A CHALLENGE

(Reprinted from Maryknoll Vocation pamphlet)

During a lull between bombs, a Marine in the Solomons sat down and wrote a letter. It was addressed to Maryknoll. And what a letter!

"We'll win this war," it said. "There's no doubt about that. But stopping the enemy won't end the trouble. We've got pagan brains to deal with—brains that do not even think of a human being as something sacred, as we do. And after the last Zero falls from the sky, these non-Christians will still not know anything about the sacredness of the individual.

"There's only one solution that I can see. Men, and more men must go out to teach and tell. You men of Maryknoll are doing this work, and if I ever get out of the mess alive, you'll have one more to work with you. So please regard this letter as my application."

"Tell it to the Marines!" they say, but every once in a while the Marines tell it to us. This one did. And he added one thing more.

He said: "There must be many younger men at home, too young to enlist in the armed forces, but not too young to prepare themselves for the work to come—to take up where we leave off—to do a work which is even more important. That is, to take Christ's message to all men."

This is the challenge of the Marine from the Solomons! A challenge to the Catholic youth of America to prepare now for the building of the world of tomorrow.

The challenge is yours—the opportunity and duty to carry peace and salvation beyond the confines of our country to the whole world.

Why have we been so slow to pass along faith in the True God to all mankind? Why haven't we given it to the six hundred million in China and Japan—nearly one-third of the population of the earth?

Orientals have shown that they make good Christians. The few that have received the truth have proved that. So it seems no stretch of the imagination to say that, if we deprive most of them of what has been sent to them by Christ, we must accept some responsibility when they do things that shock us.

PERCENTAGE SMALL

Up to now the nations of Europe have given 95 per cent of the missioners in pagan lands. We of America claim only 5 per cent of the total—3,000 priests, Brothers and Sisters.

Here in the United States of America we have 36,976 priests. They are our leaders. While most of them must stay with us to sustain the Faith in sections already Catholic, yet they realize that it is primarily their responsibility to provide for the extension of that same Faith to the far corners of the earth. Since our priests cannot go themselves, others must be found to represent them in doing for the world what they are doing for our people here at home.

After the war, there will be need for at least 10,000 more priests in the mission sections of our own country, and 20,000 to take the Prince of Peace to the two-thirds of mankind that have not as yet heard of Him.

Here is your challenge! You can change the World. Will you meet it?

New Problem

A new problem for Catholics seems to be arising out of the government regulations that fowl is available on meatless days. Some of our good non-Catholic friends have come to a rapid and not too logical conclusion, so that Catholic guests are hearing from their non-Catholic hosts and hostesses: "I know it's Friday and your meatless day, so I am serving you chicken."

Pretty soon it may be time to take stock and ask: "What does the candidate stand for besides what he hopes the voters will stand for?"

'Quiz' Corner

Do Catholics have to pay for dispensations when they want to get married?

There is no charge for any dispensation. If persons wishing a dispensation are able to make an offering it is expected of them. There is expense attached to the chancery and it is only fair that those who use its services should help to pay the expenses. If there be any money left over and above the actual expenses it is given to the charities of the diocese.

Should children tell their parents where they are going when their parents ask them, as for instance, going out on a date?

Yes, children should tell and must tell when parents ask them. Parents have a duty to know about the company the children keep and where they go. Children are obliged to obey their parents. On the other hand, parents should not ask on every occasion and every time where the children go. Constant nagging and scolding make home unpleasant. Children should remember that their parents stand in the place of God, and should therefore treat them with respect and obedience.

Why did God give man another chance after he had fallen and did not give the same chance to the Angels?

Owing to the perfection of the Angelic nature and intellect, when it places an act that act is irrevocable. If the act be good the angel is confirmed in goodness and if the act be bad the angel is confirmed in evil. The mind of an Angel is much more perfect and of much higher order than the mind of man. We are subject to many influences that come from the weakness of our bodies and from our material surroundings; an Angel is a pure spirit and is entangled in none of these distractions.

Who were the Japanese martyrs?

They were 26 holy men, missionaries and converts, who were killed for their faith in Japan. Their number was composed of European missionaries and natives of that country. St. Peter Baptist was the leader of the Franciscan group. These martyrs were the first to shed their blood for Christ in Japan, being crucified in the year 1597.

Will you please answer this question for me? What should one do when a person to whom one has done many favors is ungrateful for these favors?

St. Thomas answers your question in a rather sensible way. He tells us: "There are two points to be considered with regard to an ungrateful person. The first is what he deserves to suffer because of his ingratitude, and thus it is certain that he deserves to be deprived of our favor. The second is, what should his benefactor do? For in the first place one should not easily judge another to be ungrateful, since, as Seneca remarks 'a man is often grateful although he repays not' because perhaps he has not the means or the opportunity of repaying. Secondly, the benefactor should be inclined to turn the man's ungratefulness into gratitude, and if he does not achieve this by being kind to him once, he may by being kind a second time. If, however, the more one repeats his favors, the more ungrateful and evil the other becomes, he should cease from bestowing his favors upon him."

In a sermon on the Mass, I heard a priest refer to the "Common of the Mass." I didn't follow his explanation. Kindly print an answer.

