

Hierarchy Designates 'Bible Sunday' On Feb. 5; Urges Reading Of Gospels

BY THE REV. LOUIS HARTMAN, C.S.S.R. (Written for N.C.W.C. News Service)

The author of the following article is a noted Biblical scholar and general secretary of the Catholic Biblical Association of America. He writes in connection with the observance of Septuagesima Sunday, February 5, as "Biblical Sunday."

Some people are honestly surprised to hear that the Catholic Hierarchy of the United States sets aside Septuagesima Sunday, each year as "Biblical Sunday."

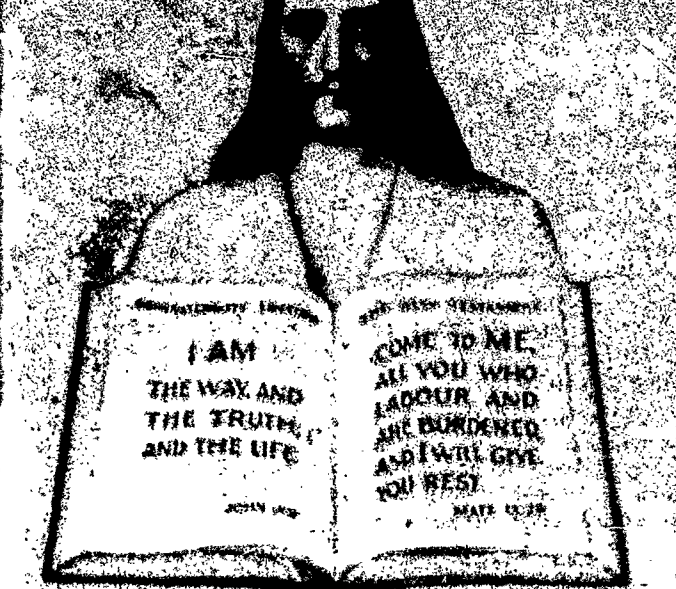
"Does the Catholic Church really urge its members to read the Bible?" they ask. "Why, we always thought that Bible reading is typically Protestant and that Catholics are taught to keep away from the Bible as from some dangerous book. And the strange thing is that such an absurd idea is shared even by some Catholics."

ACTUALLY, OF course the Catholic Church not only encourages and urges the reading and the study of the Bible, she has a far more genuine love for the Sacred Scriptures than have those who are not numbered among her faithful children. The Protestant claim that the Bible alone and the Bible as interpreted by each individual's fancy and preconceived ideas should be the only rule of faith and morals has led among other evils to a positive repudiation of the holy Book itself.

Most of the so-called liberal enlightened Protestants deny at least implicitly the truly divine origin of the Bible. For them it is a collection of merely human religious documents, very valuable indeed, but essentially no different from the teaching of Buddha (Confucius or Mohammed) or such Christian writings as the following of Christ. This is the logical consequence of the rejection of all divine authority outside the Bible and of the pretense that everyone can judge for himself what Books should or should not be in the Bible and then can interpret the spiritual meaning of these Books just as he pleads.

THE TEACHING of the Church about the Bible is entirely different from this distortion of the truth. Catholics hold two important truths in this matter first, that God Himself is the principal Author of all the Books of the Bible, and second, that through His Incarnate Son Jesus Christ, He has established and commissioned His Church to speak in His name in telling us what Books are in the Bible and what these Books should teach

A NEW TESTAMENT IN EVERY HOME



The TEACHING of CHRIST IN EVERY HEART

"The Holy Bible and the Holy Year" is the slogan of the 1939 Biblical Sunday, which at the request of the American Hierarchy will be observed by Catholics on Septuagesima Sunday, February 5. Pictured is the poster sent out by the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine, to advertise the observance. It is hoped to promote the purchase and use of the Bible, particularly of the New Testament, by the laity. (NC Photos)

us in regard to faith and morals. When we say that God is the "principal Author" of Scripture we mean that He chose certain men, the inspired writers of the Books of the Old and of the New Testament, as His instruments in producing these Books. He so enlightened and moved their faculty when they wrote, that what they wrote is just as much His product as it is theirs. That is why we rightly call the Bible "the word of God," and in that sense the Bible, when rightly preserved and rightly understood, is free from all error.

WHEN WE SAY that the Bible cannot be rightly understood without the help of God's own explanation of His word, which is given to us by Christ through His Church, we refer to one aspect of what is known as "Tradition," divine Apostolic tradition. That is why the Church places Tradition on a par with Scripture. Since the Church teaches that Sacred Scripture is the word of God, His own letter sent to us from heaven, certainly the Church wants her faithful children to love this great gift and to read it as often and as devotedly as possible. It does little good to read the Bible from curiosity or for the merely human enjoyment of good literature. We should read it with the consciousness that God is speaking to us from its pages, and always with a mind submissive to His authentic interpretation of His word as given by the Church.

Scanlan Family Fortune Left To Church

Houston — (NC) — The last of the descendants of Timothy T. H. Scanlan has died. Now the fabulous wealth which that once penniless Irish peddler amassed in Texas in the nineteenth century will go for Catholic, religious, educational and charitable purposes.

Estimates of the value of the property and possessions that the Scanlan Foundation will receive when the will of Stella Scanlan, 69, is probated in February range from \$3,000,000 upwards. Miss Scanlan was the last of Tim Scanlan's seven surviving children. She was buried from the Chapel of the Sacred Heart on the Scanlan plantation near here.

