Catechetical Director Outlines Religious Instruction Importance

By REV. ALBERT SCHNACKY, Director, Confraternity of Christian Doctrine

SELECTION OF September 4 as "Christian Doctrine Sunday" for the Rochester Diocese highlights the important work of providing religious instruction for all Catholic children in public schools.

Not many people realize that almost one-half of the Catholic children of grammar school age in this country attend public schools and that 80 percent of our children of high school age are enrolled in public high schools. In all, we know that two million Catholic youngsters are not receiving a full Catholic education.

In the diocese of Rochester nearly 28,000 Catholic children in the public school systems do receive at least one hour of religious instruction weekly. They are released from their grammar school and high school classes under the New York State Release Time arrangements and are taught by their parish priests, seminarians, nuns and some lay people assistants.

We need this annual Catechetical Sunday to stress the vital urgency of providing training in religious doctrine and religious practices for all Catholic children.

That need is best satisfied, of course, in our Catholic schools. But where the child is enrolled in the public school, special efforts must be made and constantly improved to bring him the fullest type of regular religious instruction.

Children in Catholic schools receive a rounded Catholic EDUCATION; they are given a training of their whole personality in our religion.

But the youngsters in the public school who get a weekly hour of catechism are receiving only a Catholic INSTRUCTION: information aimed at the intellect.

There are many reasons for our attempts to enroll every child in religious instruction classes and to make those classes influence the whole life and conduct of the child. One of these is today's delinquency problem.

Good boys and girls don't "just happen." They are made good and kept good by religious education that informs the intellect, strengthens the will and makes the child obedient to the Will of God. The only adequate check on modern delinquency is more religion in the school and the home.

The obligation to teach the truths of religion to others falls first of all on the Bishop of the diocese and his priests. Next it falls on the parents.

It is to assist in fulfilling these sacred obligations that the Church orders the erection and support of Catholic parochial schools and sets up the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine for those children who do not attend parochial schools.

We must never underestimate the importance of religious instruction for all our people, from the grammar school through college and on into adult life. On Christian Doctrine Sunday resolve to do your part in spreading the riches of the Faith and in protecting them from its modern enemies.

Background of the Confraternity

The work of the Confraternity is the spread of knowledge and practice of the Faith by the following means: religious training of Catholic elementary school children not attending Catholic schools, by instruction classes during the school year and in vacation schools; religious instruction of Catholic youths of high school age not attending Catholic schools, in study clubs and by other methods; religious discussion clubs for adult groups; religious education of children by parents in the home; instruction of non-Catholics in the teachings of the Catholic Faith.

Pope Pius XI in 1935 emphasized the observance of the Feast of Christian Doctrine as follows:

"In order that the Christian people may direct their thoughts occasionally in a special way toward religious instruction, a Catechetical Day shall be established in each parish, if not already there, on which the Feast of Christian Doctrine shall be celebrated with all possible solemnity. On this day:

"(a) Let the Faithful be assembled in the parish church and having received the Blessed Eucharist, let them pray to obtain the more abundant fruits of the divine teaching;

"(b)—Let a special sermon be preached on the necessity of catechetical instruction, in which parents, especially, will be warned to give this instruction to the children [illegible] them to parish catechism classes, remembering the divine precept: 'And these words which I command thee this day shall be in thy heart, and thou shalt tell them to thy children' (Deut. VI: 6)."

Editorials

Catholic Education Is an Obligation

No Atom Bomb Would Be Necessary

Age-Old Query: Where Were the Nine?

By Msgr. William M. Hart

For Catholic Children

For all American children who are Catholic, our parish schools open their doors on next Wednesday. Registration is up, more pupils are listed for the kindergarten and lower grades, with lesser growth in the higher grades. Our Catholic parents insist that their children have the same advantages given to other Catholic children. There is, indeed, a moral obligation to secure education under religious auspices for all Catholic children.

