

Courier Journal

THE COURIER JOURNAL... OFFICIAL NEWSPAPER OF THE BISHOPRIC OF ROCHESTER... THURSDAY, APRIL 8, 1948... MOST REVEREND JAMES EDWARD KEARNEY, D.D., President...

Fr. Higgins Says:

Our Failure As Christians... "So many, so grave, and so urgent are the problems of the temporal order that there is the temptation, felt principally by noble souls, wholly to immerse oneself in them, to the oblivion of the one thing necessary."



Fr. Higgins... The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science.

Seldom in our day has any American theologian analyzed so clearly, and in such a limited amount of space, the perplexing problem merely suggested or hinted at in the excerpt quoted above—the problem of reconciling within our own souls the all-important responsibility of seeking first the Kingdom of God, and the equally compelling obligation under which all of us labor of spending ourselves untriflingly in the reconstruction of the social order.

FATHER MURRAY reminds us that the Christians of every age, but perhaps, in a special way, the Christians of our own generation (you and I) are subject in this regard to two temptations; that the one is just as dangerous as the other, and is just as harmful to the cause of Christ and His Mystical Body.

The first temptation — and the one which it is particularly appropriate to emphasize during this Easter season — is the subtle temptation to concentrate on political, social, and economic reform as to forget that heaven — a life of supernatural union with Christ Himself for all eternity — is our final destination and that the salvation of our immortal souls is "the one thing necessary." It is the temptation to try to pull ourselves up by our own bootstraps — to become so immersed in the apostolate of "good works" as to forget that "unless the Lord keep the city, he watcheth in vain that keepeth it."

This is the temptation against which the Pope is always at pains to warn us, even as they urge us to participate more actively in the social apostolate. It is the temptation against which Pope Pius XI, for example, warns us in his encyclical on Atheistic Communism: "We recommend, Venerable Brethren, that in your dioceses you use the most practical means to foster and intensify the spirit of prayer joined with Christian penance."

But if it is disastrous for our own spiritual welfare, as well as for the temporal welfare of society itself, to overemphasize the social mission of the Church by underemphasizing the supernatural, it is equally disastrous to succumb to the opposite temptation, which is referred to rather scathingly by Pope Pius XI as "social modernism."

"The Christian social modernist," says Father Murray, "would maintain that his faith should have its flowering in personal piety; that he must keep his own hands clean by refusing to grapple with the grimy machinery of society." While confessing that all of us, in some measure, have succumbed to the first temptation, let us also confess that all of us, in some measure, are likewise "social modernists." Else how explain the tragic fact that the temporal order is so thoroughly disordered and so thoroughly de-Christianized as to be teetering at the present time on the very brink of destruction?

Let us also confess, to our discredit, that some of those who are attempting to reconstruct the social order without benefit of religion, and sometimes even with a positive hatred of religion in their hearts, have drifted away from God into secularism because of our failure as Christians "to grapple with the grimy machinery of society." The scandal of Christians in falling — either out of laziness or out of a false sense of personal piety — to bring Christianity into the market place goes far to account for the shallow rationalism of the typical "liberal."

THE FORMULA according to which we may steer our lives between the two temptations, which Father Murray refers to the motto to which the saintly Pope Pius X dedicated his very fruitful Pontificate: "To restore all things in Christ." "Catholic Action," said the same Pontiff while still Bishop of Venice, "will not please certain timid souls who, though good living, are so attached to their habitual quiet and so afraid of every innovation that they believe that it is quite sufficient to pray, because God knows best how to defend the faith and humiliate His enemies, and make the Church triumphant. But these good people, whom I would call optimists, will wait in vain for society to re-Christianize itself simply by the prayers of the good. It is necessary to join prayers with action."

The "middle way," in the social apostolate as well as in the working out of our personal sanctification, has been summarized almost to perfection as follows: "Pray as though everything depended upon God; but work as though everything depended upon yourself."

