

Library Suggest

Bible For Labor Day

By Rev. Benedict Erasmus

(Though the war emergency is demanding sacrifices from all, including the laboring men, we may not forget the basic principles of justice and equity. This Labor Day, the first since Pearl Harbor, is a timely occasion to review our pledge to these principles. In this column I am selecting a series of Bible passages on the rich and the poor, culled by Eric Gill shortly before his death. Read them slowly, and let them enter you like life's blood.)

EXODUS: 22-24. If thou lend money to any of thy people that is poor, that dwelleth with thee, thou shalt not be hard upon them as an extortioner, nor oppress them with usuries.

LEVITICUS: 19:10 and 23:22. Neither shall thou gather the bunches and grapes that fall down in thy vineyard, but shall leave them to the poor and the stranger to take. I am the Lord your God. And when you reap the corn of your land, you shall not cut it to the very ground; neither shall you gather the ears that remain; but you shall leave them for the poor and for the stranger. I am the Lord your God. 19:13. Respect not the person of the poor, nor honour the countenance of the mighty. But judge thy neighbour according to justice.

DEUTERONOMY: 24:14-15. Thou shalt not refuse the hire of the needy and the poor, whether he be thy brother, or a stranger that dwelleth with thee in the land and is within thy gates. But thou shalt pay him the price of his labour the same day, before the going down of the sun, because he is poor, and with it maintaineth his life; lest he cry against thee to the Lord, and it be reputed to thee for a sin.

2 KINGS: 12:1-7. And the Lord sent Nathan to David, and when he was come unto him, he said to him: There were two men in one city, the one rich and the other poor. The rich man had exceeding many sheep and oxen. But the poor had nothing at all but one little ewe-lamb, which he had bought and nourished up, and which had grown up in his house, together with his children, eating of his bread, and drinking of his cup, and sleeping in his bosom; and it was unto him as a daughter. And when a certain stranger was come to the rich man, he spared to take of his own sheep and oxen, to make a feast for that stranger who was come to him, but took the poor man's ewe, and dressed it for the man that was come to him. And David's anger being exceedingly kindled against that man, he said to Nathan: As the Lord liveth,

the man that hath done this is a child of death. He shall restore the ewe four-fold, because he did that thing, and had no pity. And Nathan said to David: Thus saith the Lord.

REVEREND: 4:1-11. Son, despise not the poor of whom thou hast not away thy eyes from the poor. Despise not the hungry soul, and provoke not the poor in this want. Affect not the heart of the needy, and desire not to give to him that is in distress. Reject not the petition of the afflicted, and turn not away thy face from the needy. Be not down thy ear cheerfully to the poor, and pay what thou owest, and be not impatient in thy soul. In judging, be merciful to the laborer, as a father, and as a husband to their mother. And thou shalt be as the obedient son of the Most High, and he will have mercy on thee more than a mother.

ST. PAUL'S FIRST EPISTLE TO TIMOTHY: 4:1-11. 11-12. Godliness with contentment is great gain; for we brought nothing into this world, and certainly we can carry nothing out. But having food and wherewithal to be covered, with these we are content. For they that will become rich, fall into temptation, and into the snare of the devil, and into many unprofitable and hurtful desires, which draw men into destruction and perdition. For the desire of money is the root of all evils; which some coveting have erred from the faith, and have entangled themselves in many sorrows. But thou, O man of God, by these things, and pursue justice, godliness, faith, charity, patience, mildness. Charge the rich of this world not to be high-minded, nor to trust in the uncertainty of riches, but in the living God (who giveth us abundantly all things to enjoy); to do good, to be rich in good works, to give easily, to communicate to others, to lay up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on the true life.

EPITAPH OF ST. JAMES: 2:1-4. My brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ of glory with respect of persons. For it there shall come into your assembly a man having a golden ring in his apparel, and there shall come in also a poor man in mean attire, and you have respect to him that is clothed with the fine apparel, and shall say to him: Sit thou here well, but say to the poor man: Stand thou there, or: Sit under my footstool; do you not judge within yourselves, and are become judges of unjust thoughts? Hearken, my dearest brethren, hath not God chosen the poor in this world, rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which God hath promised to them that love Him? But you have dishonoured the poor man. Do not the rich oppress you by night, and do not they draw you before the judgment-seat? Do not they blaspheme the good name that is invoked upon you? If then you fulfil the royal law, according to the scriptures, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, you do well. But if you have respect to persons, you commit sin, being reproved by the law as transgressors.

