

# Editorials

By  
Rt. Rev. Msgr. Wm. M. Hart, P. A., U. G.

## Christ As A Fact, A Truth

Christmas has come and gone. It has called for the attention of men, women and children throughout the nations of the world. Even those not of the faith of Christ have taken part in the Christmas festivities. But by far the greater part of those who have kept Christmas have done so in the spirit of deep faith in Jesus Christ as the Redeemer of mankind.

In all the world there can be no more inescapable fact than Christmas and the Christ it gave to the world. A man may close his eyes to the record of history, a man may refuse to give any consideration to the 1900 years in which the birth of Christ has been reported in the hearts of countless millions of people, but all about us we see today, as people have seen in days gone by, clear evidence of the fact of the presence of Christ in the world and in the years to come. Christ and His works will remain as the one inescapable fact in the record of history.

The career of Christ in the world stands forth as an unquestionable truth. One would expect this. The infinite wisdom of God decrees the coming to earth of the Son of God through the Incarnation, and definitely marks the mystery of the coming of Christ with all the earmarks of truth. Men were

not to be left in doubt, men were not to be left dependent on some shadowy testimony to so great an event.

There can be a totally unreasoning and unreasonable questioning of this truth; there can be no reasonable opposition in the mind of a sincere man to the unquestionable truth and death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Christ's power remains. It is a saving power; it is a power to bring peace to the souls of men, it is a power to bring peace to all the nations of earth. Man's free will remains and can set itself up against this power; therefore we have in the world today no perfect peace, but wars and threats of wars. But the power of Christ moves far deeper than any natural or artificial divisions of mankind; it goes directly into the soul of every one who by faith receives Christ into his mind and heart.

It means peace to the individual, because in the power and the grace of Jesus Christ he finds the answer to all his needs, the remedy to all his ills, the supreme answer to all life difficulties. Christ lives permanently in the hearts of men and every man who accepts Christ can say with St. Paul: "I live—now not I; but Christ liveth in me."

## The Way, The Truth, The Life

History gives us the most satisfying evidence of the life and career of Jesus Christ. But no true follower of Christ will be satisfied merely with the natural knowledge of His saving power. The man of faith will take Christ as He is, as the Son of God, made man for the salvation of the world. He sees in Christ what Christ claims to be for Him and for all the sons of man. "I am the way, the truth and the life."

Faith in Christ will bring life anew even to those who have died; one who lives and believes in Christ, shall not die forever. In Him we have clearly demonstrated for us

our way through the world into the eternity of Heaven; we have the revelation of God the Father, in its fullest sense, in Christ who is the Truth. In Him we have the life that is eternal, not subject to destruction by any of the forces of evil, but continuing through the ages of eternity by the saving power of Our Lord and Saviour.

May the blessings of the Christmas Season which have so joyously celebrated anew the mystery of God's love for man, be with us every day to keep us mindful that we belong to Him, who is the Way, the Truth and the Life!

## Faith And Fantasy

Christmas is for all ages. Its message must be fitted to the older people of earth and to the little children. Santa Claus has been and is the effort of older folks to bring to the little ones a full participation in the joys of Christmas, even before the use of reason comes to give them a more complete understanding. Children everywhere follow old Santa Claus through their years of fantasy into the more blessed period in which their budding intelligence tells them of Jesus.

A certain Uncle felt it would be a good thing to prepare his seven-year-old nephew for the day when he would learn that there is no Santa Claus, so he gave him the story of how old Santa Claus is the personification of the goodness and the kindness of God to little people everywhere in the world.

He told the youngster of the gleam in the eye of Santa, which spoke of God's vision of all little people everywhere; he spoke of the ruddy glow of life in his cheeks as referring to God's gift of life to men; he spoke of the wonderful smile on the features of the old gent as a sign of the undying love God has for every little child; he spoke of the gray beard and hair of Santa as indicating the eternal years of God; he spoke of the reindeer and the sleigh covering all the

world in their travels to show that God is everywhere.

To tell the little child that God is all good, all holy, all merciful, that God is everywhere, would convey no idea to the child. But the person of Santa Claus definitely brings to the little one a definite picture of the graces and blessings and joys that Almighty God brought to the world through the birth of Christ.

