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# The Seven Last Words Echo Across the Centuries

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Leer Bert Weiner Barten, Der Gelen Gin- Onles I fort Bert, Mitter den ber Berten Bert, Mitter den ber Berten Berte

## Come. Follow Me

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This week brings us two outstanding examples of obedi-ence to God's call, of acceptance of the vocation that was God's will Joseph and Patrick were true to God's call, were easer to cooperate with God in the designs He had in mind for the world, and in His choice of them as His instruments

in carrying out those designs. Joseph is a perfect example of a man chosen by God for one of the most exalted vocations, that of Head of the Holy Family Foster Father of Jesus, Guardian of Mary, Joseph effered Himself to God as a most useful and faithful and prudent servant in carrying out the divine plan for redemp-tion of the world through Jesus Christ. In that plan Jesus was foremost, Mary held the place next to Him, But neither Mary nor her Divine Son wars to carry out their respective parts mays through the heavenly appointed aid of Joseph. God called Him. God blessed him in his answering of that call. God gave him happiness in life and salvation in death as a reward for his fidelity to a sublime vocation.

#### Patrick Called of God

Patrick came full four hundred years after Joseph. Patthe war summoned by God to eavy on the work of salva-tion first begun by Christ in His life and death and resur-rection. Christ's Church had been filling all the world with rection. Christ's Church had been filling all the world with its saving presence. The first Apostles and their successor were dead and gone. New spostles were needed for labor in fields already opened, and to preach the faith to nations still stemped in paganiam. To Patrick, a poor and humble cap-tive herdsman, went God's word of invitation to undertake the sonversion of Ireland. Patrick answered that wocation, became a Bishop of the Church of God, labored eighty years as win all of Ireland to the Church of the that it became through him an island of "saints and scholars."

work for all of us, giving to each the special assignment. The Fourth Word work in his One is called to be a priest, another to be a Of mis endured by human in the fourth to be a of the young, another to save the state of the source of the young.

teacher of the young, another to serve the sick and the or-phan and the aged. The salvation of souls is made depend-ent is the labors of those who answer God's vocation.

## ely-Week-

" she our thoughts dwell with the Prince of Peace in all His Weak and sorrows during this Holy Week, the "Great Weak" at all the year, may our poor prayers help to bring the world the peace that He alone can give, the peace that will keep wat away from our country and from all the countries of the world.

Ohrist still must prevail! Paranism must be overcome in this age even as it has been conquered in ages gone by. Communism must be stopped in its march against Christ and the freedom of Christ. May the graces of the current Holy Week mean new strength for the forces of right, renewed Boarty for downtroldan peoples, a return of Christ's free-

# The First Word

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#### Father Forgive Them . . .

"Forgive!" Were liese words meant for you and me? We were not there, but clear in destiny It was not morely they who raised the Cross, Who moved those swollen lips. The pain of loss Of human souls-that was His agony. For gasing down through time, eternity Was what He viewed and what His torn heart leared For equallese spuls by all and sorrow seared.

"Failer, forgive. They know not what they do." The manifest sweet mercy of that prayer, The first He breathed in Calvary's fetid air! "Father, forgive. They know not what they do," The dying Saviour pleads for me and you.

# The Second Word This Day Thou Shalt Be With Me In Paradise

His second words a benlson conveyed. The upraless sword of justice now is stayed. The thief is matched from his impending doom And Paradise is promised ere the tomb. "Amen, amen, I say to thee this day," He saith, what only God has power to say, To Dismas, gasing with repentent eyes: "Thou shalt be with Me, yes, in Paradise."

One hour they hang in anguish side by blde. One word, the thief beholds Him glorified. Merciful Jesuy, Who could change that grief To loy unequalled for a wrotched thief, He nurciful to all who fall and stray, Remember us, O Lord, on our last day.

#### The Third Word

#### Woman, Behold Thy Son . . . Behold Thy Mother

Me whispers now: "Wonikn, behold thy son." Rre yet the final course His blood has run, Me must provide His mother with a child-Who heard those tender words. As from a throne Endued with mighty power from sbove He leaves to us this token of his love.