The faithful father and mother are away ahead of the urge that comes from this obligation: they send their children to Catholic schools because they realize all that these schools give their children, which other schools cannot give them.

So a fortunate army of grammar-size pupils, high school students and college registrants, gladly seek out on Wednesday the portals of their alma mater. Sisters and priests welcome them to the halls of learning, where divine truth enjoys its rightful place next to secular truth.

The program begins: minds are imbued with learning, souls are trained in God's word, mortality finds its rightful status as an integral part of the wisdom only a religious school can give. The individual prospers, the community profits, the Church grows apace, the country receives a blessed increment, from our religious system of schools.

For Catholic children! Priests and parents and Sisters sacrificed and labored with their Bishops and the Holy Father to make ready for our Catholic children an adequate system of education that will prepare them for life here and hereafter. Gladly do we greet the dawn of a new school term, when all the powers of our schools will be bent to bring God's blessing to the minds and hearts of pupils eager to learn. God bless our schools! God bless their pupils! God bless their teachers!

America Works For Peace

Our country harbors no ill will toward any nation. Were the same true of all countries, armaments could be reduced to token size, armies could be all but abolished, and there would be no need for the atom bomb. But wisdom keeps our government alert to the dangers of war that await only any evidence of unpreparedness on our part to become actual. Therefore the Atlantic Pact and the laws needed for its implementation.

America works for peace! Pray that the labors of our President and our Congress, of our great thinkers, of our military men in high and low rank, of the great mass of our peace-loving citizens, may be fully effective in fording off any potential aggressor and preserving peace for all the world. America works for peace!

For Body And Soul

Ten lepers sought from Christ healing for their diseased bodies. Their prayer was answered: they were cleansed even as they began their trip to the priests as ordered by Christ.

Nine of them were fully satisfied. Their present needs were care for. Their disease was cured, their bodies were made clean. What more should they look for? Why look for further blessings from One Who had done so much for them? Now to enjoy their newly-found health.

One of them let his thoughts go beyond the gift. He sought out the giver. He knew how to ask even as did the nine: he knew how to appreciate a gift, as the nine did not. See him seeking our Christ to thank Him! Note him hearing from Christ the question: "Where are the nine?"

Now comes a gift far greater than the cure of bodily leprosy. Now comes a gift for his soul. Now comes God's grace unto the sanctification of the soul of the grateful leper. Now comes God's grace to drive sin out and to bring justification in. "Thy faith has saved thee!"

While we ask of God gifts for our body, while we thank Him for bodily blessings, let us not forget to ask also for gifts for our souls. Healing of bodily ills can never mean all it should, unless it includes more permanent blessings for the soul. Let us know the importance, the necessity, of asking good things for our souls while we make the lesser petition for blessings on our bodies. God bless us in our bodies, God bless us in our souls!

Bishop Kearney's Appointments For the Month of September

SEPTEMBER

4 Sunday — St. Joseph's, Pontifical Mass — State Convention, Catholic Central Union of America — 9:00 A. M.
Hotel Seneca, Address State Convention, Catholic Central Union of America — 12:30 P. M.

7 Wednesday — Chicago — National Convention of Newman Clubs.

11 Sunday — St. Bernard's Seminary, Ordinations — 6:30 A. M.
Nazareth Academy, Children's Day Program — 3:00 P. M.
St. Louis, Pittsford — Inspection of new church property — 7:30 P. M.

12 Monday — Our Lady of Mercy High School, Mass — 9:00 A. M.

13 Tuesday — Nazareth Academy, Mass — 9:00 A. M.

14 Wednesday — De Sales High School, Geneva — Preside at Mass — 8:00 A. M.
St. Anthony's Minor Seminary and High School, Watkins Glen — Pontifical Mass and Dedication Ceremony — 10 A. M.

