

The Official Newspaper of The Rochester Diocese

Catholic Courier

VOLUME XVI DECEMBER 7, 1944 NUMBER 49

MOST REVEREND JAMES EDWARD KEARNEY, D.D. President

Member Audit Bureau of Circulations
Catholic Press Association Member
N. C. W. C. World News Service

Published by CATHOLIC COURIER and JOURNAL, Inc.
Main Business Office: 28 Chestnut St., Room 1114, Rochester 2, N. Y.
Other Editorial and Business Offices:
STAMPA, N. Y. - 121 Reade Bldg., Phone 7-5411
AUBURN, N. Y. - 15 Clark St., Phone 166

Entered as second class matter in the Postoffice at Rochester, N. Y. as required under the Act of Congress of March 3, 1879.

BY REV. MRS. W. M. HART, V.G. Editor-in-Chief; REV. JOHN S. RANFALL, Managing Editor; REV. PATRICK J. FLYNN, Associate Editor; THOMAS H. O'CONNOR, News Editor; HAROLD H. DUNN, Advertising Manager; HENRY G. GRAPENSTEIN, Circulation Manager.

LEGION OF DECENCY PLEDGE

Perhaps no moral action by a determined group has had so startling a degree of success as the pledge against bad and immoral movies by the members of the Legion of Decency. Catholics throughout the country have gone on record against such movies, and have pledged themselves to remain away from them and from the houses in which they are shown. Box-office receipts showed a decided falling off in patronage, and producers began to see the light.

The Sunday within the octave of the Feast of the Immaculate Conception is set for the renewal of the pledge. Again Catholics will arise to the call, again Catholics will promise to oppose bad films and to remain away from the theaters that make a practice of showing them. Again producers will be convinced that it does not pay to offer dirty pictures to their patrons. Again they will learn that in the long run clean pictures will bring in the best cash returns. Perhaps they may be led to see the light that even if bad films can be made to pay cash returns, that it is their duty to themselves and to the communities they serve not to seek cash on such near-to-prostitution conditions.

Bad literature also comes under the ban of the great group who will renew the pledge on Sunday. An unmitigated source of harm to the young and to older readers, filthy books, magazines, papers, should be driven from our bookstores and paper stands. The surest remedy for such a scourge is to convince the publishers and the dealers that it does not pay. Neighborhood purveyors of papers and magazines and books should have too much respect for the boys and girls of their patrons to hand over to them as ready means of moral ruin anything that is immoral and unbecoming in the realm of literature. A word now and then to them on the contents of their stands will help; a word of criticism if the stand holds some salacious titles, a word of commendation if it is kept free from all dirt.

In numbers there is strength. Join your brethren in an earnest renewal of the Pledge of the Legion of Decency on the coming Sunday. Be conscientious in keeping the pledge, and in seeing that your children keep it. You will protect your family and yourselves and help to protect your community from moral harm by driving out the devil from our entertainment and giving God a chance to enter in.

THE PROPHET OF ADVENT

Isaiah is the great Prophet of the Advent of Christ. The office of the season is filled with quotations from all the sixty-six chapters of this inspired writer. He was a scholar, a man of high literary power, and a man of God. God chose him to teach his people the way of penance in place of the way of sin they had been travelling. His mission was under two Kings of Israel, one a good king, the other a wicked one. A long life of service to his people and his God came to its end through martyrdom according to tradition.

Isaiah yearned for the coming of the promised saviour. Israel's one hope for pardon was dependent on His coming. Her salvation was in His keeping. Symbolic of the salvation He was to bring in the spiritual order was the salvation God promised and granted to Israel when the Assyrians were within twenty miles of Jerusalem and threatened to bring it to ruin. His army stricken down from on high, Sennacherib was forced to withdraw in shame from the Holy Land to his own land.

King Achaz had prayed for the deliverance of his beloved country. He hesitated in his obedience to Isaiah, hesitated to ask for a sign that Jerusalem was truly to be delivered from the threatened arms of the enemy. Isaiah exhorted to ask a sign in the heavens above or in the depths of hell. On his refusal to ask for a sign of His blessing, the Prophet spoke the words of prophecy that stand out as the greatest sign God has ever given the world: "A Virgin shall conceive and bear a Son."

The sign has been fulfilled in Mary and her Divine Son. For the world at large, for all men of all times, for salvation unto the many, a Virgin has conceived and has brought forth a Son, Jesus, the Saviour of the world! His name has been called Emmanuel: "God with us."