And she into the future peered, she knew The things on earth He still would have her do. For duly held her bound to earth once more The Mother of the infant Church, Before Mer mind there flashed the hopes, the trials, the woes, But in her heart triumphant joy arose.

Is summed up in the agonized "I thirst."



'Non-Sectarian Education

A few weeks ago I commenced, in this column, to say something about a particular idea contained in G. K. Chesterton's "What's Wrong

with the World." But as soon ss I had montioned that title I yielded to the temptation to dwell upon it. So it happened



Is it mere earthly water? Nay, His plea Heard down from the reaches of eternity A mire profound significance imparis; His cry is not for water, but men's hearts.

# The Fifth Word

The way is a surface of the second

Rochester, N. Y.

## My God, My God, Why Hast Thou Forsaken Me?

A Ged forsaken? Yes, the Son of God Who brought back Lazarus and from a clod Had raised the widow's son reviving breath In one already signed and sealed by death. A God forsaken? Christ upon the tree Crying: "My God, Hast Thou forsaken Me?" Rather, by God's own children, Christ forsaken Unto His Father's court their case has taken.

He pleads Divine Omnipotence to stay Its judgement when on that portentous day, Sinful and shameful, naked and alone Each soul shall stand before his Maker's Throne. Dear Christ, make us forever pure in heart Lest we should hear those words: "Accursed, denart."

## The Sixth Word

#### It Is Finished

Now it is finished. Consummatum est. Perhaps her heart was calmed who loved Him best; Since pain had brimmed the cup, perchance she bowed Her anguished head and breathed to Heaven aloud A grateful prayer to know the Child she bore Could suffer of its bitterness no more. Now, John consoles her with a son's caress, And Magdalen's lips once more His bruised feet press.

Beck Pilate, now, what Claudia foretold; Recall, ye scribes, the prophecies of old; Beat, priests and people, beat your breasts and flee; Slink, Herod, trembling, slink to Oalliee. A soldier, standing on the blood-stained sod, Murmurs: "Indeed, This was the Son of God."

# The Seventh Word

#### Father, Into Thy Hands I Commend My Spirit

Once called He "Abba! Father!" Now He cries With agony that rends the earth and skies; "Into Thy Hands My Spirit I commend." The earth is felt to quake. It is the end. The temple's veli is rent. Now saintly men. Long dead, rise from the grave and walk again, The rocks are moved over Calvary Descends a pell through which no man can see.

Now, Joseph, take the broken body down And place Him in her arms. Remove the crown Of thoms that pierced that sacred blood-stained brow. In Abraham's bosom rests His spirit now. So, gently, in the tomb the limp form lay To wall the glorious Resurrection Day.

> suade ourselves that the great Cardinal of Paris is talking only about a de Christianized France in which 12,000 churches are presently without the ministrations of a priest. He certainly can't be talking about us or so we like to

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WHOM THE GODS destroy, they first make blind. They make us blind to the fact-to cite a flagrant example of our own deficienciesthat we have within our boundaries 13,000,000 Negroes who are a dispussessed proletariat, if ever there was one, and who will be won to

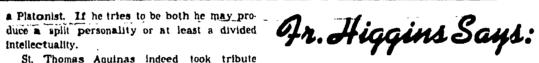
the cause of Christ only if and when American



By crucl nails in pride and malice driven. He did not murmur when they raised the tree And left Him hanging in His sgony. But now it ments His burning heart will burst For quenching waters, and He cries: "I thirst."

What quenching waters those for which He cries In anguished tones that echo to the skies?

