

Catholic Courier

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With the Approval of the
MOST REVEREND JAMES EDWARD KEARNEY, D.D.
Bishop of Rochester

The CATHOLIC COURIER has my most enthusiastic approval. A diocesan newspaper has become an essential part of the program of Catholic action in every diocese. The CATHOLIC COURIER should be placed in every Catholic home in this diocese. I find it hard to understand how any Catholic can be indifferent as to what is transpiring in his church throughout the world as to its upon inevitable sources of information or even to such an information source. Let us have a bit of dozen "The CATHOLIC COURIER" in every Catholic home.

— JAMES E. KEARNEY, Bishop of Rochester.

MISSION OF THE HOLY GHOST

Pentecost Sunday saw the coming of the Holy Ghost upon the Apostles. Pentecost witnessed the first functioning of the Church, the first preaching and the first exercise of priestly power in the conferring of baptism. The first Pope delivered a message of faith to a receptive multitude; the first Bishops of the Church welcomed three thousand into Church membership.

The Church on that first Pentecost spoke with authority, with infallibility, with confidence in its own indefectibility. The Church on that day was one and holy, was catholic and apostolic.

The Church could so speak because the Holy Ghost had come to abide with her; the Church on that day could rejoice in the marks of unity, sanctity, catholicity, apostolicity. From the Holy Ghost she receives the power and right to teach all men in matters of faith and morals; from the same Holy Ghost she receives the attribute of infallibility, that she may be protected from all danger of error; from teaching the words from the Holy Ghost she receives the guarantee of continuity, the assurance that she shall endure even as Christ abided her, till the end of time. The Holy Spirit abides in the Church forever, guiding her in the way of holiness and truth. The Holy Spirit works in the hearts of the faithful, helping them to receive in all fidelity the teachings of the Church.

All members of the Church are united in one faith, in reception of the same sacraments, in obedience to their lawful superiors in every degree under the one visible head who is the Pope. The Church is holy because of the holiness of her Founder, the holiness of her teaching, the holiness of life to which she invites all men, the tradition of apostolic holiness that marks so many of her members in every age. All nations in all ages learn all truth from the Church: this is her mark of universality or catholicity. The Church traces her history back to the Apostles on whom Christ founded His Church, exercises her power today through those who are the lawful successors of those Apostles, always his and always will insist on teaching their apostolic doctrine which is the deposit of faith given to the Apostles by Jesus Christ.

It is the Holy Ghost Who by His abiding presence within the Church maintains its unity in doctrine and communion and obedience to one leader; its holiness in purpose and effect; its universality in time and place and doctrine. The Holy Ghost protects the Church in preserving and vivifying its apostolic succession.

Pentecost is, indeed, the birthday of the Church! Pentecost should remind us of the abiding presence within the Church and its members of the Third Person of the Blessed Trinity, the Holy Spirit of God.

ROY IN LIMITATIONS

Patriotic impulses prompt ready response to and cooperation with the provisions of governmental officials and agencies limiting our supply of gas and food and clothing. Perhaps we have put on too much of an air of sacrifice as we nodded our assent to each new privation. Obedience to custom and habit, we have never had time to stop and examine our program to see if it is really adding to or taking away from our enjoyment of life. Along come government directives, government restrictions, and we begin to change our way of living. Soon we discover the new way may add to rather than detract from our real happiness.

We are beginning to discover our back-yards. Near at hand, offering a fresh air and flowers and grassy lawns with no preliminary dredging of getting the old rattle in motion and traversing miles of sun-baked roads, the back-yard has been an unknown land to us. We have treated it as a place to get away from, to avoid as we would avoid a place quarantined. Now the gas rulings are forcing us to stay home, to visit our back-yard, to find in it comfort and shade and companionship that the far places of other Sundays never could afford us. Was a smart man that discovered his backyard was the only park that offered him a rocking chair on the lawn. Many a man has spent weary hours seeking solace afar off, who could have had it near at hand had he known the treasures of his own home-plot. Perhaps the benignity of the present gas rules is what we needed to rediscover the paradise of our own back-yard.

Then those rationing-points! Perhaps the discipline of a smaller food allowance will help to reduce that waist line, so inclined to bulge and ruin one's shape. The doctors long ago advised a smaller intake, our own better sense said the doctor was right, but we kept right on absorbing all too much of red meats and sweets, kept right on using our blood pressure on too much strong coffee. Then along came rationing, along came points, along came a real reduction in our fat-of-lard at each meal. It looked hard, it frightened us a bit at first, but it has left us, much to our surprise, feeling better than in all the years when we so freely measured out excessive portions of sweets and meats unto the overnourishment of the body and the deadening of the soul.