The nephew gave a respectful hearing to his Uncle's explanation of the meaning of Santa Claus. He thought it through, made it his own and a few days after Christmas began to give it back to his Uncle in his own way. He said:

"I know, Uncle Bill, that we can't talk to little babies as we do to older people and I know that we take God's goodness and God's kindness and God's love for every little child, and we put them all together in Santa Claus, and then when we get older we learn more what all this means; but Uncle Bill, I know that there is a really Santa Claus, because I saw him over at Sears."

Here is the mind of a little boy willing and eager to accept all that his Uncle gave him; but at the same time determined to keep for himself until a later day the reasonable and pervading personality of good old Santa.

## A Marriage Notice

The papers today are full of detailed announcements of the bridal festivities of happy lovers. Some are lengthy and detailed; some are short and to the point. Many of them are soon forgotten except by the members of the immediate families of the bride and groom.

There were no papers in the time of Christ, no social column in which the news of a marriage could be entered; but there were the minds and memories of those who were invited to a wedding. The wedding referred to in the Gospel of this Sunday surely made a deep impression on all present. It took place at Cana in Galilee. The mother of Jesus was there.

Here Jesus worked His first miracle by changing water into wine. It was a miracle that clearly demonstrated to the guests the Divine Power of Jesus of Nazareth. His disciples, His followers believed in Him. They had known Him before. They had known His charity and His love for mankind. Now they knew the Divine Power which dwelled within Him.

A lasting wedding notice! One that would not pass away, one that eventually would be glorified in the printed word that would preserve it for all generations to come!

What other wedding in all the history of the world was written down in a historical record that has been read year after year for over 19 centuries to men and women of the Church of Christ. This was an unusual wedding.

We have not the record of the name of the Bride or the Groom; we do not know the names of all the guests at the wedding; but we do know that this was a wedding such as had never before taken place in all the history of the world. Preceding weddings had been merely the natural contract of marriage between man and woman; this wedding Christ raised to the dignity of a Sacrament. It possessed a new supernatural power sanctifying Bride and Groom before God. It was blessed by the presence of Mary, as one of His honored guests; it was glorified by the presence of the Redeemer of the World.

A Marriage Notice! May the marriage feast of Cana be to our wedded couples a constant evidence of the love of Jesus Christ for all who enter the married state. May it be an inspiration to our bridal couples to strive to have Jesus and Mary as honored guests at their Nuptials. May their Marriage Notice remain always as a record of a great and holy day in their lives.

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## Church Unity Octave, Jan. 18-25



### MSGR. SHEEN WRITES...

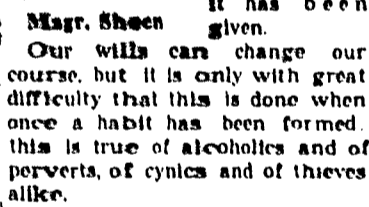
### Five Steps By Which Evil Habits May Be Broken

Protected, 1951 by The George Matthew Adams Service

A false theory, spread by certain psychologists, tells us that we are what we are because of something that happened to us from without, and very early—in infancy, or even before birth, in our mother's womb. This vicious and untrue conception takes away from a man all responsibility for his present behavior and character.

The truth is very different: characters are of our own making, and they are largely the result of the habits we deliberately form.

A habit, according to Aristotle, begins with the first conscious performance of an act and is strengthened by every repetition. It is a universal law that a person tends to persist in his present manner of being as a ball tends to keep on rolling in the direction it has been given.



Msgr. Sheen

Our wills can change our course, but it is only with great difficulty that this is done when a habit has been formed. It is true of alcoholics and of perverts, of cynics and of thieves alike.

**EACH HABIT** is commenced with a FIRST voluntary act. Every alcoholic remembers his FIRST drink; later drinks become almost automatic, as the conscious decision to take them is weakened, and replaced by an habitual lifting of the nearest glass. Man can reach a point at which he seems to have lost his freedom... whenever an occasion presents itself, he reacts in the old, accustomed way.

And the same process prevails in forming good habits, the beginner at the piano is conscious of making a great effort; but the virtuoso needs less and less, to exert his willpower in order to play.

The act which first begins to build a habit is not natural to us nor innate, but repetition tends to make it so, as it becomes "second nature." At last, we may believe ourselves to be the "slaves" of habits beyond our control, forgetful of the fact that we have trained ourselves to follow such a pattern by a series of conscious, willful acts.

