

Protestant Council

Catholics, as well as Protestants, are interested in the International Assembly of the major non-Catholic churches which is taking place at Evanston, Illinois. We assume that they meet in sincerity, earnestly seeking the goal for which Christ prayed, "that they may be one." The fact that no Catholic will attend has been taken as a sign of our pride and desire always to be different, there are those who accuse us of being narrow and unwilling to work with other Christians to attain the wish of Christ himself.

We would betray our own convictions, however, if we did attend their Assembly. We would repudiate the very truth itself which Christ died to teach us, if we were to look for truth when in reality we already possess it.

Unity, oneness, is a mark of the true Church of Christ—not some dream-church that is to come—but the one which is established with Peter as rock foundation, from which thousands of martyrs died to death, in which saints have lived and in which sinners have found forgiveness and hope for heaven. If unity were but an idea, it would be a vision of the rainbow, which remains after a storm of vision of peace in the sky over the rainbow, then now give us hope to achieve what far better Christians have not accomplished?

As we look to the Evanston Assembly, it is with true Christian charity and love, we only wish that it were possible to meet with them at one altar to worship our Father in heaven. It is with the most profound humility that we must insist that such a hope will be realized only when our Christian example and our continued prayers can win for them the true faith which Christ gives through His one, true and only Church, the Roman Catholic Church.

Understanding The Mass

One of the unique features of last week's National Liturgical Week in Milwaukee was an acted-out demonstration of the Mass at an altar facing the people. Each action and prayer of the Mass was explained to enable the people to understand and appreciate this central act of Christian worship.

Sunday after Sunday, our Catholic people "go to Mass" and our churches are too often inadequate to accommodate all who come. That there is sincere devotion, no one can deny it. That there could be greater understanding, no one can deny that either.

The Council of Trent back at the end of the Middle Ages insisted that the Mass be explained to the people. Pope St. Pius X made his first major command as Pope that the people must take an "active part" in the Mass. Pius XII has repeated that this understanding and active participation in the Mass is primary, indispensable, most necessary for a true Christian spirit.

Even our loving Savior, on the night before He died—when He who was God and could do all things, He could conceive of nothing greater, nothing more important than to command us "do this in memory of Me" and gave us the Mass.

For twenty centuries the Church has done this at king's for their crowning, for a blessing to a young couple just married, the Church has done this at the proclamation of her dogmas and the canonization of her saints; has offered this mystery of the Mass for a poor old lady afraid to die and for the repose of the souls of those who have died; the Church has done this as Columbus set sail to discover a new world, and on the beach at Dunkirk when it seemed as if the old world would be no more; the command to do this has been kept, faithfully by an old monk on the anniversary of his vows and furiously by an archbishop in the prison camp of Mauthausen; wherever the Church has gone, in every conceivable circumstance, for every human need, from infancy and before it, and till death and after it, on a hundred thousand altars, across the countless parishes of Christendom, Christians have done this, have offered the Mass, as the synthesis of their pleading and their worship.

In enabling the people of God to understand the worship of God, these annual Liturgical Weeks are serving the Church in America at the very heart and center of our faith and we confidently pray for their continued success.

Obedience Is Not Optional

The last few weeks of summer often degenerate into a "last fling" at vacation's freedom and too many young people acquire the notion that the Fourth Commandment is strictly for the birds during August. There is neither repeal nor dispensation. As long as a child lives at home (even if he's 50 years old), that child is bound to complete obedience to parents in all that is not sin. Parents who set a curfew, or restrict the companionship, or insist on help at home, are acting as God-intends them to act—to bring up their children as Christians and not as heathens. If our young people would take a minute to think things through, they will agree that God and their parents mean this discipline for their own best interests and the smart youngster will profit from it.

Sunday Sermon

MY BAPTISM

The next three Sundays give us thoughts on the three great Sacraments, Baptism, Penance, Eucharist. It is a trilogy on the inner life of grace, a reminder of the source and effect of the supernatural life of our soul.

