THE CATHOLIC
Courier Journal
OFFICIAL NEWSPAPER OF THE ROCHESTER DIOCESE

Vol. 17—No. 51 THURSDAY, DECEMBER 20, 1945

MOST REVEREND JAMES EDWARD KEARNEY, D.D., President

This newspaper is a member of the Audit Bureau of Circulations and the Catholic Press Association. It subscribes to the full reports of International News Service, National Catholic Welfare Conference News Service, Religious News Service, Catholic Information Press.

Published every Thursday by the Catholic Courier and Journal, Inc.
Main Office .... 50 Chestnut St.—Stone 1136—Rochester 4, N. Y.
Auburn Office .... 15 Clark Street—Phone 596
Elmira Office .... 323 Realty Bldg.—Phone 2-3628 or 2-3423

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

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Peace on Earth

There can be no peace on earth save through Christ. He came to bring peace to all who would receive it. Good will to men was with Him when He came to earth. Men of good will received Him and His peace with Him. Again Christmas comes to renew in our memories and in our hearts the angelic declaration of Christ's purpose in coming to earth—"Glory to God in the highest and peace on earth to men of good will."

There can be no peace on earth save through Christ. Men's hearts must be turned away from hatred to love of their kind: men's minds must be enlightened with the revelation of Christ. Moral law must take the place of the dictator's code. Right must reign in the place of rapine and injustice.

Man made in the image of God must reflect in his life the mercy and the justice of God. May the spirit of Christmas make itself felt in a new and powerful way this year, when the clash of arms is no more: when so many thousands have left the camp and the plane and the warship to return gladly to their homes. The weapons of war give way to the implements of the factory and the farm. May the hatreds of war likewise give way to the true Christian love of our neighbor that comes from the teachings of Christ!

Peace on earth! The peace of God that surpasseth all understanding! Beginning with the individual, that peace connotes a good conscience before God, a visit in spirit to the stable at Bethlehem, a hearty acceptance of the Christ Child and all that He stands for. Going out from the individual into the home, into the community, into the city and state and nation, that peace should show its influence throughout the world. If it could only lead men and their leaders everywhere to turn away from armament races, from building up more and more the powers of destruction, from perfecting new machinery for mass slaughter! What a joy for the world if the atomic bomb could be the last great argument to turn men from war to peace!

Peace on earth! Men are destined to be made the children of God, the heirs of the Kingdom of Heaven. Christ comes to earth to prepare us for Heaven. Let us be prepared to accept Him as our Lord and Saviour, to make our own the peace He brings to us. God's glory in Heaven shall be increased by the Christmas peace the Saviour brings to earth and to the hearts of men weary with war. May all the world have this year what they have lacked so completely in the years now passed, a Merry Christmas!

76th Graduation at St. Andrew's

Yesterday witnessed a notable event in the history of St. Andrew's Seminary, the graduation of its 76th class. Bishop McQuaid founded St. Andrew's Seminary very shortly after his coming here as our first Bishop. He founded it because the Church had recommended it as a necessary institution for every diocese. He founded it because he was conscious of the current needs of his diocese, and foresighted about its future needs. He had little money, but great plans. St. Andrew's first school building was nothing to boast of from the architectural viewpoint. But it had all that a good school really needs to accomplish its purpose. The priestly zeal of its first teachers, the grace of vocation in its first students, the willingness of all to follow their Bishop along a road that was hard to travel made the early St. Andrew's Seminary a real preparatory school for those aspiring to the Priesthood.

Today St. Andrew's Seminary stands at the threshold of a new period in its history. Bishop and priests and people are united in preparing a new building worthy of a great school, suited to its present-day demands, equipped fully for a glorious future. The graduates of 1945 can look back over the [illegible] the years ahead, for their Alma Mater. [illegible] have been alumni of St. Andrew's Seminary [illegible] and priests who have labored successfully for [illegible] Church were trained in its classrooms. Archbishop [illegible], Archbishop Hanna, Bishop O'Hern, Bishop [illegible] at the feet of its professors. Hundreds of [illegible] hold high in parochial and diocesan offices [illegible] within its walls. The rank and file of [illegible] and present in the Diocese of Rochester [illegible] the solid cultural and religious [illegible] for their priestly careers. [illegible] of the past we look forward [illegible] in the St. Andrew's of the [illegible] as the link between [illegible]

Christmas Forever

O Darling Babe of Bethlehem please smile on them today—
Our quarter million Yanks who died to make this Christmas gay,
They believed in You, dear Infant, and a reason why they died
Was to keep the tale of Shepherds on Judean hills alive.