The "Common of the Mass" (also called the "Ordinary of the Mass") is that part of the Mass which is the same in all Masses said; it includes the prayers at the foot of the altar, the offertory, the canon, and in most Masses, the Last Gospel. The other portions of the Mass—which vary according to the feast—are known as the Proper of the Mass.

Five and Ten Years Ago

(From the Files of the CATHOLIC COURIER)

From Feb. 22, 1934, Edition

Lady Violet Bonham Carter's story of the breaking of the seal of the confession by a Catholic priest was exposed in a London Tablet disclosure that no priest was involved in the case she had in mind and that the minister was a Church of England clergyman.

From Feb. 23, 1939, Edition

Brazenly injecting itself into preparations for the Conclave of the Sacred College of Cardinals at Vatican City to select a successor to His Holiness Pope Pius XI, Das Schwarzes Korps, Nazi Black Guard organ, warned the four German Cardinals that they were not to vote for Their Eminences Eugenio Cardinal Pacelli, George Cardinal Mundelein, Ildefonso Cardinal Schuster, or Elia Cardinal Dalla Costa.

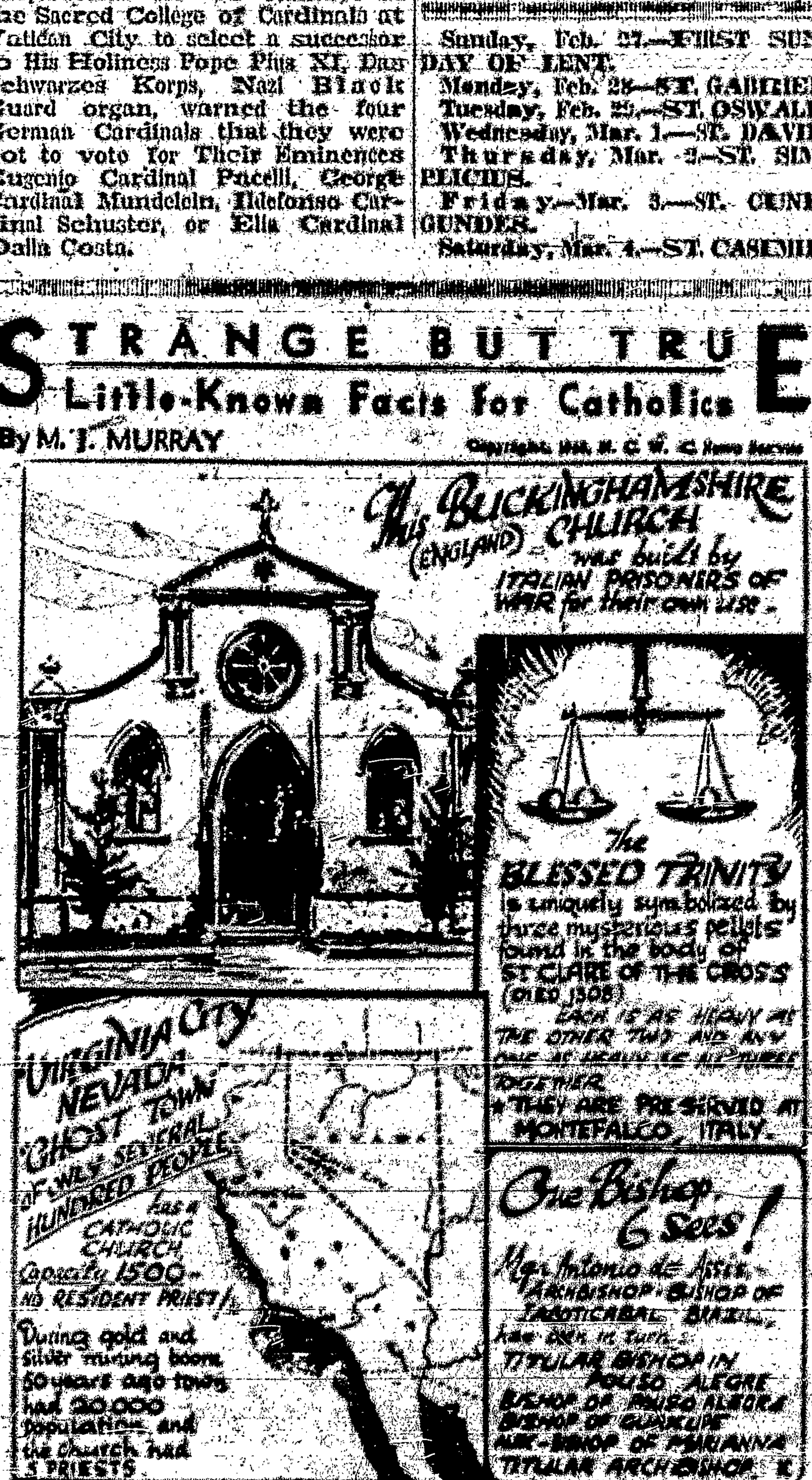
Feast Days

Sunday, Feb. 27—FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT.
Monday, Feb. 28—ST. GABRIEL.
Tuesday, Feb. 29—ST. OSWALD.
Wednesday, Mar. 1—ST. DAVID.
Thursday, Mar. 2—ST. SIMPLICIUS.
Friday—Mar. 3—ST. CUNEGUNDES.
Saturday, Mar. 4—ST. CASIMIR.