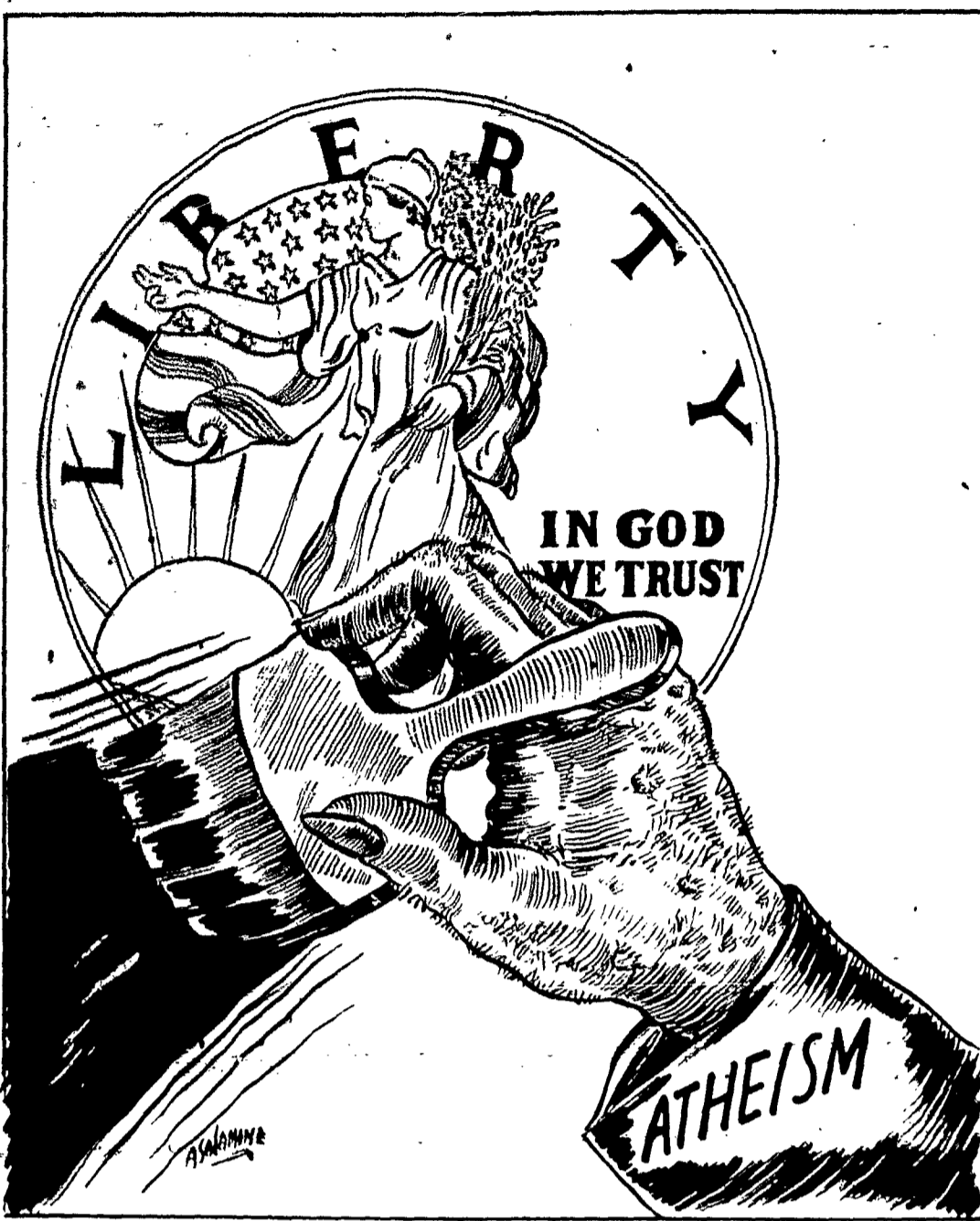
Do You Remember?

25 Years Ago—April 13, 1923... Disagreement over the division of the spoils secured by the sale of memberships in the Ku Klux Klan, and the disposal of nightgowns, hoods and other equipment split the imperial officers of the Knights of the Invisible Empire into rival factions.

10 Years Ago—April 7, 1938... Ten leading Catholic groups of Geneva joined in vigorous protest against the showing of the motion picture "Damaged Goods" classified as C or condemned by the Legion of Decency.

5 Years Ago—April 8, 1943... Prayer was prescribed as a "spiritual conveyer" for boys in service by His Excellency, Bishop Kearney, speaking at St. Lucy's Church, Rochester at the first Victory Novena.

"God Bless America!"



As We See It By Dan Patrick A Solution For Delinquency

The theorists who vainly wring their hands about juvenile delinquency might well look to an experiment in Rochester.

Conceived by the city's Department of Public Safety with the formation of a Youth Bureau manned by police personnel, the Rochester plan has enlisted widespread community support from a citizenry keenly aware of the results of unbridled delinquency among its youth.

The formula on which the Rochester plan has been projected is simple and not entirely original. It comprises the initiation of a program designed to interest youth and absorb some of the excess energy which too often is expended to the detriment rather than the advantage of a community.

IN THE SHORT space of a few months this Youth Bureau has opened centers of activity in nearly a dozen city schools including a number of our parochial institutions.

Information Desk

Why Is Church Opposed To Mixed Marriage? Non-Catholic Witness at Catholic Marriage

Q. Why is the Catholic Church so opposed to mixed marriages? A. Because of the dangers which such marriages bring with them to the faith of the Catholic party, and to the children born of such marriages. The Church believes that our Catholic faith is the most precious of possessions; martyrs have died rather than surrender it. In caring for her children, therefore, like a good mother, she tries to see to it that her children will avoid anything that might endanger, weaken, or destroy their faith.

Priest's 'Crime' Prayer for Jews

Nuremberg — (NC) — Praying for Jews was the "crime" charged by the Gestapo against a German priest whose main secret police arrested in Berlin in 1941, evidence introduced in the war crimes trials here indicated.

mon meeting place where such misconceptions can be corrected on both sides.

THE DELINQUENCY problem, as far as police are concerned, assumes greater proportions as youngsters advance to high school age. Here, there, is a field of activity with unbounded potentialities. What can be done to check the countless spawning places of delinquency to which youngsters of high school age are subject?

