

Catholic Courier

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With the Approbation 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 found in every Catholic home in this diocese. I find it hard to understand how any Catholic can be so indifferent as to what is transpiring in his church throughout the world as to rely upon unreliable sources of information or even to seek no information whatever. Let us have a brief slogan "The CATHOLIC COURIER in every Catholic home."
+ JAMES E. KEARNEY, Bishop of Rochester.

PASTOR AND TEACHER

Parishioners and former pupils unite with relatives and close friends in mourning the death of Rev. Joseph C. Wurzer, Pastor of the Church of the Holy Ghost of Coldwater. His life had brought him into contact with thousands of souls in the classroom, in the church, in the parish school. His work as a teacher was undertaken just after his ordination, and closed only with the end of his life. At Rochester Catholic High School and Aquinas Institute, he was Professor and Prefect of Studies until his appointment as Pastor of Holy Ghost Church six years ago. Even with his assumption of pastoral work, he continued to be a teacher: his work among the student nurses at St. Mary's Hospital has been an effective aid in the training course.

His six years at Coldwater won him a host of admiring friends, just as his teaching career endeared him to thousands of young men in and about Rochester. Father Wurzer will be missed in the school room and at the altar and in the pulpit. His keen mind, trained intellect, shall no longer find its outlet in imparting the truths of religion to other souls. God has called him from the world and its labors. The prayers of his parishioners, relatives, pupils, friends, shall follow him. May he rest in peace!

To his parents, his brother, Father Michael Wurzer, and his sister and brother, the COURIER extends its sympathy on the death of this gifted priest.

GETTING BACK TO FUNDAMENTALS

The OPA regulations are borne with more or less patience by the many millions that make up America. The desire to cooperate fully with the all-out war effort prompts much of the obedience to rules and regulations that affect so completely the affairs of every home. Americans have had much freedom, much free-way, in their own planning and in their dealing with others. It took the war emergency to teach them to respect directives on what and how much they may buy, and what the producer or dealer shall be permitted to charge.

Some imaginary law of supply and demand was the accepted criterion up to now on prices. All the market would stand, was the rule of some producers and merchants. Trusts and combinations in restraint of trade have been held up to some extent by law. But nowhere do we hear any reference to the basic morality on the setting of prices. It is an application of the seventh commandment, "Thou shalt not steal," after a fair price shall prevail in all purchases and sales of goods. A fair price! How the lords of finance laugh at the term! The idea of measuring the sale price of any product by the actual cost of production with a fair profit for producer and middleman has never entered their mind. Ceiling prices as imposed by the OPA are merely an attempt to stop that form of stealing which comes from overcharging.

The Catholic Church has always taught the doctrine of the fair price. It is based on the natural law and on the positive divine law. It is a matter of justice or injustice, of right or wrong. Anything over and above the real value of an article, including cost of production and distribution, and allowing a reasonable profit to all producers and distributors, that is added to make a fixed market-price is an unjust taking of what belongs to another. A man steals from his neighbor when he takes money from him unjustly; he can do this by robbing his house, he can do it by holding him up on the highway with a gun, or in a store with an unfair price.

It is well to get back to fundamentals. Well-informed people should understand that some at least of the OPA directors are merely stopping that form of robbery that exploiters would commit through violating the law of the fair price.

PRAYERS FOR PEACE

The good news that is coming from all our battle-zones gives promise of an approaching victory for justice and honor, a victory that will mean real peace for the world. Now is the time to redouble our prayers for such a victory. There was something off the usual line in "Praise the Lord and Pass the Ammunition!" Chaplains are not combatants, not fighting men. There are others to pass the ammunition.

But it is wrong to be so busy in passing the ammunition that we forget to praise the Lord. All our military prowess and might will mean little if the Lord is not with us. But the Lord will be with us, will bless our arms with victory and peace, if we turn to Him in prayer.

Prayers for peace should be on our program every day. They should include that spirit of good-will for all that will promise the world freedom from persecution and aggression when victory comes.

Certain thoughts are prayers. There are moments when, whatever be the attitude of the body, the soul is on its knees.—Victor Hugo.

You do well to watch attentively over your own personal salvation, nevertheless he does better who strives to help others.—St. Bernard.

"Divorce is not wrong because the Church says it is wrong. . . . The Church says it is wrong because it is a violation of the natural law, which binds all men. There is not one God for Catholics and another for Protestants.—Mgr. Fulton J. Sheen.

