Sursum Corda

Don't Blame The People

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

I believe in the American People. Not of course as I believe in God. The people are not God though they are usually nearer to God than their rulers. Vox populi vox Dei? No, the voice of the people is not the voice of God. The people are not infallible. But I could more easily accept the voice of the people as a substitute for the voice of God than I could accept a king as the alter ego of God. Political power does not descend directly from God to the ruler, and from the ruler indirectly to the people. As Bellarmine showed so lucidly in his controversy with King James, God is first, the people second and the ruler third. In that sense, therefore, the people are closer to God than the King or the Emperor, or the Duce, or the Fuehrer or whatever you may call the top political man.

So far in regard to "The People" any people. When it comes to the American people, I find it especially easy to accept them as the first instrumentality through which God acts for the good of the State. Perhaps if I were a Frenchman or an Italian or an Englishman I should detect in one of those people a degree of wisdom I did not find in the American. But it does seem plausible that we who achieved freedom and liberty earlier, and who have governed ourselves longer than any other people are more to be trusted with power than others.

Be all that as it may, I return to the original proposition. I believe in the American people. So I feel aggrieved when some speaker, official or non-official, scolds the American people for whatever inefficiency he may claim we have been guilty of in the conduct of the war. Some of these speakers say "we" have been delinquent. "We" have not yet waked up. "We" have not realized what sacrifices "we" must make. Sometimes of late these pep-talkers have taken to the use of swearwords. Washington correspondents inform us that words not only profane but obscene are being flung around in the Capital City by those who seem to be angry with us. But the American people are not another that must be cursed at. Public speakers who resort to profanity in the attempt to arouse us to the seriousness of the situation do not know us. They had better omit the cuss words and the dirty words as we may turn on them and ask them what they think we are.

One of the best of the newspaper correspondents, who writes for a metropolitan paper and a nation-wide syndicate, recently challenged a "pep-talker" to define what he meant by "we," after the speaker had said that "we" were losing the war. That first person plural pronoun is ambiguous. Does it mean "we" the manufacturers, "we" the industrialists, "we" the members of Congress, "we" the officials of governmental agencies, or "we" the people? The reporter naturally demanded to know if the fault-finder had in mind "we" the newspaper fraternity. Some also asked "Is he casting suspicion on the Army or the Navy or the Air-Forces? What does he mean by "we"?

As for me, I do not feel inclined to run to the defense of the Army or the Navy, or of Congress or of the war-workers, though I might in passing say what these various agencies have not done that they could have done. But when a public speaker, especially one who seems to represent official authority, even by inference indicts the people at large as slow, or unresponsive, or asleep or unpatriotic, I think it is time to protest. The American people are the most intelligent in the world (once you put your argument honestly and completely before them) and what is more, they are the most responsive and the most loyal. We call ourselves and we are an independent people. But we are not independent in the sense of being obstinate or recalcitrant. Still less obstructionist. We are, to use an old-fashioned word, a biddable people. We may have to be shown (like the man from Missouri) but once a course of conduct has been explained to us, and it is in our opinion justified, there is no people on earth that will cooperate more enthusiastically. Scolders and fault-finders had better send their shafts in a different direction. The people are all right. Especially the American people. P.S. Once again, let the pep-talkers cut out the profanity. We don't like it. Especially we Catholics.

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Library Signpost

The Third Liturgical Week

By Rev. Benedict Ehmann

The trains that took us to southern Indiana for the Third Liturgical Week were crowded with soldiers and business people and commuters. Here was the business of the war in full stride. One had the feeling that it would have been hard to explain to these people why we were occupying valuable space to go to a remote Benedictine Abbey to discuss and participate in Christian Liturgy.

But in our own minds there were no apologies. We were going on the best kind of defense work. Our mission was to lay plans for the return of the world to the principles of peace. If our Master could say, "Jerusalem, Jerusalem, if thou hadst known, and that in this thy day, the things that are to thy peace," why, then, we would take that to heart, and ponder the things that are to our peace.

