



Threat To Children Foes Of Indecency Example Of Fortitude

By MONSIGNOR HART

Panderers All

When a condemnation is extended to a great number of publishers it should be easy to pick out a number who will deny that they belong in the condemned group. When a person, whether a publisher, an editor or just a popular writer, claims for himself exemption from the ordinary rules of morality he must look for inclusion in the body which sponsors trashy books, magazines and other immoral publications. How a man can sponsor such books and still expect exemption from the condemnation of all decent people is beyond our understanding. It becomes even worse when they bring out pious objections against the natural efforts of parents to keep such books away from their children. They still feel that those who bring out improper books and movies have some special grant from society or from government to enable them to strive mightily for the moral ruin of our children.

Moral men everywhere join with the members of God's Church in condemning trashy, impure and scandalous publications, and let no publisher of such books promise himself that the day will soon come when decent people will grow tired of condemning their product.

Right is always right and wrong is always wrong, and decent people everywhere will join with God's Church in the continued condemnation of literature of this kind. Bad movies are joined also in close communion with bad books.

Let every Catholic be guided in this matter by the conscience that God has given him, to judge books and movies according to their moral content, with the understanding that nothing can ever justify immoral books, immoral movies. They constitute a never-ending threat to the morality of our children and young people. When it comes to a matter of protecting our children and youth against moral filth they may well call us "vigilantes".

Left On Our Own

Recent activities of movie magnates, and of the lawyers they have hired to protect them against decent people, tend to show us that in matters of this kind we must depend upon ourselves. There seems to be no common ground upon which decent people in our country can meet with those who seek to control our sources of entertainment. It would be really refreshing to have one or more of our movie magnates come to the front with a plea for decency in our books and films.

We find little encouragement in the news that our daily papers and magazines have given to us in this matter. There was a time when the Legion of Decency stood as a living threat against any enemies of decency who would try to produce and secure patronage for bad books or bad movies. Our good Catholic people should continue to make the Legion of Decency a lasting and living threat to all those who would like to make their living at the expense of the morals of our youth.

Left on our own! We can never expect to have these purveyors of immorality come to the front and say "We would like to promote better conditions in our books and in our films". We are left on our own and we must produce an argument that will have in itself strength enough to force these enemies of morality into a movement that will put an end to bad books and bad plays.

Left on our own! All the power to limit and destroy the work of these purveyors of filth must come from us. We have yet to see activity on the part of these people that will actually show true opposition to the nefarious work that they are doing. They surely have no respect for morality and surely have no intention of ceasing immoral books and plays unless we show them that decent people will not patronize their unworthy productions.

St. Agnes - Virgin & Martyr

Very close to the beginning in God's Church comes the history of St. Agnes - Virgin and Martyr. A vision of virtue and an example of fortitude seldom seen in the world come to us in the very early years of God's Church. So beautiful and attractive a personality made an appeal to her contemporaries and to their successors in the Church so that now after 1900 years we have as one of the great and appealing heroines of the Christian faith a woman young in years but powerful in her ability to turn men to God.

St. Agnes is still a heroine that appeals to men and women of all ages. And so we celebrate on this 21st day of January the feast of St. Agnes, not the day of her birth into the world, but the day of her death to the world and her entrance into a life of glory. Let us be near to Agnes on this anniversary of her martyrdom and let us continue to see in her the promise of eternal life that God has made to all that love Him.

Sunday Sermon

By Monsignor Hart

FAITH AND THE KINGDOM OF GOD

Only through faith can a man become a worthy member of the Kingdom of God. Christ offered many blessings to the children of the Kingdom. Christ urged in His talks to the people that they should become children of the Kingdom.

It was instinctive in the Jewish people to honor and reverence those who were known as Children of the Kingdom, and Christ, looking more deeply into the hearts of those who claimed to be worthy children of the Kingdom, saw that they were lacking in conditions that made them worthy followers of Christ.

At Capharnaum a Roman military official sought the power of Christ to cure his servant. Paralytic and grievous affliction had taken hold of his servant. His appeal was so compelling that the Lord immediately said "I will come and cure him" and the centurion answered "Lord I am not worthy that Thou should come under my roof but only say the word and my servant will be healed." Here was faith; here was

faith in the power of Christ; here was faith so strong that it led Jesus to say "I have not found so great faith in Israel."

The prayer of the centurion was a prayer of faith. It merited immediate action from Christ and right there on the spot where the prayer had been made Jesus answered to the centurion the answer that was already given "Go thy way, as thou hast believed, so be it done to thee."

Every day in our churches we hear the Priest saying in the name of the petitioner "Lord I am not worthy that thou should enter into my roof but say only the word and my soul shall be healed." Again is repeated the words spoken of old by the Centurion and again is brought into the soul of a new friend of God the fullness of blessings that is contained in the Blessed Sacrament of the altar.

