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TIMELY ETERNALS

By Rt. Rev. Msgr. Peter M. H. Wynhoven
Editor-in-Chief, Catholic Action of the South

KINDHEARTED MORONS

According to Webster, a moron is a moderately feeble-minded person. We do not wish to insinuate that people who give indiscriminately to street beggars are morons; but, all the same, most of the time they act as if they were somewhat weak in the head.

Charity and generosity are beautiful traits, approved by God and admired by man; but they should not be dictated by the heart alone. There is many a kindhearted person whose hand goes automatically to his pocket-book on the least provocation. A little word stirs his sympathetic imagination, a pitiful-looking human creature, holding out a grimy hand or a shivering tin cup is enough to arouse his Samaritan instincts.

A bedraggled-looking fellow came to the kitchen door, and addressed the housewife:

"Lady, I was at the front—"

"The interrupted lady at once, and bade him sit down.

"If you are one of the gallant boys who went across the sea and fought and bled to make the world safe for democracy, sit there in the nice sunshine and I will get you something to eat."

When he was through eating and had gratefully received a quarter besides, he continued:

"As I was saying, kind lady, I was at the front door and the bell did not ring, so I came to the rear."

Morn! The question still remains unanswered as to whom the kind lady had been kind to? And this question is rarely answered for anyone who is unwisely generous. A whose heart is tender and whose mind is lax.

It is difficult to ascertain, on the spur of the moment, whether an unknown beggar is deserving or not. He may look pitiful in his shabby clothes and with his physical handicap. But Lon Chaney could make up in a way to impersonate any character. Daytime street beggars have been known as nighttime spenders. Many a "blind" man sees all kinds of opportunity to cash in.

We know a legless man who begs in front of the same church every Sunday. We asked him once why he did not at least sell pencils or showtraps. His answer revealed him to be an upright and thoughtful soul. He somewhat indignantly replied that he was not the type to break the Sunday ordinance which forbids the sale of certain things on the day of rest; besides, there were stores in the neighborhood whose proprietors had to make a living by selling merchandises.

This pitiful, mendicant is able-bodied, strong and well-developed, from his stumps up. Hence, why isn't a passer-by realizing that if this petty racketeer wished to make an honest living, he could long ago have learned a trade, for which he is fully capacitated. There are at least a dozen occupations at which a legless fellow could earn his sustenance despite his obvious handicap.

An old, white-haired blind man, well past 70, can be seen every day on the city streets, carrying a heavy pack of brooms and mops. He trudges along, on the hottest day, if anybody were entitled to beg, he would be the one, with his added handicap of age. Still, he keeps on at his hard toil and struggle to say, soft-hearted givers do not rob him to get his brooms and mops.

Herein lies another angle of the folly in foolish giving. Many givers with the tin-cup weakness are superstitious. They firmly believe that it means bad luck to pass up a blind or maimed or horrible-looking beggar. This is the reason the blind, lumpy loafer with the cup makes more money than the man without eyes who is trying to earn a decent living by hard work.

In the game of charity, looks generally deceive. A Nun had inherited money to be given away every month by herself, \$40 at a time, and always to a different person. The next month she found a dilapidated individual standing on a corner. He appealed strongly to her. She handed him the \$40, with only these words, "Godspeed, my good man," and left him. The following month she glimpsed him hanging around the same corner. He approached her as soon as he saw her running and gave her \$100 with the statement: "Sirree, God-speed was a four-to-one shot that day. Where did you get the list?"

The law of charity and of kindness to your neighbor, especially one who is in distress, is age-old. The genuine appreciation of it and the wholehearted practice and fulfillment of this divine and natural law stamp one with a character trait of fine nobility. But deeds of charity, performed without much thought, rhyme or reason, mark one as too thoughtless to be trusted with possessions. If generosity would be directed more by the mind, and less by the heart, we would not have so much encouragement of sin and vice.

Archbishop Spellman Sends Easter Message From Jerusalem

(Continued from Page 1)

not infer that I think victory is either predicated or easy, for those who started this war, although they see the handwriting on the wall in the air, on the land and on the sea, nevertheless are fighting with a desperation impelled by something different than patriotism.

"They know that the Allied terms are unconditional surrender." But they interpret unconditional surrender by definitions from their own dictionaries and America's definition has been written: "We wish no harm to the common people of any nation."

"We must bear in mind however that victory is not synonymous with peace. This peace, this humpty-dumpty world has had a great fall. Hatreds have multiplied and have become deep and bitter. Yet Easter Day should not and must not pass without hope. And hope must be based on faith, supernatural faith. Faith and hope beget charity, and charity means peace.

"Humanly speaking, the foundation of peace is contented peoples. The average man in every country is contented if he can earn his living and support his family with tranquility. But, also humanly speaking, we know now as we should know that something more than brains, brawn, machines and material is needed to bring peace to mankind. They can give us and they will give us victory. But they cannot give us peace with justice after that victory if we neglect the cornerstone of the building of peace which is Jesus Christ.

"I address myself to all those who believe in God, and only the fool says in his heart that there is no God. For those who do not acknowledge Jesus as the Son of God must nevertheless recognize in His personality, His doctrines, His Commandments and His Sermon on the Mount a sure and indestructible basis on which world brotherhood under a Fatherhood of God may be established.

"Here in this Holy Land I pray not only for victory but for peace. All believers in God all men of good will can unite in this prayer for peace and can also, if they sincerely wish to do so, contribute to its realization by thinking, working, speaking, writing, acting, judging, teaching, legislating, voting, administering, caring for the sick, the old and the young, by doing any or all of these things, by living in the presence of God, by making Him the cornerstone of the building of their lives.

Named Montignor

People, Ill. — Elevation of the Rev. Leo C. Thales, pastor of St. Peter and Paul's Church, Nayvoo, to the rank of Domestic Prelate with the title of Right Reverend Montignor, has been announced here by the Most Rev. Joseph H. Schlarman, Bishop of Peoria. Word of the elevation was received by the Bishop from His Excellency the Most Rev. Anacleto Giovanni Cicognani, Apostolic Delegate to the United States.

Our Diocesan Retreat House, Geneva, takes on new significance in these war times. Now sign up for your parish's week-end retreat now. — J. J. 4701344