

Sermon Cards

An Important Utterance

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

That was a strong and stirring address delivered in St. Louis by Bishop Edwin V. O'Hara of Kansas City during the convention of the Catholic Central Veterans of America and the National Catholic Women's Union. Other speeches made since we went into the war have reached a larger audience, but no utterance either by statesman or by churchman is more fundamentally valuable in war or peace.

Bishop O'Hara spoke of the employment of mothers—particularly young mothers in war industry. Characteristically not given to rhetorical over-embellishment, His Excellency on this occasion made an attempt to smother his indignation or to diminish his wrath at the unnatural phenomenon of impressing into war-work women who in all conscience should be at home taking care of their children. "It is ungodly planned," he asserted, "to set up a vast chain of nurseries under the patronage of the State to relieve mothers of their children while these mothers operate power machines, even on night shifts, in bomber plants."

Any such abnormal and unnatural procedure said the Bishop "should be the last resource of a tottering nation."

I need not repeat all the other vigorous phrases in that notable address. Every reader of this column must have seen it.

Here and now I would merely call attention to the fact that some 23 years ago, one of the major prophets of sociological modernism, H. C. Wells, made the very same suggestion which Bishop O'Hara now declares an imminent possibility. Mr. Wells used to insist that the chief obstacle to the development of a true civilization (meaning of course a Wellian civilization) was the fact that children were brought up in their own homes by their own mothers. We must change all that, he said. We

must establish State institutions, and stock them with boys and girls, indeed babies, taken away from the vicious influence of fathers and mothers.

Mr. Wells, cynic and of ultra modernism, did not in mind the opportunity that a war would afford to put his notorious plan into action. But perhaps he now welcomes the war if not for itself, at least as the occasion of trying the plan he invented a generation ago.

Invented? No, not invented. There were pagan philosophers, or at least one philosopher, Plato, in the fifth century B. C., who planned an ideal Republic in which one feature was the removal of children from the home and their incarceration in the word stand, incarceration—in children's communitaries to be reared by the State.

So the ultra-ultra-up-to-date, most-modern, most-recent, very-latest sociological experiment turns out to be old, very, very old. Old, vicious, heathen, unnatural and abominable.

What the Bishop had in mind (I hope I do not intrude upon his thoughts) is that the war which demands so many old-established institutions supporting the absolutely basic foundation of Christian civilization, the Family, the Home, the Jesus-Mary-Joseph unity of father, mother, child. Already millions of fathers have been taken; now the suggestion is that mothers absent themselves and leave the children to the impersonal care of some bureau or department of the State?

The plan is hideous—to carry it out would be suicide—in light, as we say we do, for civilization, but to destroy while we fight would be an insane procedure. The Bishop does not use those adjectives, but he does speak in forthright denunciation of what he calls "the sad spectacle of progressive de-Christianization in contemporary society."

Occasionally, and indeed rather frequently, members of Congress ask and obtain permission to have printed in the Congressional Record, the text of speeches that have seemed to them important and valuable for our American life. I wish that Bishop O'Hara's speech might be in that manner preserved for future reference. But before it is committed to the Record it should be spoken in the National House or Senate and broadcast to the four corners of the United States.

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Library Signpost

The Church's Harvest-Home

By Rev. Benedict Ehmann

This is the Autumn Ember-week. It is the Church's harvest-home. She rejoices in the fruits of the earth in the great harvests that fill the granaries and the winepresses, in the beauty of this season of mists and mellow fruitfulness.

From dim antique times, men have always brought home their harvests with joy. Every literature has its harvest songs, exulting in the good earth, bounding and rollicking songs that dance like King David before the Ark of God's bounty.

Ember Wednesday celebrates the Church's harvest joy. She gathers her children under the mantle of Mary the fruitful Mother of the Vine (the key-church of this festival) is St. Mary Major's in Rome). Together with them she gives a thank-offering of the harvest to the heavenly Father, in the bread and wine which are to be consecrated into the sacrificial Flesh and Blood of the Savior. She invites them to sing with her as she exults in psalms of joy (at the Introit): Rejoice to God our helper; sing aloud to the God of Jacob: take a pleasant psalm with the harp . . . (at the Gradual) Who is as the Lord our God, who dwelleth on high, raising up the needy from the earth, and lifting up the poor out of the dunghill? . . . (at the Communion) Eat fat meats, and drink sweet wine, and send portions to them that have not prepared for themselves, because it is the holy day of the Lord; be not sad, for the joy of the Lord is our strength.

