

Editorials

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

Dust Thou Art

Thus speaks the Priest as he imposes the blessed ashes on the forehead of the penitent Catholic. This is true humility, to realize that we have been taken from the dust of the earth. Not from the organized particles of matter in all its different chemical forms, but from that part of the earth which seems to be worn out, useless, unfit for any new purpose.

Yet upon this the formative power of God has acted to produce the body of the first man; and the creative power of God has brought into being a spiritual soul to be the life of the body. As children of Adam we all share in the dust from which God raised up man; as children of Adam we share in the formative and creative act of God by which man was brought into being.

Dust Thou Art! But what dust? Not any portion of the dust of the earth, but that part of it that has been marked by the action of God in choosing it as the material for the body of man. The thought of our being dust, is a true basis for humility. The added thought that this dust has received

the particular attention of the Almighty in the making of man, gives complete truth to the statement: "Dust Thou Art."

And into dust! The dust into which the body of every man falls is not just a part of all the dust of the earth. It is a dust that has received the imprint of the Almighty; it is the dust that is marked for God's further attention at the last day when He shall raise it up again to be reunited with its soul. The Church respects this dust, the Church honors it with burial in consecrated ground; the Church prays that the angel of God may guard it in its last resting place.

Man must realize that all his being, all his power, all his glory comes from God. The dust of the earth became part of the human entity only because God acted upon it and raised it up. "Dust Thou Art" has real meaning for us at the beginning of Lent and makes us realize that we came from the dust, that God has exercised his creative power on that dust, that God will continue to give special attention to that portion of the dust of the earth from which we came.

Lenten Practices

Bishop Kearney's Lenten Pastoral is an exhortation from our spiritual Shepherd to observe Lent in a constructive manner. All the Lenten regulations, even in strictest fulfillment, will mean little or nothing unless accompanied by a spirit of penance; fasting, abstinence, other acts of self-denial always must be subordinate to the great fast of Lent which is the fast from sin. Even this is not enough. The real work of Lent is to return to God by turning away from sin, and by seeking for ourselves God's grace from all its sources.

Let Lent be for us, therefore, a time of prayer, a time of devotion, a time of spiritual rejuvenation! Follow the Bishop's admonitions to make daily Mass and daily Communion a foundation for all your Lenten practices. Keep your thoughts fixed on God and on the mysteries of Faith; realize every day that you belong to God, that you are on your way toward Heaven, that this may be your last Lent on earth. Begin right now to make this Lent, a worthy one, productive in results for your spiritual betterment.

For Our Indians And Negroes

Missionary work in any part of the world calls for the interest and generous support of the Catholic Americans. We should have a special interest in the Indians and Negroes in our own country; God surely has given them to our charge. The laborers of thousands of missionary Priests and Sisters, laboring among the Indians in the south and west, and among the Negroes in the southeast and in many of our larger cities, say made possible only through the generous

contributions of our American people. This first Sunday of Lent brings to us our annual opportunity to do our part for the Negro and Indian Missions. Ask God to bless these people with the grace of conversion and with the opportunity to practice the Catholic faith. Let the first Sunday of Lent find us practicing almsgiving in its best form—by the generous and practical gift we make for the conversion of our Indian and Negro brethren.

General Eisenhower Reports

Our President, our Congress and our people have just received the report of General Eisenhower on conditions in Western Europe. He has visited all the countries concerned, has used his military skill and experience in evaluating their military strength and the resistance they are prepared to make against communist aggression. The General also has indicated the help they will need from America; if their work is to be successful, it must include arms and

munitions and also the support of our manpower. America is grateful to General Eisenhower for his valued report. America would have the world know that General Eisenhower's mission was a mission of peace. America does not want war. America does want peace for itself, for the countries of Western Europe and for all the countries of the world. Our people will continue to pray that God may bless the world with continued peace.

The Temptation Of Christ

The Gospel for the first Sunday of Lent is filled with mysterious meaning. Yet the story it tells is a clear one and one that can be of service to all the children of Christ. The fact that the devil would assault Christ with his three-fold temptation is an indication that he did not know that Christ was God, did not know He was the Divine Redeemer. He was ignorant, but he wanted to know and these temptations were put before Christ that he might discover if Christ was the Son of God.

