

Birthday Of Our Saviour
Congratulations To Parish
Series Of Three Masses
Christmas Graces, Books
By MONSIGNOR HART

A Merry Christmas
To all our readers and patrons the Catholic Courier Journal extends best wishes for a Merry Christmas.

The word "Merry" is an old English word that is intended to indicate all the happiness that comes from a proper realization of all that the coming of Christ means to us.

Christmas Joy At Mt. Carmel
Father Azzi and his staff of Priests have every reason to rejoice at the wonderful drive which has brought them over \$169,000 to repair the damage done by the recent fire at Mt. Carmel School.

Christ In Christmas
There can be no Christmas without Christ and the most natural word to connect with Christ and His glory is the "Mass." The Mass that is the most important part of the celebration of the Birthday of Our Lord is so intimately conjoined with the Feast in our hearts and minds that we cannot conceive of them ever being disjoined.

So mark the Mass for this great day as a special Mass set aside by the Church to commemorate the birth of Christ. It is not just one Mass but it is a series of three Masses marked by the Church to celebrate the three-fold birth of Christ: His birth from the Father in all eternity; His birth in time at Bethlehem and His birth in the hearts of each one of His children.

The Graces Of Christmas
Plan to make your Christmas joy effective in special blessings for soul and body. Think of Christ as filled with love for you and coming down to earth that He might prepare you for your eternal home in Heaven.

Christmas Books
Your friends will be receiving from you and will be also presenting to you beautiful and appreciated books. We hope many of them will be real Christmas books, devoted to the birth of Bethlehem and the history of His life here on earth.

Sunday Sermon
The Sermon of the Lord
The Sermon of the Lord is the most important of all the gifts that faith is heir to.

JOSEPH BREIG Present From Mister Brown



The Mysterious Stranger rang the doorbell. "You're just in time," said Mr. Brown, ushering him into the living room. Maybe you can persuade my wife to listen to reason.

MR. BROWN CAME back from the wardrobe where he had placed the Stranger's coat. He planted himself in the center of the living room and began, "Now look sir, I'll leave it to you whether I'm being reasonable. For years Sara has refused to allow me to give her anything for Christmas."

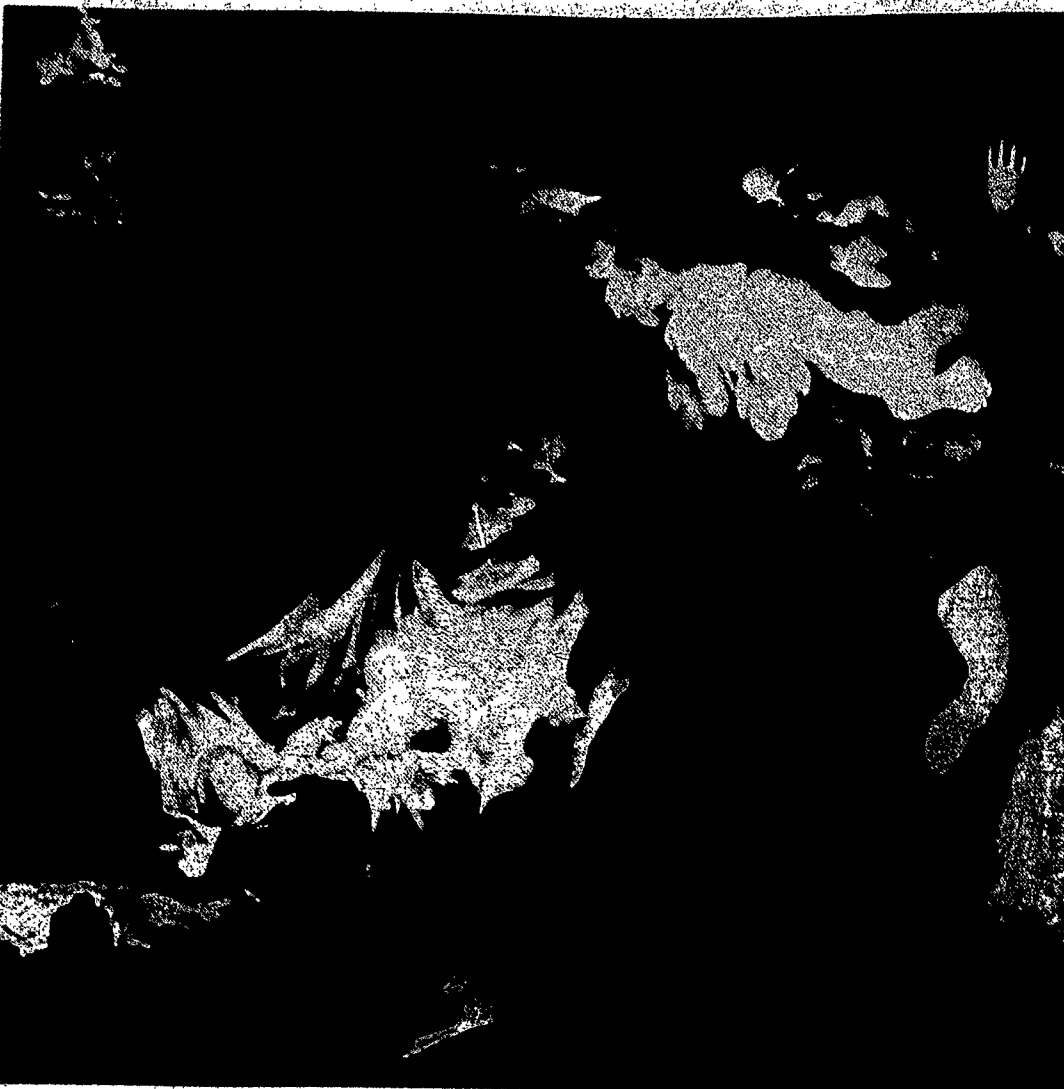
MR. BROWN SAT down, pulling his legs in front of him, and gloomily studied the tips of his shoes. "Look," he said, "do you understand? You've had your way every Christmas. This time, I want the pleasure of surprising you with something beautiful on Christmas morning. I want the pleasure of hearing the children exclaiming over it."