Faith in the Virgin birth of Christ, faith in the saving power of God revealed in Jesus Christ, have been the glorious possession of all who have known Christ in the Church He founded. It is interesting in this time of Advent to consider the part Isaiah of old had in bringing to the world the first report on what God had in store for His children on earth, the gift of Mary the Virgin-Mother, the gift of Jesus to be our God-with-us, our Emmanuel.

FOR AN EARLY VICTORY

The world has seen battles such as are shaking the many a front spread over hundreds of miles men being thrown into strife of gigantic proportions, men fighting on both sides, and we must continue to fight with victory over the Axis well within our grasp. We do to help our men, the earlier the day when we and victory will be actually ours.

We have been a constant contribution to our cause. We have been a constant contribution to our cause. We have been a constant contribution to our cause. We have been a constant contribution to our cause.

Suum Cuique By Rev. James M. Gillis, C.S.P.

ELEPHANT WALKS ON WATER

In this column I have confessed more than once that I am a collector of coincidences. Others collect stamps, match boxes, Pullman towels, ticket stubs, wooden Indians, pot-bellied railroad station stoves, stop-and-go signs and what not. Doctor John O'Brien of Notre Dame tells us that at Harvard and at Notre Dame there are collections of specimens of bigotry which flooded the country when Al Smith ran for president. Well, why not? In the Tower of London there is, or there was, a collection of instruments of torture.

Compared with all those collections my coincidences are pretty tame, but they give me a little entertainment, and after the entertainment sometimes a basis for a little philosophical speculation.

Here, latest, if you are interested. In the Reader's Digest for November, in the course of a conversation from the book "Anna and the King of Siam," occurs this passage: "One day a steamer had brought the King a box of ice from Singapore. Anna obtained some for an object lesson. The children examined the novelty with a great deal of interest, and as word of it spread women from the harem crowded into the school to see it. They felt it and giggled to see it melt; then they watched it melt and turn into water. With the ice before them they found no difficulty in believing that water froze in the colder countries of the world until it was possible to walk on it. But when Anna went on to say that rain in such countries froze as it fell and became a white substance that the people called snow, the whole school was indignant. Not until she got the King himself to testify that he had frequently read of the phenomenon in books of travel, was her reputation for veracity reestablished."

Dropping the Reader's Digest I picked up a very different kind of reading matter, Butler's "Analogy," about as solid a piece of philosophical reasoning as one can find. Newman enthusiasts will remember that Butler's classic was one of the formative influences on the mind of the future Catholic and Cardinal.

Well, "lo and behold ye," not in the solid and serious text but in a note inserted by the editor, appears this paragraph: "A story is told by Mr. Locke in the 'Chapter of Probability,' that a Dutch Ambassador entertaining the King of Siam with the particularities of Holland, amongst other things told him that the water in his country would sometimes be so hard in cold weather that men walked upon it, and that it could bear an elephant, to which the king replied, 'Hitherto I have believed the strange things you have told me, because I looked upon you as a sober fair man; but now I am sure you lie.'"

Butler's "Analogy" was first published in 1726. Since then a dozen editors, commentators, eluc-

Along The Way By Rev. Daniel A. Lord, S.J.

REGULATIONS AGAINST IT

She went into the restaurant, Catherine Roberts, our Librarian, reports, with a real thirst for a glass of iced coffee. The day was belatedly warmish. Anyhow how account for sudden tastes?

She gave her order. "We don't serve iced coffee," the waitress replied, emphatically. That seemed a little stupid, so our Catherine suggested: "But you have coffee, haven't you? And you have ice?" The girl agreed.

"Then," suggested Catherine, helpfully, "put my coffee in a regular cup, and just put ice into it."

"We're not allowed," said the girl. "All right," persisted Catherine, still not defeated. "Then please bring me a cup of coffee and a glass full of ice."

"The ice will cost you extra," parried the girl. "That's all right; I'll pay it."

"I'll have to ask the manager," the girl said, and disappeared. She returned triumphantly. "The manager says you can have the coffee and you can have the glass of ice, but not if you are going to put the ice into the coffee or pour the coffee over the ice. Because if you did, then everyone would want to do the same thing, and that would be against the regulations."

So Catherine went home and fixed her own iced coffee without bolts of red tape.

High Hair

The chairman of my lecture precluded his comments and his introduction with a request that the ladies remove their hats. Now heaven knows I am nothing to look at. Yet I thought the request and the prompt obedience on the part of the audience wonderfully right. Who wants to listen to a speaker from behind a ledge of high female hair? And may be if women are reminded to take off their hats at a lecture, they may be inclined to do so spontaneously at the theater, in a movie, at a concert. A lot of our younger girls sit with their high hats on in the utter frustration of the unfortunate behind-

Shall We Look for Another?

