

Library Digest

Bible For Labor Day

By Rev. Benedict Egan

(Though the war emergency is demanding sacrifices from all, including the laboring man, we may not forget the basic principles of justice and equity. This Labor Day, the first since Pearl Harbor, is a timely occasion to renew 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 Galt shortly before his death. Read them slowly, and let them enter you like life's blood.)

EXODUS: 22:28. If thou lend money to any of my people that is poor, thou shalt not be extortioner, nor oppress them with usuries.

LEVITICUS: 19:10 and 23:22. Neither shalt thou gather the bunches and grapes that fall down in thy vineyard, but shalt 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. 19:15 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 hath this thing, and had no pity. And Nathan said to David: Thus saith the Lord.

SOLEMNIZATIONS: 2:1-11. See, defined not the gear of steel, and turn not away thy eyes from the poor. Despise not the hungry soul, and provoke not the poor in this way. Affect not the heart of the needy, and defer 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. Bow down thy ear cheerfully to the poor, and pay what thou owest, and be not faltered in thy word. In judging, be merciful to the fatherless as a father, and as a husband to their mother. And thou shalt be as the excellent son of the Most High, and he will have mercy on thee more than a mother.

ST. PAUL'S FIRST EPISTLE TO TIMOTHY: 2:3-11, 27-29. Godliness with contentment is great gain; for we brought nothing into this world, and certainly we can carry nothing out. But having food and wherewith 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 wounded themselves in many sorrows. But thou, O man of God, by these things, and persons of 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 hold on to the true life.

EPISTLE OF ST. JAMES: 2:1-8. My brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ with respect of persons. For if there shall come into your assembly a man having a golden ring, and fine 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 despised 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 have the royal law, according to the scriptures, shall ye not love thy neighbour as thyself, you do well. But if you have respect to persons, you shall be convicted, 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 out. And it did. After supper Mother looked at me and disappeared and when there was a tapping at my dressing room door. "Daddy? I leave the kitchen window open." "What, honey, if you are coming, come in." "But—how can I come? I must stay with your golf balls, and I was told and I did and I'm awful sorry and I'll never do it again and I'll never be in the room and I'll never be in the room and I'll never be in the room." "Junior, old man, I said, taking the five-year-old Junior into my arms. "You're sorry because you thought you were coming to see me, but you know that punishment is coming to you. But anyway, I surely do forgive you and love you again. Now as to that punishment for willful disobedience—well, when we start off on that picnic tomorrow, honey will have to stay home. Unless—unless Mother suggests a way out. Satisfactory now and ask her?" In a few minutes from when Mother came a shrill excited shout: "Daddy, Daddy, see what?" "What?" I inquired breathless from the doorway. "Wasn't it beautiful? I missed my shoes, my socks, my necktie and polished the handles of my highboy." "Mummy and I did! And look, Daddy, on the bureau! Read what it says!" I read aloud the scrawled note: "Daddy, I love you!" "I do, too!" came a proud, little voice, "and Mummy said if we did

these things, you'd take away that other punishment and I could go on the picnic after all." "Right—I did give Mother that authority and that means you will hear about heading up our picnic bag next!" "Oh, yes, Daddy!"

And just as simple as the Catholic doctrine of indulgences. The forgiven sinner has an indulgence which allows him to suffer what he has done in Purgatory. Holy Mother Church is given power by Almighty God (that He will 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 prescribed as acts of reparation and as means for further Divine favor. To the Christian who believes that God's mercy is a boundless ocean, when necessary to suffer hardships which wipe out Original Sin, even by the power of genuine contrition, indulgences given by Him in His Church, should not seem unreasonable.

That indulgences are granted for us—that they may be purchased with money—was proclaimed by the Council of Trent in 1545. The Council stated that in fact of those indulgences, we think we have to be indulgent.

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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 admitted 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.

When is drunkenness a mortal sin? When through use of intoxicating liquors, one deprives himself of the use of reason and loses the ability to distinguish between what is right and what is wrong, he is

guilty of mortal sin, which means that he has committed a grave sin (God's law). The matter of the sin depends on the individual's intention of reason without just cause.

How can I know if I am a Catholic? I can know if I am a Catholic if I believe in God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and if I believe in the Church, the Sacraments, and the teaching of the Church.

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 previous form of error or sin, which the faithful to obtain it, must have remedied for sins forgiven or already existing.

I have seen pictures of the Crucifixion, some of which represent the two thieves as tied to the Cross, and some others depict them as nailed. Which is correct? Those 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, to represent 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 mention recorded in Holy Scriptures, still a fitting tradition of the Church is that He first appeared to His Blessed Mother.

Sorsum Cords

An Unusual 'Conversion'

By Rev. James M. Gilks, 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, Orators 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 preparation. 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, "When 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." Yes, 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.

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FIVE and TEN Years Ago--

From Sept. 2, 1937, 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. Mgr. 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, insecure 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 morrow. —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 sets her foot down it's the stamp of disapproval. —Charlotte M. G. "News and Courier."

There's nothing stranger about traveling, someone being your talker. They live away from home. —Candern (N.Y.) "Catholic Post."