

# Have Professors Souls Or Is It Only an Idea?

Rev. Armand LaVerdiere

There was once a professor of anatomy in one of our non-sectarian colleges who did not believe in the existence of the human soul. Because of his almost reckless use of human corpses in his experiments, his pupils had dubbed him Prof. Post Mortem.

One day, his attendant wheeled a body into the classroom and without further ado the professor set to work upon it with scalpel and saw and chopper. He did not quit until he had reduced it a hundred pieces. After which, looking up at an awe-stricken class, he solemnly declared:

"There you are, gentlemen. I have been cutting up bodies for the past 20 years and I have never come across a single soul. Draw your own conclusions!"

His remark left them all momentarily dumbfounded. Then one of the students, a Catholic, raised his hand: "Professor, I was just wondering; supposed we sliced a human brain, yours for instance, do you think we would find an idea in it?"

Whether this anecdote is true or not matters little. It is a good story, and it serves a purpose. The reason why it is introduced here at all is that it brings to mind a delusion under which many Catholic parents labor who allow or encourage their offspring to enter a secular institution of learning. The delusion is this: They believe that somehow their boys and girls will be able to defend their religion should it be ridiculed—that somehow they will be able to weather any attack made upon their faith. After all, have not their youngsters had religion all through high school? And anyway, it is high time that Mary and Johnnie should begin to make those all-important social contacts!

There is a deal of wishful thinking in all this. The mere fact of parents' apprehension shows that the attitude is unjustified. As a matter of fact, not one Catholic student in a hundred could have made the retort with the cleverness of the young man in the story. They could not, first because they are not equipped to wrestle mentally with their university professors; second, because of the presence of human respect and of the fear of getting on the wrong side of their instructors. St. Joseph Magazine.

## War Ruins Only One-Tenth Of Central Italy Buildings

NEW YORK.—Ninety per cent of a total of 420 buildings in Central Italy considered artistically and architecturally important "have suffered no damage more serious than the breaking of window glass," the second official British account on the condition of monuments in that area states, according to a report to the Office of War Information.

The survey does not include structures in Rome. It states that of the remaining 10 per cent "only two or three have been hopelessly destroyed," while in many cases the damage can be repaired.

## FORTY HOURS

Devotions of the Forty Hours are scheduled in the following churches of the Rochester diocese: Friday, Sept. 15.—Cohocton; Genoa. Sunday, Sept. 17.—St. Stanislaus, Rochester; Adiscon; Aurora; Brockport; Groveland; Penn Yan.

## Five and Ten Years Ago

(From the Files of the CATHOLIC COURIER)

From Sept. 13, 1934, Edition An audience of 15,000 gathered on the Marywood College campus for a demonstration of loyalty to the Holy Name, heard the Most Rev. Thomas C. O'Reilly, Bishop of Scranton, denounce indecent movies, as the Scranton Holy Name Union joined the nation-wide fight led by the Legion of Decency.

From Sept. 14, 1936, Edition *Observatore Romano*, Vatican newspaper, in an article entitled "In the Name of Humanity," urgently appealed to the warring nations for the immunity of open cities. Author was the paper's Director, Count Della Torre.

## Laws sans Teeth Are No Good

By REV. RICHARD GENDER

You know what we mean. We're talking about laws which can't be enforced because there's no penalty attached. People aren't afraid to break them because they know that nothing can happen to them. As a result, the laws have become dead letters.

If a law or a command of any sort is to work well, it must be backed up. One of the first principles in controlling people, whether it be a family of children, a classroom, or an army, is to make them realize that you mean what you say.

Have you ever called at the home of a mother with a family of spoiled children? One of them starts rolling your hat up and down the floor—"Now, Melvin," mamma says, "you mustn't be rude. Put the gentleman's hat back on the piano bench." "Oh," you say, uneasily, "that's the way children are." "Melvin, dear, you don't want mother to spank you!" "Melvin! put that hat up!" "Melvin, stop it!"—and so on, until your hat is ready for the ash-can.

What's wrong? Well, Melvin knows from experience that mother just won't raise a hand.

### Force Lacking

Or, look back on your school days. Can't you remember some teachers who were "easy"? You were afraid of some of them, because you knew they meant what they said—but others, well, the class just walked away with them. They shouted and blustered, they thumped and threatened, but nothing ever happened. Their word had no force behind it.

That's why we Catholics believe in hell. If there is no hell, then the Ten Commandments have no backing. Our reason, first and always, of course, is the fact that our Church teaches there is a hell; she bases that on her traditions and on the many references in the New Testament, including Christ's text: "Depart from me, you cursed, into everlasting fire which was prepared for the devil and his angels." (Matt. 25:41).

A reason which appeals to common sense, however, is the fact

that God is all wise. If we can understand the need for penalties to enforce a human law, then He must see such a need a thousand times more clearly. The laws He gave us must have teeth in them.

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## Daily News Items on Pope's Talk in 'Congress Record'

WASHINGTON (NC) — Two newspaper comments on the address of His Holiness Pope Pius XII delivered over the Vatican radio on the fifth anniversary of the outbreak of the war in Europe have been reprinted in the Congressional Record.

An editorial from the Washington Star entitled "The Pope on Peace" was carried in the Record at the request of Rep. John W. McCormack, of Massachusetts, and a news release entitled "Pope Urges Enforced World Peace," from the Washington Post, was included in the remarks of Rep. Louis C. Rabaut, of Michigan.

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