15 Thursday — Nazareth College, Mass — 9:00 A. M.
Mercy High School, Annual Alumnae Banquet — 6:30 P. M.

16 Friday — St. Agnes' High School, Mass — 8:30 A. M.

18 Sunday — St. Bernard's Seminary, Ordinations — 6:30 A. M.
Holy Sepulchre Cemetery, Blessing of the Graves — 3:30 P. M.

19 Monday — Aquinas Stadium, Mass for Student Body — 9:00 A. M.

20 Tuesday — St. Joseph's, Lawyers' Red Mass 9:00 A. M.
Knights of Columbus, Testimonial Banquet, Mr. John J. Kinney — 7:00 P. M.

21 Wednesday — St. Mary's School of Business, Mass — 9:00 A. M.

22 Thursday — Academy of the Sacred Heart, Mass — 9:00 A. M.

23 Friday — St. Andrew's Seminary, Mass — 9:00 A. M.
Aquinas Institute, Teachers' Conference 3:30 P. M.

26 Monday — St. Cecilia's, New York — Silver Jubilee Mass of Rev. Jeremiah J. Scannell, C.SS.R.

28 Wednesday — Elmira Catholic High School, Mass — 9:00 A. M.

29 Thursday — St. Joseph's Commercial School, Mass — 9:00 A. M.
Avon Inn, Testimonial Banquet, Mr. Don C. Manning, Litt.D., Retiring Chief of Parole, State Industrial School — 7:00 P. M.

30 Friday — Holy Family High School, Auburn — Mass — 9:00 A. M.

LIFT UP YOUR HEARTS

A One-Man 'Minority' Can Rule Out Religion

By Rev. James M. Gillis, C.S.P.

Fr. Gillis

During the recent discussion of the prospective grant of federal aid to public schools and the denial of that aid to schools that teach religion, many members of the Write-a-Letter-to-the-Editor Society" projected themselves into the debate. Like the legendary Irishman, they seem to have asked, "Is this a private fight, or can anyone get into it?" My own feeling was that too few of our own were like that Irishman. Others saw their chance and took it. Our side was as usual—content to play the part of spectators and private commentators.

How or why it happens that Catholics sit dumb while non-Catholics and anti-Catholics are vocal, is beyond my understanding. We are a minority and the only chance for a minority's getting its rights is to stand up and speak out.

I should like to quote a couple of letters that were written by two non-Catholics, less rambunctious than most of those who write to the papers.

• • •

THE FIRST letter runs thus "Years ago I was in a public school. Each morning a short selection was read from the Bible, usually a parable or an account of one of the miracles, and we repeated the Lord's Prayer in concert.

"A Catholic minority objected to the 'Protestant' Bible and the trustee supplied the Douay version. The smaller Jewish minority protested, and the prayer was omitted and the reading became a psalm. Thereupon, the tiny minority of atheists protested; both versions of the Bible were laid aside to gather dust and the school was antiseptically free of religious bias.

"Still I cannot help being glad that Bridget Riley and Rachel Cohen and I, ignoring sect and race, not only played and worked together but joined our childish voices in prayer to Our Father who is in heaven."

• • •

THE WRITER of that letter, a woman who is evidently also a lady, wrote with commendable moderation. But if we wished to be critical we could find fault with her linking Catholics—in a way—with atheists, and with her seeming to hint that we joined with the irreligious to put an end to a religious custom.

But would the lady suggest that Catholics should have remained complacent when a Protestant Bible was used in a public school attended by Catholics? She says the Catholics were a minority. But would it have been in the American spirit if a minority failed to express its conviction? Or does an American minority cry out when it feels itself a victim of discrimination?

As for the Jews, a "smaller minority," should they be more diffident than the Catholics about asserting themselves? In regard to the atheists, a "tiny minority," is it not in the spirit of American law and American tradition that even a minority of one shall not be deprived of its rights? Should not a one-person atheist minority object to a religious exercise in a tax-supported school?

