Sodality of Our Lady

For 1947

By REV. ROY E. MORPHY
Diocesan Director for Sodalities

"Check the oil and water, mister?" Our Gasoline Service Stations are once again after our days of rationing reminding us that our cars need attention if they are to keep running smoothly. Radio announcers din into our ears the necessity of seeing our dentist at least twice a year and visiting our family doctor for an annual once-over.

And most of us heed this mechanical and physical advice. We see to it that our "oil and water" is carefully and regularly checked; we religiously clean out our furnaces; we defrost the refrigerator at regular intervals; we keep tabs on our teeth, and we keep in touch with our family doctor.

But how about the other side, the spiritual side, the more important side. Are we any where near as careful about the well-being of our soul as we are about our body? We check the gas and oil in our car. Do we check the grace in our soul?

Check Up For Sodalists

We Sodalists, moreover, have a greater responsibility to our souls than the average Catholic. We have dedicated ourselves to a more perfect way of living. The Sodality is definitely a "way of life," a more perfect living of our Catholic faith. Thus, a regular check-up, a regular inventory of our selves, is more necessary and more demanding than it is with the average Catholic.

New Year's Day gives us a chance to make a real check-up. New Year's is a sort of punctuation mark in life's paragraph. It calls for a pause for reflection. It is an occasion to review the past, with a view to the future.

Resolutions are not respected as they were in past years. They have come into ridicule. What's the sense of telling ourselves that we will do something that we know we won't? That's the cynic's sop to his conscience. He lacks will power and thus he sits back content to stay as he is from year to year. But he forgets that it is better to have resolved and failed than never to have resolved at all. At least we have made an attempt to get out of our spiritual rut. And that's something! For every resolution helps us to be better and if made over and over we will gradually improve permanently.

The Real Article

In bringing these thoughts to the attention of our Sodalists, we can urge them to make some sincere resolutions this New Year's. The best resolution a Sodalist can make is simply to be a Sodalist. Not a wishy-washy, lukewarm, smugly conservative Sodalist. As the priestly Redemptorist, old Father Lynch, used to tell the students at St. Bernard's in my seminary days, "Be the real article." That's right — the real article, a Sodalist conscientious in his duties as a Sodalist, a frequent reviewer of the Sodality Rules so as to reaffirm the Sodality spirit within him, regularly attending Sodality meetings, active in the Sodality program, parish, school or diocesan, zealous in his attempts to enlist others in the life and work of the Sodality.

Resolve then, to be a Sodalist to the core. The word, "core" comes from the Latin word for "heart." Put your heart into the Sodality for 1947.

We, the directors of the Sodality in Rochester, extend our best wishes for a very happy New Year filled to overflowing with God's blessings.

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Catholic Trade Union Organized

London — (NC) — British Catholic labor circles took an important step forward checking the influence of communism, which is sweeping through trade unionism here, with the formation of an association of Catholic trade unionists, established in Britain's premier See of Westminster, with the full approval of His Eminence Bernard Cardinal Griffin, Archbishop of Westminster.

Several other British dioceses have already formed their own Catholic trade union groups. Workers from 50 unions attended the London meeting at which Cardinal Griffin defined the aims of Catholic trade union associations.

Australian Catholic Is Envoy to Canada

Ottawa (NC) F. M. Forde, former Deputy Prime Minister of Australia who has been named Australian High Commissioner to Canada, is widely known in North America as a distinguished Catholic layman.

Australia's former Deputy Prime Minister represented his country at the meetings in San Francisco which saw the formation of the United Nations, and addressed several large Catholic gatherings during his stay in the United States.

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Blinded GI Asked Santa to Bring Him 'Shiny Eyes'

Phoenixville, Pa. — Santa Claus this year assumed the role of intermediary between God and a blinded soldier patient in Valley Forge Hospital who requested "two bright, shiny blue eyes" for Christmas.

Writing to old Santa for the first time, twenty-one-year-old Corporal Chester R. Perkins, hopelessly blinded by a land mine in Germany, filed the following petition:

"If God chooses, let me find beneath my Christmas tree two bright, shiny blue eyes — so that the memory of the last Christmas I saw may be blotted forever from my mind."