May our faith in God's word and in God's Sacraments be ever powerful in bringing to us the great blessings that God has aside for those who have faith in Him.

JOSEPH BREIG

All The Happy Days

Our 5-year-old daughter, Geena, and her 7-year-old brother Jimmy, were playing in the many-colored glow of the Christmas tree lights. I watched them busied themselves with their new toys. Presently Geena's joy overflowed into speech.

"Jimmy," she cried, "the happy days for children are Christmas and Easter."

"Somebody ought to set those words to music. Some great composer ought to use them as the theme for a hymn of praise and thanksgiving. They could even carry the burden of an oratorio or a canticle."

"Come to think of it, they are, just as they stand, nothing less than a canticle."

"THE HAPPY DAYS for children are Christmas and Easter." I can almost hum a melody to go with those phrases. In fact, the phrases themselves are a sort of melody. And Geena did not so much speak them as sing them.

Children, when they are re-joyicing, do sing their sentences. There is a lift in their voices, a rising cadence which should make us ashamed of our matter-of-factness and the flatness of our diction.

"Geena," I said, smiling, "I know that Christmas and Easter are the happiest days for children. But the other days are happy, too, aren't they?"

"No," she replied with magnificent simplicity. "On Christmas and Easter, children get presents. On other days, they don't."

WHAT A GREAT lesson Geena has yet to learn! No presents on other days?

Why, existence itself is a present beyond price—a never-ending series of presents. We do not expect a 5-year-old child to realize that. But we should not excuse ourselves from the duty of realizing it.

We should shun like the plague the heresy of taking things for granted. We should turn our backs on the temptation to act as if it were only to be expected that we should open our eyes in the mornings, and see sunlight, and be obeyed when we command our legs to walk.

The man who has never found himself staring at his hands as they wash each other—staring as if he were seeing some wonder of the world for the first time (as indeed he is)—such a man has not yet begun to live life to its fullest. The man who does not marvel over the fact that fire is hot, and ice cold, is sleepwalking through the world. The man who is not startled at the sight of water flowing when he turns a spigot needs to be jolted awake.

AS A MATTER OF FACT, I have lately learned that water baffles—perhaps I should say scandalizes—not only the poets and the mystics, but even the scientists. I am told by a scientific friend that according to the laws of physics, there ought not to be any such thing as water.

I am glad, I am glad for all our sakes, but especially for the sake of the physicists, who must sometimes be tempted to forget such homely truths as that water is astounding, and that a mature man ought to stand as saucer-eyed in the presence of a brook as does a child at sight of a circus parade.

THE AIR and the lungs with which we breathe it, the trees and the eyes with which we see them, the ground and the legs with which we walk on it—these things are not to be expected at all. We have no real right to them. They are all presents, and if we had the proper philosophy, they would all be surprises.

They are handed out to us from moment to moment, as if God, His arms filled with ribboned packages, stood plying us with gifts—and a new gift for every instant.

Repetition should not stifle our astonishment. It is surprising that I should have one day of life; it is twice as surprising that I should have two.

BOOK REVIEWS

Paul, The Apostle

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

PAUL THE APOSTLE, by Giuseppe Ricciotti. Translated by Albas Zizzamia. Bruce, 1953. 540pp. \$7.50. Available at Tucker's.

By Ricciotti! I could still hear a student exclaiming, "This is a wonderful book!" "This is the wonderful life of Christ as he lay dying in a field hospital of World War I, and after roaming through Asia on archaeological and historical missions and coming to hold the chair of Semitic languages and oriental Christian history at the University of Rome (which he still holds), he had written it, a solid, fact-cramped, unctio-filled textbook that students can love."

In World War II, in a house filled with Jews and other hunted persons whom he hid and fed and lived in peril for, he wrote his Paul.

No wonder the 168 pages of mere introduction to his subject are so rich! And in breadth, in painstaking workmanship, in marshaling of proof, in quiet humor over those who build their canons on strictly personal judgments, he will remind you of a Rochester scholar, Rev. Dr. Frederick Zwierlein—even the portrait on the book jacket, if I am not mistaken, bears a resemblance.

SO I CIRCLED the mountain to study the slopes, and I found—Dr. Ricciotti's mind is impregnated with the Divine Comedy. When he savors a high point of Paul's thought, one of those torrential fountainheads of genitive cases, of living thought germinating, branching, and fructifying as it comes, he is at once reminded of a relevant passage in the *Paradiso* or elsewhere in the great poem.

Of course! and partly because Dante himself is Pauline, particularly so in his noblest passages about the great Sea of Being which are the opening and fundaments of the *Paradiso*.