THE EPISTLE is really St. Paul's story of Easter—a double Easter, Christ's and his own. St. Paul tells how Christ died but rose again as witness to our faith. And then in deepest humility, he describes his own "days of death" when he hated Christ and persecuted His Church. But then, by a miracle of grace, Christ called him to the life of grace, raised him from his sin and counted him among the Saints.

EVERY SUNDAY is meant to be a "little Easter" for each one of us. Our first Easter was our Baptism when we were rescued from the darkness of sin and from the utter void of gracelessness. Each Easter is a worldwide anniversary of our Baptism, a day we renew our Baptismal innocence and ideals, as is provided for in the restored Holy Saturday ceremony. Even every Sunday is a "freer upper" for the week ahead. The week gone by has had its failures and humiliations and sins, but Sunday is the first day of a new week, fresh and unstained, and we consecrate it and the whole week with it at Mass on Sunday.

THE DREAM of this Sunday's Gospel has been taken from earliest times as a picture of an unbaptized soul. The life

of baptism today has the priest put a pinch of blessed salt on the candidate's tongue that he may relish spiritual things and speak to God in prayer. The priest touches the ears of the candidate and says "ephpheta—be opened" to hear the word of God.

As a matter of fact, that is the double purpose of the "Mass of the Catechumens"—the part of the Mass up to the sermon. First we pray to God, then we listen to His word. We speak and God hears us, then He speaks and we must listen. Our Baptism first gave us the right to call God "our Father" and the ability to believe what He taught. In our conversation with Him at Communion, we will let these thoughts fill our hearts with profound gratitude for our Baptism of so long ago.

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Immaculate Heart of Mary

New Feast Requested By Our Lady Teaches Heaven's Peace Program

By
REV. HENRY ATWELL

Sunday, August 22nd, marks a feast day only recently introduced into the Church's calendar. It is a feast which our Lady herself requested.

IT WAS summer time, nearly forty years ago, and the armies of a relentless aggressor were sweeping through Belgium, the Low Countries, and into France. It seemed as if there would be an early victory and an empire over the continent of Europe. The dream faded, however, and the First World War deadlocked during the winter and bogged down to two frightening years of destruction.

But before the end came, our Lady came. She came to Flanders to give us the reason and the remedy for war. The reason is sin. The remedy—her Rosary.

In her conversations with the little shepherd children at the Cova de Iria, Mary warned the world to give up its untamed appetite for the forbidden fruit of sinful pleasures. Mary said we all must do penance. Otherwise, there would be another and a worse war.

THE BLESSED VIRGIN even foretold a sign, God's last warning before the scourge of war would whip us again. There would be a night that would not be dark.

The world gave little heed to the message. It neither prayed nor did penance, and as rival armies envied each other across the Maginot Line, there came a mysterious light one night. The newspapers and the radios reported it, but couldn't explain it. Again the world refused to listen and we had to weep and bleed through a Second World War.

THESE LONG YEARS of struggle sobered us somewhat. Many people turned to our Lady's peace program and the war which began on the feast of her Immaculate Conception was brought to its conclusion on the feast of her Assumption. The hand of God and the prayer of Mary were evident—we had been scourged for our sins but spared through the pleading of our heavenly Mother.

Years of fragile peace have been punctuated with the episode in Korea and the tragedy of Indo-China and even now we hear the rumblings of war again.

Our Defense Secretary, Mr. Lovett, said over a year ago, "Today, the United States is developing new weapons so destructive that their use in war might destroy civilization as we know it."

JOSEPH BREIG

How Shall We Pray?

A California reader has asked me to tell her what is my favorite prayer.

There is only one possible answer.

My favorite prayer is the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. But there is this point to be noted at the very beginning—the important question is not what is my favorite prayer.

It matters little or nothing which prayer pleases me. The purpose of prayer is not to please me or any other human being.

The purpose of prayer is to please God. If we want to know what is the best prayer, we should not ask men. We should ask God. God has made it abundantly and overwhelmingly clear that the greatest possible prayer is the Mass.