His first appeal was to the hunger of Christ, who had just finished thirty days' fasting; his second temptation was a contemptible appeal to the spirit of vainglory; the third was an appeal based on the love of power. All three of them were rejected by Christ without even a moment of thought or meditation. Christ was God! He could not consider even for an instant any suggestion, any intimation of evil from the devil.

The devil's temptation did not succeed; he did not receive the assent of Christ to any of his suggestions. Moreover he did not discover that Christ was the Son of God. Christ rejected him as the angel of wickedness; then the good angels came and administered unto Him. So also it will be with us if we reject every advance of Satan and keep ourselves ready for the visitation of God's holy angels.

Look At Labor

By A. C. Tuohy

According to all reports something of a feud is going on in Washington between Charles Wilson, head of Defense Mobilization, and the fourteen-member United Labor Policy Committee, representing the top leaders of the AFL, CIO and railroad unions. Up to now the adamant Mr. Wilson refuses to appoint a labor man to a key position in the defense mobilization. Many labor leaders already criticizing the government's policy in its advisory capacity and some unions have provided the necessary support with economists, industrialists, statisticians and business directors. However, there is a single labor man working in Washington on the governmental level of government.

to be partial to the idea of sharing that authority with no one whose philosophy disagrees with his own. **WHATEVER BLAME** rests with the Truman Administration and Charles Wilson for this conflict, some blame rests with the union movement and labor leaders. For one thing there is a shortage of top-flight labor personnel. Labor has not produced enough outstanding executives of its own to match those produced by management. On the other hand, while businessmen can be loaned indefinitely to government with the assurance that their jobs will be waiting for them, labor leaders to regain their offices would have to be re-elected. Once they resigned from their union positions, which they would have to do, these men would have lost control, and in their absence new leaders would move in.

and William Green on the basis of his age. But what about George Meany and Walter Reuther? Meany aspires to succeed Green and Reuther does not intend to remain with the auto workers if he can step into the shoes of Philip Murray. Either of these men could use the prestige of an important government post to realize their ambitions. Undoubtedly there would be some risks, the risk of doing a poor job, the risk of antagonizing other labor leaders, the risk of being fired by politicians. But if one is as sure of himself as Reuther seems to be, these risks could be taken in stride. The point is that if organized labor is going to demand an important role in the mobilization program, it has to provide some of its own leadership. This may mean subordinating AFL-CIO jealousies, giving up convenience and security, jeopardizing careers.

In their turn these labor leaders, if they make such sacrifices, have the right to expect that their talents will be intelligently utilized and that the jobs offered them will not be unattractive. Up to now the government and Charles Wilson have offered labor little.

HOWEVER, THE gravity of the emergency being what it is, a handful of prominent labor leaders should be readily available. Philip Murray may be excused on the ground of ill health

THERE IS exactly one kind of person in the U. S. today qualified to scotch this dangerous mis-

Memo to Mao



THE TOP OF MY MIND

A Dangerous Misconception

By Gretta Palmer

Some of the murkiest and most muddled statements of the year are being made these days by public officials whose position is completely at variance with the classical and Christian attitude: they condone the sin, but castigate the sinner.

Gretta Palmer They are soft on Communism, but tough on Joe Stalin. They oppose Soviet Russia for being Russian, rather than for being Soviet. They are angry with the Chinese Communists for being Stalin's stooges, but not for being Marx's stooges. They are up to their necks in power politics; they are not even up to their ankles in political philosophy.

This emphasis has created a dangerous situation—which it behooves every Catholic thinker to beware.

For if we make common cause with those who are anti-Communist for the wrong reasons, we are very apt to find ourselves deserted by them when their reasons for being anti-Communist are altered or removed.

THE RUSSIAN Revolution was made by philosophical Communists. The evils inherent in their system, with its shocking misconception of man's relation to God and to the state, emerged as soon as it was tried in practice.

These evils inevitably would have emerged had it been tried in practice by any other group of men in any other nation in any other period of history.

The fact that Communism leads to oligarchic power, and always must, has been spelled out in detail by Arthur Koestler in the most brilliant novel written by any ex-Communist of our day. His Darkness at Noon should disabuse anyone of the notion that the men in Moscow have "perverted" Marxist doctrine to the state, and evil results came fast.

Yet the idea that Russia has "perverted" Communism—a more dangerous notion, at this moment, would be hard to find—a widespread nowadays.