We'll miss them, Infant Saviour, as off to church we go.
Sure wouldn't they be with us a-riding through the snow?
And as we kneel before your crib we'll pray for each G.I.
For if you hadn't called them they'd be kneeling at our side.

Because they fought the fight they did, all children sing and play
And all the world re-echoes with the joy of Christmas Day.
So bless them on your Birthday, Lord, and make us better, too,
So that we all may likewise share eternal peace with you.

By Rev. Neil P. McManus S.J.

Sursum Corda — By Rev. James M. Gillis, C.S.P.

Spirit of Christmas, Not Date, Counts

Someone has explained in the newspapers that the early Puritans of New England neglected or even forbade the observance of Christmas Day on December 25th, because the choice of that day was "Romanist" and therefore pagan. But what does the precise date matter so long as we celebrate our Lord's Birthday some time during the monarchy and of the Church of England, it is quite possible that Christmas would have disappeared both in Old England and New England. It was legally abolished by the Cromwellians by Act of Parliament in 1644. But Christmas came back and now see how generally and how enthusiastically it is celebrated!

But what about the alleged paganism of its origin? Some scholars used to maintain—though now more accurate historians and archaeologists have abandoned the theory — that the celebration of Christmas was originally a condescension to converted pagans who had been accustomed to indulge in the orgies of the Saturnalia shortly after the middle of December.

Other scholars, no less pretentious, refer to the Natalis Invicti Solis, the Birthday of the Unconquered Sun, celebrated at or immediately after the winter solstice, when the sun, after waning for months, is born again. The idea of the birth or rebirth of the Sun-God is said to have been imported into the Empire from Persia with Mithraism, the mystery religion which contended so long and so powerfully against Christianity, and which yielded — so runs the argument — only after leaving its impress upon the nascent religion of Jesus.

Now there is no reason why pious Christians should be frightened at this show of learning. The coincidence of dates does not prove that the Christians adopted and perpetuated a pagan holiday. It is a well-known fact that popes and councils in the early Church deliberately placed a Christian festival on or near the day of a previously existing pagan carnival, with the purpose of ousting the heathenish and generally licentious celebration.

The impulse that prompted the substitution of a Christian holiday for a pagan carnival is the same as that which led the early Christians to choose the Circus of Nero as the site for St. Peter's, to remove Marcus Aurelius from the top of his column and give his place to St. Paul, to build a monastery at Monte Cassino on the ruins of a temple to Apollo, and a church to the Blessed Virgin on the spot formerly sacred to a pagan goddess,—a church called to this day Santa Maria sopra Minerva. Only a mind unattuned to poetic justice can see in these facts a confusion of Christianity with heathenism. Rather they indicate the triumph of Christianity over the old pagan religion.

But the all important question for us today is not about the actual date of Christmas, but about the spirit in which it is celebrated. There is some danger that the neo-pagans will snatch the day away from us again as the Cromwellians tried to do 300 years ago. In this case, however, they do not wish to expunge it from the calendar but to corrupt the manner of its celebration. We must not permit them to paganize Christmas. Still less should we take part in the paganizing process.

After all, Christmas is Christ's Mass. To celebrate a Mass by excessive eating — not to say with excessive drinking — would be a sacrilege. Let's keep the day for Jesus Christ. We overcame the attempt of the Cromwellian Puritans to deprive us of the loveliest day in our Church Calendar. We must not permit the modern pagans to destroy what we fought so hard to retain. Let's be Merry but Merry in the Lord.

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Feast Days

[illegible]

A Rosary Crusade For Peace in Our Day

During the past three years the Family Rosary crusade has become a world-wide campaign to bring the Rosary into the home of every Catholic family. The wholehearted response of millions of families is understandable only to those who know well the history of the Rosary.

Seven hundred years have passed since Our Lady gave the first Rosary to St. Dominic and instructed him to "teach it to the people." Our Lady promised then that the Rosary would be "an inexhaustible fountain of every kind of blessing," and she further made the promise, "I will prove by many graces how pleasing this devotion is to me and how profitable to the faithful."

At Fatima in 1917 the world was reminded once again of the power of that perfect prayer. On the occasion of her final apparition there on October 13, 1917, Our Lady revealed herself as "The Lady of the Rosary," and she not only begged men to recite that seven-hundred year old prayer but she commanded, "They must say the Rosary." There is no doubt of the confidence that Our Lady has in the power of the Rosary. And the testimony of the centuries proves that countless families have developed a confidence like that of Mary herself and have, therefore, made the Rosary the family prayer. Although Our Lady herself has never expressly mentioned the Family Rosary, we know that the Rosary was brought into family life very early in its history and that at Lourdes Our Lady joined in the prayer of the Rosary with Bernadette.