THE MASS, therefore, is my favorite prayer—but not because it pleases me.

The Mass is my favorite because it is the only prayer that is infinitely and totally worthy of God, and infinitely and totally pleasing to God.

God alone is infinitely and totally worthy of God. God alone is infinitely and totally pleasing to God. The Mass is God offering Himself to Himself. The Mass is God Himself pleading with God, for men and with men.

Human language cannot possibly bear the burden of fully expressing the Mass. The human mind cannot possibly encompass the infinite excellence of the Mass. The Mass is a great mystery. But we can make some approach to understanding it, and appreciating it.

JESUS CHRIST was a man. He had a complete human nature—a human body, human soul, human intellect and will.

Jesus Christ also was—and is—God. His nature was human. His person was divine.

Joe Breig is a human person



Pope Pius XII recently commented, "The realization of our responsibility before God obliges us to attempt everything, and to undertake everything in order to spare the human race so frightful a disaster." So we organized the UN, and ratified the Atlantic Charter, and proposed the EDC. These are needed instruments to maintain the peace, but more is needed still.

And that is why we have this Sunday's feast. Mary has brought us Heaven's Peace Program—so very simple and yet so very difficult. Really, it is nothing new. It is a renewal of all Christ said.

1. When Jesus looked out from His cross, He said to us, "Behold thy mother." Now He wants us to consecrate ourselves to her Immaculate Heart, to do as John the Apostle did—take her to be our own Mother and imitate her purity of life.

The Pope has consecrated the whole world to her Heart, but it remains for us to rally it in our own little hearts—making them like Christ's, filled with devotion to Mary.

2. Jesus gave us His own precious Body and Blood to "take and eat." Communion—union with Christ—is meant to be something not just occasionally done, but frequently, daily.

with a human nature, Joe Breig is a man and nothing more. Jesus Christ is a divine person with a human nature. His human nature belonged to God the Son—the Second Person of the Holy Trinity.

Jesus Christ was crucified and died for the redemption and salvation of His fellowmen. What happened on Calvary was this: God the Son, in His human nature, offered Himself in supreme sacrifice to God the Father for us.

THAT SACRIFICE was infinitely pleasing to God, infinitely pleasing to God. It was the prayer of prayers, the supreme prayer: God incarnate offered the perfect prayer for us.

Previous to that sacrifice, Jesus Christ had offered the first Mass when, at the Last Supper, He gave Himself to His Apostles. Under the appearance of bread and wine to be food and drink for their souls—spiritual nourishment for their salvation. And He commanded them:

"This do in commemoration of Me."

"The Mass on our altars today is the same Mass offered by Christ at the Last Supper."

The Mass on our altars today is the same Sacrifice offered by Christ the Incarnate God on Calvary. It is the same Sacrifice, with one difference.

The difference is the difference between the Last Supper and the Crucifixion.

The Crucifixion was Christ sacrificing Himself in a bloody manner for us. The Mass is Christ offering Himself in an unbloody manner, under the appearance of bread and wine, as He offered Himself at the Last Supper for men.

THE MASS today is the Risen Christ—Christ resurrected in living glory—continuing to offer Himself over and over for us and with His fellowmen, continuing to plead our cause with the heavenly Father, continuing to nourish our souls with the spiritual food of Himself—He Who is God and man.

You Can Win Converts

Mrs. Ryan Wins Fifty!

By

Rev. John A. O'Brien, Ph.D.
(The University of Notre Dame)

Have you ever heard of a housewife who has helped to lead more than 50 converts into the Church and who personally instructed 20 of them? Certainly not often.

Yet that is the achievement of Mrs. Mary Ryan of St. James Parish, Waverly, N.Y. For more than 30 years Mrs. Ryan has had as a hobby the sharing of the precious treasure of her holy Catholic faith with others. She believes that a lay person is called by God to explain his faith whenever the occasion warrants, and she translates that belief into practice.

"Tell us, Mrs. Ryan," I said, "about some of the cases where you were privileged to help."