And what are those things? Simply, love of God, and love of neighbor in God. But how glibly those phrases can come off our lips! They comprise the truest adventure of life, the fullest statement of our meaning on this earth. And yet it is possible to say them without even a tremor of the heart.

The old Prophet said, "With desolation is the land made desolate because no man thinketh in his heart." All right, then, if that is the case, the only way to restore ourselves to consolation and fruitfulness is to think in our hearts about the things that are to our peace—God's love, our love of God, our love of neighbor in God. The war of tanks and planes is a war of attrition, negative, destructive—necessary I'll grant you, but getting no farther than rubbing out the opposition. But when that is accomplished (as we pray it will be, soon . . .) what will be left except an awful exhaustion and chaos? Unless now with all our activity, we engage ourselves in a war of contrition, throwing into the ghastly breaches of modern life all our resources of love and prayer and sacrifice.

This is why we did not feel out of place as we took up space in crowded trains and buses on our way to St. Meinrad's Abbey in Southern Indiana last week. There were five hundred of us: priests, sisters, laypeople, from California to Nova Scotia. We were a vanguard of peace: not fighting a rear-guard action, but a front-line battle, for our deliberations and our energies during those days were directed against that power of darkness apart from which, as Mr. Yeats-Brown reminded the world two years ago, we cannot understand the global war into which we have been plunged.

Extend the radius of the light and you diminish the frontier of darkness. We were concerned at St. Meinrad's to extend the radius of God's light, first in our own souls and then in the souls of others. Our deliberations were on the theme of **"The Praise of God: Its significance and primary importance in Catholic life."** We were assisted in our reflections by bishops and by leaders of Catholic life from all over the country. But best of all we were given the living example of the Church's life by the marvelous services of divine worship each day in the Abbey Church, and by the generous charity of Benedictine hospitality. Here was Catholic life full, radiant, unhampered: an extension into our own time and country of the Ages of Faith. With this inspiration and example a man could catch the fire of Christ, and become apostolic. If the Catholics of America could live from day to day near that powerhouse of faith and charity, the army of Christ would be galvanized into dynamic energy. But anyhow five hundred priests, sisters, and laypeople confessed that they were charged with this dynamism, and that they would be transmitters to carry it far and wide to the people under their influence.

The Third Liturgical Week will surely be a landmark in the Catholic history of America.

These were the topics of the Conference:

Keynote address: **The Praise of God**, by Rev. J. J. Holleran of St. Francis, Wisconsin. First Morning Session: **The Praise of God in Creation**, by Rev. Wm. F. Furlong, of Seton Hall, South Orange, N. J. . . . First Afternoon Session: 1. **The Praise of Christ on Earth**, by Rev. Bernardine Shine, O.S.B., of St. Meinrad's Abbey. 2. **The Praise of Christ in Heaven and in His Church**, by Rev. Chas. Schmitt, of O'Fallon, Mo. 3. **The Praise of Christ in His Individual Members**, by Rev. Justin Mulcahy, C.P., of Dunkirk, N. Y. . . . First Evening Session: **Praise in Sacrifice and Sacrament**, by Rev. Roland Winel, of Columbus, O.; **Praise in Mystic Song**, by Rev. Bede Scholz, O.S.B., of Conception Abbey, Mo.