With the current disregard for law the answer, as far as these places are concerned, is pretty much in the negative. The solution, therefore, lies in inducing the youngsters to bypass these places and go elsewhere. But where?

THEY ARE some well meaning people who oppose, directly or indirectly, all types of sponsored entertainment for youth.

Q. May a non-Catholic be a witness at a Catholic marriage? A. The ordinary rule is that all the participants at a Catholic ceremony are to be practicing Catholics.

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Fr. Gillis Says:

Alice and the Supreme Court... "It's getting curiousest and curiousest," says Alice in Wonderland. It surely is, and not only in that world of wild fantasy.

The highest court in the land, or for that matter in all the world, gave a decision last year on the school-bus question in favor of the cooperation of Church and State. Now the court hands down a decision on the Champaign "release time" system which seems to outlaw cooperation of Church and State.

Same court, same principle in question, same line of reasoning, but a different conclusion. Something new in logic and I should say something new in law. If it is the purpose of the high court to puzzle the people, it has succeeded. If the idea is to demonstrate that law is elastic, mercurial, variable from year to year, again the Court can rack up a victory.

PERHAPS I MAY be permitted to say without being accused of treason that when we get a decision in 1947 that the First Amendment permits the use of public funds for the encouragement of religion, and a decision in 1948 that the First Amendment prohibits the use of public funds for the encouragement of religion, the law takes on some of the characteristics of a chameleon, a Mexican jumping bean, or of the pea in the well-known shell game.

BUT THERE is an even curiousest thing about the law — much more curiousest, as Alice might say. Mr. Justice Jackson who concurred in the recent decision wrote, "It is idle to pretend that we can find in the Constitution one word to help us as judges to decide where the secular ends and the sectarian begins in education. Nor can we find guidance in any other legal source. It is a matter on which we can find no law but our own prepossessions."

SIMPLE FOLK like you and me, dear reader, would be tempted to say, "If you have no law but only personal prepossessions, why don't you decline to make a decision, or make a decision to stand by the traditional interpretation of the First Amendment?" We ask not only why should there be one interpretation in 1947 and another in 1948 but why in 1948 reject the interpretation that has been accepted since 1791?

THE CONFESSION that the decision was made on prepossessions rather than on law is curiousest than the decision that a new interpretation must be given — with no new reason alleged — in regard to the use of public funds or, to speak more precisely, of public buildings for the advancement of religion.

BUT THE MOST curiousest fact of all is that a government which declares that it rests upon God should make it impossible to teach upon God in schools established to uphold the government. If, for example, a child reads in the preamble to the Declaration of Independence that the rights of many come directly from the Creator, and the child asks, "What is the Creator?" may he not be told that the Creator is God?

IF, being told, he goes on to ask, "Who is God?" must he then be informed that God is not to be spoken of in school? If God was spoken of, will Mrs. McCullum who brought the action and who calls herself an atheist, be satisfied?

WE COULD start in, here and now and ask a hundred such questions. But one more will do. Suppose the name of Jesus Christ comes up in history class.

How will the teacher explain Him? Any teacher who can do that little thing without bringing in religion, and indeed without disclosing her own theology, must be pretty slick with words. Is it part of the equipment of a teacher to use words to conceal thought?

YES, indeed, that Supreme Court decision gets curiousest and curiousest the longer you look at it.

Calendar of Saints

SUNDAY, APRIL 11—St. Leo I, the Great, Pope-Confessor-Doctor. He became Pope in 440 and ruled when Rome was threatened by vandals and heretics. When the Huns swept toward the city, he sought out Attila and saved Rome from destruction.

MONDAY, APRIL 12—St. Julius I, Pope. He was elected Pope in 337 and ruled 15 years. He upheld the orthodox doctrine concerning the Most Holy Trinity and vigorously asserted the Supremacy of the See of Rome in the East as well as the West.

TUESDAY, APRIL 13—St. Hermenegild, Martyr. A Visigothic Prince he was converted by Bishop St. Leander and his enraged father imprisoned him. When he refused to return to Arianism, he was beheaded at the order of his father in 586. His brother Reccared succeeded to the throne and was converted to Catholicism and brought about the return of the nation to the Faith.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 14—Feast of the Solemnity of St. Joseph, Patron of the Universal Church.

THURSDAY, APRIL 15—St. Basilissa and Anastasia, Martyrs. They were Roman noblewomen, who lived in the 1st century and were among the first converts. They are said to have assisted at the burial of St. Peter and Paul and for these Christian acts were killed in a massacre carried out under Nero.

FRIDAY, APRIL 16—St. Benedict Joseph Labre, Confessor. Born of a poor family in Artois, France, he decided against joining a religious community in favor of a life of solitude. He made pilgrimages to sanctuaries in France, Italy, Switzerland and Germany, everywhere begging his food, refusing money and spending most of his time in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament.

SATURDAY, APRIL 17—St. Anicetus, Pope-Martyr. He was a Syrian who succeeded St. Pius I as Pope in 155. He defended the Faith against Valentinus, Marcian and other Gnostic heretics.