

Catholic Courier

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FIFTY YEARS AFTER

Tomorrow marks the Fiftieth Anniversary of the laying of the cornerstone of St. Bernard's Seminary. Formal celebration of this event will be connected with the Diamond Jubilee observance of The Diocese of Rochester later this year.

But the very importance of the day demands that some attention be given to it now. It saw the culmination of many years of active and intelligent planning on the part of Bishop McQuaid and his priests and people. The planning had to do not merely with the collection of a building fund, the preparation of plans for building, the assembling of the bricks and stones and mortar. It concerned itself also with the future faculty of the seminary, and to the great schools of the Church at Home and Inland and Oxford as well as to American seminaries for many years before 1893 were sent young men who were to fit themselves under celebrated teachers for their own work of teaching in the future St. Bernard's Seminary. We say these plans were the work of Bishop McQuaid with his priests and people because the Bishop would, indeed, have been helpless without the cooperation of an understanding clergy and a truly devoted people.

The interest of the clergy and the generosity of the people enabled the Bishop to further his plans, and to build up from modest amounts a seminary construction fund that made an approaching reality of what had been to many just another dream of a zealous Bishop.

Fifty years of service by St. Bernard's have seen results in dioceses far and near, in our own country and in neighboring countries, and in the far places of the earth. Some 2700 of her graduate priests have labored in church and school and chancery and military chaplaincy and in the episcopate. Greater far than even the happy dream of Bishop McQuaid for St. Bernard's Seminary have been the accomplishment of this noted school for the clergy.

Fifty years of life have you many friends for St. Bernard's, eager to help with her in blessing the world with an ever-growing army of splendidly trained priests. Her Golden Jubilee will prompt many friends of this new generation to claim their privilege of initiating those who have been her benefactors in the first fifty years of her history.

FINANCIAL ECHOES OF FIFTY YEARS

Older diocesans will recall the Seminary Report of old that came over a year in book form to acknowledge every gift to the Seminary Collection specifying the parish, the Collector, the individual giver, and the souls of deceased brethren in whose memory gifts were made. The Report had an honored place on the parlor table, was closely scrutinized throughout the year, eagerly searched to see that one's parish was doing as well as last year and keeping its place if not bettering it among all the parishes of the diocese. Dollar offerings were most to the front, and were the gifts of the poor people to a cause dear to their hearts. Blessed by Bishop McQuaid for timely help were those steadfast friends, blessed also were those of larger means who responded with the greater gifts of Professorships and Burses to his appeals for the seminary. What a world of memory their gifts had fifty years ago, what a world of good these gifts have produced in this half-century; What other investment could have had an auspicious and lucrative, what other investment could have produced such priceless dividends?

We have read the list year by year, now contained in the shortened Seminary Report, of those whose benefactions have sponsored Professorships and Burses and Debt-Reducing Funds. We have noted Bishop McQuaid's style of appeal for such donations: \$20,000.00 would then support a Professorship, furnishing an income that would pay the annual salary of one Professor. \$5,000.00 would set up a Burse, its income paying the yearly tuition and board of one student. Doubtless these amounts would be required today to produce the same results. Many benefactors in these later years have found it more convenient to make a donation of \$10,000.00, or \$5,000.00 without specifying any particular use, merely making their gift part of the general endowment of the Seminary.

Three marble tablets at the entrance of the Main Building of St. Bernard's Seminary contain the unique Roll of Honor of all who have become Benefactors of the Seminary in its fifty years of history. The present and subsequent years will find new additions to this list. The Roll of Honor is a fitting tribute to the contributors; but the lasting remembrance of their gift is the constant service to the Seminary and to the Priesthood and to the Church represented by the yearly income it produces. A word to the Bishop or to Monsignor Goggin is all that is necessary to plan a present-day gift to the Seminary, of a gift in the future by will.