In a world that is torn and bleeding from the ravages of war just ended, at a time when family life has been in danger of being completely disrupted, it is heartening to see the zeal and the devotion with which families the world over are taking up the prayer of the Rosary and building their home life about it. Not only are these families saying the Rosary themselves, but they are becoming zealous apostles in bringing the devotion into the homes of others. By their prayers, sacrifices, and labors, Rosary families are winning others to Our Lady's cause. They are breaking down the prejudice against family prayer that has existed for many a year particularly in our own country.

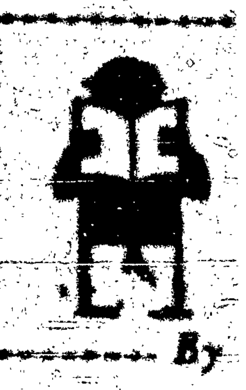
Serious men and women have grave misgivings as to the future safety of the world, their country, and their homes. They know well the dangers that are ahead and they are striving by every possible means to overcome the threat of these dangers and to bring to earth a long and a happy peace. For this purpose it is heartening to know that millions of families the world over are putting their trust in the Family Rosary. This beautiful ten-minute perfect family prayer will never fail. Rosary families will be safe amid all the dangers of the future, and the world itself will be safe when every Catholic family is a Rosary family.

The Christmas Gospels

Three Masses on Christmas present to us three Gospels for our study and consideration. St. Luke's history of the events in and about Bethlehem on that solemn night is the burden of the Gospel for the First Mass and also for the Second Mass, while the Gospel according to St. John in its very beginning gives the Third Mass the deep revelation of the eternal birth of the Son from God the Father. Christ's birth in time, His birth in the hearts of men, His eternal birth from the Father, are commemorated in the three Masses for Christmas.

Rome with its hunger for taxes, Rome with its methodical listing of all in a world census, Rome with its domination over the Holy Land, appears in the Gospel history of the Nativity as given by St. Luke. But Luke's picture centers principally about the birth of Christ, the visit of the Angels to the shepherds, the adoration of the shepherds. Mary with Joseph beside her looks lovingly on her baby as she hears the tale of the shepherds of the Angel's message and the singing of the Angelic Choir.

John's great Gospel sings of the eternal birth of the Son from the Father, sings in sonorous tones—"In the beginning was the Word." The divinity of the Son, His equality with the Father, His life that was to be the light of men, His coming to men and His rejection by men, His [illegible] to all who would receive Him—all these follow in rapid succession in John's striking words. [illegible] of Christmas joy is summed up in John's closing words—"The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, the glory as it were of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth."



By

The cynical ... seems to have c... as the post-war ...

To the heart... which garland ... are too apt to ... Scrooge rasped ... "Humbug."

These people ... be at peace at ... warfare. They ... children slaught... are saying that ...

They point to ... what happened ... document proclai... its darkest hour ...

You tell them ... they answer th... eastern Europe ... ment from whic...

You tell them ... all religious fre... the lands once t... they again poin... ship which shrou... stories of religio...

You tell them ... has been crushe... activities of othe... the night and d...

You tell them ... been opened to n... with cynicism at ... children all over ...

Finally you tu... statesmen to rebu... war impossible ...

You point to th... the epochal Uni... answer that "pow... the Charter is d... scrap of paper.

You point to th... ments to impleme... working organiza... which the foreign ... conference.

You point to ... and they ask wha... as long as you h... with the same ... world problems.

Then to cap ... atomic bomb with... the future and a... to agree on contr... ous nations can't ... comparatively mi...

And then you ... eye settles on a ... nineteen hundred ...

You see the she... suddenly that brig... singing: "Glory t... earth peace to me...

The last phrase ... good will" sort of ... tion. There is th... millions who are ... bring to all the w... first Christmas nig...

Note well the ... phrase from the ... wards men" versio... carols.

This angelic m... earth" to "men of ... that in that simple ... to the solutions of ... problems.

As you scan the ... all men engaged in ... are not "of good ... their own nationali... concerned with e... nations and setting ... for future wars.

If all of these m... they could reach ... around the confere...

If all of these ... deaths of our warr...

If all of these me... ment would be rou... the greeting "Men ... sincere and hearty ... that at long last th... which the angels b... lehem on that bless...

To know a man ... his weaknesses, his ... know God is to be... vine perfection, His ... lasting mercy.

A real friend is o... you yet expects th...

Even when a ma...