

# Universal Church Feels Impact Of Global War During 1942

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The deepening, spreading shadows of global war and death made 1942 one of the blackest years in the history of mankind. One by one the lights of civilization went out and in their place the flashes and blazes of cannon and bombs were the only illumination. Amid the noisy fury one voice still spoke and one figure still was seen in amazing clarity. It was the same voice that had pleaded against the folly of war when it threatened and when it came, reiterated the hope and led the Catholic world in prayer for an early peace and an enduring one built on the foundation of charity and justice.

In his 1941 Christmas Message, his Holiness Pope Pius XII, sounded a note of hope and of faith in "the Star" that has never faded. He bade the world to remain always strong in faith and to derive "the comfort of that very real, superabundant and elevating hope and certainty which radiates from the crib of the new-born Saviour." Again he emphasized the Five Points that must obtain as the basis of future world peace.

Work! Again called to prayer. His Holiness again called the world to prayer in May, inviting all, especially children, to profit by that month, and to join in a holy crusade of prayer, saying: "While the world, trusting solely in the force of arms advances along its bloodstained path, we repeat our full confidence in God and exhort all our children scattered all over the world to unite their prayers with ours."

### Year of Unceasing Burden

The Holy Father's year was an unceasing burden of labor and anxiety. The Pope consecrated the war-torn world to the Immaculate Heart of the Blessed Virgin when he prayed that "peace may return to men's souls" and that "the order of the Kingdom of God may prevail." His concern for war-sufferings resulted in his continued support of the Vatican Office of Information on War Prisoners, which labored to reestablished communication between war captives and their families, and his allocation of funds for the relief of peoples made needy by the progress of the war.

The heads of State of virtually every country in the world sent messages of congratulation to the Pontiff on the occasion of his Jubilee. Prominent among those greeting the Holy Father were Presidents Roosevelt and Myron C. Taylor, the President's personal representative at the Vatican.

### Axis Propaganda Refused

Again the neutrality of the Holy See was questioned and Axis propagandists sought to show Vatican favor for their cause, but international impartiality of the Holy See remained unchanged. Axis propagandists endeavored to make capital over the establishment of diplomatic relations between the Holy See and Japan, but it was quickly made clear that the Vatican-Japan relations were founded at the request of Japan itself and in a routine manner. The Vatican always has welcomed such requests from any nation. Similarly, China requested diplomatic relations with the Holy See and such relations were established.

Mr. Taylor visited the Holy See in the late summer and had several audiences with the Holy Father. The visit of President Roosevelt's envoy evoked lively interest in the neutral press of Europe. Harold Pittmann took up residence in Vatican City as Charge d'Affaires of the mission established at the Vatican by President Roosevelt with his appointment of Mr. Taylor.

The Holy Father sent to King George VI of England a message of condolences on the death of the King's youngest brother, the Duke of Kent, in an aircraft crash.

### Catholics in England

Catholics of England were acclaimed for their contributions to the Empire's war effort. In the fighting Catholics captured awards for gallantry out of proportion to their numbers. Although about one in 15 in the population, Catholics gained about one-sixth of the Victoria Cross awards. Catholics organized committees for supplying books to the troops and during the terrifying months of air raids, priests and Catholic societies did

### heroic work.

Principal problem faced by the British Hierarchy in the year was a movement to standardize religious education in schools and otherwise to deprive Catholic schools of their distinctive character.

### Catholics in Parliament

There were 22 Catholic members in the British Parliament. Cardinal Hinsley presided at a Thanksgiving Day Mass in Westminster Cathedral for American troops.

### Courage of Malta

The courage and faith of Malta's Catholics made history as that island became a battered fortress. The island had 15,000 houses, 70 churches, 18 convents, 22 schools and eight hospitals destroyed or damaged in the air raids. Axis bombing destroyed St. Paul's Chapel, built in 1615 on Malta Bay, on the spot where the Apostle Paul landed.

The Nazis did not relent in their war on the Christian religion, both in the Reich itself and countries it has occupied.

In spite of difficulties, Catholic prelates in Germany voiced protests and condemnation of attempts to hamper the Church and Christianity. The first joint Pastoral of the German Bishops since 1941 called formal protests the Bishops had submitted to the Nazi Government demanding cessation of oppressive measures, reviewed extensive persecution of the Church in Germany, and charged that the Nazis "wish to destroy Christianity" in the Reich. It urged redress of the injustices heaped on the Church and called upon the people "to repulse decisively and vigorously all attempts to make you waver."

Persecution went on unabated in occupied countries—in France, Poland, Yugoslavia, Norway, the Netherlands, Luxembourg and Greece.

### War On Christian Ideas

In a Joint Pastoral, the German Bishops discussed public morality in the Reich, scoring violations of the sanctity of marriage.

Cardinal Michael Faulhaber said German Catholics are ready to champion State order, and, out of their faith, to make sacrifices for the community, but they are not prepared to become traitors to the Church. His Eminence protested against "the heathen burial" of victims of the September raid on Munich, urging his spiritual children to limit upon a Christian burial as an inalienable Christian right.

