

Catholic Courier

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

ASSURANCE TO THE POPE

Americans can well be proud and happy over the letter sent by our President assuring the Holy Father that churches and institutions throughout Italy would be protected, that Vatican City's neutrality is well as that of other papal domains throughout Italy would be respected.

Americans can be joyful that in a world partially desolated by the pagan excesses of totalitarianism, our President can give the Holy Father assurance that "respect for religious beliefs and for the free exercise of religious worship is fundamental to our ideas."

The President speaks of his hopes for the return of the peace of God to the world, when we may joyfully turn our energies from the grim duties of war to the fruitful tasks of reconstruction.

Then comes a paragraph that should make its place in history: "In common with all other nations and farers imbued with the spirit of good-will toward men, and with the help of Almighty God, we will turn our hearts and minds to the exacting task of building a just and enduring peace on earth."

We are proud of our American heritage of liberty, we are proud to have the American ideal so clearly stated by our President, we are proud to have the Holy Father receive from the American people through their leader this consoling message. In a dark hour for all the world, it means much that America approaches the hour of victory with no dreams of conquest of men and goods and territory; but with the ambition of building a just and enduring peace on earth, of cooperating with all who seek in the spirit of good-will to men under God's helping hand, of restoring to all men the right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

CATHOLIC LEFTISTS

Conservatives and reactionaries and rightists love to oppose leftists, liberals, moderns. The man in the street is confused by the slipshod way in which men and movements are christened by the opposition with titles often more expressive than truthful. Those who lean away from what has been accepted, who look to Communism as a cure-all for modern ills, have no time for the organizations which still see some good in present-day conditions. The leftists are lawful, worthy, united only for what is helpful; the others are pressure groups.

Latent hatred for the Church breaks into the open in many of the pronouncements of leftist groups. The Church is accused of being the opium of the common people, drugging them into complacent acceptance of every economic disability by the promise of a happy eternity in heaven. The Church is accused of being reactionary, forgetful of the poor, giving yeoman service to every capitalistic assault on the workman. Those in the Church who publicly seek social justice for all are called Catholic Leftists.

A better knowledge of the Church and its teachings on the social question would show these leftists to be conservatives. They are not deviating from Catholic principles, they are applying them; they are not substituting their own decisions for the Church's, rather they are preaching and extolling Catholic doctrine. Look into the encyclicals of the great popes, especially of Leo XIII and Pius XI; find therein the basis for all true social reform. Some of the principles there enunciated are so clearly founded in natural and divine law, that they have called for the immediate support of all reasonable men.

Social reform looking to justice between employer and employee, to right rules on which the relations between employer and employee should be based, to respect for the dignity of man, finds its foundation and its constant unwavering support in the teaching of the Church as given in the great encyclicals. Catholics who strive for the good things sponsored by the Church are not Catholic Leftists; they are apostles for the thesis that God's concern for all men is much more fully and thoroughly set forth by the Church than by those leftist organizations which insist on mixing with their correct teachings on social problems those errors that would enslave men and turn them from their eternal destiny.

THE MYSTICAL BODY OF CHRIST

The Feast of St. Peter and Paul gave to the world a new Encyclical known as "Mystical Corporis," treating of the Church as the Mystical Body of Christ. Christ is the Head of the mystical body of which we are members. All the members are mutually dependent on the head and on one another. Catholics have no right to consider themselves members of the Church as they might be of some merely human society; they belong to the living society, must be living members of that society, must partake of the life of the spirit that is their's as members of the Church.

The Holy Spirit abides always with the Church, ministering the gifts that give its life, enabling it to teach and sanctify and govern. He is in the Church and in each of its members. The power of the Holy Spirit and the sanctity and faith of each member, makes the Church a living continuation of Jesus Christ, Saviour of the world.

The faith, hope, charity, in the heart of a Catholic will lead him to reject instinctively any pagan doctrine of racism, of superiority of one people over another; all will be one in Christ Jesus, head of the Mystical Body. Christian unity is founded on this unifying love of all men for each other.

Prayer is the expression of the life of the Mystical Body; it enables the members to be in contact with their Head. The Holy Father teaches those who would limit the prayers of the faithful to the liturgical and common prayers of the Church. Catholic instinct will prompt us to avoid the excesses of those who misinterpret the doctrine of the Mystical Body. Our prayers may be taken from any source that is proper, may come from the depths of our own devotion.