Hopes to Study Journalism

A former Indianapolis High School athlete, Corporal Perkins, wrote to The Indianapolis News that he planned to study journalism at Butler University, and enclosed the following letter, which The News copyrighted:

"Dear Santa Claus:

"Aren't we all children? Can't all of us, though some of us are adult in mind, ask for the things which we want most in life? I can't remember ever writing to you before, but I have found it so increasingly difficult to obtain this thing which I want, that I thought perhaps you could help.

"As a small child, I can remember wanting playthings and candy; as a teen-aged youth I wanted smart clothing and athletic equipment; now, I want something entirely different. It's not as childish as a plaything or as temporary as a piece of candy, nor is it as ostentatious as smart clothing, or as energetic as athletic equipment.

"It is practical. Most people would think it a necessity. It isn't. Only the person who doesn't have it can understand that. He knows, it is a God-given luxury.

"In asking for this, I have to think of you as an intermediary between God and me, for I have already said that it is God-given. He gave it to me once before, when I was born, but I lost it. I have missed it so much, and would like to have it back.

Leaves the Matter to God

"Dear Santa, if God chooses, let me find beneath my Christmas tree two bright, shiny blue eyes brimming over with good health and true vision. Let me place them in my head, then let me look out through the window at the snow lying deep and crisp and even, as far as those beautiful eyes can see.

"Let me drink in the looks of joy on the faces of those who love me, who have seen me groping and stumbling in the dark for so long. Let me hold those eyes aloft to the Christmas Star that I might not forget the true meaning of Christmas.

"Let me see all these things so that the memory of the last Christmas I saw might be blotted forever from my mind.

"Replace the screaming of shells, the rumbling of tanks, the sound of tired marching feet with the singing of hymns, the laughter of little sisters, and the voices of thankful people.

"Replace the filthy, smelly mud of battle and the drawn faces of dying men with the cool feeling of fresh, clean sheets and the hopeful faces of men born anew.

"Bring me those eyes for these purposes, and I will be grateful forever to Him Who once gave them to me.

"If, on Christmas morn, I should not find them there, I won't really mind, and I will still be grateful to God, for haven't I still a good mind, a strong body, friends who love me, and a desire to justify the reason for my existence. After all, aren't these the important things in life?

"So Santa, there it is. That's what I want for Christmas. Please try, won't you.

"From a grown-up little boy,
"Cpl. Chester R. Perkins."

Nun's Diary Published

Milwaukee — (NC) — "We Saw South America," a new volume written in diary form by Sister M. Frederick Lochemes, O.S.F., dean of the Cardinal Stritch College here, relates the impressions and experiences of two Franciscan nuns on their twelve-month tour "of the ten republics of South America and the three small nations afloat in the water of the Caribbean."

Bolshevist Peril Great in Germany, Black Market Rife, U. S. Probe Asked

By TOM HOGAN

Washington — Here's an uncensored and unbiased picture of the conditions in Germany at present. This correspondent, dare not reveal his source at the moment, but that source is unimpeachable — eyes honored. And here's the brutal score:

"The strongest element of democratic resistance can be found in the churches, mainly of course, the Catholic Church. Such resistance is highly important. The Bolshevist danger is far greater than expressed by the very misleading election returns in the western zones, note from the east indicates that the sovietization (of occupied lands) is making rapid progress."

We are receiving constantly much reliable information on the super-Nazi atrocities committed by the Poles and the Czechs. People are wondering why the world press is so silent on these matters. In Hamburg, there is much talk about coup d'etat plans of the Soviets. In the French zone, the people receive 600 calories a day. Because of 900 the leaders of the Belsen camp hung.

In the American zone things are better than anywhere else. (I. T. R.) But the people hope that the U. S. Department of State will take over. Also, there is much hope and many prayers for the investigation of the U. S. Zone by a Senate committee.

There is a rife black market. There is the influence of radical and spiteful "refugees" of German origin but with foreign backing reminiscent of the early 1920's. There exists a situation that only an honest investigation of the widest scope can cover. And millions are ready to support it.