100 YEARS AT ST. JOSEPH'S

In the Catholic countries of Europe, 100 years does not mean much in the life of a parish church. Back over the ages goes the record of many an edifice that has ministered to many a generation. 1000 years of history of God's Church has left its monuments in every part of the European country. Not here, in America 100 years in the history of a parish church does mark it as a pioneer institution, one of the earliest among its younger neighbors.

The COURIER expresses today the greetings of the diocese and of all its parishes to the great pioneer among parish churches, St. Joseph's, which now completes its first century of life. Centrally located in the midst of our mercantile and industrial buildings, the stately stone edifice raises its tower into the skies proudly reminiscent of the days when it looked down from its heights onto green lawns and study houses which have gradually given way to the demands of modern life and business. But changing conditions have not destroyed the mission of St. Joseph's Church from far and near parishioners and worshippers come to benefit by the zeal and religion fervor of the sons of St. Alphonsus, the Redemptorist Fathers.

QUERIES and REPLIES

Why Does Your Church Forbid The Beautiful And Romantic "Here Comes The Bride" At Wedding Ceremonies? The Church has the right and the duty to prescribe what is fitting and proper for the administration of the Sacraments and for the dignity of the House of God.

"Here Comes The Bride" is not a wedding march but a bedroom ballad. It is taken from the opera, "Lohengrin" and occurs in the bridal chamber of Elsa and Lohengrin in act three. It serves as an overture of impending tragedy. Immediately after the bridal procession approaches her husband for not sharing a secret with her. Each then accuses the other of mistrust. In the midst of the argument that ensues their room is broken into by Frederick who is promptly killed by the bridegroom.

This is the setting of the romantic wedding march so much desired by brides who do not know its meaning. Certainly no well-instructed bride would want the atmosphere of impending tragedy to surround her on one of the happiest days of her life. That is why Holy Mother Church, with discriminating good taste thinks that such worldly compositions should be left to the operatic stage where they properly belong. From the pen of Father Richard Felix, O.S.B., Defenders of the Faith, Conception, Missouri.

STRANGE BUT TRUE Little-Known Facts for Catholics

By M. J. MURRAY

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St. Nicholas' Cathedral in Rome, where the Pope prays for the world. The candle is the symbol of the Church's mission. Pope Zachary (741-752) had the cathedral constructed as the Lateran to chant the growth of the faith.

Right Disposition By Nation

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

That is a very eloquent and poignant passage towards the end of the Holy Father's letter to Cardinal Marchetti-Selcaggiani on the occasion of the bombing of Rome.

"To all our sons whose eyes are turned to Rome and to the Year of Christ who as its Bishop is its own loving father, to all our sons wherever they be, and in a special way to all those throughout the world whose experience of personal suffering in others makes them more sympathetically toward every form of misery, we address, with fatherly insistence, our invitation asking them to raise such good prayers to our Lord that He may hasten the hour of light when men will lay down their arms, their souls will be calm and the hearts and joys of a true peace will come back to brighten this convulsed world."

The Holy Father has been saying beautiful and touching things like that for several years. Doubtless the prayers he suggests have been said; novenas made, Masses offered and Communions received with the purpose that God would design to put an end to this war. Would it be irrelevant or sound skeptical if we were to ask why the prayers have not been heard? I think not.

In apostolic times the people asked St. James that question and in his "Catholic Epistle" he gave them the answer. Not to go so far back and not to appeal to the authority of an Apostle. I think I have stumbled upon a good answer in a book very recently published in America. "If England," says the author (whose name I shall not give now because I expect to quote him later, and I think he would prefer to be introduced with a more characteristic passage). "If England is in this war not with a feeling of racial superiority, like her opponents, or for the self-appointed glory of an international policeman, but guided by a sentiment of contrition, determined to serve the Occident and Christianity humbly and dutifully, then this war will be won by her morally and spiritually, unlike the last one which was a total loss."