A BOY, A BALL AND AN INDULGENCE

Something had happened. Junior's five-year-old appetite was not clicking and he avoided my eye during the entire meal. But I said nothing, knowing that the truth would come. And it did. After supper Mother winked and disappeared and soon there was a tapping at my dressing-room door. "Daddy? I want the kitchen window!" "Well, honey, it was an accident, wasn't it?" "But, but, you said I couldn't play with your golf balls, and I was bad, and I did not feel awful sorry and I'll never do it again and I cleaned up the glass and stuffed paper in the hole — and, Daddy, Daddy—I want you to forgive me and love me again!" "Listen, old man," I said, taking the trembling little figure into my arms. "You're sorry because you disobeyed me, because you fear the loss of my love, and I forgive you because you know that punishment is coming to you. But, anyway, that's a real, good confession and I surely do forgive you and love you again. Now as to that punishment for which you're begging, well, when we start off on that picnic tomorrow, Sonny will have to stay home. Unless—unless Mother suggests a way out. Satisfactory now and ask her."

"These things you'd take away that other punishment and I could go on the picnic after all?" "Right, I'll give Mother that authority and that means I'll look about having her see me, being so late!" "Oh, yes, Daddy?"

And just as simple as the Catholic doctrine of Indulgences. The forgiven sinner has an account punishment due to himself and he suffers either in this life or in Purgatory. Holy Mother Church is given power by Almighty God (Matt. 18:18) to grant from the treasury of the merits of Christ and His Saints, Indulgences which are remissions in whole or in part of the temporal punishment due to forgiven sin. These Indulgences may be gained by specified prayers, devotions, pilgrimages, fasting and other good works which are performed as acts of reparation and as a means for furthering Christ's Kingdom. To the Christian who believes that God empowers even a layman when necessary, to confer Indulgences which wipe out Original Sin, thereby the power of granting Indulgences given by Christ to His Church, should not seem unreasonable.

These Indulgences are granted for sin—that they may be pardoned with money—no application or prayer should be made to these Indulgences, which are given by Christ to His Church, should not seem unreasonable.

'Quiz' Corner

What is the difference between a monk and a priest? A monk is a member of a monastic order, like the Benedictines. A priest is one who has received the Sacrament of Holy Orders, conferring on him the power to say Mass and forgive sins. A man may be both a monk and a priest. He may be a priest without being a monk, and a monk without being a priest.

Why do we wear scapulars? The most popular of the scapulars is that which is called the Brown Scapular. It is the habit of the Carmelite Order and one who wears that scapular or habit, like a true Christian is affiliated with the Carmelite Order and shares in all the prayers and good works of the members. It is worn out of devotion to the Blessed Mother of God and the desire to give her special service.

Are we then to presume there were bad Popes, and the Catholics were bad Catholics? Not necessarily. Sometimes the Popes encouraged wars, as in the just defense of Europe against the invading Turks, or for the sake of repressing violent injustice. At other times, European kings declared war without consulting the Pope at all. But even that does not justify the sweeping assertion that "Catholics were bad." The average Catholic could be quite good, despite the ambition of princes. I merely want to steady up your exaggerations. I am quite prepared to admit that there have been bad and ambitious Popes, and also that many Catholics have not always acted up to Catholic principles.

How old should a girl be before it would be right for her to keep company with a young man? No general rule can be given as each case should be judged from the standpoint of the girl, her character and surroundings all being considered in the light of her moral welfare. Too many girls of early years are permitted to roam around at all hours of the night and day with promiscuous companions. The results are seen in the juvenile courts, delinquent homes and maternity hospitals.

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What is meant by an indulgence? An indulgence is a letter addressed by the Pope to all the Bishops of the world in communion with him. It is generally concerned with matters which affect the welfare of the Church at large. It condones some prevalent form of error or moral defect, the faithful to constancy or penitential remedies for evils foreseen or already existing.

I have seen pictures of the Cross, some of which represent the two thieves as tied to the Cross, and some other depict them as nailed. Which is correct? These which represent them as nailed are in accordance with Catholic tradition for when St. Helen, mother of Constantine discovered the three Crosses, she found the marks of the nails on all of them. Therefore, he represented them as tied is apparently a mistaken artistic conception.

Must a girl who desires to enter the convent pass a physical examination? A candidate for a religious community must bring with her a certificate of good health issued by a physician.

Was Mary Magdalene the first to whom Our Lord appeared after His Resurrection? Though this is the first apparition recorded in Holy Scripture, still a living tradition of the Church is that He first appeared to His Blessed Mother.

