At Our House

The Postman Brings Some Puzzling Stork News

BY MARY TINLEY DALY

A most unusual flood of mail has been pouring into our house.

Every day I've been getting letters. At first there was the joyous anticipation of hearing from old friends—but the letters are never from old friends.

Mary Daly

They are from manufacturers of every infant product in the country. Not only letters, either. There are samples of baby talcum, baby oil, little plastic gadgets to seal nursing bottles, small packets of baby cereal, cotton-wrapped sticks — and more paraphernalia than I had used for all seven of my babies.

The letters are masterpieces of salesmanship. The one from a baby carriage firm this morning thanked me for my interest in their product and knew that I would take great pride in rolling our precious little king or queen in such a handsome carriage.

The carriage was handsome, all right, and so was the price—enough to make a down payment on a new car wherein all our little kings or queens could roll down the street—and all over town.

ANOTHER LETTER was from a diaper service.

"We can now supply you with service," it stated, "superservice to end your diaper problem."

A little late to settle that problem.

The third letter was even more mystifying. It began, "Dear Mother-To Be" and went on to tell in glowing terms how beautiful I would look in their maternity clothes—"everything you need now to a complete layette —later!" it wound up coyly.

Well . . .

I looked suspiciously at Pat and Johnny, both college students.

"Do you know anything about all this baby fan mail that's been coming here?" I asked sternly.

Blank looks on both faces.

"You think we have time for practical jokes?" grunted Johnny.

"Oh, Mother," said Pat disgustedly, "They just get a name and send out that stuff. They got your name when Virginia was born."

"You can use the cereal for Virginia, can't you, Mother?" asked eight-year old Mary anxiously. "Aren't you glad to have it? And the baby foods? And the little bottle of baby oil is swell for my real-skin doll."

Well, of course we could use some of the stuff. But why?

LATER IN the morning I found out why. A gentleman came struggling up our icy front steps carrying a huge thing the size of a card table. He nearly slipped several times but persisted and landed, panting, at the front door.

Hanging onto his burden with one hand, he politely took off his hat and beamed: "Good morning, Madam. Here's your mother-saver!"

He stepped inside the living room and unwrapped the enormous package. "Now, if you'll just bring your baby in . . ."

"Virginia," I called, "come here, honey, and see what this nice gentleman has for you."

The "nice gentleman" looked aghast as Virginia came trotting into the living room shouting, "Got candy for Ginna?"

He gulped. "I think you misunderstand, Madam. I mean the little baby—the one who is to use the combination play pen and table that will add extra hours to all your days."

"But this is our baby," I said. "She's two. And who told you I'd be interested in a play pen?"

He pulled a letter from his pocket. There, in Mary's handwriting and signed with my name, was a request sent to a magazine to please send all information and samples of "everything for a baby."

Of course! That time Mary had had a cold and kept herself so happily busy with magazines!

THE "MOTHER saver" man was a good sport and laughed—a bit wryly—as he packed up his contraption and prepared to lug it down those icy front steps.

"One never knows what the little rascals will do next, does one?" he chuckled.

One certainly doesn't!

THAT THE BLIND MAY SEE

Embossing Catholic greeting cards in Braille for the blind is the cheerful task of these two students at Mount Mary College, Milwaukee. Rita Novak of Chicago (left) operates a Braille writer, while Rosemarie Kieffman, Grosse Pointe Park, Mich., transcribes on a Braille slate. For the past nine years students of the college have been learning the Braille system and have produced much material for this project of the International Federation of Catholic Alumnae. (NC Photos).

Missionary Work in Red Manchuria at Standstill

Peiping — (NC) — A long blackout of news on Catholic missions in northern Manchuria was slightly lifted when special planes brought American and British consulate staffs, missionaries and a number of civilians out of Changchun, one-time Manchurian capital. Their reports give this picture of the situation:

(1) Outside of the government-held cities of Changchun, Kirin and Mukden, scarcely any missionary activity is now possible in all Manchuria, with a population of 43 million of whom 200,000 are Catholics.

(2) In the Diocese of Kirin, Bishop Auguste Gaspais, four French and about 20 Chinese priests can exercise their ministry freely in Changchun and Kirin. The major seminary has been emptied of its 45 students by military conscription the difficulty of travel, and economic stress. Thirty Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Mary, a Chinese congregation, are refugees at the seminary, expelled from convents in the hinterland. For a meagre living they must do needlework or make cigarettes for sale.

(3) TWENTY-SEVEN mission posts have been pillaged, either by brigands or the communists. These include Siapachiatze, a center for 2,800 Catholics, where church, rectory and convent are now in communist hands. All the food supply and spare clothing of the Sisters was taken from them.