She reads to her children from the Holy Bible. First from that part of the Prophecy of Amos in which the great shepherd-prophet describes the Kingdom of the Savior in terms of the vineyard and the field: Behold the days come, when the ploughman shall overtake the reaper, and the breeder of grapes him that soweth seed, and the mountains shall drop sweetness, and every hill shall be tillied. And I will bring back the captivity of My people Israel, and they shall build the abandoned cities, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and drink the wine of them; and shall make gardens, and eat the fruits of them; and I will plant them upon their own land: and I will no more pluck them out of their land which I have given them, saith the Lord thy God.

And then, because man lives not on bread alone, Mother Church reads to her children about the holy word which is the bread of the soul. She turns the Bible to the Second Book of Ezechiel, that portion where it is recounted how the man of God "brought the law before the multitude of men and women . . . and he read it plainly in the street that was before the water-gate, from the morning until mid-day . . . and the ears of all the people were attentive to the book."

But if our souls are to bear a harvest of good works from the hearing of the word and from the sowing of grace, they must be pruned and purged by fasting and prayer. And so Mother Church, after these readings, directs our attention in the Gospel to our Blessed Lord casting out the devil from the possessed boy and saying to His apostles when they asked Him why they could not cast out the evil spirit. "This kind can go out by nothing, but by prayer and fasting."

Such is the Church's teaching and her joyous singing in her harvest-home liturgy. She rejoices in the harvesting of crops and fruits and grain. But even more she rejoices in God's harvesting of souls, as He gathers them into the granaries of heaven. With the eye of faith, we should see all men as God's fair field sown with His grace, waiting to become the golden wheat for harvest, the death-time, the judgment-time, when the wheat will be separated from the chaff, and God's barns be made full. The harvesting of earth always brings to the mind of Mother Church the harvesting of heaven. In the fall of the year, she too has her vintage songs, her

Ember Masses of September, on Christ-King-Fest, on All Saints; they are the jubilant harvest-burials for the Church Triumphant.

Many people these days are thinking of the end of the world. The turn of events, an enormous, so full of portents and omens of anti-Christ, seems to be bringing the final prophecies to a head. I do not share their alarm. For one thing, it seems to me that some of the signs precluding the end are far from fulfillment. For another, the Church does not view the end of time with alarm. To the Church, Christ's Second Coming is "a consummation devoutly to be wished for." In her fresh and ardent youth, her expectation of Christ's return—His Parousia, she called it—consumed her thoughts. Read St. Paul's letters to the Thessalonians. Read St. John's Apocalypse. Realize that every Mass is a vigilant memorial of the death of the Lord, with His come. Remember our Lord's parables of the wise virgins, and of the wakeful servant. The Church does not forget these things. She is the faithful Bride, who awaits with devoted love and yearning the return of her Beloved. The days of harvest-home reawaken her desire of His Parousia. With gladness she beholds the fruition of her Beloved's Vineyard, the ripening of His grain.

If we sing the songs of our Mother Church, and so center into her spirit, we will come to see that the terror and evil of our times, when Death and Satan seem to be the only reapers, are all under the sway of the Prince of Peace, and His harvesting goes on unceasingly, among our soldiers, among our distraught families, among the refugees, the poor, and the starving, gathering them into His harvest-home, His peace, His love.

FIVE and TEN Years Ago—

—in the files of the CATHOLIC COURIER

From Sept. 14, 1932, Edition

"We must never think of any Catholic School in the terms of Catechism alone. It is a Catholic philosophy, perennial in nature which permeates all academic learning. It is a Catholic spirit which pervades the classroom always. It is the Catholic interpretation of life and death and eternity which is continually forming character in the learner. These are the reasons for the existence of Catholic schools," declared His Excellency, Bishop O'Hara in dedicating the larger Elmira Catholic High School.

From Sept. 16, 1937, Edition

As the Angelus bells rang out, the key was turned for the last time by the Rt. Rev. Mgr. Charles F. Shay, marking the closing of St. Patrick's Cathedral, historic edifice on Platt St. Rochester.

Completely renovated in Byzantine style was the historic Our Lady of Victory Church, Rochester, under the direct supervision of the Rev. Daniel A. Van Der Meulen, C.S.B.C., pastor.

Selected

"God's might to direct me,
God's power to protect me,
God's wisdom for learning,
God's eye for discerning,
God's ear for hearing,
God's word for my clearing."

"May He support us all the day long, till the shades lengthen, and the evening comes, and the busy world is hushed, and the fever of life is over, and our work is done! Then in His mercy may He give us a safe lodging, and a holy rest, and peace at the last!" Cardinal Newman.

"Nothing does more harm to the progress of Christianity and is more against its spirit than . . . race prejudice amongst Christians. There is nothing more widely spread in the Christian world."

'Quiz' Corner

Why is there temptation under the Providence of God?