The fact is that under the public school system there can be logically no place for religion if so much as one person [illegible] be ruled out. That isn't a pleasant conclusion but it is logical. Now take the other letter:

• • •

"MR — . . . in his letter states that 'unfortunately, public schools fail to teach the basic truth that the spiritual side of our life is its most important aspect.' Apparently, Mr . . . never attended public schools. I did, and I can testify that the strong, intelligent, but subtle emphasis placed upon spiritual worth which was imparted to me in every class has reminded one of the outstanding impressions of my public schooling, and has been a sustaining and determining influence on my whole life, for which I humbly feel that I have not much reason to be ashamed.

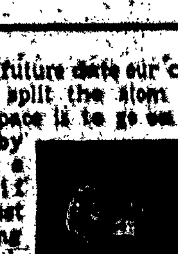
That letter writer also expresses himself with moderation. But I cannot help wondering how a strong, intelligent, but subtle emphasis can be placed upon spiritual worth without mention of God, or Christ, or the Scriptures. It may be possible, but it seems difficult.

As for "spiritual worth," it seems a vague phrase. The gentleman confesses that the emphasis placed on it was "subtle." We Catholics think that a vague subtle emphasis on spiritual worth is a pretty weak substitute for forthright teaching. Religion is the most important element in life. It is not right that it should be subtly insinuated into the curriculum.

WOMAN'S VIEWPOINT

Geometry Flunkees United, No Atom-Splitting For Us

By Marie Weidman



Marie Weidman

If, at some future date our children are to split the atom accurately, if space is to go on being spanned by bridges, if buildings must keep soaring and jet propulsion propulsing — then there will always be mathematic students sighing over square roots and quarreling with quadratic equations.

We can also look forward to an unbroken line of textbook publishers each vowing that his latest volume makes math easy, Math for the millions and all that.

Well, the millions may have it—but for the scant half dozen or so individuals who will unashamedly avow they failed high school geometry, there can be no beauty in a bisected angle, no truth in theorems.

• • •

THOSE WHO possess what is known as (for want of a better term) Mathematical Minds, those, that is, who know why A and B can do more work than poor old lonely C, are the folks who win all the iceboxes on the quiz shows. With minds functioning like sleek slide rules, they make us geometry flunkees out to be happy high-type morons who wouldn't even recognize the cube root of fifty-three point nine.

Young people, therefore, going back to school next week should be mindful that close application to daily math assignments may bring them that much nearer to a mink-lined trip to Pago-Pago with all expenses paid. And who can deny that what this country needs are more of its citizens taking free jaunts to Pago-Pago?

Of course the process of finding out what X equals or why two angles equal each other is sheer joy because in proceeding from known to unknown by logical deduction [illegible] highly human—in fact we are using our reasoning faculty which dignifies and ennobles us as the most wonderful of God's creatures.

• • •

REGARDLESS of current opinions to the contrary, man can think and there is nothing quite so wonderful as man using this spiritual quality of thought toward some positive good.

It is so unfortunate then to see so many potential young thinkers disdaining mathematics. Either they avoid it completely in their high school programs, having heard that the math teacher is a perfect fire-breathing ogre, or else, as soon as the first equation refuses to balance or the first right angle begins to look not quite right, they storm the office of the faculty advisor to have math forever abrogated from their academic lives.

Mathematics, and in particular the study of plane geometry has always been one of the trials of youth. Unless the textbook publishers discover some kind of one-a-day capsules that will hatch a brood of young Einsteins, circumscribing a triangle with a circle will go on making young people feverish and uneasy. Well, those at least who are classed as being of the [illegible] the un-mathematical minded coterie, that is.

• • •

Inevitably the day arrives when it becomes startlingly clear that you are just not going to quite make the course. This would ordinarily discourage students in other classes, but failures in geometry share a warmth and kinship which unites them, a sort of "all-you-all-the-people as-stupid-as-I-am" feeling that often makes them fast friends in after life.

Assuredly these are not the bridge building, atom splitting people of the future—but they do get mental discipline from it and a pleasing humility as well.