THE SCANLAN estate includes parcels of property in booming downtown Houston, some of which is estimated to be worth \$2,000 per front inch. In addition there are the 8,000-acre family plantation, thousands of head of cattle, 12 oil wells worth about \$150,000 apiece, a department store building in Galveston, lakeshore property in Chicago and several sections of oil land in West Texas.

Tim Scanlan came to Houston from Ireland in 1843. He topped his fantastic business career by becoming mayor of Houston in 1873 and later post master. He died in 1906 having outlived his second wife and three of his 10 children.

The Scanlan Foundation has already given out about \$6,000 a year to the new St. Thomas University, operated in Houston by the Basilian Fathers.

Buddists Hear Army Chaplain

Tokyo — (NC) — Some 6,000 persons heard the Rev. Philip Sullivan, S.J., Army chaplain, speak on peace and the Blessed Mother in one of the principal Buddhist temples in Kyoto during a memorial service for war dead. It has just been heard here. Interpreter for Father Sullivan was the Rev. Paul Egli, O.P., of the Aquinas Institute in Kyoto.

After the lecture, the priests were entertained by the leading Buddhist monks of the temple.

War Story Invading Americans Found Easter Mass In German Barn And Knelt To Worship

BY MAX JORDAN

Frankfurt — (NC) — "Gott mit uns!" (God with us! Hear!)

The priest of the emergency altar set up in a barn near Eisen in the Diocese of Fulda, Westphalia, was saying Mass. It was Easter Sunday, 1943, and American forces were sweeping across the German countryside.

Alleged planes had been strafing the city of Paderborn for days and Eisen was a point of refuge. Some of the faithful had gathered at a farm waiting for the attack to blow over.

The priest had assembled his small congregation and alike boys, trained to sing the Proper of the Mass and the responses.

"Confidential Informant" (Gives praise in the Lord) they sang with trembling voices, and the congregation responded: "Alleluia!"

It was cold outside and the barn doors were closed. Suddenly the singing stopped in the midst of the Preface. The congregation rushed toward the altar. Motors could be heard and they were fast closing. Now the women were crawling the priest.

"Father," said one of those whispering anxiously, "They are coming!"

"Vere dignum..." murmured the priest bending over the chalice.

But by this time the roar of armor was drowning out his voice. An armored vehicle outside was turning around. The women shrieked. It seemed as though the whole barn was falling apart. And now a big gun pierced the barn door.

The priest remembered the Gospel of the day: "Nolite expavescere!" (Do not be afraid.)

"Per omnia secula in excelsis," he prayed aloud. And, quivering, the congregation responded: "Amen."

Then all was quiet. "Agnes Dei..." said the priest, striking his breast, and turned around to behold a scene he was never to forget. The barn door had been pushed open and there was an American armored tank. He gun pointed toward the altar. The congregation was kneeling on the floor, their heads bent low in adoration and all around them were the Americans, their helmets in their hands.

FROM POPE'S STOREROOMS



Clothing and supplies for the needy, from the storehouses of the Holy Father, are distributed in Tokyo to the poor of Japan. Before presentation, the gifts are inspected by Archbishop Imberti (left), Apostolic Delegate and Bishop Felix Tameo Dal, of Japan. On March 10, Lenten Sunday, Catholics of the United States will have the opportunity to contribute funds to aid war sufferers throughout the world, through the War Relief Service-National Catholic Welfare Conference. (NC Photos)

Egypt Weighs Aid To Catholic Schools

Cairo — (NC) — Egypt's director of elementary education has been instructed by the Education Ministry here to study the possibility of a State subsidy for 128 tuition-free schools operated under Roman Catholic sponsorship.

The study directive was issued by Minister of Education Ahmed el-Fahmy, following a visit from the Rev. Henri Arrault, S.J., director of the Catholic Association for Egyptian Schools.

Details Growth Of Church In United States

New York — (NC) — A study showing the "astonishing" increase in Catholic Church membership in the United States in the past 20 years is being prepared in Rome for inclusion in the 1939 Year Book.

Dr. Louis Kennedy, editor of the Official Catholic Directory, who returned recently from Rome where he made arrangements for the survey, said it will be made known in due time in the Year Book or in special issues in each issue.

IN 1918 the Catholic population of the United States was 13,077,112, or 12.7 per cent of the total population of 103,000,000. In 1938, Catholics numbered 26,712,000, or 13.1 per cent of the population of 203,000,000, according to Dr. Kennedy.

The increase in Catholic membership in the United States now totals more than 100 per cent.

During the past 20 years, the hierarchy has increased from 128 to 240 bishops, from 11,128 to 22,256 parishes, from 2,876 to 7,823 and Sisters from 69,977 to 121,765, he said.

BY 1938 some 100,000 churches had increased from 10,000 in 1918. The number of priests had increased from 10,000 to 20,000, while the number of nuns had increased from 10,000 to 20,000.

Of particular interest is the fact that the number of young men entering the priesthood has increased from 10,000 in 1918 to 20,000 in 1938. The number of young women entering the convents has increased from 10,000 to 20,000.

It is noted that the number of Catholics in the United States is now 26,712,000, or 13.1 per cent of the total population of 203,000,000. This is a significant increase from 13,077,112, or 12.7 per cent in 1918.

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