AS WE SEE IT

By DAN PATRICK

In Rochester the other day a lady lecturer was giving an audience her version of what we hope may not go down in history as the ill-fated Italian campaign. She said in effect that the reluctance of our military leaders to bomb churches, convents and shrines slowed down the drive and brought a consequent large number of casualties.

The reason behind this strategy, the lady lecturer went on, was a desire of the high command not to alienate the sympathies of Catholics in the allied countries.

It is high time that a halt be called to loose talk on this subject. If our armchair strategists are looking for premature alibis, they better leave out the Catholics. Our position on this mater is no secret. It was clearly stated by some of our Bishops who commented on the bombing of the Cassino monastery. It coincides with the orders given the Allied armies by General Eisenhower who told his men to spare religious edifices wherever possible but not at the cost of the lives of our men.

American Catholics have a tremendous stake in the Italian campaign. The stake is not measured in the stone and masonry of shrines which of course we all respect and hope are spared wherever possible. It is measured in the flesh and blood of our sons and brothers and fathers.

By various methods, some subtle and others quite obvious, attempts are being made to gain public support for various proposals which would give the federal government a too-hold on our school systems.

We, of course, are told that the government wishes to shower some of its gold on the heads of our children and make them better citizens of tomorrow. Translated, of course, this is nothing more than an attempt to control our schools to some degree at least.

At the present time, for instance, the United States Office of Education is planning to create a federal division of informational propaganda designed to provide lecturers, books and pamphlets to instruct our pupils in "internationalist political philosophy." The whole idea is the brainchild of one of those immigrant professors who always manage to land softly on some cushion padded by the federal government.

We might well heed the advice given by a visiting Frenchman some years ago when he said: "Don't let the government get a hold on your schools. If that ever happens you will eventually have politicians for teachers, and then, God help you!"

Major benefits, not now too apparent, are bound to accrue from the oratorical contest sponsored among students of our diocesan high schools by the Catholic Education Office and this newspaper.

The general subject matter of this year's contest was gleaned from the CATHOLIC COURIER'S Jubilee Magazine which spotlighted the post-war world. Under contest procedure, these articles were discussed at some length by the high school boys and girls.

That was exactly what we hoped to achieve inasmuch as these same boys and girls who now are discussing these post-war problems in theory must face them in reality as the men and women of tomorrow.

These boys and girls, to a large extent, comprise the laity of tomorrow. After the war—as never before—the Church will need an informed laity to cope with the tremendous problems which will be generated in every conceivable field.

The American clergy cannot carry forward the cause of the Church without the understanding help of an informed laity.

By far and large, informed Catholic laymen today are not too numerous. By an informed layman we mean an individual who knows the teachings of the Church so thoroughly that he can apply them in obtaining a Catholic solution to the social and economic problems which plague us.

In a fashion we are weathering the storms of today but we cannot run the same risks in the future. That is why we deem these oratoricals so important not only to the participants but to the Rochester Diocese at large.

See No Evil

The four young Catholics went to the city's best restaurant and settled themselves down for a pleasant evening. The floor show began and featured a girl in Indian costume. She sang "Indian Love Call." But when the lights were turned on her, she might as well have worn nothing at all. The first young Catholic lieutenant became very much engrossed in the business of crushing his cigaret in the ash tray. The second turned his back on the singer. One of the girls suddenly found that her shoe needed fixing. The fourth girl reports to me that she turned her eyes from the singer to look admiringly upon her three companions, whose spontaneous Catholic sense had manifested itself so promptly.

It's All the Way You Look at It

Mary Dooling reports on the Fifth Grade teacher who was endeavoring to increase and enrich the vocabulary of her students by a simple process of roll call. As she called each name, the student mentioned a noun, an adjective, or a verb. The first student named a word beginning with "a," the second with "b," and so on. This day they were on adjectives.

The young man rose when she called his name, and then to his dismay realized he had to name an adjective that began with "u." He was stumped, so sister helped him.

"Now suppose that at Christmas time along with the football and the bicycle and the toys, your parents gave you clothes, shoes, stockings, a jacket, a suit. What kind of gifts would those be?"