Our informant continues: "In view of the bolshevist danger it is specially regrettable that the British have succeeded in making themselves hated even in such traditionally pro-British cities such as Hamburg. Their attitude is cold, arrogant, apparently aiming only at destroying the German economic rivalry, and introducing socialistic legislation, destroying traditional values, family ties and property."

In addition, it is openly said in many parts of Europe that apparently some secret order, perhaps dating back to Yalta, seems to be in force, aiming at artificially retarding, even frustrating the reconstruction of the Germain ruin-towns.

Production is stifled everywhere. People are beginning to lose whatever hope and faith remained in democratic 'fair-play'. The danger of neo-Nazism is great, even while a most stupid process of witch-hunting is carried on. The danger is that de-Nazification may well turn into National Bolshevism.

Adds our correspondent: "... The present witch-hunt is turning Germany into a paradise for stool pigeons and informers of the lowest type. It is making people more and more intolerant to accept any public office."

He goes on: "... A few days ago I saw a train composed of Czech cattle cars. ... It stood in the Aschaffenburg station.

A LOOK AT LABOR

By A. C. Tuohy

The Closed Shop is about to become, for the umpteenth time, an issue in American politics. The argument runs: If the closed shop is outlawed, unions will be weakened, and not in a position to sponsor paralyzing strikes. Attempts will be made in the 80th Congress to have a law passed making the closed shop illegal. It is hardly likely that the attempt will succeed, unless the vicious elements in the background of American politics have strength enough to destroy the trade union movement itself. In such a destruction more rights will be violated than self-styled proponents of democracy claim to defend.

To Define the "closed shop" is not an easy thing. It can be so worded to outlaw the closed shop without at the same time outlawing fundamental natural rights. Generally, the closed shop means that type of working conditions where a man must belong to the union in order to work. But in practice the closed shop has 57 varieties. Employers, saints that they are, tell us that the closed shop is un-American, because it deprives the worker of the inalienable right to work where and under whatever conditions he sees fit. This employer argument is so much twaddle. In the first place, the worker has no such right, otherwise every employer would have to hire the first man who asked for a job. In the second place, employers have not cared about anyone's right to work. They usually hire whomever they can get to work on their own conditions. In the third place, employers have not been not are they scrupulous about coercing a man they do not wish to employ, nor about discriminating against a man simply because he belongs to a union.

The Real Reason why employers resist the closed shop in all its forms is that it tends to make the union stronger. Since they start out from the premise that all unionism is bad, they are willing to settle for weak unionism in preference to strong unionism. They see in the strong union higher wages, shorter hours, and a shift in the control over the workers. Under closed shop provisions, they have to abide by the work rules of the union. Having been accustomed to determining how the men shall work, they do not like (and that is putting it mildly) union interference in their sacred domain.

The Fight Against the closed shop is really a fight against trade unionism. In the early days of the trade union movement, employers recognized that once they accepted unionism, they had to accept the closed shop in some form or other. Before the turn of the century, even the great J. P. Morgan admitted this inevitability. What is more natural for a union to work until all the members of the job belong to their organization. Can anyone say to a group of workers that they may sign up in a union, providing that they don't sign up everyone? Can we begin to determine what percentage of a working force must remain non-union before the union is acceptable? It is just as ridiculous as telling the Catholic Church that She can convert as many non-Catholics as She wants, providing that she does not convert too many. Or as inane as insisting that Catholic Schools permit a certain percentage of non-Catholics to attend, before those schools will be desirable. By its very nature, the trade union movement is inclusive! It tends to gather all workers within its folds. No law can undermine the very nature of a thing.

Employers are generally opposed to trade unions and the closed shop. But there are many enlightened employers who accept trade unionism and the closed shop. These men see a certain stability in the make-up of their working force, when all the workers are union members. They find that better work is done when the union disciplines the men, rather than the boss. They are only glad to have the union take over many of the headaches which have irked them for years. What about these employers? Is a law to be framed so that employers can't get the closed shop even when they want it? To outlaw the closed shop would be to interfere not only with the rights of the workers, but even of the employers.