There is temptation under the Providence of God, because God has made man a free being and requires a voluntary service from him for God will not force man to do good against his will.

Hence, there is need of tests whereby man freely chooses of freely refuses this service of his Maker, and these tests are called temptations. Therefore, man will be perfected, not by exemption from temptation, but rather by victory over it.

When making the Stations of the Cross by yourself in the Our Father, the Most Holy and the Glory be to the Father, etc., enough to say, or just what prayer would you advise one to say when making the Stations?

When making the Stations all that is necessary is that you pass at each station, meditate for a few moments at more so the mystery which is commemorated. At the conclusion of the Stations you should say some prayer for the intentions of the Holy Father who graciously grants the indulgence, though this is not necessary.

Is it wrong for a girl to marry with a wreath and veil even if she shouldn't?

Marriage in wreath and veil is purely a matter of custom and not a regulation of the Church. Hence there is nothing to obligate a girl to marry in that attire, nor must it be taken as a sign that a girl has done wrong if she does not marry in a wreath and veil. That would be rash judgment, because people can and do marry in all sorts of attire. If a girl has done wrong, she is certainly not required to publish it to the world by refraining from using wreath and veil.

Should one worry if they are not certain that they made an act of contrition when they went to confession?

There is no necessity to make a formal act of contrition in the confessional. Contrition is a condition of mind and heart. The very fact that you went to confession indicates that you were sorry for your sins, that you had contrition. It is well to make a formal act of contrition while the priest is giving an absolution as a good means to excite our hearts to sorrow. The fact that you forget it in the confessional should cause you no worry.

Is it a sin to have one's picture taken?

The picture-taking picture is a mere knowledge of an object and it is a sin for a Catholic to consent each frame if he believes in their power. To consent that his picture may be used for a bad purpose, according to the circumstances, is usually in expiring consent to the probable occasion of sin.

May the poor suffering souls help those on earth by their prayers?

Though the suffering souls cannot help themselves, but depend on the prayers and on the intercession of the saints to hasten their entry of God and hasten their release from the pains of Purgatory, still they can and do assist us by their prayers and supplications. This is done by virtue of the Communion of the Saints, that is to say, an account of the righteous souls, which souls during the month of August, the souls in Purgatory and the faithful on earth.

Is it a mortal sin to be late for Mass through one's own fault?

Certainly, if the intent is such that you are not present at enough of the Mass to satisfy the bodily obligation. If you are present when the priest says the prayer called "The Offertory," before he removes the veil from the chalice to offer up the bread and wine, you do not fulfill the obligation of hearing Mass.

The proper Catholic attitude towards Mass is to enter the Church and hear the whole Mass by being present when the priest comes to the altar and not leaving the Church till the priest leaves, thus missing the prayers at the end of the altar.

Spiritual Thoughts

"Be ye perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect"

"Unto whomsoever much is given, of him much shall be required"

"The Church of God possesses nothing more admirable, nothing more holy, nothing more precious than the most holy sacrament of the Eucharist."

EDITORIALS

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"We must never think of any Catholic School in the terms of Catechism alone. It is a Catholic philosophy, perennial in nature, which permeates all academic learning. It is a Catholic spirit which pervades the classroom always. It is the Catholic interpretation of life, and death and eternity which is intrinsically forming character in the learner."

That is why these teachers of our children are making personal sacrifices to go to Aquinas Institute, Friday, this week. That is the essence of training the young for fitting themselves to take a rightful place in a true democracy.

A HOME-FRONT DUTY

"It is a struggle to the death to determine whether our way of life, our religion, all we hold most dear, will survive or be suspended."

Maybe we all have thought of this recently, or maybe given it a little more thought but it is imperative that this statement of Walter Reid Wolf, Acting Deputy State Administrator, Defense Savings Staff, Treasury Department be made a part of our everyday thinking.

It is not a clergyman who is calling upon us to think of this and act upon it. It is a representative of our great American government. To those in power the realization is deeper that this global warfare must be won not only for victory itself but for preservation of those ideals for which the pioneers and founders of these United States of America fought.

Leadership in making these truths of the importance of War Savings Bonds and Stamps is demanded at this time as much as capable guidance on the field of battle. The men out there taking the heat will have a terrific let-down coming if those of us at home fail in our duty.

A duty presents itself in making known that sacrifices must be made. We must with the same spirit that we enter the Holy Season of Lent or Advent, give up, that our fighting forces will not go down.

Called to sacrifice on material luxuries and conveniences, our government has given us the duty of purchasing War Bonds and Stamps even to the extent of going without other things in the home. This phase of the self-denial program is not a hardship but a privilege. All the money that goes into these government securities will be returned to the investor with interest in a monetary way and with the full satisfaction that