Dante is there for perspective and beauty—but just the facts, just the definitions of words, just the even-handed handling of controversial points, make this a book with years of value in it.

THIS IS a critical biography, as it was intended to be, and from it emerges a giant Saint Paul, a mystic in frequent inspired converse with Christ, and with the mind of the Church-to-be, the Spouse, with a consciousness of the ages to come, our age, a mind with "the viewpoint of the perennial Church." A book to make discoveries in.

You Can Win Converts

A Retreat Faves the Way

By Rev. John A. O'Brien, Ph.D.

"A group of us are leaving Thursday afternoon," said Anthony Lorine of Philadelphia, "to make a weekend retreat at St. Joseph's in the Hills at Malvern, Pennsylvania. We'd like to have you join us. We think you will find it interesting and helpful. It will give you a deeper insight into the faith of your wife and children."

"That," replied James McGowan, assistant manager of the Prudential Company, "would be a new experience for me. Three days listening to conferences on the purpose of our existence and meditating on the truths of religion. It certainly won't do me any harm and it might do me some good. I'll take you up on that."

During those three days of prayer, silence and recollection Father James Gibbons unfolded to them step by step the end for which God created each of us and the means He instituted to enable us to achieve our goal.

ANTHONY LORINE'S father, Carl, took a special interest in helping Mr. McGowan. Mr. Carl Lorine is the devout father of eight grown sons and daughters and is the captain of a Retreat group. He took a copy of the King James version of the Bible and marked the passages showing the establishment of the Catholic Church by Christ and her authorization to teach all mankind.

"Read these passages carefully," he said, "and you will find that the Catholic Church was not founded by men but by Christ Himself. It was teaching His doctrine, administering His sacraments and nourishing the souls of men before a single line of the New Testament was written."

"The authors of the twenty-seven books composing the New Testament are all Catholics. All that they wrote and taught are carefully preserved and taught and practised in the Catholic Faith."

Mr. McGowan was an open-minded man. He read the passages marked and saw that they contained the clear authorization of Peter and his successors to govern Christ's Church and hand down without error the full deposit of truth.

"That's interesting," he remarked. "You've proven the divine origin of the Catholic Church by the Protestant Bible. If men wrote those passages carefully he can't escape that conclusion. Christ founded one Church, I can see, the Church of the Apostles and the first Christians, the Universal Church. He didn't found any Church in the sixteenth century, nor authorize any to teach in His name. Indeed, He had nothing to do with the brood of bickering sects that were hatched by Luther, Calvin and Henry VIII and are still being hatched."

Supplementing his reading of Scripture was the edifying example of his wife and children. He saw what a powerful help religion was in their lives.

When the Retreat ended, Mr. Carl Lorine continued his interest in helping Mr. McGowan. He brought him to Father Dolan. After a thorough course of instruction Mr. McGowan was received into the fold at Our Lady of the Rosary Church with Mr. and Mrs. Carl Lorine acting as his sponsors.

"Carl," I said, "with an assist from your son, you were instructed into the Church."

"THANKS FATHER," broke in Carl, "but don't forget that Retreat. That was what really got him thinking seriously of religion. Get a non-Catholic to make a Retreat and you've got him started on the way into the Church. I've seen it happen a dozen times with open-minded people in the broad of bickering sects that made the Retreat at Malvern."

"Yes," I added, "and I've seen it happen at Notre Dame where some 1,700 men make a weekend Retreat each summer, with a dozen or so outsiders in attendance. This summer a minister was among those who made it. He was enthusiastic about it, Carl, have you helped others into the fold?"

"I helped two of my sons-in-law find their way into the Church. They're model Catholics now and setting a good example for their children. God privileged me to lend a hand also to Raymond Engelke, now a soldier in Panama. I brought him to Father Dolan who received him into the Church with two of my children acting as sponsors."

CHURCH MUSIC

11. The Organ in Church

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. Author of these articles is the Rev. Benedict Ehmann, nationally known authority on Church Music and pastor of St. Mary of the Lake Church, Watkins Glen, N. Y.)

The proper music for worship is the music of the human voice, expressing the prayer of the heart. This vocal music is solo in the sanctuary, choral in the chancel and the pews. In spite of the great development of musical instruments, it is still the noblest music of all.

Beethoven includes a chorus in the finale of his last and greatest symphony. Practically all the great composers applied themselves to works of vocal music, and today even our popular band and orchestra leaders consider a chorus to be necessary for their ensemble.

For many centuries of Catholic worship, there was no music of instruments, and even to this day, there is none in the Eastern rites, either Uniate or Orthodox. Go into any church of the Eastern Rites, and you'll look in vain for an organ.

But as time went on, and there was a great development of the organ and appropriate music for it, there was little, if any, hesitation in adopting it for use in the services of the Church. For many centuries now, in the Church of the Latin rite, an organ is considered part of the necessary choir equipment of every church—or at least a harmonium, if that is all the church can afford.