There is work for the Mystical Body of Christ in the world today. Our duty is to seek our own salvation; our broader duty is as a member of the Mystical Body to share in the striving for the salvation of the whole world.

Real Foes Of Civilization

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

Cardinal Newman predicted that those who abandoned devotion to the Blessed Virgin because, as they explained, they wished to give all honor to her Son, would end by refusing the first and highest honor due to the Son, belief in His divinity. That was nearly a hundred years ago, and now we see, to our dismay, the fulfillment of the prophecy. In fact we see a great deal more. We see not only the denial of the doctrine that Jesus Christ is God. We see the denial of God, Father, Son, Holy Ghost. And we predict that those who deny God will soon follow up that denial with a denial of the dignity of man. Men say, with their curiously perverse logic, that in getting rid of god they will exalt man, that belief in God is the obstacle to the way of man's being God himself.

We know how that will work out. The same thing will happen as happened before in regard to the dignity and glory of the woman, only this time it will work in reverse. Formerly they said they could not honor the woman without derogating from the honor of God and they ended by dishonoring both the woman and God. Now they say they cannot believe in God because they believe in man. They will end by believing neither in God nor in man.

Man has no dignity in himself apart from God. If there is no God and if therefore man is not the image of God, what is man? The answer is obvious, too obvious for some of the polite materialists who teach in universities,

who while admitting atheism, or its cowardly cousin agnosticism, keep on talking about the rights of man, the freedom of man, the dignity of man, and the crimes committed against man by tyrants and dictators and "totalitarians."

But if there be no God, if man is not the image of God, then it must follow, as the night the day, that man has no spiritual soul, no God, no soul. What then? Why talk at all about man? If man has no Godlike soul, man is an animal. If man is an animal, treat him as an animal. Ernst Haeckel said "Man, who called himself a child of God and exalted himself to the heavens is found to be a placental mammal and nothing more." Very well then, says Adolf Hitler, who had read Haeckel since man is only a placental mammal and nothing more, "what does it matter to me (these are his exact words) 'what does it matter to me if a million young Germans are killed?' What would it matter if a million bullocks were killed, or a million goats or a million dogs or a million of any other farm or placental animal?"

So it comes to pass that a disdain for man stems directly from disbelief in God, and more directly from a disbelief in the Son of God. Hitler rejects Jesus and the Father of Jesus. He said he didn't want a Semitic God or a Semitic Son of God. So he goes back to the Celtic gods. Needless to say he goes back to the gods who are no gods at all, to atheism. Once he has got rid of the one true

God and of Jesus Christ, he can say what he will about man and do what he will with man. As a matter of fact, he goes so far as to talk about "the saving doctrine of the absolute insignificance and the unimportance of the individual human being."

Over against that is the Catholic doctrine of the infinite importance and value of the individual human being. We find in all our books of instruction and devotion the statement that the Son of God would have become incarnate, would have suffered and died to save one soul from perdition. We might add that God would have created the heavens and the earth and all that is in them for the sake of one human soul. But of course we would not say all that if man is only a brother to the ox, a placental mammal. If man is not a soul, a human being, a child to God and an heir to Heaven we would say nothing about his glory and dignity and infinite value.

It is not immediately evident that the hideous things that are being done in this war are the consequences of a bad philosophy and that the bad philosophy in turn rests upon a wrong theology. But such is the fact, as any one with a logical mind can see. So if we are really going to reconstruct this world after the war is over we had better look to our philosophy and our theology. And we had better discover the real enemies of civilization, the materialists, atheists, agnostics, skeptics, the Irreligious. — (Copyright, 1943, N. C. W. C.)

Then Come and Offer Thy Gift

God is a spirit and those that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth. There can be no such thing as external worship that omits or excludes internal worship. Forgive us as we forgive those who trespass against us.

Christ in today's parable upbraids the Pharisees and the Scribes for the insufficiency of their religious service. He told His disciples that unless their justice exceeds that of the Pharisees and Scribes, they shall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. Here there is question of a definite serious fault; a question of an external action that is belied by the interior disposition. An outward practice of serving God, a total inward lack of true service to God.