"Eloise Mitchell, along with her aunt and grandmother," she said, "lived next to us. She sang in the choir of the Methodist Church, was president of the Epworth League and wrote for a Methodist paper."

"ONE DAY when her aunt was taken to the hospital for an emergency operation, I offered to go along with Eloise. The aunt died that night while I stood on one side holding her hand and saying the Rosary. On the other side stood a minister reading from a Bible."

"We became close friends and Eloise never forgot my little act of kindness. It was difficult for her to understand how I could pray to Mary and kneel before a statue of her. I explained the teachings of the Church on these matters and gave her a Rosary."

"If you will recall it a few times," I said, "meditating upon the mystery at each decade, you will discover for yourself how vividly it brings the life of Christ home to one." She was looking for a job at the time and I suggested that she say it for nine days for that intention. To her joy and astonishment on the ninth day she was offered a job.

"Her interest in the Faith deepened and I brought her to Mass and explained more about our religion to her. Finally, I brought her to Father Edward Dwyer who gave her a complete course of instruction and received her into the Church. Monsignor Edward Belowski of Yonkers has likewise helped to deepen and increase her knowledge of the Catholic religion. Eloise is today a devout Catholic and the mother of three children."

"THAT WAS a long trail you helped her travel, Mrs. Ryan," I said. "Tell us of another whom you helped."

"On my way home from confession, I stopped at the home of Mrs. Alberta Boehmer who was slowly dying of cancer. I told her where I had been and of the words of encouragement which the priest speaks and how much they help. She showed much interest so I went to see her often. When her condition got worse I stayed every other night for six weeks. I gave her a Rosary and taught her how to say it. I continued to explain more of the teachings of our Faith and finally she said she wanted to become a Catholic. I notified Father Thomas Toole and he came and checked on how thoroughly instructed she was. Then he baptized her and gave her the last sacraments."

Mrs. Boehmer's daughter noted how much solace and joy her mother had gotten from the Faith. Three weeks after her mother's death, she told me she wanted to become a member of the Church in which her mother had died. I called Father Edward Lyons and he instructed her and received her into the fold. She later became an officer in the Junior Catholic Daughters."

"THESE ARE all wonderfully interesting and illuminating," Mrs. Ryan, I remarked. "Tell us, please, how you helped the Reynolds family."

"Ruth Reynolds was at a party one Saturday night, and she noticed that her Catholic escort ceased at midnight to eat or drink with the rest of the crowd. When she inquired why, he explained that he was going to receive Holy Communion in the morning and therefore had to be at church at midnight. The incident made a deep impression on Ruth. When I heard of it, I asked Ruth to call on me and began instructing her. Then her brother got interested. With Father Keenan's help the family of six were received into the Church. Today Ruth is Mrs. Francis Vall and her brother-in-law is Father Richard Vall, a Redemptorist missionary."

"If we had a few million Catholics like you we would win the hundred million churchless people for Christ within our lifetime. I pray that your example may serve as a torch to kindle the zeal of every lay Catholic throughout the world."

Last Question

Johnny had asked so many questions that his father had run out of patience. "Look here," he said, "didn't you ever hear of the boy who asked so many questions that he turned into a question mark?"

Johnny thought for a minute. "Daddy," he asked, "didn't he keep the little dot under himself?"

Next Week

Special Edition
"Back-To-School"

QUIZ

On Catholic Faith

Address your Questions on Catholic Faith to: Quiz, c/o Courier-Journal, 35 So. 5th St., Rochester, N. Y.

If a person has taken money or things from stock over a period of years and then realizes it has amounted to a considerable total stolen, what should be done?

God's law commands that stolen goods be returned to the owner. It is quite obvious that this case creates a double problem—first: the person will be embarrassed to confess guilt at this time—and second: perhaps the person does not have the means to restore what was taken. The best solution is to consult a parish priest and perhaps he could act as agent for the guilty person and thereby prevent any public embarrassment and repayment can be arranged on some kind of "installment plan."

If I buy an item and then later discover that it was stolen, what must I do?