Second Morning Session: a Symposium on **Praise in the Living Parish**, with a paper on **The Ideal Participation by the People in High Mass and Office**, by Rev. E. Thibault, P.S.S., of Montreal, Canada; and reports from two city and two country pastors: Rev. Wm. Huelsmann, of St. Louis, Mo.; Rev. Henry Velte, of Milwaukee, Wis.; Rev. Jos. P. McGeever, of Ambler, Pa., and Rev. Ernest Burtle, of Mt. Sterling, Ill. . . . Second Afternoon Session: a Forum on **The Music of Divine Praise**: 1. **Chant and the Clergy**, by Rev. Jos. T. Kuth, of Mundelein Seminary, Chicago; 2. **Chant and the Laity**, by Rev. Robert Brennan, Archdiocesan Director of Music in Los Angeles, Calif., and **The Organist and Choir-Director**, by Mr. Elmer A. Steffen, of Indianapolis, Ind. . . . The Second Evening Session: **Our Language of Praise**, by Mary Perkins; **Praise and Holy Scripture**, by Rev. Bernard Laukemper, of Chicago, Ill.

Third Morning Session: **Divine Praise in Church Art**, by Rev. Dunstan Tucker, O.S.B., of St. John's Abbey, Minn.; **Divine Praise in Ceremony and Venture**, by Rev. Wm. Lallou, of Washington, D. C. . . . Third Afternoon Session: a Forum on **Praise and the Present Crisis**: 1. **Modern Perversions of Praise**, by Max Jordan Ph. D., of New York; **Praise and Catholic Civilian Morale**, by Rev. Vincent Donovan, O.P., of New York; 2. **Praise and Catholic Military Morale**, by Rev. Bernard Smith, O.S.B., of St. Mary's Abbey, Atchison, Kan. . . . Third Evening Session: Summary and Conclusion, by Rev. Thos. Carroll, of Boston, Mass., **Looking Ahead**, by Rev. Thos. Stack, of Bloomfield, Conn.

The preachers at the Morning High Mass worked out the same theme of Divine Praise in their homilies: Archbishop McNicholas of Cincinnati, Abbot Lawrence Vohs, O.S.B., of St. Lawrence Abbey, Peru, Ill.; Bishop Griffin, of Trenton, N. J., and Bishop Ritter, of Indianapolis, Ind.

FIVE and TEN Years Ago--

From Oct. 21, 1932

There is positive need for qualified Catholic creative writers in this country, the Rev. Wilfrid Parsons, S.J., noted editor of "America," national Jesuit review, told members of the Dante Club at St. Bernard's Seminary.

From Oct. 21, 1937.

Both at the Holy See itself and through its representatives in the United States, the Vatican denied promptly with the utmost vigor, and in the most categorical terms, a widespread secular news service report that it had taken sides with Japan in the present conflict with China.

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Institution of the St. Alphonsus Society for daily adoration of the Blessed Sacrament in the Rochester diocese was announced by James E. Cuff, chairman of a committee named by Rochester Nocturnal Adoration Society, sponsors of the new society.

Feast Days

Sunday, Oct. 25—CHRIST THE KING.
Monday, Oct. 26—ST. EVARISTUS.
Tuesday, Oct. 27—ST. FRUMENTIUS.
Wednesday, Oct. 28—SS. SIMON AND JUDE.
Thursday, Oct. 29—ST. NARCISSUS.
Friday, Oct. 30—ST. MARCELLUS.

'Quiz' Corner

Is a person obliged to have his confessor?

Yes. Love of those who have charge of souls, as implied in the general precepts of charity and expressly commanded by Christ (Matt. c. xii). The precept is positive, in so far as it binds us to forgive our enemies, and either them at least the common marks of Christian charity; negative, in so far as it forbids us to curse or hate them, wish them evil, exclude them from our customary salutations, manners and prayers. Serious breach of this precept is a mortal sin.

May a plenary indulgence be applied for persons who are living?

Not in the sense that one living person may fulfill the conditions prescribed for gaining an indulgence and apply it to another living person. Some indulgences may be gained only for the benefit of the departed. Other indulgences, however, may be gained by and applied to the living person who fulfills the prescribed conditions.

Hence the expression is sometimes used that an indulgence may be applied to the living, as well as the departed. But this must not be misunderstood to mean that the indulgence can be gained by one living person for another living person.