We do it because we are patriotic, because we want our men in service to lack nothing needful, because we cooperate with our leaders in every effort to win the war. But we must admit we have found much to enjoy and exult over in the changed program rationing has forced on us. Reduced opportunities of purchasing overloads of food and supplies in other lines, may too leave us more money to invest in War Bonds. We find joy in limitations.

Reprisals in Kind?

REV. JAMES M. GILLIS, C.S.P.

In the course of a series of talks on Peace and War in the City of Denver, I happened to speak of reprisals. On that subject the teaching of reputable moralists and the emotions of the people may well be in conflict. The moralists insist that we must answer the question "to retaliate or not to retaliate" in accordance with ethical principles and not as our angry mood would dictate. If the moralist happens to be also a Christian theologian he will go on to say that not natural ethics alone but the inspired Scriptures must be our guide. If beyond that he aims at Christian perfection he will cite the example of Christ and suggest that a world which calls itself "Christian" should live up to its profession and follow the example of Christ.

However, for the present let us hold the high perfection of the Gospel in abeyance, and consider the question in the light of pure reason. If we dare not measure up to Christ, let us demand the morality of—shall we say—Socrates. The questions then are these: If in desperation Hitler uses poison gas, not on the battlefield alone but on residential sections of thickly populated cities, shall we, in retaliation, do the same? If he uses gas in that manner it will be a crime. Will it cease to be a crime for us? Or shall we do it even though it be a crime?

Second question: Since the Japanese confess—or rather boast—that they executed the American aviators who fell into their hands, shall we execute Japanese soldiers who fall into our hands? It is against the conventions of war to do so, but shall we follow the example of the Japanese rather than the conventions of Geneva to which we have subscribed?

Both the Japanese and the Nazis have committed the atrocity of bombing hospital ships sailing fully illuminated and marked unmistakably with the Red Cross. Shall we in retaliation, make ourselves guilty of the same outrage?

At Lidice in Czecho-Slovakia the Nazis killed every man old and young thereby Out-Heroding Herod. Shall we do likewise as soon as some German towns fall into our hands?

To any Christian, or even to any humane person, the answer to these questions would seem to be that we cannot make savages of ourselves because others who have pretended to be civilized have degenerated into the condition from which their savage ancestors came. Any other decision would logically lead us to horrible conclusions. For example: if the police catch some Jack the Ripper who, with sadistic cruelty, has slashed his victims to ribbons, should the police slash him to ribbons? If a hundred or two or three hundred men in one of our American communities have been caught in the act of lynching a Negro, burning him to death in a cage while they dance about him like "wild Indians," should the lynchers be put in a cage and burned, and should the populace be urged to gloat over their sufferings?

How far will you go in these reprisals? As far as the enemy? Will you do what he does or beat him at his own horrible game?

THOUGHT ENOUGH
President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill have explicitly stated that we cannot and will not retaliate in kind for the atrocities done to our soldiers. Neither Mr. Roosevelt nor Mr. Churchill thought it necessary to quote sacred Scripture in support of that decision. Natural reason was thought to be enough.

But when in the course of a speech on this subject I said these things, an editorial writer in a Colorado newspaper castigated and ridiculed me. That, of course, is not important. In fact the editorial writer himself is not important. But in his last sentence, as a final sting, he did say something that calls for comment.

In support of his view that we would indulge in reprisals, he suggested a referendum throughout the United States, Great Britain and all the Allied Nations, and he declared with emphasis that 75% of the population of the United Nations would vote "YES" on the question as to whether we should do to the Nazis and the Japanese whatever they do to us.

That editor is guilty of two egregious errors. First, he thinks that morals are decided by popular vote. We who read the Bible and believe in it do not find that the Ten Commandments were voted into existence by the people at

the foot of Mt. Sinai. On the contrary, Moses, the intermediary, came down from the Mount and reported to the people that the Lord Himself says "thou shalt" and "thou shalt not." The moral law comes from God and must be accepted by the people whether they like it or not. Voting on the Ten Commandments would be like voting obedience or disobedience to God. No referendum can be taken on that blasphemy.

ONLY ANSWER

See how it would work out in our own time and in our own country. If in a certain State the people refuse to arrest and convict lynchers; if a jury would acquit them even if they were brought to court, does that mean that lynching is no sin and no crime? If irritation spreads so far and wide in the United States that finally 51 or 75 or 99 per cent of the people cease to pray, or to go to church, or to worship God, does that make irreligion no sin? If, by hook or by crook more than half the people of the nation were persuaded to vote that adultery is no sin, should we cancel the prohibition of adultery from the decalogus?