With Catholic Poets

The Size God Meant a Man To Be

A little man amazingly
Can touch the roofed-in sky and feel
God and His infinity.
And being little thus can kneel

And pray a little, loving prayer
As that word within the sign without
For which his kneeling, noticed there
Is what all men are grieved about.

Are grieved about, who being little
Can rise to such height, see such wonder
Their dumbness touches man's sacred riddle
Of being man and being under

The size God meant a man to be,
The love he meant a man to give
To his dark and bright mortality
That life might die and death might live.

— Albert Clements.

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THE CATHOLIC Courier Journal

OFFICIAL NEWSPAPER OF THE ROCHESTER DIOCESE

VOL. 21—NO. 35 SEPTEMBER 1, 1949

MOST REVEREND JAMES EDWARD KEARNEY, D.D., President

This newspaper is a member of the Audit Bureau of Circulations and the Catholic Press Association. It subscribes to the full reports of National Catholic Welfare Conference News Service, Religious News Service.

Published every Thursday by the Catholic Courier and Journal, Inc.
MAIN OFFICE .... 35 Scio St.—BAker 6316—Rochester N. Y.
AUBURN OFFICE .... 128 Genesee St.—Phone 344-W
ELMIRA OFFICE ...., 323 Realty Bldg.—Phone 2-3668 or 2-3412

Entered as second class matter in the Post Office at Rochester, N. Y.
As required under the Act of Congress of March 3, 1879.
Single copy 10c; 1 year subscription in U. S. $3.00.
Canada, $3.50; Foreign Countries, $4.00.

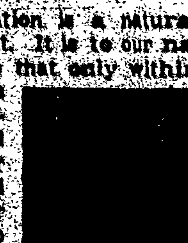
Rt. Rev. Msgr. W. M. Hart, V.G., P.A., Editor-in-Chief; Very Rev. Msgr. John S. Randall, Managing Editor; Rev. Patrick J. Flynn, Editor; Rev. Richard T. Tormey, Associate Editor; Thomas H. O'Connor, News Editor; Harold H. Connor, Advertising Manager; Elmer G. Grapensteter, Circulation Manager; Martin G. Moll, Public Relations Director.

TOWARD INDUSTRIAL PEACE

Some Rights of the American Worker

By Richard M. McKeon, S. J.

Director, Le Moyne College School of Industrial Relations



Fr. McKeon

Free association is a natural God-given right. It is to our national disgrace that only within recent years has our legislation recognized this right for workers. And as the worker has a right to join a responsible labor union, [illegible] union which society can [illegible] for the common [illegible].

From this it follows that the worker has the right to collective bargaining through freely elected representatives. When conditions [illegible] unbearable [illegible] to human dignity, [illegible] to strike [illegible] a just [illegible] [illegible] and laudatory.

• • •

ANOTHER RIGHT of the workers is being vindicated in recent years. It is still a matter of grave controversy as the Labor-Management Conference of 1945 proved. It is the right of workers to have a greater voice in the management of industry.

This does not mean the usurpation of exclusive rights of management, but the fuller participation, usually outside matters of collective bargaining, with management in increasing production, elimination of inefficiency, and in general improving the entire industry.

This was recognized in the war in some five thousand labor-management committees. It is current practice in many successful enterprises today. Progressive management will always use the brains of the better workers.

Workers are citizens. Therefore the state must act to protect the constitutional rights of workers against infringement by other employers or unions. This calls for an industrial ethical code clearly defining the rights and the duties of all parties concerned. There comes to mind the case of a certain union in which there had been no election for thirty years.

• • •

THE ORDINARY worker relies on his wages for the support of himself and family. If prices for the common things of life — food, clothing, housing — are exhorbitant, then the state should act to restrain such abuses for the common good. This means checking the greed of those who look only for big profits.

