph over all his enemies to bring into a peaceful haven the indestructible bark whose visible pilot is His Vicar on earth, the Successor of St. Peter, the Head of our Holy Church, Pius XII. The Lord keep and preserve him and give him strength and courage; and deliver him from the snares of his enemies who are also the enemies of God. (N. C. W. & News Service)

Bomb Hits Chapel Fails To Explode

CHUNGKING—During a recent heavy bombing raid over his Yangtze mission, the Rev. Blaise Scunlan, an American Franciscan missionary, hurried to the church to consume the Blessed Sacrament. As he opened the tabernacle door a bomb dropped through the center of the church, but failed to explode. Although the raid continued for some time thereafter, only this one bomb struck the mission property.

This was just one of a remarkable series of instances when bombs have pierced chapels and failed to explode. The Most Rev. Jacques V. M. Rouchouse, of the Paris Foreign Missions Society, Vicar Apostolic of Chengtu, had a similar experience of a bomb piercing the roof but remaining a "dud" at his feet as he knelt in his chapel during an air raid.

Cuban Youth Meet

HAVANA—The first Provincial Concentration of Cuban Catholic Youth, held at Guines, was attended by 2,000 young people. Most of the youths received Communion at the Mass in Central Park at which the Most Rev. Manuel Arceaga y Belandier, Archbishop of Havana, pontificated.