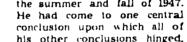
St. Thomas Aquinas indeed took tribute from both Aristitle and Plato. But what he made of them was neither Aristotle nor Plato. It was Aquinas, When another Aquinas comes along, he may take Aquinas and someone else and make a third which will not be Aquinas or the someone else, but himself. Someone with such stupendous genius may not come today or tomorrow. We may have to wait for



#### Fiddlers Other Than Nero

A legrned American priest was talking to a group of us recently about what he had seen and heard on the Continent of Europe during

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think.

the summer and fall of 1947. He had come to one central

#### Every Day for Christ!

The recent decision of the United States Supreme Court eclaring unconstitutional the use of public schools for inatruction in religion, does not include any prohibition of the of private buildings for such instruction on released how. All who believe in God will refore that the decision ender the official atatement that it is not intended to lowor the high standard on which religious teaching can be mparted friely to eltison of America. We take exception to a certain newspaper editorial which would have us accept the proposition that Sunday should be auflicient for reigious instruction. How far that editorial is from the true deal of every Christian I We belong to God not only on Sunay but on every day of the week. Our knowledge of God. our thoughts obscerning Him, our service of mind and body. are for every day in the week. No portion of time can be alienated from God's presence, from God's constant blessing upon all of us. In Him we live and move and have our being. Every day for Christ! The Catholic school is the rational anawer to the need of our children for God and God's constant help. Where such schools can not be had, no thinking person will assume that our reluctant acceptance of any substitute for such a school can limit or should limit itself to just one day in the week. Sunday is the Lord's Day: it prowns with glory the week in which every day is a day for CHILLE - 19 4 . A. A. -

#### Guarded Until

The Paulon of Our Lord according to St. Matthew is read on Palm Sunday. It begins with Christ's prophecy of His approaching, crucifizion. Judas betrays Him to His chemies for thirty pieces of silver. At the Last Supper, Christ Institutes the Blessed Sacrament, gives fulness of priestly power to His Apostles, prepares to go out into the night into the Garden of Gethemane for His agony. Arrested at night by those who hated Him, brought down into the Holy City, He is mocked, scourged, crowned with the noise city, ne is macked, scourged, crowned with thorns, unjustly condemned by Pilate to the death of the most Crucified, raised shoft on Mt. Calvary, He dies after three hours of torment. But even in His death, He shows that He is the living Son of God.

They placed their guard; they followed Pilate's permismission --- "Go, guard it as well as you know how." They sealed the stone at the entrance to the tomb, they set their mard. They had made all things secure. Their work was ccomplished.

Christ's enemies were not satisfied with what they had the Christ had been humiliated, dishonored before the mole had died by their hands. Now they come to Pilate. They are worried. Christ had promised He would rise and His desiples might easily steal the body, and say They prayed that the tonib might be "guard-

setil"! Roman soldiers were accomplished Their Presence at the tomb, their the top of the top against all men, atand as a second to the death and burial of Christ. They are a second to the death and burial of Christ. They are a second to the death and burial of the second are a second to the second day." They could a second to the second day." 1000 and an mothing to protect it against God's that I didn't get around to the particular idea I had in mind. In that little book (written back in 1910) G.K.C., who was a great optimist, found so much wrong with the world that by the time he got to page 233

(Catholic Masterpiece Series, Fr. Gillis Sheed and War 1942, 75c) he referred to the world situation as "this chaos." But (now here speaks the optimist) he thought we could still bring order out of chaos. How? By education. Old stuff? Yes, old stuff. Everybody has said it. -**ì** -But G.R.C. never uses old stuff without making it new. When he recommends education as a cure for the evils of the world, he doesn't mean what most of those who use that overworked word mean. Quite the contrary. They speak of "broad education " He favors narrowing education down. He heads his chapter, "The Need for Narrowing." The usual thesis of educationalists is that creeds and dogmas are narrowing and hence crippling the

mind. Chesterion says "the educationist must find a creed and teach it." Others abhor "sectarian" education. G K C. says "Education must now be sectarian education "

. . .

NOR WILL HE permit the objector-in this case probably a highly indignant objector -- to say, "The vellow is pleased to be paradoxical; he is induiging in his usual gymnastics with phrases; he is trying to be 'smart;' he cannot mean what he says, or if he does, it is because he has permitted his mind to be subjugated by religion, and at that a sectarian religion."