**BUT EVIL** habits can be overcome, and by five steps. FIRST must come introspection, with the acknowledgment that one is himself responsible for continuing or giving up the habit. This includes a survey of the conditions, situations, places, people and moods most apt to bring the evil habit into operation, with a decision that all these must be avoided.

If one does not want to get burned, he keeps away from fire. The avoidance of occasions of sin may promise to be more difficult than it really will be. Those with the evil habits which society brands "criminal" are able to avoid "criminal" performing them when a

cannot be driven out—they can only be crowded out. There must be a new love to take the place of the old. It does no good at all to tell an alcoholic not to drink; he must be given something that he will love more than the pleasant sensations he expects from drink, so that he is willing to make the exchange.

The surest cure for any evil habit is an intensification of one's love for God; I have known alcoholics to abandon a twenty year habit at once when they had fallen in love with the love of God revealed on Calvary's Cross.

**THE FIFTH** and final step is the most important of them all. It is to accept the grace of God, which is required for any act or virtue we perform.

Man cannot lift himself by his own bootstraps in either the moral or the physical world; he needs to be drawn up by One stronger than he. As we need air we did not make for our lungs, and light we did not create for our eyes, and sound we have not brought into being for our ears, so, too, we must have illumination for our minds and strength for our wills beyond our own ability to manufacture; these things must come to us from God.

God will always give us the needed grace, provided we are honest in our desire for it and are willing to co-operate with it. The sunlight is waiting to bring us light and joy; it is our task to raise the blinds and let it in.

## STRANGE BUT TRUE

### Little-Known Facts for Catholics

By M. J. MURRAY

**ROYALTY PRINCES**  
with ten projections for the AVES and the bejel for PATERNOSTERS are worn by women in the Basque Provinces of Spain and France.

**LIVE SNAKES**  
ADORN THE STATUE OF SAN DOMENICO  
FRANCO (ITALY) TO MASS ON HIS FEASTDAY. HE HAS BEEN WOUND FOR 1000 YEARS AGAINST SWINE-SITTING

**Popular German shrine to Our Lady**  
at Kew-Garden centers round a small engraving brought by soldiers from Luxembourg in 1642. It is contained in a peasant's cottage. RECEIVED IN 1642. CORONATION IN 1839. Many thousands visit it annually.

## Prayer for the Holy Year

Clip this prayer and keep in your prayerbook

Following is the prayer composed by His Holiness Pope Pius XII for the Holy Year which began at Christmas in 1951, the [prayer] has been urged for all this prayer to the other prayers required for recitation on this in prescribed churches to gain the Holy Year indulgence (see Regulations, Page 1).

### PRAYER FOR THE HOLY YEAR

Almighty and eternal God, with our whole soul we thank Thee for the great gift of the Holy Year.

Heavenly Father, Thou Who seest all things, Who searchest and dost guide the hearts of men, make them responsive, in this time of grace and salvation, to the voice of Thy Son.

May the Holy Year be for all men a year of purification and sanctification, of interior life and reparation, the year of the great return and of the great pardon.

Bestow on those, who are suffering persecution for the Faith, Thy spirit of fortitude, to unite them inseparably with Christ and His Church.

Protect, O Lord, the Vicar of Thy Son on earth together with all bishops, priests, religious and all the faithful. Vouchsafe that all, both priests and lay, the young, the mature, and the old, united intimately in thought and affection, may become as a solid rock, against which the fury of Thy enemies will break in vain.

May Thy grace enkindle in all men love for the many unfortunate people, whom poverty and misery reduce to a condition of life unworthy of human beings.

Arouse in the hearts of those who call Thee "Father" a hunger and thirst for social justice and for fraternal charity of deeds and in truth.

"Grant, O Lord, peace in our days"—peace to souls, peace to families, peace to our country, peace among nations. May the rainbow of peace cover with the sweep of its serene light the Land sanctified by the life and passion of Thy Divine Son.

God of all consolation! Deep is our misery, grave are our faults, countless our needs. But greater still is our trust in Thee. Conscious of our unworthiness, we lovingly place our lot in Thy hands, uniting our weak prayers to the intercession and the merits of the most glorious Virgin Mary and all the Saints.