Layman Thinks Theologically

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

Frequently — in fact habitually — we, of the clergy, complain that laymen know so little, say so little, write so little about theology. But there are exceptions. In fact there is a fair number of persons not in Holy Orders — sometimes not even of our faith — who seem to have a pretty strong hold on at least some theological principles. Now and again you may stumble upon a piece in the papers that shows a realization of the fact that the basis of all thinking and of all action is theology, and a grasp of the consequent fact that the biggest battle now in progress in the world — bar none — is the battle not of ideologies, but of theologians.

Yes "theologies" in the plural, because all philosophies (or if you have not a phobia or a complex against that "neologism," "ideologies") are "theologies." Theism is of course a theology but so is Atheism. And so is Pantheism. And Agnosticism. And Ma-

terialism. And of course all the older paganisms.

One writer who seems aware of that important truth is George Sokolsky whose syndicated article appears in the New York Sun and elsewhere. He says: "No fanaticism of any sect at any time in history is as foully fearful as the paganism which has become the stench of Europe and even assails our nostrils here in this country. It is a struggle between the God of Love and the gods of hate. It is a struggle between the absurd materialism that the confusions of science without philosophy, of knowledge without truth, of facts without thought, have employed in the corruption of our manhood and womanhood — it is a struggle between that and the essential need for man to walk again in the image of God unafraid and without shame."

"It is curious perhaps that I, a layman, hard in the intricacies of

life, engaged in the dissection of politics and economics and the mistakes of men should be speaking of this. But the peril is that our Western civilization, the civilization of Torah and Crucifix, will be shattered because men have forgotten and have lost it."

"Hitler did not originate the paganism of Europe any more than did Lenin. They are the products of the fallacies of even a century before them, when men were sure that they knew that there was no invisible world — no world of the spirit, of faith, of kindness, of goodness — no world of love. And now we know what all that leads to and we must go back to the house of prayer and find understanding and repentance."

Mr. Sokolsky, as he confesses, is no theologian, but I doubt if any theologian could have expressed that particular truth more correctly, and there are few, if any, theologians who could have spoken it so eloquently.

Unless the nation all large, and indeed, unless the great majority of the peoples of all nations, victors and vanquished in the present war, get hold of the truth so trenchantly expressed by the newspaper columnist, there will be little hope for the world.

We must all to that extent at least become philosophers, moralists, theologians. If we continue to see in the war nothing but a monstrous anomaly, instead of the inevitable and logical climax of what has been going on in the world for a few decades back, the war will have been fought in vain.

In a deeper sense than the usual slang-users imagine, we must learn "what it is all about." Most of us haven't yet acquired that elementary knowledge. We are so distracted by thoughts of battles and campaigns, of heroes and villains, of hopes and promises and prospects of victory that we don't see the struggle a estrance between Faith and Anti-Faith. If when the visible war is over, we are too tired to fight the real war, we might better not have bothered to fight this one.

Winston Churchill and President Roosevelt have rung a couple of changes on the words "beginning" and "end." "It is the end of the beginning," said the Prime Minister, when the Allies drove the Axis Powers out of Africa. "It is the beginning of the end," said Mr. Roosevelt when the Anglo-Canadian-American forces made a successful landing in Sicily. With due respect to both of these competent observers, we have not yet seen either the end or the beginning of THE WAR. When what we call "the war" is over and "peace" has settled down (God speed the day), we shall be free to make the real beginning, the beginning of the world-wide war against Materialism, Atheism, Irreligion.

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Diocesan Recordings

A LAYMAN LAYS OFF — the weekend for his parish has arrived. . . . He meets other men of the parish at the church parking station. . . . They drive to Geneva and turn up Lochland Road. . . . Up the drive way of a beautiful lake-side estate they go. . . . They are greeted by the Rev. Augustino J. Aylward, C.S.S.R. . . . He is director of Our Lady of the Lake Retreat House. . . . That is the beautiful estate with a commodious house and spacious grounds. . . . The men are shown to their rooms. . . . Then they go to supper. . . . A conference follows and they learn that self-imposed silence is the rule of the retreat house. . . . Early to bed and early to rise for Holy Mass. . . . Breakfast follows in silence save for the spiritual reading. . . . "The Loyal Catholic" is the topic for spiritual reading. . . . Conferences follow. . . . Led by one of their own group they follow the way of the cross