The only answer to these questions is that certain things are right in themselves and that other things are essentially wrong. Morality is not a matter for popular referendum.

Secondly, the editor in Colorado thinks the majority of people in the United Nations would vote to treat the Japanese and the Nazis savagely since they treat us savagely. I cannot share that pessimistic view of the mind of the people. It is true that when we are angry or as we say "mad" because of some atrocity, we might do something wild. But when we come to our senses we know that two wrongs do not make one right, and that a second crime does not cancel the first. For this reason we shall not indulge in savage reprisals.

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Feast Days

- Sunday, June 13.—PENTECOST.
- Monday, June 14.—ST. BASIL THE GREAT.
- Tuesday, June 15.—SS. VITUS, CRESCENTIA AND MODESTUS.
- Wednesday, June 16.—ST. BENEDICT.
- Thursday, June 17.—ST. ADOLPH.
- Friday, June 18.—ST. EPHRAIM.
- Saturday, June 19.—ST. JULIANA FALCONIERI.

British warships in the North Sea are using dogs as airplane detectors. Perhaps airdales and skye terriers.

He Will Keep My Word

Obedience is the criterion according to which our love of Christ is measured. Obedience to the Father is the great fact in Christ's life that the Holy Spirit was to impress on the world. Faith in Christ means nothing where we do not keep the word of Christ.

The Three Persons of the Blessed Trinity will abide with all who believe in Christ, who love Christ, who keep His word of Christ. Christ tells us in the Gospel of this Sunday that He and the Father "will come and make their abode in him," referring to one who keeps His word. Later in the same Gospel He speaks of the Holy Spirit coming as the Prince of this world, the Advocate who is to remain with the faithful to convince them that Christ loved the Father and showed that love by His obedience to the Father's word.

Christians have known down the centuries the peace that can come only from obedience to God's word. Every deviation from that word means an act of disorder, a violation of the principles on which the world and man were created. God's word shows us the way. True Christians follow that way, keep that word.

Peace can come to man only from God. That peace of soul that surpasseth all understanding is the highest happiness man can have here or hereafter. Our membership in the Church, our knowledge of Christ, our love of His Sacred Heart, will have its most convincing expression in the obedience we give at every moment to the word of Christ.

May the Pentecost Gospel help us to be obedient to Christ in all things that we may have abiding in our souls the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, for our sanctification here on earth, for our eternal salvation in heaven.

Diocesan Recordings

VIGILANT committees in our Catholic lay organizations can well be formed at this time to watch for the subtleties and even open attacks on the Church and to take action against them. An example of how this can be done is given by a priest of the Diocese in his letter answering a University official. (See page 2, this issue.) Some of these attacks are made from ignorance, some from decided opposition to the Church, all are made to discredit the Catholic Church, especially in the war effort. Fair minded persons should be informed, editors and radio stations, as well as producers of motion pictures must be told courteously, but firmly of the true facts.

BELITTING is one of the methods used by writers in attempts to make Catholic beliefs and practices look ridiculous. This week, it was called to our attention, that a highly publicized columnist and radio commentator has gone in for this sort of thing. Last week the efforts of a daily newspaper in New York which has other color besides the red ink often used, brought indignation. Greater publicity only helps these "belittlers," but convincing protests to publishers and radio stations will have effect. In the matter of publications, the best treatment is not to buy them, the result will be the same as in the objectionable motion pictures.

ADD INCONSISTENCIES—Giving up pleasure riding to save gasoline in the war effort but purchasing food from a black market.

CATHOLIC THOUGHT will be given an especial treatment in Florida on Sept. 4 and 5 when the State Branch of the Catholic Central Verein and Catholic Women's Union convenes there. Sincere and consistent students of the Papal Encyclicals and alert to the trends, these organizations will have something to offer in their stations that no zealous American citizen will want to miss.

SPIRITUAL COMFORTS — In the last World War, the Knights of Columbus brought creature comforts to men in the service and thereby built up a great record. Now they have, through their Chaplains Aid cooperated provided for spiritual comforts that will endure long after creature comforts are forgotten. The giving of only one Mass Kit cannot be estimated in its results. An Lieutenant Caffery wrote from Africa prior to his being reported killed in action, when he assisted at an open Mass celebrated on the tail-gate of a truck: "We felt very close to God." Furnishing these Mass Kits and other aids for the Chaplains is definitely the work of a Catholic lay group.