The boy thought a minute and then shouted, "Oh, unnecessary."

STRANGE BUT TRUE

Little-Known Facts for Catholics

By M. J. MURRAY

Five and Ten Years Ago

From Mar. 30, 1934, Edition

The Catholic Calverts gave to the world "the vision and the example which, once implanted in the human heart, will quench the dangerous consequences of religious antagonism and prejudice, whose embers and smoldering fires unhappily still abound." This was the message of Gov. Albert C. Ritchie of Maryland at the Memorial Cross dedication at St. Clement's Island in commemoration of the Tercentenary of the founding of Maryland.

From Mar. 30, 1939, Edition

Consistency in carrying out the teachings of the Church and the "saturation" of Catholic homes with wholesome Catholic literature were urged by His Excellency, Bishop Kearney in his address to more than 7,500 members of the New York Police Department Holy Name Society at their annual Communion Breakfast at Hotel Astor.

Feast Days

Sunday, Apr. 2.—PALM SUNDAY.

Monday, Apr. 3.—ST. RICHARD OF CHICHESTER.

Tuesday, Apr. 4.—ST. ISIDORE.

Wednesday, Apr. 5. — SPY WEDNESDAY.

Thursday, Apr. 6. — HOLY THURSDAY.

Friday, Apr. 7.—GOOD FRIDAY.

Saturday, Apr. 8.—HOLY SATURDAY.

Pope Pius XII On The Catholic Press

"Truth like man has but a single face: and truth is Our weapon just as prayer is Our defense and strength, and the living, sincere, and disinterested apostolic word inspired by fraternal affection, Our entree to the hearts of men."

An Open Letter To— Red Cross Blood Donors

The Fighting Front

"Dear You: From across the abyss that separates this world from the Eternal Realm of Almighty God, comes a personal message to you.

"Pat was one of those starry-eyed kids to whom all life is an adventure. He had just turned 21. His past life had not been what you could call bad, but like every son of Adam there were a few things he had to 'straighten out' before he should be fully ready to meet his Creator and Judge.

"It was 0100 hours. The earth lay bathed in a pool of silver. Suddenly the sharp crack of a rifle split the still air and Pat fell to the ground seriously wounded.

"He was rushed to the hospital where, for three long hours, he hovered unconscious between life and death. Though doctors and nurses used their every skill to save him, it was apparent to all that they were waging a losing battle. In the busy hush of the operating room, the Chaplain began the prayers for the dying.

"Moments passed. In a final desperate effort the doctor called for some plasma and prepared to give the dying soldier a transfusion. As your blood coursed through his veins, Pat's pulse grew stronger until, with a fluttering of his eyelids, he awoke to full and clear use of his faculties for 20 precious minutes! In that time he made his Confession and received his God in Holy Communion and the Last Rites of his Church, at the conclusion of which he again lapsed into unconsciousness and died.

"In the name of a soul that has gone to its God in eternal rest, in the name of Pat's dad and mom who found comfort and consolation in those last acts, from the very depths of a chaplain's heart, thanks for those golden moments in the form of drops of your blood! Your donation to the Blood Bank did not preserve Pat's earthly existence but, what is infinitely greater, it made secure his eternal life!"

Signed: Capt. Joseph J. Walsh
U. S. Army Chaplain

Library Suggest By Rev. Benedict Thomas

A JOURNALIST'S GIFT OF MYRRH

Splendor of Sorrow, by Eddie Doherty. (Sheed and Ward, $1.50)

This is a book on the seven sorrows of Mary. It is far from easy to write or preach on such a subject without spoiling it by gush and sentimentality. Certain "devotional" prayers and services offend badly in this regard. But it looks as if Eddie Doherty made a rigid resolution to steer clear of any word or suggestion that would make of Mary a hysterical prima donna. The greatest of all hymns on Mary's sorrows, the Stabat Mater Dolorosa, repeats the Gospel word that Mary "stood" at the foot of the Cross. Eddie Doherty is wonderfully courteous and respectful to this heroic posture of Mary's soul in all her seven sorrows. Hers is not a swooning kind of grief: she had too many graces for that. Her grief was far deeper, a grief that reached her soul.