For instance: the recent speech of Prime Minister Attlee in the House of Commons dealt severely with the Soviets—in Russia. It dealt very gently with the Soviets in China. And our own government seeks quite content to help the Communist Tito, so long as he does not ally himself with the Communist Stalin. All over the country the amateurs of geopolitics are pointing out that Russia is and always has been an expansionist state, and that Stalin merely is carrying out the plans dear to the hearts of the Czars—that his communist ideology is a mere accident.

There is exactly one kind of person in the U. S. today qualified to scotch this dangerous mis-

conception of the communist menace: the kind of person trained in Catholic philosophy. Graduates of Thomistic or Scotian thought are aware of the fact that ideas have consequences. They, and only they, fully realize that the concentration camps, the secret police, the knout and the torture chamber, the blood purge and the persecution of the Church—all are inherent in the dry-as-dust volumes written by Karl Marx himself.

These things have not occurred in Russia because Stalin is a Russian, or even because he is Stalin; they have occurred because a communist revolution, if it succeeds and endures, invites a Stalin to take over and force him, if he would stir in power, to adopt the means by which the free world so deplores.

MARX DID NOT recognize

God, as a result he did not understand man. He blamed the results of Original Sin on class-warfare, and assumed that, in a classless society, man automatically would lose his tendency to sin and selfishness. He saw men made unhappy by material wants, and assumed that if they were granted physical comforts they automatically would arrive at happiness. Any first-year seminarian knows better his metaphysics.

Catholics are in a position nowadays to serve their country by a unique contribution to clear thinking—for they are of the very few who know that results do not exceed their cause, and that a good society cannot be built according to a faculty blueprint. The patriotic duty of all American Catholics is to make this point obvious to all others: by doing so, we may save our country and the modern world.

Lenten Regulations

1. All the days of Lent, except Sundays, are fast days. The Lenten fast ends at noon on Holy Saturday.
2. All between the ages of 21 and 59 inclusively are obliged to fast, except the sick and convalescent; women in delicate health and condition; those to whom fasting would cause grave injury to health, or produce such illness or exhaustion as would interfere with their daily duties; and those whose occupations are of a very laborious and exhausting nature. Those who doubt whether they are excused or not should consult their confessor.
3. Those obliged to fast may take only one full meal a day. This meal may be taken either at noon or in the evening. The law also permits a light breakfast as well as a lunch at midday or in the evening. No other food is allowed.
4. During Lent every Wednesday (except the Wednesday in Holy Week), every Friday, the second Saturday and Holy Saturday until noon are days of abstinence. However, by special privilege of the Holy See, working people and their families are obliged to abstain from meat only on Ash Wednesday, Fridays and Holy Saturday until noon. On all other days of abstinence those of the family who are obliged to fast may eat meat at their principal meal; those not obliged to fast may eat meat at any of their meals.
5. Those who are excused from fasting or abstinence during Lent should practice self-denial in some other way.
6. In all Churches having a resident pastor there will be a sermon and Benediction of the Most Blessed Sacrament on Wednesday evenings, and the Stations of the Cross on Friday evenings. Pastors in charge of two churches will give a sermon in each church during the week.
7. Parish parties or similar activities on the church premises are to cease during Lent.
8. The time for complying with the precept of Paschal Communion extends from the first Sunday of Lent to Trinity Sunday inclusive.

By JAMES E. KEARNEY,
Bishop of Rochester

On Washington's Birthday, Feb. 22, and on St. Patrick's Day, Mar. 17, the Most Reverend Bishop grants to the faithful of the Diocese a dispensation from the Lenten law of fast and abstinence.

Lenten Prayer And Penance

My Dear People:

The impressive ceremony of Ash Wednesday ushered in the Holy Season of Lent. This annual period of prayer, mortification and almsgiving takes on additional significance in this Holy Year. Our Holy Father, in extending the Holy Year to the world, has made possible a tremendous outpouring of prayer to God for peace in the world, and you and I have personal responsibilities in that program.

Certainly Lent in a Holy Year should be marked by increased devotion on the part of everyone. I do wish that everyone would try to attend Mass every morning during the Holy Season of Lent. You can make that resolution at Mass today and let nothing interfere with it. May I urge also attendance at the weekly Lenten Devotions and the Stations of the Cross.