Grant to the sick, resignation and health; to young men, the strength that is born of faith; to young girls, the gift of purity; to fathers, prosperity and holiness for their families; to mothers, success in their mission of rearing their children; to orphans, affectionate protection; to the refugees and prisoners, their fatherland, and to all men Thy grace, in preparation and in pledge of the unending happiness of heaven, Amen.

## THE TOP OF MY MIND

### Two-Ply 'Red' Propaganda

By Greta Palmer

The human heart, according to Communist belief, is a narrow and restricted thing, not roomy enough to hold more than a single loyalty.

If a fellow traveler can be led so far that he gives his whole heart to the Communist Party, so much the better. But in the case of peoples less "advanced" the Reds will still desire that they shall love one thing, and only one, enough to fight for it.

Knowing this Marxist principle, it is possible to get a glimpse of what the Communists are trying to do to the minds of all peoples willing to listen to them today.

A clue lies in the fact—recently and indignantly noted by the "Observer" and "Rome" that the Church of Rome and the United States are constantly bracketed together as twin enemies of the "progressive elements" in the phrase which is Communists' jargon for themselves.

The tightly-disciplined Communists in charge of capturing men's minds are trying to create two hatreds. But both of them are advertised as threats to a single love and loyalty: love of country, love of the motherland, loyalty to the flag.

COMMUNIST strategy never despises any human emotion of which it can make use, and Communist ideology is not embarrassed by self-contradiction or by inconsistency.

Examine the Red propaganda wherever it appears, and you will see the terms in which the Church and the United States are jointly or separately attacked—we are treated as enemies of some country's independence. The tag is always: "American imperialism."

The peoples of Europe are being taught that Washington plans to devour them, to colonize them, to turn them into slaves through E.C.A. The peoples of Asia are told that we were the "aggressors" in Korea. They are warned that Formosa (where there are exactly 44 American military men, active as observers) is our beachhead for conquest. We are being portrayed in Indo-China, Burma, China, Malaya, India and all the east as a dangerous successor to those European empires which did, in fact, affront the sovereignty of Asiatic lands.

America's record is, comparatively speaking, a good one in the east. We started the Open Door in China. We surrendered the Philippines without a shot. We did not try to make Japan a U. S. outpost.

But facts do not embarrass Red publicists. America is big

and strong and rich and the atomic bomb is ours. With a little juggling of truth, it is not hard to make this strong, rich, atomic America seem a potential threat to peoples who are sensitive, already, over their inability to keep their country free whenever white foreigners start shooing.

AND WHAT about the hatred of the Church that is being simultaneously released by Communists throughout the world? That, too, is related to the temporary use of patriotism as a Marxist pawn. For the Church is rarely attacked in this decade, on grounds of truth or falsehood, the old adage of Lenin that "Religion is the opiate of the people" is put away in moth-balls in the Communist attic.

The present attacks on the Church are attacks on the Vatican as a "political state" as an enemy of the flag, of any flag. The priests in eastern Europe nowadays are not asked outright to renounce their faith; they are asked to renounce their Bishops, as "representatives of the foreign power of Rome." The absurd suggestion is made that one may remain a Catholic while repudiating the hierarchy and, especially, the Holy See.

These attacks on the Church for its "internationalism," its alleged enmity to patriotism are most violent where Catholicism is strong among the masses. The attacks on the United States are stressed in sections of the world where Buddhism or some other non-Christian religion still prevails.

IT MIGHT be difficult to turn the Czechs into a state of patriotic paranoia over the threat of the United States to their sovereignty, since no evidences of America are present there except a flow of food-packages from "Care." Very well; in Czechoslovakia, the people shall be taught to fear the Vatican-hatred of America can wait.

It might be hard to make the Asiatics see as "foreign spies" the kindly priests and nuns who have succeeded their sick and brought them gifts of charity for many years. But every Asiatic who loves his country is uneasy about the presence of white soldiers, prowling about its shores. The word in Asia, then, is: "Teach them to hate American imperialism! hatred of the Church can wait!"

Ironically, Communism is the sworn foe of all nationalist sympathies and every flag except the Red flag. But in this transition age, loyalty to country is her worldwide strategy. And it may have the odd and unforeseen effect of bringing to a closer understanding her two arch-enemies: The Church and Washington. The Vatican and the United States.