An Unusual 'Conversion'

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

There was a surprising story in the press two or three weeks ago of the conversion of Mr. Boake Carter to what he calls the religion of the Old Testament. The well-known columnist and radio commentator had belonged to more than one Protestant sect but it seems that he found them unsatisfying. Apparently he didn't care to search through the entire list of 200 or more in the attempt to discover in some last one of them what he had not found in a few. For that disinclination I suppose no Catholic would care to blame him. Earlier and abler men—for example Orestes A. Brownson and Isaac Hecker had dropped one Protestant creed and taken up another and another and another. In their case it turned out to be a painful experience and, in the end, futile. So Boake Carter probably was wise not to make any such piecemeal investigation. It would be like trying 200 different tests for allergy and not finding what caused one's illness.

But I wonder why Mr. Carter didn't make a thorough investigation of the Catholic Religion. It is different. It is in a hundred ways antithetical to every one of the multitudinous sects that have sprung up since Luther and Calvin. When I first began to read a bit of the philosophy of religion, there was a certain William H Mallock (a kind of G. K. Chesterton of his day), particularly brilliant and yet unusually profound, who, though he never came into the Church, declared flatly that "The claims of the Catholic Church are the only ones worth investigating." It surprises me that Boake Carter didn't look where any wise person looks when he finds Protestantism unsuitable to his spiritual needs. Perhaps he did, but if he did, and decided against the Church, it is still more surprising.

However the most incomprehensible fact is not that he didn't find Catholicism, but that he seems to have by-passed the Gospel. I am not—I regret to say in his confidence. I have only the newspaper account of his conversion. But that account was in his own words, and oddly he doesn't so much as mention the New Testament or Jesus Christ.

To go back to the Old Testament for one's religion when one has the New Testament is like going back to the First Reader after one has grown old enough for the classics. To read the Bible and not to find Jesus Christ is like reading Shakespeare but never discovering Hamlet. A better simile would be that of a farmer who sows seed every year but never reaps a crop. The Old Testament is the seed ground from which sprouts the New Testament. The prophets were, in their day and in their way, illustrious sages and Saints, but their entire purpose as they themselves insisted with tremendous vigor was to "prepare the way of the Lord." St. John the Evangelist, speaking of his namesake John the Baptist, says: "He was not The Light, and he goes on to say of Jesus "That was the True Light." To go back to John of the Old Testament, passing by Jesus of the New, is to go back to midnight, or at least to

dawn, out of the full splendor of the Noonday looking for light.

The essence of the message of John the Baptist is in the words "There cometh One after me, Who is preferred before me, the latchet of Whose shoe I am not worthy to loose." He was a prophet, yet, more than a prophet. He was the precursor, one who prepares the way for some one else.

As a matter of fact, the entire Old Testament, from Genesis to Apocalypse, is a precursor. If we had the Old and not the New it would be as if we had a play without a climax, a plot without a denouement, a tale of mystery with no solution. If I were a Jew I think I should be forever tortured in mind with the question, "Where is the Messiah Whom we have been expecting since the days of Adam? Our sacred books all speak of His coming. Why has He not come? If He has come, how is it that we have not known Him? The purpose of the existence of our race was to give birth to the Redeemer. Has that purpose been frustrated?" "If Christ be not risen," says St. Paul, "we are the most miserable of men." Yea, but not more miserable than if Christ had never been born. To go to the Old Testament is to act as if Christ had never been born.

I must say—with all due regard to Mr. Boake Carter and reverence for his religious spirit—that his conversion, as he related it in the papers, seems to be a progress backward. (Copyright, 1942, N. C. W. C.)

FIVE and TEN Years Ago--

—in the files of the CATHOLIC COURIER

From Sept. 2, 1932, Edition With His Excellency, Bishop O'Hern celebrating Holy Mass, a three-day celebration of the Diamond Jubilee of St. Mary's Hospital founded by Sister Hieronymo and two other Sisters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul, was opened at the Hospital.

From Sept. 2, 1937, Edition In impressive ecclesiastical ceremonies, His Excellency, the Most Rev. Walter A. Foery was enthroned as Fifth Bishop of Syracuse in the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, that city.

The Rt. Rev. Msgr. Charles F. Shay, former rector of St. Patrick's Cathedral, was appointed administrator of Holy Rosary Parish to succeed the Most Rev. Walter A. Foery, as pastor.

Quote--End Quote

Human slavery is wrong in itself and demoralizing. On mechanical slavery on the slavery of the machine, the future of the world depends. —Oscar Wilde

No one has had gods so favourable to him that he can promise himself a sorrow. —Seneca.

When you get into a tight place and everything goes against you, till it seems as though you could not hold on a minute longer, never give up then, for that is just the place and the time that the tide will turn.—Harriet B. Stowe.

Clips

When mother acts her part down the stairs of discipline— Charleston (S. C.) News and Courier.

There's nothing strange about traveling salesman being good talkers. They live away from home. — Camden (N.J.) Courier Post.