It was reported that 88 Franciscans were killed or reported missing in action. Seventy members of the Society of the Divine Word drafted in Central Europe died in action. The great Cathedral of Cologne was undamaged in the massed British air raid on that See City.

### Resistance in Holland

Nazi oppression and courageous, outspoken resistance and protest constituted the theme of Catholic life in the low countries. Many of Holland's leading churchmen, arrested by the Nazis and imprisoned in Germany.

A new Nazi decree suppressed the entire religious press in Holland. 129 Catholic publications falling under the ban.

### Compulsory Labor

The Nazi press in Holland assailed the Dutch Catholic Bishops, because they forbade Catholic youth to register for the new Nazi labor service. Throughout, Catholic resistance and protests were strong and articulate. Catholic leaders joined with Protestants in protesting the treatment of Jews in the Netherlands.

### Stand of Belgian Cardinal

In Belgium, too, Catholic resistance to Nazi oppression was unabating, marked by the refusal of His Eminence Joseph Cardinal Van Roey, Archbishop of Malines and Primate of Belgium, to accept German domination. It was feared that "regular persecution of the Church" in Belgium "on the pattern followed in Germany" was forthcoming. Cardinal Van Roey protested the order compelling Belgians to work on Sundays and holy days. The Cardinal in one address stressed the "absolute contradiction" between Nazi philosophy and "the ideal of human grandeur according to Christianity."

### Poland's Gethsemane

Poland's Gethsemane possibly became more severe while her exiled leaders directed from England the activities of free Poles

in collaboration with the United Nations. Under Gen. Wladyslaw Sikorski, Premier of the Polish Government, 200,000 Poles were fighting on fronts of the United Nations.

In Poland the Catholic Church was the chief target, because the Nazis openly regarded the Church "as an institution which contributes to upholding national resistance." It was reported that every Polish family had suffered in some way. In a village outside Warsaw from 12,000 to 15,000 of Poland's political and educational leaders were executed. The full total of executions were reported to have risen to 400,000 in the course of the year. At least 2700 priests were interned, and many were sent to forced labor in Germany.

Some hope was held out for Polish Catholics in Russia. Fifty-five Polish Army Chaplains in Soviet Russia, were permitted to minister to some 2,000,000 civilian Polish populations deported into the USSR. General Sikorski said Soviet officials promised that complete religious freedom would be granted to all Polish citizens in the Soviet Union.

The Nazi yoke embraced the Church in Yugoslavia. In one Diocese only nine of 15 priests remained in the 143 parishes to bury the dead, baptize and hear confessions, but they were not allowed to preach or teach catechism.

The Catholic clergy in Russia, it was learned, was composed of one American priest authorized by the Government to exercise his ministry; from 110 to 150 priests of the Archdioceses of Mohilev and Saratov, ordained before the revolution and now in prison or work camps; and about 200 Polish priests deported in 1939-40 and now serving the reconstituted Polish Army. It was reported that 150 Catholic priests were held prisoners in Russian camps on the Solovki Islands. Since the signing of the Polish-Soviet agreement, it was said 52 Polish priests were freed from Soviet prison and concentration camps. Later it was feared these priests were "lost" when, after their release, the vessel removing them was torpedoed.

### Catholic Life in China

Catholic life in China was maintained at a remarkably high point of activity. While engaged in aiding the war need, the Church prepared for its apostolate of the future by increasing the training of a native clergy. Catholics of China prayed for an allied victory South of the Border.

Catholic Bishops urged the faithful to support completely President Avila Camacho's Government in a Mexico at war against the Axis. The situation of the Church was definitely better. Some Mexican papers even suggested assumption of diplomatic relations between Mexico and the Holy See. The Supreme Court ruled galleys have the right to acquire property and that religious schools, if religious teaching is only incidental are not subject to nationalization.

The Fourth National Eucharistic Congress brought joy to the Catholics of Brazil and the death of their Primate, His Eminence Sebastiao Cardinal Leme da Silveira Cintra, Archbishop of Rio de Janeiro, plunged them into sorrow. The Cardinal had attended the Congress as Papal Legate and the great functions were thronged with thousands of Catholics from all parts of the Americas. President Vargas led his countrymen in their final tribute to Cardinal Leme as the noted prelate was laid to rest in the Capital.

### Brazil's Bishops Support War

In a collective Pastoral, the Brazilian Hierarchy urged Catholics to give all-out support to the nation as Brazil entered the war against the Axis. President Vargas sent a special gold medal to Pope Pius XII to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the Encyclical "Rerum Novarum," banned since 1899. Religious instruction was restored to the schools of Brazil through a revision of the secondary and senior school curriculum.

Chilean Bishops, in a Joint Pastoral, vigorously warned against totalitarian ideologies "which exalt the unlimited power of the State," warning that by making the State "the prime source of every right," such teachings constitute "a new threat to our creed, founded on respect for and belief in the eminent dignity of the human person."