THE MYSTERIOUS Stranger looked at Mr. Brown, obviously waiting for his answer. Mr. Brown set his jaw firmly for a moment. Then he said, "Sara, you're a spiritual bully. But this time I'm not going to be bullied. I'm determined to give you a nice present for Christmas."

MR. BROWN APPEALED to the Mysterious Stranger. "There, you see? It's the being unreasonable."

Old Christmas
The Christmas season is a time of joy and peace. It is a time when we remember the birth of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

'This Day I Have Begotten Thee'



This is a striking impression of the birth of Christ so vividly expressed in the fresco, 'The Lord said to me: Thou art My Son, this day I have begotten Thee.' Reproduction is from a painting by Antonio Bazzi, which hangs in the Church of St. Zachary in Venice, Italy. (RNS Photo)

CHURCH MUSIC

7: Third Kind Of Church Music

By REV. BENEDICT EHMANN
(This series of articles commemorates the golden jubilee of the "Motu Proprio" letter on Church music issued by blessed Pope Pius X on Nov. 22, 1903.)

When Palestrina and his contemporary peers gave new dimensions to musical art in the 16th century, they opened a new era in the history of music. All the great musical works with which we are familiar and which enhance our lives with a great joy are the outgrowth of that vigorous re-birth.

BEAR NOW AN important distinction for clear understanding: not all sacred music of our times is church music — either because it does not conform to liturgical laws (too long-drawn-out, too repetitious, underplaying the sacred text to give the music the right-of-way), or because its form and style are more concertive than churchly.

Though they are colossal works of the greatest artistic value, yet they are a bad fit for the Mass: the armor of Saul cumbering the young David. Their place is the concert hall where it can be heard with awe and delight. At the Mass they would only distract and annoy.

Bl. Pius X voices a necessary precaution in this matter: "Since modern music has risen mainly to serve profane uses, greater care must be taken with regard to it. In order that the musical compositions of modern style which are admitted to the Church may contain nothing profane, be free from reminiscences of motifs adopted in the theater, and be not fashioned even in their external forms after the manner of profane pieces."

THIS RULES OUT from liturgical use just about everything that Bach and Beethoven and Mozart and Schubert and Verdi and Gounod composed in the way of sacred music. Is there anything left for the Church's blessing? Yes, there is, but unfortunately we must admit, nothing of equal stature from the musical point of view.

Almost a century ago, there was a quite large group of European musicians who comprised what was called the Cecilian School. Quite successfully they attempted a sort of marriage between the sacred polyphonic and the modern classical to produce an effective and very practical hybrid which with its native language and derivation, has been the staple of many Catholic churches for the last three generations.

It surely was a far better prospect for the preservation of the worship than the invention and every indication, with some words of what passed as sacred music in the days before the First World War. Many a robust choir of "the good old days" has been able to sing the music of the Cecilian School with a certain degree of success.

BOOK REVIEWS Sing Maryly

By SISTER MARGARET TERESA (Professor of Literature, Nazareth College, Rochester, N. Y.)

Little Word, little Head of the Book! Alpha and Omega, our All, "bound by Love in one volume" (Dante says)—our single saving History, Breviary of our fortunate hours! What things happened to the world of song, to the expression of men, when you started the breath of hope with Your sudden coming! What new elements are these, intertwining with the majestic pleas of Your royal ancestor David, that ever after give to all poetry about You an unearthly sweetness?

SURELY THE new elements are the undying Gloria of the angels and the pure heaven-climbing selflessness of Mary in her joy for the world—these two echo tenderly in the carol of the centuries. You are forever the wonder of the angels, little Word, the angels who "keep their ancient places: turn but a stone and start a wing!"