To John the Baptist's question "Art thou he who is to come, or do we look for another?" Christ made a clear answer. He referred to His works and to His words—"The blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead rise, the poor have the gospel preached to them."

For more than 1900 years the same saving power of Christ has wrought wonders for man. His grace and His power have marked Him as the Saviour of all mankind. He has blessed the body and soul of men with His good works; He has preached His saving doctrine to the poor of all lands. He has in a word, fulfilled His mission as Saviour of the world.

Do we look for another? For another Saviour, another Redeemer? Why should we look for another? Is there something lacking in the grace Christ gives, in the doctrine He preaches? Has imperfection been found in His ministry to men?

No, we do not look for another! Just as the faithful Apostles welcomed Christ to be their permanent leader, so have faithful Christians down the centuries welcomed Him as their unfailing Guide. Christ with all His teachings in their perfect beauty of their first revelation. Christ with His daily outpouring of grace and blessings on men. Christ in His Church always the same, we cling to and shall cling to unto the end. We have only one answer to the question—"Shall we look for another?"—and that answer is "No, we shall cling always to Christ."

dators, and, as the colored preacher said, "explainers" have brought out more and more editions with notes appended. So I guess the editor who quoted the anecdote from Locke antedates Anna who didn't go to Siam until Abraham Lincoln became president. Not that the date matters. The story may be as old as Aesop. What amuses me is the coincidence, my happening upon substantially the same yarn in a popular magazine and not more than half an hour later in a profound work on the philosophy of religion.

But how about the "speculation" of which I gave a hint at the beginning? It amounts to this: The King of Siam, or, as you choose, the children of Siam, were no more ignorant than are those up-to-the-moment unbelievers who say that such and such things cannot be done with matter. It was also, I think, Cardinal Newman who said, "I know as much of the potentialities of matter as any man living; that is to say I know nothing." He was talking about the difficulty of believing in Transubstantiation. Those who reject that mystery say, "It simply cannot be!" If they had lived in the years before X-ray they would have said the same thing about looking through flesh and blood and seeing the bones; and, for that matter, seeing a bullet imbedded in one of the bones.

Such skeptics however are becoming fewer. People are learning, thanks to the scientists, that we live in a Mysterious Universe, in which one of the greatest of mysteries is matter. They are becoming more and more reluctant to dogmatize about what changes can be made and what cannot be made in matter. They don't want to be put in the class of the Siamese who couldn't believe that water could get hard enough to hold up an elephant.

And now to the horror of everyone who must go into public gatherings, word issued from liberated Paris, and photos confirm the menace, the women's hair is going to be piled high on their heads and swept out into a wide wing beside each ear. That means that when they remove their hats, the unfortunate will be able to see—less than every. It's pretty tough to spend money and then sit gazing into the thickets of a woman's headdress. It's pretty annoying to have a ticket for a form of entertainment that turns out to be the privilege of admiring the rear of a hirsute thicket.

If women have any consideration for their fellow humans, they will either not follow the ridiculous Paris fashions or stay home from public gatherings. Or the male of the species will feel himself fully justified in attending public functions armed with a pair of hedge shears with which to cut himself a view to the stage.

Even the Big Boys

We were talking of form letters, which I particularly detest. Not, of course, the form letters that come frankly mimeographed or duplicated, with your name filled in. Anyone who knows anything about mail recognizes them, recognizes their necessity, treats them in proportion to their contents as important, trivial, a bore, or a nuisance.

But I mean the form letters that come addressed to you personally, and typed to you personally and yet are used for dozens or hundreds of other people and occasions.

For instance: Some time back, I gave a radio broadcast for one of the big national hookups. When my appearance was over, the company sent me a kind and flattering letter of thanks. It helped the good old ego considerably.

About three years later, I gave another broadcast for the same national company over the same national company over the same hookup. And by mail comes the same identical letter which they had sent me three years before. Not only did they use that form for all their letters of thanks but in three years time they had never bothered to change.

The second time it wasn't a letter of thanks; it was an insult.

My answer read: "Your form letter for the second time has been received." I'll bet even that didn't cure 'em.

There are two very different kinds of ease: the ease that comes from the conquest of difficulty, and the ease that comes from the vague dodging of it.—Henry James

Oris is the agony of an instant; the indulgence of giving the blunder of a life.—Dylan