

Library Signpost

By Rev. Benedict Ekmann

Lenten Aid to Knowing, Loving Faith

During the persecution days and for about two centuries later, until the mass conversion of the...

months of Baptism. This highly organized system of instruction was called the Catechumenate...

Our times are remarkable for the attention paid to catechetical both as a science and as an art. We have a parochial school system which justly commands respect and often admiration...

I have an opinion to submit to the debate on this vexing question. I think that what our modern catechetical needs (and so far lacks, at least in practice) is a return to the technique of the ancient catechumenate...

New Books To Be Reviewed By Cardinal Hayes Group

New York — (NC) — Mgr. John J. Hartigan, President of Cathedral College, here, has been named chairman of the Cardinal Hayes Literature Committee...

The Committee, Monsignor Hartigan says, plans to publish quarterly The Book Survey which will review all serious current publications in any field of literature of interest to the Catholic reading public...

Dr. Blanche Mary Kelly, professor of English at the College...

root cause for the disturbing failure of our modern Catholics (the majority of them) to know their Faith. They grasp it as Truth; but they do not grasp it as Life and as Beauty.

Realizing the value of the Lenten Masses with their specially chosen Lessons, Fr. Hilary Pepper, O.P., two years ago wrote a series of meditative commentaries on them published in a book called Lent...

"The Church chose the texts for a set purpose. She set them

of Mt. St. Vincent, New York, and author of "The Will of English," "The Sudden Rose," "Mary the Mother," "The Valley of Vision" and other books, will prepare a weekly column, "Adventures Among Books," for the N. C. W. C. Feature Service.

Monsignor Hartigan has been a member of the faculties of Cathedral College, the College of Mt. St. Vincent, Manhattanville College of the Sacred Heart, and St. Joseph's Seminary, Dunwoodie. Long known for his interest in Catholic literature and assistance to Catholic enterprises in the publishing field, he was a pioneer in developing the parish library movement.

before catechumens and Christians alike to prepare them for the Easter sacraments, baptism for the former, penance for the latter, and the Eucharist for both. . . . These Lessons were meant as a solid basis of instruction gradually revealing the mysteries of the Christian religion to those who were finally to be brought into the Church by baptism. But they were for sinners, too. So here we learn the spirit of penance, and the way to prepare for the Easter abstinence. But the primary purpose of the Lessons is to lead every Christian to identify himself with Christ hanging on the Cross.

To be thus instructed in this living context of the Sacred Mysteries celebrated at the altar during Lent, is gradually to know the Faith as friend known friend, or as a husband knows his wife. It becomes a knowledge which is at the same time love, the knowledge inspiring love, and the love deepening knowledge. This is what we all need today so badly in the household of the Faith. Not precocious quiz kids that can toss off all the answers in the catechism, but people with a deep, unshakable love of their Faith, people who see it not as a set of facts and rules but as a living in Jesus Christ that goes to the bottom of their souls and lifts up their lives every day into the embrace of God.

We could hardly do better in Lent than to spend it in an effort to enlighten ourselves with this living and glowing meaning of our Faith, by means of the Lenten Masses whereby the early Church converted her catechumens into ardent martyrs for Christ. Simply take your Missal for the Mass of each Lenten day, meditate on it with the corresponding chapter in Fr. Pepper's book, and you will feel your soul growing wings for stronger flights toward God.

Book Selections Made — New York, March 4 — (NC) — March and April selections have been announced here by Pro Parvula Book Club: For girls 10-14 years old, in March: "Search Through Pirate's Alley," by Mildred Houghton Comfort; in April, "Green Peace," by Marjorie Hayes; for boys 10-14 years old, in March: "Fall-Down for Action," by Armstrong Sperry; for High school readers, in March: "Al Smith, American," by Frank Graham, and for children under 10 years old, in April: "The Adventures of the Redcross Knight," by Sister M. Charitina.

Various City — (NC) — Eugene Clark, Librarian of France: "The world knows as should know, that there is no religious freedom in Russia."

The Literary Cavalade The First Freedom

By John O'Connor

After you have waded through or ignored some very poor and confused thinking, you will be well rewarded with the content of the last 250 pages of The First Freedom, by Morris Ernst.

Mr. Ernst is concerned over the increasing monopoly of thought and information through the channels of distribution in this land of ours. American, Catholic and non-Catholic alike, will be inspired by his display of facts and his arguments from those facts. The American trend towards combinations and holding companies has never worked out more thoroughly and been less known to the public than in the press, radio, and movie fields.

"Our press is fast evaporating," states the author. "Ten states have not a single city with competing daily papers. Twenty-two states are without Sunday newspaper competition. Fourteen companies own eighteen papers control about one quarter of our total daily circulation. Three hundred and seventy chain newspapers own about one fifth of all our circulation. More than a quarter of our daily circulation is absentee owned. We have a thousand less owners than a few decades ago. Thirty-two hundred weeklies — the backbone of local democracy — have disappeared. One company dominates more than 2,500 weeklies. There are only 117 cities left, in our entire nation, where competing dailies still exist."

The author is not concerned with the editorial beliefs of these various syndicates and chains. He sticks to his theme: the return to local democracy, the sustaining of local customs, democracy on a working basis rather than in theory. And all these things are being lost by the inexorable drive towards the concentration of control. (The opportunities for a live Catholic press in this crisis are great, but more of that some other time.)

Nor does the radio escape. In time, in talent, and in patents made in one of the greatest eras in history. And Mr. Ernst has the facts all ready for you: "One-third of all regular radio stations are interlocked with newspapers. The bottleneck gets narrower. Four networks before

the war had 95 percent of all night-time broadcasting power. One hundred and forty-four advertisers account for 97 percent of all net work income. A dozen advertising agencies create the radio programs which bring to the networks one-half of their income. Independent radio stations are the stepchildren of the milk. In more than 100 cases the only newspaper left when the

This phenomenon is increasing. Bigger owners continue to buy out smaller owners.

These are sober facts. These are terrifying facts. The peril inherent in them should be apparent to everyone. Here the Catholic press can claim some credit for spade-work with the recent Studies of Opinion book which ran serially in The Sun — and the new projected series of analytical articles on American publishers. But we should not leave the work to The Sun alone. . . .

Then we come to the movies! Source of entertainment are they? Aimed:

The weekly attendance of movies amounts to more than 100 million people. But five companies control the 200 key theatres of the country. These five companies — called the Big Five — pick up more than three-quarters of all the tickets and sales paid by the American movie audience for its screen entertainment. All other producers of films enter the market place by grace of these companies. We have allowed five giants to destroy our market place of free competition for movies. Moreover, two companies produce about 90 percent of all our new film stock. . . .

Here, then, is a monopoly within our midst. And radio and the press are moving the same way. A few Catholic weeklies that

political affairs in other countries would do well to look around at home and spend some time helping to root abuses such as those cited by Mr. Ernst. Freedom of the press is limited here — even to the refusal of editors to print the columns of commentators who are ready to stand on their own.

Don't get the idea that Mr. Ernst, a noted lawyer, does not have a number of suggestions as to the solution of this problem. He does not think that it is too late to turn the tide. His suggestions are just as straightforward as the facts and his presentation of them is clear.

However, skip the opening chapters. As far as his philosophy is concerned — in the words of Sam Goldwyn: "Include me out."

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