They shouldn't fool themselves. G.K.C. wasn't trying to be smart. He was smart without trying-so smart that beside him smart he said and what's more he proved it. He showd that no matter what kind of education you seek-religious, philosophical, scientific, practical-you are confronted with a multitude of conflicting theories. You must choose one out of the multitude. You may know them all but you will prefer one. Chesterton says with his usual amplification, "out of all this throng of theories education must somehow select a theory; out of all these thundering voices it must manage to hear a voice; out of all this amazing indication of this in the forgive hira?" awful and aching battle of blinding lights it frequency with which the vari-

11AT. 72 either the Ptolemaic system or the Copernican: in biology, either the Darwinian or th anti-Darwinfan. As the old saying goes, every child

him. The longer his coming is delayed the more complicated will be the world of learning. It will be more difficult for him than it was for St. Thomas 700 years ago to make a aynthesis; that is to say, a combination of other philosophies and his own.

WHILE WE WAIT for that day we shall continue to have a chaos of conflicting opinions in philosophy and in science. We must pick out one of them. If we think to accept them all, we shall be like the fellow visualized by Stephen Learock who "jumped on his horse and galloped off madly in all directions." To fell-the-truth that is precisely what most equ. cation is doing nowadays.

New applying this to what is called "nonsectarian religion" Are we to teach that God is, and as coually true that God is not? That Christ is God and is not God? That there is one Church of Christ and a hundred Churches of Christ? That the Holy Eucharist is the Real Presence and is not the Real Presence! That there is and that there is not a future life? That there is a heaven, a purgatory and a hell, and that there is a heaven but no purgatory and no hell?

Right or wrong, true or talse, good or bad, the teaching must be of one set of truths and not of another. You cannot have both. Not unless you accept the modern philosophy that good is bad, right is wrong, and true is false. To avert that madness in himself and in his pupil, the teacher must teach one thing as true and its opposite as false. That is to say, the teacher must be sectarian. Non-sectarian teaching fof religion or of anything else) is a psychological crime. Rather it would be if it were not a psychological impossibility

#### Just Between Us-

important.

There is an

#### **Most Important Apostie**

away?" Simon Peter therefore One might be tempted to think first'to be called by Jesus. it was St. John, the Beloved Disanswered, 'Lord, to whom shall

people were stupid. He meant exactly what ciple, who lay with his head on His name comes up so often we go? Thou hast words of Our L or d's probably because he was the everlasting life, and we have breast at the spokesman of the apostles. Again come to believe and to know that last supper and and again it is he who first finds Thou art the Christ. the Son of tle with Jesus his voice in speaking for the God."

His death on "Behold," we have left al! and There are many, many' dia-Calvary. Dear. followed thee." - That was St. logues between Jesus and St. est to Q,u r. Peter. "Lord, dost thou speak this Peter. Our Lord works many a but not most parable for us or for all alike?" miracle on his behalf. We think Lord, perhaps. of how Jesus let. Peter walk on -St. Peter again.

"Lord, how often shall my the waters, of the neraculous brother sin against me, and I catch of fish, of the money provided for the local tax-collector. Peter's mother-in-law was the

must manage somehow to trace and track a ous spostles are mentioned in PERMAPS HIS most beautiful first person to be healed by the four Gospels and the Acts, words-words which have since Jesus. In fact, whenever Jesus St. John is mentioned 29 times. comforted millions of Christians was in Capharnum, He seems to -were spoken by St. Peter to have stayed at St. Peter's house TO PUT IT more prosaically, a teacher can. But St. Peter comes in more than Jesus after the great sermon on (see, for instance, Matthew 18, Jesus after the great sermon on (see, for instance not teach his pupil all theories as equally true. 190 times a difference of 161. the Holy Communion. Many of 24: Mark 2.1 fl.; 3.22 fl.; 7.17). In astronomy he must, for example, teach Why was St. Peter so important? the disciples had gone away, un. These are only a few of the Another striking fact is that willing to believe that Jesus reasons that lead scholars to St. Peter's name stands first on could give them His flesh to eat conclude that Simon Peter, the every list of the agostles to be and His blood to drink. fisherman, was the chief and found in the Scriptures. In fact, "Jesus therefore said to the most important of Christ's born into the world is either an Aristotellan or of all the aporties, he was the twelve, Do you also wish to go twelve.

and apart from which they were almost meaningless, he thought.

