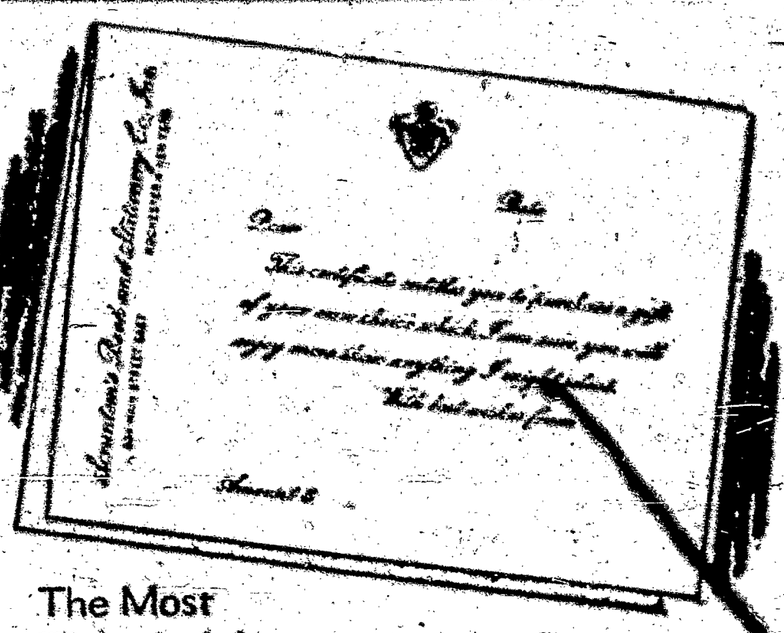
CHARITABLE JUDGMENT

What books to thy dim eyes a stain
In God's pure light may only be
A scar brought from some well won field.
Where thou must only faint and yield.—Procter.



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Catholic Information

'Twas a Very Odd Name

They were going over the list of officers at the Field Club the other day:

J. Mortimer Dillingham
Cadwallader Dalrymple
C. K. Dexter Haven, III
Graham Stanton McMaster
Joseph T. Page

At that point the secretary reached over and flicked the long curling ash of his cigarette into a tray at his elbow.

"Joseph T. Page," someone said. "Isn't that an odd name? It sounds so old-fashioned."

As a matter of fact, Joseph is not an old-fashioned name although it is almost 2,000 years old; for Catholics, and other devout people, will go on calling their boys Joseph until our old earth is burned to a cinder. People like the name, because it has been borne by great men . . . first of all, by the ancient patriarch and friend of Pharaoh, and then, later, by the companion of the Blessed Virgin, the foster-father of Jesus.

Mothers and fathers looking down into the faces of their newborn man-children, have hoped and prayed that their flesh and blood would be just a little like those holy Josephs in their strength of character. As a lasting reminder, they have had their children christened Joseph, so that they would never be allowed to forget their model and ideal. At home, in school, on the street, in business, it will be "Joseph, this" and "Joseph, that." Why, everytime they write their own signature they will be naming their patron, their special friend before the throne of God!

That is why Catholics still use those grand old names: Peter, James, John, Paul, Joseph, Clement, Mark, Luke, William; and Mary, Catherine, Helen, Josephine, Elizabeth, Margaret and all the rest of them. They are giving their children something to aim at in life. So well established is the custom that it has become law with us, and no priest will baptize a child unless he can give the child a saint's name. It does not matter how fancy the rest of the child's name may be, as long as there is a saint's name tucked somewhere along the line; as, for instance, Mortimer Cadwallader John Stanton Dalrymple. That name would pass muster — even though in later life, the man would wish a living as undistinguished a name as John, and should take to signing himself, simply, Mortimer C. J. Stanton Dalrymple for short! He still has "John" in his name.

(Catholic Information Society of New York.)

WHO IS THIS BABY?

A mother lays her new-born child in a crib . . . angels appear on a hillside . . . shepherds journey quietly into Bethlehem.

Somehow, the world stood still that night. Time was at the crossroads. Men took a long last look at the Old Testament and turned their faces toward a new era — an age of love and brotherhood. With the first gurgle of that Jewish baby, Christianity drew its first breath on earth.

But why? Who is this baby? Let's go over and look into that crib!

There he lies — a little boy. His mother has him so wrapped that all we can see is his face — but it seems no different from other baby faces.

The strange, the mysterious fact about this baby boy is that the Jewish world has been talking about him for the past 1,500 years. Long ago—500 years before—the prophets had lifted up their voices and said:

"Behold! A virgin shall be with child, and bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel" (Matt. 1:23).

"Then shall the eyes of the blind be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb shall sing."

"And he shall feed his flock like a shepherd, and he shall gather the lambs with his arm and carry them in his bosom, and gently lead those that are with young."

Five hundred years! Those words were uttered 500 years before Mary laid her child in that manger!

This baby then — this child — is He the Prince of Peace? God the Mighty? Yes, because when he grew to manhood, He said He was God and He proved it. That's past history.

And that is the marvel of this festival. It's that which brings the Christian world to its knees every year: the spectacle of Almighty God in the flesh; the devout adoration of those tiny fingers — fingers which shaped the mountains and set the moon in her place, now reaching out helplessly for Mary's face; those lips, which pronounced the first fiat of Creation, now tiny and blue with cold.

Is it any wonder that today we raise our voices with angels and archangels. Today our Christ was born. Today our Savior appeared. Glory be to God in the highest, and on earth, peace to men of good will!

"Come and behold Him, born the King of Angels." No — we must do more than behold. We must adore our God, enthroned now in the manger, soon on the Cross.

(N. C. W. C. Features)

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