up the Old Testament with the present to make points he would have remembered. . . . His apt stories interest and hold his hearers. . . . He tells of an elderly woman visited, one who could not read or write but knew her faith. . . . She was asked what she believed in the Immaculate Conception. . . . She said that she had a mother in Ireland whom she dearly loved. . . . She said that if she could have brought that mother into the world without evil, she would have done it. . . . God could bring his Mother into the World without evil and He did it. . . . The men leave the beautifully appointed chapel. . . . They go out into the sunshine and walk towards the lake. . . . Giving the Biblical atmosphere are the sheep which the Reverend Director procured to keep the grass down. . . . no mowers available. . . . Recitation of the Rosary in the afternoon. . . . Confessions Saturday. . . . Another conference in the evening and Benediction with the men's voices raised in hymns. . . . At 10 p. m. lights out and quiet descends over the three floors of the house. . . . Sunday afternoon the Conference ends the retreat. . . . The men prepare to leave. . . . They praise highly the Retreat Master and his counsel. . . . They speak enthusiastically of the meals served and the general comfort at the Diocesan Retreat House. . . . In the state of grace their spirits are uplifted. . . . Men who have for the first time made the retreat pledge themselves to bring others. . . . It is an experience that cannot be fully described but must be lived to be appreciated, they all say.

QUERIES and REPLIES

Is It Christian To Go To War For Any Purpose?

War is a terrible tragedy but, tragic though it be, it is not always essentially evil. In fact there are many instances when it is right and justifiable. If this were not true, the Church would never have canonized St. Joan of Arc. If it were not true, St. Louis would not have been a Crusader, nor St. Bernard an advocate of the Crusades; Pope St. Pius V would not have prayed for the victory of Don Juan of Austria at Lepanto nor would the Papal Zouaves have been summoned by Pius IX to fight for the rights of the Holy See.

Not only is it permissible to wage war under certain circumstances but it may even be a matter of duty to take up arms. Suppose a father sees his child in danger from a murderer; suppose a son sees his mother being treated cruelly, and suppose that each of them has the means at hand to defend his dear one. Clearly it is not only lawful but positively virtuous to fight in such circumstances. Indeed it would be sinful not to do so. If for the same reason men are justified in taking up arms to defend and protect their country when that end cannot be accomplished in any other practical way.

This does not mean that every war is justified. Neither does it mean that it is right to glorify war for its own sake or to fan into flame the war-like passions of men. Only in the last extremity, either in self-defense or in defense of someone else gravely threatened in body or in soul, may men and nations enter into mortal combat. But Christianity has never taught, and does not teach, that war is always wrong.

From the pen of Father Richard Felix, O.S.B., Defenders of the Faith, Conception, Missouri.

Better not sneer at "backward South America." Peru had three generations of university graduates before we had a college.—Louisville Times.

Because Thou Hast Not Known

Jerusalem had received the greatest of all divine benefactions, the culmination of all the blessings of patriarch and prophet and priest and levite, the fulfillment of all the promises of old. That benefaction was the visitation of the long-awaited Redeemer. The signs were there, the conditions that clearly pointed out the visitation as present. Prophetic pronouncements united with miraculous manifestations to declare that visitation. Yet the Jews did not know Christ, did not know the day of His visitation.

Of all the woes that Jerusalem had suffered in her long history, none was so great as this. There was no man-God to lament her tragedies of old, her fallings from grace, her sinking into ruin before the invader, her sorrow at the destruction of the temple, and the captivity of her children. There were, indeed, one series of catastrophes for Jerusalem! But none of them called for the tears of the Redeemer!

But the destruction that Christ saw facing thee, O City of Jerusalem, as a punishment for the fact that "Thou hast not known the time of thy visitation," was something so terrible, so lasting that it called forth from the eyes of Christ bitter tears, from the lips of Christ sorrowful lamentation. "He came unto His own, and His own received Him not."

Christ has His day for coming to each of us. We can remain ignorant by refusing to know the signs that tell us that day is at hand: we can study the signs, and know it is the time of our visitation. Christ's lament over the Jews was because of their refusal of grace: He shall have like reason to lament over us should we reject Him. Let us seek from Him now a saving knowledge of the things that are to our peace!