## Educational Mission to South America



BY PLANE, the Very Rev. Albert F. Conness, C.S.C., superior General of the Congregation of the Holy Cross, (left) and the Rev. John J. Covansough, C.S.C., vice-president of the University of Notre Dame, left Miami, Fla., Dec. 4, on an educational mission in South America.

## Christmas Vigil On the Atlantic

By J. P. Derriman

(Written for N.C.W.C. Christmas Supplement)

(An English merchant seaman pictures from experience the Christmas which *will* spend this year at sea. Mr. Derriman, who attended Ealing Priory School (Downside Benedictines) in England interrupted a career in journalism to join up with the Merchant Navy in 1941. He is at present the radio officer on a land-lease cargo vessel.)

Up on the bridge, eight bells sound midnight. The old watch goes below, the new watch take over. Out in the raw Atlantic night, the convoy throbs steadily onward. On the bridge, the officer of the watch paces the deck, scanning the horizon now and then, watching for signals from the silent lines of ships. Presently in the East comes the first streak of dawn just another dawn in the long Atlantic winter, but still the dawn of Christmas Day, with the morning star just as the Shepherds saw it, nearly two thousand years ago.

Somewhat, keeping this Christmas vigil at sea is a moving experience, despite the present horrors of the man-made war which may at any moment intervene; to know that while you are but a small fraction of the crew of a ship which is itself a dot on a boundless ocean, people all over the world are at Christmas Mass, at which perhaps you yourself assisted the year before.

The officer inquires the course "How's her head now?" he calls, and the helmsman gives the answer in compass degrees. In the wireless room, the operator is sleepy, perhaps, over his instruments thinking of those Christmas-masses at home in happier days, until suddenly he hears those dreaded letters in Morse "SSSS" a submarine attack. Another ship sunk one you've often sailed with, perhaps, and now not far away. Then in the distance you can hear the thud of depth charges, dropped by the escort of your own convoy. And then again silence. You've escaped again. . . . Somehow familiarity breeds contempt, even of submarines. U-boats, torpedoed, depth charges these have become so much a part of everyday life at sea, that the far-off memories of home seem much more vivid in the imagination.

### Seem Very Close

This might be any ship in any Atlantic convoy. Wartime makes but superficial difference in the life of the sailor and beneath those stars and in that "silence of the sea" of which Mr. Belloc writes so eloquently, God and eternity seem very close. Small wonder that men of the sea have that innate religion which they undoubtedly have. On your tramp steamer of today, Christmas brings no quarter-deck service, the officer reading prayers, such as a battleship's crew attend, but once let the stress of shipwreck or torpedo prevail and faith is apparent enough among the toughest deckhand.

"Business as usual" must be the rule at sea, in peace or war; and though Christmas is a holiday for the day-workers (those who do not keep watches, such as the Bos'un

and Carpenter), and for the sailors so far as deck-work is concerned, watches must of course be maintained, and the majority of the crew must work. In the galley the cook puts the finishing touch to his Christmas dinner and cake—food counts for much at sea, where pleasures are few and simple. The helmsman and look-outs are on the bridge, the firemen and greasers below in the engine-room, and nowadays the gunners are at their stations just as on any other day of the voyage. Those who are not on watch have their smoke and yarn on the "poop," just as on any day of the year.

### Have Not Forgotten

In the officers' saloon, there will be plenty of celebration at the mid-day meal and in the evening. The cook will produce his turkey and plum pudding without fail, be the ship in the icy North Atlantic, or on the torrid West African coast; and you can be sure no one will thirst for long! Mail and presents are naturally luxuries which must be forgone till the ships' movements and wartime communications permit. But they are the more appreciated for that. You mothers, fathers, and sweethearts who have written to your boys at sea this Christmas need have no worry. They have not forgotten you, though writing home may be difficult or impossible. There's scarcely a cabin in the average merchant ship without its photographs, carefully framed, beside each bunk, to remind them of you. And, as everyone knows, a sailor's talk, when not about ships is about his girl. . . .

No Christmas at sea may be without any of that atmosphere of home which when ashore we regard as inseparable from it but by the very contrast, however small, which it makes with the monotony of ordinary routine it is all the more welcome. If it is impossible to be at home, to go to that Midnight Mass which is somehow more impressive than almost any other in the liturgy, there is nowhere I would rather spend Christmas than at sea. Whether or no one has a watch to keep, at sea there is time to think—often almost too much time. And for a Catholic, Christmas brings many thoughts which one spares little time for in the rush of family celebrations back home.

And so Christmas Day passes. Once more the men of the "dog-watches" see the sun set, the moon rise, and the stars appear, in that eternal atmosphere of the sea. And so passes the birthday of Our Lord, Son of that Star of the Sea whose protection we sailors now have so often to implore. And surely now in these days of total war upon the sea, Christ the Worker must look down with a special love upon these sons of His, from captain to the humblest fireman and cabin boy, who work at Christmas, as throughout the year, for victory over the oppressors of His Church.

### LOVING WELCOME

What a loving welcome the Divine Master will have on the threshold of heaven for those who have paid Him the tribute of fidelity and love by attending daily Mass.