Now please don't concentrate on that word "England." And please don't be distracted from the main thought by cynical reflections on the impossibility of England's being humble and dutiful, contrite and concerned to serve religion. In place of "England" substitute "The Allies" and ask if the Allies are humble and dutiful, contrite and truly concerned to serve religion. Or, to be perfectly fair,

say "America" instead of England or the Allies, and ask if we as a nation are in this war in a spirit of contrition, with no racial or other animosity; if we are carrying on from a sense of humility and duty; if we have no intention of policing the rest of the world, or of doing so from a sense of superiority to those whom we police.

When those private individuals in early Christian times asked St. James why their prayers were not heard, he told them in effect that unless they got themselves into the right attitude of mind and heart, their prayers could not be heard. Prayers don't work automatically. We cannot tell God what we want and expect Him to do it whether or not we are in the right disposition. Prayer is a matter of give and take, a two-sided contract.

If that is so in the relationship between an individual person and God, why isn't it so in the relationship between a nation—or an alliance of nations—and God?

It would be sacrilegious to profess to read the mind of God with dogmatic certainty. But in all reverence we may imagine God saying, "The prayer of the nations will be answered when the nations are ready to receive the answer in the right spirit." The right spirit is not pride but humility, not vindictiveness but contrition, not a sense of being better than the rest of men and therefore entitled to "police" them, judge them, condemn them and punish them. "Vengeance is mine," "I will repay." And again "The anger of man worketh not the justice of God."

I think it was Jacques Maritain who not long ago suggested that we people of the Allied Nations should not only pray, but make processions, confessing and bewailing our own sins, wearing (at least in our hearts) sackcloth and with ashes on our heads. I suppose there are some persons, even Catholics, who thought the suggestion ridiculous. Nations don't do public penance, least of all when close to victory. No, truly, nations don't do that. And perhaps that is what holds up the answer to the prayer of the nations.

It is significant that my unnamed author (you shall hear from him again) says in substance the same thing as Maritain. He suggests that we—the nations—be humble and that whatever "policing" we may do shall be done not for our own glory or with a feeling of superiority, but with contrition and a purpose of amendment of our own lives.

It is an old truth, spoken and written by all theologians. That God sometimes withholds what we ask because if He were to grant our prayer, it would work to our detriment. Even victory, even peace can work to our detriment if we are not ready to accept it in the right frame of mind. (Copyright, 1943, N.C.W.C.)

Diocesan Recordings

HEADS FOR SERVICEMEN—A short time ago, this newspaper was asked to make an appeal for ornamental heads for servicemen in the South Pacific to be used in their dealings with natives. This week, the Army and Navy Union which made the appeal, thanked us for the response. More important than sending this type of heads to the men on the fighting fronts is to send the "heads" as we know them, the Honors. The first kind are for temporal dealings, the latter for spiritual and eternal.

WANTING DEPORTMENT—Stories that come to us of what the speed-up times resultant for war are doing vary. In some instances it is reported that women in their new environment in the shops are becoming lax in their speech—are learning to use the language that no member of the Holy Name Society would use nor

would want to hear. On the other hand it is reported that in shops there are men and women who will not tolerate any obscene language and stop the users at once. Whatever the condition, it is a time for well-informed, staunch Catholic laymen and women to make their presence felt in groups. Not objectionably or boisterously but quietly and by good example. People are being thrown together now who would not have otherwise met in peacetime. The influence of sound Catholic knowledge, thought and deportment can do a great amount, not only for the Church but for those outside the Church who may not know of her teachings and practices.

ADD INCONSISTENCIES—Worrying about predictions about the end of the war while wasting time in the effort to bring about war's end.

St. Joseph's has been a center of spiritual life for all Rochester during its one hundred years of life: it has a history of service that antedates location on the present site; may it continue to be a medium of grace to countless thousands of the faithful in the years ahead! We congratulate Father Aulbach and his fellow Redemptorists on this happy anniversary!