The state does have public service commissions to protect the people. It is sad, but amusing, to contrast the loan rates of today with the crime of usury in the Middle Ages and the severe penalties attached.

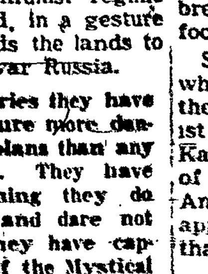
Society does not owe the individual a living but the opportunity to make a living. In the present industrial era when most people depend on a wage, this calls for the fulfilment of the rights which we have discussed.

America is still far from complete social justice for the worker but the promise of a brighter dawn ever urges our citizens of good will forward towards this goal.

THE TOP OF MY MIND

'Dark Horse' Is the 'Trojan Horse' Inside Russian Walls

By Gretta Palmer



Gretta Palmer

The most precious things may be the most dangerous to possess. Radium sells at a market price high enough to [illegible] top-notch thief . . . except for the fact that, by carrying it on his person, he may contract radium-poisoning and die.

The great jewels of the world have brought misery to most of their owners (and not because of any such mythical "curse" as the Sunday supplements ascribe to them).

The Kremlin stands today in a position of similar embarrassment. The Communist regime stretched its hand, in a gesture of avarice, towards the lands to the west of pre-war Russia.

In these countries they have captured a treasure more dangerous to their plans than any radium or ruby. They have captured something they do not understand and dare not leave alone. They have captured a section of the Mystical Body of Christ, the Church.

• • •

THE CAPTIVE Catholics behind the Iron Curtain now number over sixty millions—one-half as many persons as the whole population of the United States—scattered throughout Czechoslovakia, Russia and the Ukraine; Hungary and Germany's Soviet zone; and the little Baltic states, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Bulgaria and Albania.

These are the most dangerous captives any despot has ever seized in the [illegible] of the world. They have no arms, no tanks, no planes, no cash from abroad. They have no training in terrorism or sabotage or revolutionary tactics. But every Catholic soul carries Christ, Who broke from the tomb and rolled away a stone which human force could not have stirred.

The mere existence of this supernatural power is a greater threat than any tyranny can long sustain. For there [illegible] way to any Machiavellian handbook by which a "strong man" can subdue a man who is not afraid of anything that human strength can do. Threats of death or torture are wasted breath on those whose eyes are focused on Eternity.

Sixty million men and women who can [illegible] be converted to the first premise of the Communist faith present a problem which Karl Marx, in his callow books of prophecy, failed to foresee. And the problem is even more appalling to the Communists than that.

• • •

THERE IS the matter of prayer. In every Catholic church throughout the world prayers are said at the foot of the altar for the conversion of Russia. Against this enormous spiritual tide what dike does the Soviet oppose? None at all. There are no counter-prayers for the success of Stalin rising from the Comintern meeting-halls.

And there is more wealth in our spiritual warehouse than even that. The Orthodox churches are in schism, but their sacraments are valid. Thirty to forty million Orthodox believers in Rumania, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia get sacramental strength in opposing the Soviet.

• • •

BUT EVEN that does not tell all the story of the spiritual Trojan Horse the Communists have let into their walls. News reports on Russia's underground religion, which operates in caves under catacomb conditions while Soviet guards patrol nearby reveal that there are millions of Orthodox and Catholic Russians who are our allies in a spiritual fifth column.

Add these millions of secret Christians to the sixty millions in the countries the Soviet has overrun. Combine their prayers and sacraments with those of the Orthodox in the quisling Church. It is a spiritual fifth column presenting a greater danger to the Soviet than would exist if every communicant had a stock of dynamite. For the sacraments are spiritual dynamite which secret agents cannot steal.

The Soviet state is built on rigid principles — as rigid as iron. But iron can be broken. The Soviet state has undertaken to do a very dangerous thing: it is fighting life with death, and expecting to win. It is opposing the heavy, static, cumbersome thing called the "police state" against a thing as light and permeating as light — the Light of God.