STRANGE BUT TRUE
Little-Known Facts for Catholics

By M. J. MURRAY

Copyright, 1944, N. C. W. C. News Service



Literary Signpost — By Rev. Benedict Ehmann

INTRODUCING: THE DEVIL

Satan is always having his innings with the Church, and with each one of us. But usually he works behind the curtain. Or if he comes on the stage at all, he is masked, and looks like somebody else. There are two days of the year, however, when the Church confronts the Old Boy in person: the first and third Sundays of Lent. On the First Sunday, we see how he tempted the Savior. On the Third Sunday, we see how the Savior attacked him, driving him out of the possessed. The Church, too, is tempted by Satan; the Church, too, has power to attack him and to beat down his works.

The idea of a personal devil was being ridiculed a few years ago by most people outside the Church. That always suits his purpose fine. It doesn't make any difference to him that he should be seen as the power behind the works of evil. He'll have all eternity to publicize himself. His big trouble is that he can't stay hidden. There comes a certain point on the downward path where the stench becomes so evil that you cannot deny there must be a carcass of hell around somewhere. And the laugh of ridicule at the idea of a personal devil becomes frozen on the lips with the terror of recognition.

BEAR DIRE WITNESS

Bernanos and Huysmans, in the French literature of our day, bear their terrible witness to the reality of Satan. Butler-Yeats, in his *European Jungle*, which is a commentary on the Europe before Munich, states plainly that we cannot begin to make sense out of the terrible conflict if we do not accept the fact of a personal devil.

And, only just the other day, one of the most popular books of the season had two devils for its characters. Of course, they bore imaginary names —Screwtape and Wormwood, and the situation in which they worked was an invention of the author. But, with all its diabolic wit, the book was in deadly earnest about the reality of the devil, and still more about the reality of what the devil tries to do with us.

For those who might have missed earlier notices about this book, the opening of the Lenten season makes it timely to speak of it again. It is called *The Screwtape Letters*. It served to introduce its author, C. S. Lewis, so well to the American reading public, that the publishers immediately issued four other books of his which had been earlier printed in England. It uses a clever literary device—a series of letters written by a senior devil, Screwtape, to his young nephew, Wormwood, who has just been sent on his first temptation-assignment and is pretty much like a greenhorn. Screwtape is a veteran of many wars, and knows almost all the ropes. He keeps in touch with his unskilled nephew by the letters, which make up the book.

Dimly seen through the murk of the devilish plotting are the human characters who are the objects of the conspiracy. They have no names, nor even any special identity. It is as if we are ciphers to the devils who hold us in contempt. The Screwtape-Wormwood plot finally fails: the object of it dies in the state of grace. But, before that time, there are many terrifying crises when the plotters come close to tripping up their man.

WARNED OF PLOTTING

The Screwtape Letters gives the reader the uncanny sensation he would have if he unearthed a batch of spy letters plotting the overthrow of our government. As I read the book, I couldn't let go the thought that, whoever the devil is who has the job of sabotaging my salvation, these must be the lines of his strategy. It is a sobering thought to realize that I am being shadowed; but I am already warned of the alleys and dead-end streets of my character where he can do his deadly work.

Of course, it isn't really us in whom the devil is interested. It is God. There is the great Enemy. We human beings are beneath the devil's contempt. He considers it a sacrilege for God to have taken the spark of spirit and to have locked it up in such mudpiles as human beings. That is unforgivable of God. He is forever to be despised for that cheap faux pas. The way to get back at Him for that insult to pure spirit is to spoil as many of these mudpiles as possible and throw them back in His face. Their hate for Him never lets them call Him God. When they speak of Him at all, they call Him simply "the Enemy."

All of this is powerfully brought out in *The Screwtape Letters*. As you read them, you get a deep insight into the thoughts of this wonderful divine "Enemy" who is on our side. Glimpses and sunbursts of His tremendous glory shine through the venomous words of the hate-ridden Screwtape; for hate does not keep the devils from knowing the true measure of their Enemy.

The Screwtape Letters would make a grand book for Lenten reading. It would give you plenty of food for examination of conscience. But, even better than that, it would give you a better perception of God's love for us all; for the devils hate us only because God loves us; and if they strike at us, it is only that they may strike at God.

It's odd that the versatile Tin Pan Alley boys have never given us a March income tax song. What we have in mind is something beginning, perhaps, with the line "Unhappy daze is here again."

That German idea of using razor blades for money is just another instance of Nazi cruelty. Only think of what might happen to a wife innocently looking for a little extra change in a pants pocket!

Ponape is credited with being the most fertile isle in the South Seas, but the Japs, you may be sure, would gladly get along without what our fliers have just been raising there.

All those little signs, dangled out here and there around the town, remind us that it isn't paying the tax that irks old John Q. Citizen so much [illegible] somebody to show him how [illegible]