Let me call to your attention this year the opportunity of uniting all our homes and parishes in the recitation of the Rosary as it comes over the air every evening at ten o'clock. Here we have the opportunity of rounding out each day of the Holy Season with the Holy Rosary. In a Lent clouded with doubts and fears, the Rosary gleams through as a beacon of hope and confidence.

Finally may I point out the law of self-denial and penance which is the fundamental principle of the Lenten spirit. Please do not seek to excuse yourself from the saving benefit of self-denial. Find some definite program by which you deny yourself some pleasure in amusements, food or drink so that self-denial becomes a real and effective source of penance. Do not avail yourself of every favor which the Church offers in relaxing the general laws of fast or abstinence. These are permissions which we may accept if we wish, but which our own spirit of penance is free to decline.

Let everyone of us aim for a "holier Lent in a Holy Year," and God will bless us and our country. Praying God's choicest blessing upon you and yours, I remain

Your devoted Shepherd in Christ,
+ James E. Kearney
BISHOP OF ROCHESTER

MSGR. SHEEN WRITES . . .

Sex and Spirituality

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Those writers to whom sex has gone to the head, like wine to its empty stomach, assume that spirituality is nothing but sex which is out of line. A young man or woman who loves God is presumed to have some abnormal sex life. The mystical writings of St. John of the Cross and St. Theresa are analyzed in an attempt to show that sex "made them that way." It seems incredible, but actually there are some sex maniacs who have gone so far as to say: "God is called love and is created by the love-sick longings of men to take the place of the undiscovered and much craved human lover."

Msgr. Sheen

Hidden beneath these exaggerations is the false assumption that sex is the whole of life, which it is not. These writers also confuse cause and condition. In some instances, sex may condition one's spiritual outlook, but it is not the cause of spirituality. The window is the condition of light, but the window is not the cause of light.

THESE THEORISTS forget the very obvious fact that the two tendencies of sex and spirituality do not necessarily flow together. As one goes up, the other goes down. This is because sex can militate against the development of a religious state of soul, while a spiritual vision of the universe can minimize the importance of sex. In a happily married life, the piety of husband and wife progresses as the years go on, while the sex life sublimates.

Furthermore, the ideal of God cannot come out of the mental conflict or struggle, for it is already pre-supposed in the struggle; nor can it come of the individual himself unsettled. It must therefore have its origin in an outside source.

SEXUALITY AND pride go together, and love and humility are companions. Love is self-render because of the nobility of the person loved, regarding the beloved as more worthy, from which flows sacrifice of self. But sex and pride are psychologically inseparable. Sex is love which loves to be loved. It is a subject which desires to possess the object. This necessarily involves a conception of the ego and the wishing to be preferred to all others. Coquetry in a woman and boasting in a man are forms of pride which are closely related to an excessive dedication to sex.

Because sex is selfish, it is always sensitive. It shrinks from self, becomes incapable of understanding sacrifice, and impatient when its every whim is unsated. This sensitiveness is also due to the fact that pride nourishes itself on illusions; for example its beauty, its charm, and its power over the other. Since nothing is more quickly destroyed by con-

tact with reality than an illusion, it must ever be on guard lest its little self-inflated balloon be punctured.

IT IS interesting from an academic point of view, that no group of psychologists is more sensitive to criticism than the sex-psychologists. Other schools of psychology, like those of Jung and Adler, meet objections calmly and scientifically; but let anyone attack the sex theory of the Freudians, and he will immediately realize how an extreme sensitiveness of pride goes hand in hand with the veneration of the Golden Calf of Sex.

The effect of the loss of the belief in God has been well described by the great psychiatrist Carl Jung. Analyzing the statement of Nietzsche that "God is dead," Jung asks: "But if God is dead 'he should find out at once where this considerable energy, which once was invested in an existence as great as God, has disappeared. . . If it does not appear under the disguise of a new name, then it will certainly return in the mentality of the one from whom the death declaration issued." Jung here suggests that the denial of the spirit in Nietzsche ended with the exaltation of himself as God.

So it is with the sex philosophers who deny God; they ultimately end by making each person his own God. Jung says the loss of God has a terrific psychological effect; but if society loses the idea of God the masses begin to breed epidemics, of which we now have a fair number.

Spirituality is on the way back now that humanity has experimented without it. The arduous times are at hand when people will rediscover that there is no substitute for love.

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