The closed shop issue is complicated. More remains to be said. More will be said next week.

The train was crowded with thousands of starving children.

The German officials on our united zone in each conference, the refugee problem seemed to subside. Every attempt has been futile from the beginning. One nation is acting in the most selfish manner possible. Recently, Herbert Hoover and the Mennonite Central Relief Committee returned to the United States. (Hoover was chief food administrator during the first World War.)

The solution: liberation of the present German economy from its present bonds. Lifting of the censorship and the economic restrictions of foreign trade . . . and the returning of the Eastern provinces — that the refugees may return to their homes.

There apparently is not much talk about war. But there persists an uneasy feeling. By next summer the war may be here. All agree that it may mean the biggest "Dunkerque" in history . . . for the Western powers.

This does not make pleasant reading. When our correspondent left these starving zones weeks ago, he promised to send the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth.

". . . I should add," he writes, "that the 1800 calories are to be found on paper only. There is no coal for the schools, for the hotels used by Germans, overseas troops, etc. Here are a few typical examples:

"12% of the total Hamburg population have tuberculosis, 8% have VD, and 12% of the Heidelberg students have TB.

"There's part of the German story as its stands today. Within short space of time, we hope to have an equally factual story from China — from an even higher source.

Letters to Editor

Now, many years ago [illegible] public conveyances [illegible] — when traveling at the [illegible] children were [illegible] —that the youngsters [illegible] much better behavior than those who [illegible] to and from public schools. . . .

However, times have changed. Public High Schoolers are not more immorally than before, but are certainly more lax — while children of the parochial schools seem to have become veritable ruffians, punching and hitting each other [illegible] the chance older person [illegible] to have to occupy standing room on the [illegible] with the young fry grasping all the seats, transfer, or every one's toes, ballooning bubble gum at random, screaming, jostling, and never apologizing if they actually injure someone. The same conditions prevail on Sundays when the youngsters flock [illegible] out of church to get a bus. . . .

Twice as many more children ride the buses nowadays that in former less [illegible] times. Yet, it does seem as though the schools ought to begin a real fortright campaign to teach manners to these [illegible] children whose parents have no time and not no means to teach them decent behavior in public.

What especially appeals to me as the very best basis for good manners, orderly social behavior is the central theme of the Catholic religion, Holy Mass. Every rite, every gesture of the priest, the altar servers, the people indicates a deep sense of reverence and pious regard for the Host at the Sacrament. Our Lord's presence evokes spontaneous reverence from all attending Mass.

But we Catholics are supposed to carry this reverence into every event of our daily lives. Are we not also supposed actually to see Christ, our Elder Brother, in every human being we meet? Then why can't we have, in due proportion, the same regard for Him in the persons of our human brothers as we have for Him upon our altars? We do not push, shove, jostle each other when we go into Church, when we walk to the Communion rail. We do not see the servers at Mass hastening to get ahead of each other. We do see everyone genuflect before the Blessed Sacrament before seating himself, or when passing by the altar. Is this not in deference to Christ, indeed as though asking His permission to be seated, to pass by Him? go ahead of Him?

Cannot the lesson of "good manners" that the Mass demonstrates among its infinite instructions be used to inculcate good, considerate social behavior in public, in our Catholic youth? Do let us try to teach the children that no matter who they meet or where, Christ our elder Brother is there present, or potentially so. Christians behaving rudely toward others at any time or place are worse than pagans.

Sincerely in Christ,
Mrs. C. E. O'Toole
62 Hazelwood
Rochester 9, N. Y.

96 Per Cent of Austrian Children Taught Religion

Vienna — (NC) — Ninety-eight percent of Austrian children are being given religious instruction, according to a new map made public here. The map showed that 70 per cent of the servicemen in Catholic uniforms are of children from non-unionized workers' families.

Veteran Missioner Dies

St. Louis — (NC) — The Rev. John E. Joyce, Missionary Servite, veteran missionary activities included service among the Chinese in Minnesota, and the Indians at Tree Point, N. Dak., has died here after a sudden illness.

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