It is so easy to leave it all on the Scribes and Pharisees! But even we of today have reason to examine our souls on this very question: "Is our service of God wholehearted? Is it merely lip service in which the sincerity of the heart is not concerned?" Disobedience to God's law, permissiveness in habits of sin, unwillingness to give up a particular sin, can easily make worthless all our outward expressions of devotion. Sins of thought and desire can be as wicked as sins of action; seemingly lesser sins can make us as guilty as sins that appear greater. It is the soul that decides, the will that chooses good or evil.

"Go first to be reconciled with thy brother." God does not want the gift of one who has seriously offended his brother, and who refuses to be reconciled to him. Christ is speaking to us in this Gospel. He gives us an important warning. He calls on us to be 100% for Him and all that He stands for. We can not be half-Christian, half-pagan; we can not be half-good, half-bad. Be true to Christ in your conscience, then come and offer your gift at His altar.

QUERIES and REPLIES

Why Condemn Everyone Like To Hell? Your Church is just too intolerant.

The Catholic Church condemns no one to hell. She does maintain, and with good reason, that she and she alone is the only true Church but she does not thereby consign everyone or anyone outside her fold to the eternal fires of perdition. Even well-informed non-Catholics recognize the boundless charity of the Catholic Church in this matter, a charity which condemns those only who deliberately sin against the light.

Thus Mallock writes: "Never was there a religious body, except the Roman, that laid the intense stress she does on all her dogmatic teachings, and yet had the justice that comes of sympathy for those who cannot receive them. The holy and humble of heart who do not know her, or who in good faith reject her, she commits with confidence to God's unenvied mercy; and these she knows to be infinite. Her anathemas are on none but those who reject her with eyes open" (St. Life Worth

Living? p. 243). — From the pen of Father Richard Felix, O.S.B., Defenders of the Faith, Conception, Missouri.

Feast Days

SUNDAY, July 12 — FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

Monday, July 13 — ST. VINCENT DE PAUL.

Tuesday, July 14 — ST. MARGARET.

Wednesday, July 15 — ST. FRANCES.

Thursday, July 16 — ST. NANCY MAGDALEN.

Friday, July 17 — ST. APOLLINARIS.

Saturday, July 18 — ST. CHRISTIAN.

The first thing a young Axis journalist is taught, no doubt, is to eat and sleep while wearing a muzzle. — Lincoln Journal-Star.

Diocesan Recordings

If you had to give up gasoline for a trip to Syracuse over here, you probably helped a paratrooper to get more easily to Syracuse, over there.

"Spiritual Powerhouse" of the diocese, so termed by His Excellency, Bishop Kearney, the diocesan Our Lady of the Lake Retreat House, at Geneva, is also a morale powerhouse in this area in wartime. Gasoline within reason for use in getting to the laymen's retreats is being allowed by the government.

Many imposing structures in the diocese have electrical plants, and fixtures which were installed under the energetic supervision and intelligent direction of Patrick A. Dwyer, president of Dwyer Electric Company who was called to his eternal reward, this week. He never tackled a job but that his whole heart was in it. He was an active layman, a kind father, a generous-to-a-fault friend. He had a host of friends throughout the diocese and his charitable deeds will not be adequately recorded in this life. Strong in faith he never faltered in declaring that faith on all occasions. May his soul rest in peace.

Equally to be condemned. A New York columnist commends movie producers for eliminating part of "Stage Door Canteen" in which a strip-tease dancer's clothes fall upon the American flag, but says nothing against the dance sequence itself in the picture.

Our boys overseas, in the tropics or the arctic, and the central features of their faith, the same. On Christmas Island, a Ranger writes, he attended Mass at which a native served in the same manner as he did when an altar boy back-home. The idea of the Church's missions in "teaching all nations" will be better understood by these boys when they return.

While concerned about boys and girls in service in war time and what may be in store for them, parents are justly proud of what military discipline is doing for the youth of the country. Early discipline at home is making it easier for the service boys and girls to "take" discipline in the armed forces.

Entering a restaurant in shirt sleeves is vulgar, unless the shirt is khaki. A badge of honor is not despised, even in a snooty restaurant. — Weston Leader.

There are 12 different kinds of snow, says a magazine article. None of them, however, is shoveling. — Portland (Me.) Press.