Unless we understand, he kept repeating, that the struggle of the twentieth century. and more particularly the featful struggle of the present moment, is a desperate strug-

Fr. Higgins gle by the forces of evil to capture the allegiance of the working classes, we know nothing at all about the world in which we live a world which, if you can be heve this morning's newspaper, almost seems to be aching for further and perhaps final destruction.

A few days later there came across my desk the English translation of Cardinal Suhard's famous Lenten Pastoral of 1947, which is by all odds one of the most important religious documents of the present generation. The Cardinal Archbishop of Paris corroborates the findings of our American friend and underlines his central conclusion most emphatically.

"THE MODERN apostolate," he says. "while neglecting none, will be based especially upon the working class The first reason for this is that the laboring masses are particularly tut off from the Church, and their evangelization poses problems which must be solved at any cost if the twentieth is to return to Christ the crowds which the nineteenth century took from Him. The second reason is that the Church is too conscious of human dignity not to encourage with enlightened sympathy the elevation of the working class to its rightful

We are tempted (by Satan of course) to per-

By Father

Ginder

Catholics help to snatch them from economic slavery and raise them to the dignity of brothers of Jesus Christ. Whom the gods would destroy, they also make blind to the fact that at times during the thirties we had as many as 12,000,000 unemployed in the United States and that, to our national discredit, it was only the recent was which finally gave us full emproyment. The gods who would destroy us would first convince us. in other words, that we are not at all like the rest of men. We may argue, if we will that conditions

are worse in France than they are in the traited States Of course they are Conditions in France are incredibly worse than they are in the United States. Nevertheless His Holiness Pope Pius XII was taiking about the United States as well as yoout France and Belgium and Italy when he said, even before his elevation to the Papers that "in the complexity of the modern world the working classes take on a growing unportance, an importance which it would be stupid and unjust to underestimate. The extent to which the representatives of labor are penetrated with the principles of the Grapel will decide in large measure the extent to which the society of tomorrow will be Christian" . . .

POPE PILS XII and Cardinal Subaid are taiking principally of ourse about the supernatural apostolate about the salvation of souls But even in the natural order the paramount importance of the working classes becomes more apparent every hour of the critical days in which we find outselves. To whom are the Communists directing their attention and their unscrupulous propaganda? Whom are they trying to convince, desperately and altogether dishonestly, that the European Recovery Program is the tool of Wall Street imperialism? Principally the poor and the dispossessed, who can most easily be persuaded that they have nothing to lose but their poverty.

. Be it said to the lasting credited the labor movements in almost all of the nations still on this side of the "iron curtain." that they have thus far spurned the overtures of the Russians and are struggling heroically to retain their democratic freedoms.

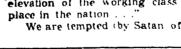
ARE THE REST of us prepared to help them? If we are, we can prove it 'only by lending our full support oday ut may be too late tomorrow) to a radical program of social reconstruction - a democratic program around which the working classes of the world can rally hopefully as a symbol of human dignity and decency.

Those of us who have already been partially blinded by the gods of destruction to the meaning of the present crisis-those of us who are not yet convinced of the necessity of radical social and economic reforms-are urged, if only for their self-preservation, to ponder prayerfully the concluding pages of Martin Ebon's recent analysis of the present position of world Communism. The Communists, he tells "s. nave a head start: "With the Communists out in front, and the socialists and Catholic parties competing for second place, international business interests seem to be promenading along the track. earnestly discussing yesterday's stock market fluctuations." "While Rome burns ...."

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