And it is Mary who utters You on earth, publishes You, little volume of Love; gives you rose-leaf folio involute, parchment most pure and chaste; binds You in whitest sheath of the Tower of Ivory and golden clasp of the House of God, and sings You a Preface of ecstasy, "Magnificat." Little First Book of the Marian Year, we will be reading You at that first midnight hour of Your appearance!

How angelically right is the theology of medieval singers, how maidenly their minds!

I sing of a maiden that all matchless is, The King of all Kings in her Son, I wis. He came all so stille where His mother was, As dew in Aprile that falleth on grass, He came all so stille to His mother's bowser, As dew in Aprile that falleth in shower, He came all so stille where His mother lay, As dew in Aprile that falleth on spray. Oh, Mother and Maiden was ne'er none but she— Well such a Lady God's Mother be!

Is not the divine aura of the first moments in Bethlehem all around it? We can sing it, too, if we use a (not at all medieval!) famous tune, the Lourdes hymn, "Immaculate Mother, our hearts are on fire."

Sometimes it is a martyr-to-be of a later unquiet day who sings best of You, little Word—like Blessed Robert Southwell, who had a vision of You in 1594 as his own Tyburn passion approached:

As I in hoary winter's night stood shivering in the snow, Surprised I was with sudden heat which made my heart to glow... A pretty babe all burning bright in the air appear... "Alas!" quoth He, "but newly born, in fiery heat I fry, Yet none approach to warm their hearts or feel my fire but I! My fatherless breast the furnace is, the fuel, wounding thorns... And straight I called unto mind that it was Christmas Day."

In America, in our own state, there is a precious song each year more widely known; it appears in public-school singing books. It was heard on a recent John Fisher Glee Club program. It is being sung by some little pupils of the Notre Dame Sisters for this Christmas—a song composed by the martyr-missionary Father Jean de Brebeuf for his beloved Hurons in the wild cold New York winter of 1641:

'Twas in the moon of wintertime when all the birds had fled, That mighty Gitchi Manitou sent angel choirs instead! Before their light the stars grew dim And wondrous hunters heard the hymn, "Jesus your King is born, Jesus is born, In exultation!" Within a lodge of broken bark the tender Babe was found, A ragged robe of rabbit skin wrapped round His beauty round, And as the hunter braves drew nigh The angel's song rang loud and high: "Jesus your King is born...!" The earliest moon of wintertime is not so round and fair As was the ring of glory on the happy infant there, While chiefs from far before Him knelt With gifts of fox and beaver pelt, "Jesus your King is born...!" O children of the forest, O sons of Manitou, The Holy Child of earth and Heaven is born today for you. Come kneel before the Babe and say, Who brings you beauty, peace and joy, "Jesus your King is born...!"

And the music, for the adventurous, goes in even beat: Sol (below do) do re mi fa mi re do, Ti (low) do re ti (low) do; Sol (low) do re mi fa mi re do, Ti (low) do re ti (low) do; Chorale: Sol (low) do re mi fa mi re do, re mi re do, do re do do do (low); Chorale: Sol (low) do re mi fa mi re do, do re do do do (low); Chorale: Sol (low) do re mi fa mi re do, do re do do do (low).

All the world then as now was singing, making up words for Mary,

"Sing hallelu, my little Boy, Sing hallelu, my little Boy," and the nuns of Carmel, as Teresa had taught, sang at the thought of His sweet Face,

Let them see, that care, Reason and judgement— I saw His Face most fair! All flowers are there!

How much might we choose from our own poets, from the grave Alice Meynell, the awestruck Chesterton, the crusading Meloc, the melodious Noyes (!), the crystal Tabb, the steady flame of Jessica Powers—so many more, all lovely when they sing of You!

"In praise, Jesus of Thee, and the white Lily-flower which did Thee bear," we will go singing, and as Thomas Merton says, we will "one by one kneel to look upon our Life," for we are the lucky people of the earth, who know "... the secret, cherished, perilous,

The terrible, shameful, frightened, whispered, sweet Heart-hatting secret of Thy way with us. We know, and we bear the little "Agnus, Agnus Dei Pleasing for man with Love's own breath." "I can hear, if I listen," says Sister Madeira,

"A young Child's cry; I can see, if I look, Legions of wings, And a woman who pines, On all these things."

Refugee Mother's Lullaby

By MYRTLE VORST SHEPPARD

SLEEP, my little one, sleep! Around the world have shepherds kept, The Christmas Eve a watch on each Mt. Hill. Lie still, my child, lie still, Cradle your head upon my breast, Dry your soft tears and rest... and rest. This night, through all the years, Has always been a blessed And holy one. Now I pray, Heaven's Blessing down on you, my son, Once more will feel the star of glory through To fill the sky with wondrous light! And angel choirs will sing tonight, Of peace on earth in all men's hearts, My little one! Pray you, pray you, Christ's love, shining through your eyes, Will take me safely home again!