Most of us live on the surface of our emotions. And so our griefs, stormy as they sometimes are, are not really very deep. It is not hard to write about such griefs. But to reduce all sorrow to this level is to falsify true sorrow. A different set of values is needed; yes, even a new vocabulary, to get away from the trite sentimental expressions. Eddie Doherty succeeds admirably. He knew the difficulty of the assignment which he set for himself; and so he worked out a device which is most effective in keeping his presentation at once objective and still intimately devotional.

HE TELLS HOW IT GREW

He told Mr. Sheed, his publisher, the way he came upon this device. "I had long been trying to understand some of the mysteries, so at night before going to bed I would begin thinking about them. Then I asked Blessed Martin to explain them to me, and he did. Then I asked other saints and they helped me. So the book grew."

Thus, with heavenly companions as his guides, Eddie Doherty traverses the road of Mary's seven sorrows. As in a miracle play, they take part in Eddie's search. They leave their celestial places to walk the way with him. It is a journey of the here and now—a Chicago journalist with the faith of a child and the love of a saint making a pilgrimage on the road of Mary's sorrows, and taking the reader with him. It is not an entertainment: it is a prayer.

Blessed Martin de Porres (to whom, of all the blessed ones, Eddie Doherty has a special devotion) takes him into the Temple at the Presentation, and helps him see into the meaning of Simeon and the dire prophecy, as the Mother offers the two doves in place of her little Son. The guardian Archangel Michael accompanies the Holy Family on the flight into Egypt, and gives Eddie the key to some of its secrets, and Therese of Lisieux goes along to lend her tears of compassion with Mary.

CALLS WHOLE LITANY

In the third sorrow, Eddie calls a whole litany of saints to help find the Holy Child for His grieving mother, and he sends St. Bernard to comfort her, and Brother Andre to stand guard over poor St. Joseph. During the fourth sorrow, along the Way of the Cross, the doctors of Love stand with Mary—St. Francis de Sales, St. Thomas Aquinas, St. John Chrysostom, St. Augustine, St. Jerome, St. Benedict . . . And thus, with each of the sorrows, special saints stand by or take part in the action as Eddie's tutors in the mysteries. In no case does he quote their own recorded words. But the words he hears them say during his meditations are in harmony with their written doctrine. There is great knowledge of the doctrine of the holy ones even behind the writing of this slender book.

What are the book's special qualities? Perhaps, first of all, a mature and masculine devotion: like the "Confessions" of St. Augustine, the book is a dialogue with God and His holy ones. Add to this quality a good grasp of doctrine and an unerring sense of the telling word or phrase, and the result is a book of solid piety which can be recommended to the simple without offense to the theologians. It is, at the same time, a good object lesson in the art of meditation; for it visualizes the great scenes of Mary's life with Jesus, and at the same time it inspires constant elevations of the heart toward the object of its meditation.

Eddie Doherty showed many flashes of spiritual insight in his autobiographical Gall and Honey. He has come a long way since then, lasting deep within himself the gall and honey of his religion, still disciplining his journalistic style for the rigid demands of a difficult and delicate subject. Splendor of Sorrow is the fruit of his meditation and discipline. It is a book for young and old, for the simple and the scholarly, all of whom will find themselves drawn by its lyric devotion to a deeper understanding and love of the mystery enveloped within "the Queen of the Seven Swords."

The interracial problem is the greatest world problem of today. It is the major threat to international peace. In America the interracial problem is one of grave national concern. It is perhaps the biggest problem confronting the Catholic Church in America.

The cruellest lies are often told in silence—a man may have sat, for hours and not opened his mouth, and yet have been a disloyal friend or vile calumniator.—Robert Louis Stevenson.

A pebble on the ridge of the Alleghanies can turn a river toward sepuddle or the Atlantic Ocean, and a touch can turn a child from destruction to God.

Japs should prove very poor contract bridge players—not being able to understand the meaning of honors.—Council Bluffs Nonpareil.

The good die young—but the [illegible] until they die.—Father Bede Jarrett, O.P.

What is an ism as a statistic [illegible]