Can you tell me if there is or ever was an indulgence attached to the Angelus?

The faithful may gain an indulgence of 10 years every time they say the Angelus. They may also gain a plenary indulgence once a month, if they say the Angelus every day of the month.

This indulgence is to be gained under the usual conditions, i. e., confession, Communion and prayer for the intention of the Pope. These indulgences were granted Feb. 28, 1935.

If I join the Catholic Church, will it be necessary for me to be baptized again?

That depends upon a number of conditions. If you were baptized in a non-Catholic sect and the validity of the Baptism can be established, conditional Baptism will be administered. The priest beginning the formula with these words: "If you have not been baptized, I baptize you . . ." If you were never baptized at all, Baptism must be administered at your admission to the Church.

EDITORIALS

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unreasoning opposition to the one World Power that is recognized as the unchanging friend of all that is just, right, proper, for men and nations. President Roosevelt sees the Pope and the Vatican and the Church in right perspective: he deals with the Holy Father on most friendly terms: he sends his personal Ambassador to treat most confidential matters. As the Church is happy in her true friends throughout the world, so is She fortunate in the queer type that choose to be Her enemies.

LINE INTERFERENCE CONTINUES

Every American is entitled to his own views and to the expression of them on right occasions. No American is entitled to meddle in the all-out effort of the Armed Forces and of the Congress to win the war, by the injection of irrelevant and dangerous movements into war legislation. The officers in our army should know what is best for our soldiers, what will furnish them the safest protection in the dangers that are bound to surround men who enjoy America's freedom under discipline rather than Nazi regimentation in slavery.

There is no occasion for injecting a rider providing for prohibition into the bill lowering the draft age. Senator Lee and those urging him on are no more interested in the morals of our soldiers than other Americans. Sensible people who oppose prohibition because they know it will not work any more in wartime than it did work in peace time, are anxious for the defeat of this alien rider precisely because they understand that strict regulation of the sale of alcoholic drink will give a control that will immediately disappear when a sumptuary law gives the signal for the return of the bootlegger and the racketeer.

Army authorities have condemned former movements to introduce prohibition into the Army: they have stated their understanding that it will work harm, not good. Why not let them guide us? Why let those who look upon the use of alcohol as always evil, assail the liberties of the larger and saner citizens in service who respect right use of alcohol while they strive to correct its abuse? This is a serious time when knick-knacks and exploded isms should not be permitted to hinder the all-out war effort.

ENTRAP JESUS IN HIS TALK

Many sought out Jesus that He might heal their sick, that He might bless their children, that He might teach them. Many have sought Him out for like purposes through the years, many today still hasten to Him for like ends.

Some others went to Him for lighter reasons. Curiosity to see His wonders, eagerness to hear the new Teacher, hopes for some earthly comfort or blessing. Even Herod thought he might find a moment's diversion if Christ would work a miracle or two for him.

But it took the Pharisees to go to Him for a wicked reason. Deceit ruled their souls as they discussed ways and means of thwarting Him: they wished to destroy the love the multitude had for Him, the faith they were developing within their hearts for Him.

They would entrap Him in His talk. Disguising their guile, they would have their messengers put questions to Him as those who desired a last good word of advice on a moot question. Why enquiries were so couched as to open Christ to a difficulty whichever way He answered them. They would entrap Him in His talk.

Christ saw their wicked purposes. Christ was able easily to thwart them. Their question about the lawfulness of giving tribute to Caesar was answered by a declaration in general of their duty to Caesar and of their greater duty to God, which they were even then side-stepping in their role of hypocrites.

There are in the world today some that would entrap Jesus in His talk. They are not on the square: they seek not truth: they seek not a fair and enlightening answer to their difficulties: they are hypocrites. They do not deceive Christ! They deceive only themselves.

Let us look to Christ for direction, counsel, doctrine: that we may have no desire to entrap Him in His talk, but to find in His every word or deed something to help us [illegible]