Return it to the true owner and try to collect for it from the person who sold it to you. We have no right to keep what is not ours, no matter how innocently we ourselves obtained it. This indicates we ought to be cautious of any "bargains" offered us by strangers.

BOOK REVIEWS

The Lady And The Sun

By SISTER MARGARET TERESA

(Professor of Literature, Nazareth College, Rochester, N. Y.)

THE LADY AND THE SUN, a novel of Faith by Elizabeth Dockman, Newmarket Press, 1954.

THE LITTLE PRIEST, a story by St. Francis, with illustrations by St. Marie Francois, Christopher Press, 1954.

THAT WE MAY HAVE HOPE, by W. A. Donaghy, S.J., America.

Nobody need insist that the best way to learn about Faith or to refresh the mind on all the beautiful details and earnest warnings of our Lady's appearances there is to read a novel based on the facts. All we want to know is whether the novel is a good one. Mrs. Dockman's is good.

She is literate, literary, gifted. In love with her subject, she spent four years on the scene, knows the people, knows children, has documented her book, but has not let her imaginative vision of the following consecutive reality of an infant clouded.

The result is a happy-hour book, through which you can be a worth-while friend to some tired or sick or unbelieving person you know.

If you liked the play or the movie, you will round out your gains by entering into the special aura of Portuguese family talk, marketplace, and bullfight (in which neither bull nor man is victimized). And the evocative account of Faith, this one brings the reader straight to himself and his Rosary and the dependence of Our Lady's promises on his saying it.

The Little Priest is a rare thing, an authentic thriller, with no help from modern science or modern war. Written for the little ones, it interests the big and for just one reason: it is a review of a twentieth century discussion for the First Sunday of Lent. How Matthew Arnold gets into it, and St. Paul is a pleasant bit of future business if you like it.

Apostleship of Prayer

By REV. THOMAS H. MOORE, S.J.

THE SPIDER AND THE FLY

The General Intention recommended to the prayers of all Apostles of Prayer for the month of August is "Opposition to Immorality and Irreligion in Literature." The following explanation of that intention by the Rev. Thomas H. Moore, S.J., appears in the August issue of THE MESSENGER OF THE SACRED HEART.

You have only to go down to the corner of almost any American town to be witness to the number and variety of magazines on sale for people to read. In spite of television, publishers of books and periodicals do not seem to be going out of business. In fact, their business is so good that it is attracting people on the mental and moral level of the opium peddler, the procurer and the sex pervert—people who make a living selling opportunities for sin. This is the problem to which the Pope now calls your attention and for the solution of which he asks your help and your prayers.

The average Catholic father and mother try to be careful about the company their children keep. When Mary, aged 16, begins to get interested in a boy, her mother will want to know about his family and general background, and she will have ways of finding out.

When the new interest calls for Mary of an evening, her father will want to get a good look at him, to have a few words with him; and the boy will make either a good or bad impression on the older man from the start. It will all be casual but real. A

man is not going to risk his daughter with someone he does not trust.

Why is that? Because a father is vitally concerned about the happiness of his children. If he can prevent it, he will stand for nothing which can jeopardize his daughter's reputation, her peace of soul, her eternal salvation.

Immorality and irreligion appear in literature on two different levels. There are, first, the clearly obscene, indecent and immoral publications which are sold under the counter. Only recently has the public become aware of the enormity of this trade in sin. What to do? The strong arm of the civil law is pitifully weak against moral murder. In a country like ours, you get no agreement on what is good and what is bad. So the law is vague. Court action runs you up against loud shouts for the freedom of the press, against censorship. You are face to face with general public which does not care, and with special interests prepared to defend themselves against any threat to their invested millions.

In the public eye, you are not a defender of the common good, but a bothersome prohibitionist, a very irritating person.

At the risk of becoming the very same thing to your own children, you have the obligation to keep their minds and hearts as uncontaminated as possible by luring them away from all that is immoral in books and other reading matter. The best way to do this is to give them good Catholic books and magazines to read.