(4) The church and rectory at Haipeichen (birthplace of Archand the Sisters of the Holy Cross from Ingenbohl (Switzerland) have been interned by communist authorities at Tsitsihiar.

(5) NINE AUSTRIAN Capuchians, from the Apostolic Prefecture of Kiamusze, including Msgr. Hermenegild Hintriger, O. F. M. Cap., are under strict surveillance at Harbin, with other priests of the Harbin district. They are subjected to long lectures of communist propaganda. Catholics in Harbin are forbidden to go to church.

It is also said that a group of priests and Sisters, mostly of Slav nationality, administering to Russian Catholics of the Byzantine-Slav rite at Harbin, have not been molested in their work. With a parish, they had in 1941 an orphanage for 180 Russian children, and two schools for 165 boys and 150 girls.

Recent news dispatches have reported that the Swiss Missionaries of Bethlehem at Tsitsihar, tobler and five of his priests are now in a Tsitsihar prison. Thirty-five Chinese Sisters, Oblates of St. Theresa, are reported to have been dispersed. The Tsitsihar prefecture contains 23,000 Catholics.

Child Bill Defeated

London —(RNS)— A proposed amendment to the Children Bill, which deals with the care of homeless minors, to ensure they will be boarded out only with persons of the same religious faith, failed to pass the House of Lords when the measure came up for reading.

Pretty Protector

Look what you can have from only one yard of material — an apron that's large enough for ample protection, in the kitchen, yet allows you to move freely and look your best. Note the clever cut of the back that holds the shoulder straps in place, while bright binding on the hem, patch pockets, and neck gives the eye-appeal.

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New Bill Aimed At Bias Against Women Backed

Washington — (NC) — Endorsement of the principle and methods of a bill before Congress to create a Commission on the status of woman and to eliminate distinctions at law between the sexes, "except such as are reasonably justified by differences in physical structure, biological or social function," is stated in a letter by Miss Ruth Craven, executive secretary of the National Council of Catholic Women, to the House Subcommittee or Judiciary.

At the same time, Miss Craven, in a separate statement, reiterates the opposition of the N. C. C. W. to the proposed Equal Rights Amendment to the Constitution.

Indicating that she speaks for five million Catholic women representing all walks of life, Miss Craven says that while the N. C. C. W. has always opposed the Equal Rights Amendment, yet it has always recognized the need to abrogate "unjust legal discriminations" against women, while at the same time preserving legal protections based on natural differences between the sexes.

IT IS THE clear intent of the bill, on the status of women, she states, "to provide a workable formula whereby women might be freed from objectively unjust legal discriminations, and at the same time that difference between the sexes, which has been decreed by Almighty God Himself, might be respected."

The bill envisages establishment of a Commission on the Legal Status of Women to make a "full and complete study, investigation and review of the economic, civil, social, and political status of women." With regard to this proposed procedure, Miss Craven states: "The personnel of the Comission, its method of approach to the problem, the thoroughness of its study, all of these factors will be decisive of the question whether this Bill, if enacted into law, shall be productive of good or of harm — for there are possibilities for either, despite the excellence of the principle on which it is based."

THEREFORE Miss Craven points out, her statement is an endorsement of the principle of the bill and of the procedure outlined in the Bill, "even though it must be subject to the condition that it is the final report of the Commission which will determine the ultimate social value of this legislation."

Reiterating opposition of the N. C. C. W to the Equal Rights Amendment, Miss Craven states that as children of God, "men and women are absolutely equal," but that the characteristic differences which divide the two sexes are so obvious that their significance cannot be overlooked in social relations and legislation.

Gethsemane

Devout Mental Prayer Offered For Moderns

BY MARIE WEIDMAN
Rochester Catholic Charities

Saviour, as Thy heaving shoulders bent over Gethsemane's cold ground, how the sins of our age must have tormented Thee! When the evils of the world pressed down upon Thy Holy Brow, our generation's wretchedness made Thy Bloody Sweat more agonizing, more unbearable.

Marie Weidman

O, Holy Lord, Thy Sacred Blood trickled to the barren earth when the awful weight of our sins took hold of Thee. They fill us, mere humans, with horror and dismay, how they must have appeared to thee, God-Man. Surely Thou didst suffer searing pain on beholding an age that has forgotten Thee as an Almighty Judge. We seem unable to pray, to contemplate or to worship Thee, Lord, as our Creator and Saviour. Our hearts are cold, our spirits cannot soar to Thee in the praise which should be Thine. Vision is dimmed and souls are blunted by the material, the crass; we worship creature comfort and mammon, our goal is ease.

HOW INTOLERABLE Thine anguish to see children scandalized, left to exist without knowing Thee. Their parents blinded by a hundred evil allurements, neglect the little souls Thou has entrusted to them and are indifferent if their children follow them early into temptation and grave sin.