THESE SEEMS TO have always been a recognition that the music of the organ most closely resembles the music of human voices. Whether by habit and association, or by sympathetic response, there is a unanimous agreement concerning the appropriateness of the organ in church.

Its primary purpose, however, in worship, is to sustain and accompany the singing. So it is written in the Motu Proprio of Blessed Pius X, and any unprejudiced person ought to see why. Nothing can supplant or take priority over the chorus of voices in worship. That must come first and foremost as the music of prayer.

Any other kind of music must be subordinate to that, and harmonious with it. Warning has been repeatedly given that the organ should not drown out the singing. The support and accompaniment must be a discreet and servicable handmaiden.

THE CHURCH ALLOWS the organ to be played before, during, and after the services, when no singing is called for, provided again great discretion be exercised both in the kind of music played and in the silences called for by the rubrics.

As to the kind of music chosen, it must be concordant in spirit and character with the reverential character of the holy Liturgy. As for the choir, so for the organ: anything secular or sensational must be ruled out. Both in choice and in performance, everything must be guided by good religious taste, and with due regard to the requirements of the Liturgy.

This will oftentimes rule out the larger and longer compositions for organs, since it is in the worst taste to begin a composition which will have to be interrupted by the exigencies of the Mass.

The best choices are shorter preludes and interludes. As far as postludes are concerned, there seems little point in selecting them, since modern congregations clear out of the church as fast as they can, and marries hardly any interest in such music being provided for them. That's a pity, but so it is, and we might as well face it.

IT IS WRONG to play secular compositions on the organ for services just because they sound pensive and religious. Debussy's *Clair de Lune* is truly of a haunting beauty, but it is romantic and this-worldly and out of place in church. Too often, indeed, do organists of a worldly cast of soul introduce such pieces into our churches, and pastors either do not hear, or do not know, or are too feeble to protest and call for a showdown. Pleasure is not the criterion, but reverence and proper decorum.

Just as important for the

organist to regard is the matter of when not to play. Whenever the priest is wearing purple or black vestments, the music of the organ is not to be heard at all, except when necessary to accompany the singing. This is a strict rule and should be strictly observed.

At feastday Masses during Lent and Advent, the organ may be played, as well as on *Gaudeate* and *Lactare* Sundays within those seasons, the restriction applies to Masses in purple and in black—in black, at all times, whether in Lent and Advent or out of them.

THE TEMPTATION to play the organ at a funeral must be severely rejected: the serene and graceful melodies of the Requiem are fully adequate to meet the needs of the broken heart which is ruled by faith: sobrio, sentimental music in addition can be equated with onions as a tear-jerker, a spurious prop for a solemn occasion.

At no time is it ever permissible for the organist to accompany the singing of the celebrant at the altar: this is strictly forbidden. The organ should be silent during the *Ecce Agnus Dei* as the priest, facing the people at Communion time, holds the Host in view for adoration: the reason is that the words of the priest are to be audible to the people.

It is customary for the organ to be quiet during the Elevation and during the blessing of the people with the Host at Benediction. The same rules apply at Low Mass, with the further addition that the organ should not be played, nor hymns sung, when the priest is required to recite the Mass texts in an audible voice. This is during the entire Fore-mass, up to and including the *Credo*; during the Preface and the *Pater Noster* and *Agnus Dei*, and during the Postcommunio.

DURING LOW MASS there ought to be a concerted and appealing interplay between the priest's audible prayers and the playing of the organ or the singing of hymns. If many priests have lapsed into an inaudible tone for the full extent of their Low Mass (which is improper, since some parts are required to be said aloud), I think it might be due to the discouragement of having to compete with the trespassing of the organ or of the hymn-singing. Let organists take heed and do as they should.

And let me conclude here with an earnest prayer: for a large supply of organists who are competent musicians, reasonably endowed with ability in improvisation, counterpoint, modulation and transposition, and are at the same time devout, generous, and intent on the beauty of the Lord's service.

They need not be maestros or virtuosos, as long as they bring to their task a sufficient musical equipment, a humble regard and a readiness to perfect themselves in their privileged avocation.

New Words Given Old-Rowboat Song

Union City, N. J.—(NC)—An unusual way of impressing spiritual values on young children has been devised by Ed Willock, Catholic free lance writer and father of 10. In an article for the January issue of *The Sign*, national Catholic magazine published here, Mr. Willock related:

"For one thing, we sing grace before meals. The words of the chanted grace are these: 'Bless this food, O Lord, and bless all those who dine, and feed the poor where'er they are, on Christian bread and wine.' This is sung to the tune of *Row, Row, Row Your Boat*."

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