O, Son of Mary, we have long since forgotten Thine Own Holy Family Life and the blessed peace of Nazareth. Parents are sinning violently against Thee: no longer do they glorify and thank Thee for the blessing of children. They are seeking to evade their parental duties by unholy, sinful means so that they may have more time and freedom to worship gold and personal comfort.

We are losing the Holy significance of Cana and are tearing asunder the sacred marriage vows. We are ignoring Thy stern commands and now put aside marriage partners at will; families scattered, as Christian homes become merely pagan houses.

We know Thou didst envision the scores of young souls to be corrupted and brought to their final destruction by the bad example of their elders and by today's subtle, God-denying philosophies which will plunge youth into the Hell they so glibly argue away as idle superstition.

Our generation, Lord, is cold and harsh, even as the winds in Gethsemane on that awful night. They seem scarcely able to deny Thee, of late rather they ignore Thee, Maker of a Universe and Creator of man to Thine Own Image. Man is putting Thee firmly out of his heart and trying to ease the aching void by pursuing pleasure and power. Men are assuring themselves that there is no God and that there is no life beyond the grave.

Our sins added greatly to Thy cup of suffering that night, Lord, yet Thou didst accept that cup—our sins, so awful that Thou, Omnipotent God, didst suffer Bloody Sweat. By the merits of Thine agony may our people return to praise Thee, to bless Thee, to adore Thee, O Holy Saviour, Amen.

Many Legends Surround Discovery of True Cross

There are a number of legends about the identification of the True Cross but all agree on one point the finding of it near Calvary.

In 326, the 80-year-old mother of the Emperor Constantine, St. Helena, journeyed to Jerusalem for the specific purposes of freeing the Holy Sepulchre from the rubble and earth which had accumulated over it, to destroy pagan buildings profaning this sacred spot, and to seek the True Cross.

The cross on which Christ died to redeem mankind was reported to have been thrown into a ditch or well, and the site concealed with stones. The Jews, it was said, had taken these measures to keep the Disciples of Christ from converting this most humiliating implement of punishment into a glorious symbol of faith.

It is interesting to note in this connection that, according to many historians, the cross first came into its own as a symbol of faith when Constantine saw in the heavens a luminous cross and the words, "In this sign conquer." This vision occurred just prior to the Battle of Milvian Bridge, October 28, 312, or 24 years before Constantine's mother discovered the True Cross.

SO IMPORTANT from the Jewish standpoint was the concealment of the cross of Christ that only a chosen few were entrusted with the secret from generation to generation. And the one who is credited with betraying the secret was named, of all things, Judas. He afterwards became a Christian and is known today as St. Cyriacus.

According to two legends, although three crosss were found concealed at the place pointed out by Judas, there was no identifying mark on any of them. One legend says that the three were carried to the bedside of a worthy woman who was at the point of death, and that as the third cross touched her, she was cured instantaneously.

THE OTHER legend is that St Helena caused a dead man to be brought to the place where the crosses were found and that contact with the the third cross restored him to life. A third explanation, attributed to St Ambrose, is that one cross still bore the inscription which, by Pilate's order, had been placed above the head of the crucified Christ "Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews."

The Feast of the Invention (discovery) of the True Cross dates from very early times at Jerusalem. Gradually it was introduced elsewhere but did not become general until about 720 In the Latin Church it is observed on May 3. In the Greek Church on September 14. According to St. Ambrose, St. Paulinus of Nola, Sulpicius Severus, Rufinus and others, soon after discovery much of the wood of the True Cross was cut into small relics which became scattered throughout the Christian world.

'Red Squads' Boost Sales Of Anti-Red Comic

New York —(NC)— Through the use of "squads" to intimidate newsstand dealers, New York communists unwittingly have been boosting sales of the anti communist "comic" book, "Is This Tomorrow," according to the Rev. Louis A. Gales, president of the Catechetical Guild Educational Society, St. Paul, Minn., publisher of the book.

Father Gales said that the "squads" have forced some 7,500 copies of the book off newsstands, but that as fast as they are removed they are taken to other stands in the same area and placed on sale. As a result of the "squad" operations, coupled with editorial bombardments in The Daily Worker, communist newspaper, many new orders are being received, he says.

Moral Training Halves VD Rate in U. S. Army

Washington —(NC)— A marked decline has been noted during the past year in the incidence of venereal disease among American soldiers amounting to 40 per cent for the army as a whole and to 50 per cent among soldiers stationed in the United States, army authorities have announced.

This decline is attributed to adoption by the army of the new moral approach to the problem, emphasizing spiritual and moral factors in educational programs.

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