

Gift For Christ Child

Downtown and suburban stores are crowded these days with throngs shopping for Christmas gifts. In this bustle to buy presents for our friends, we must be careful not to overlook the Christ Child. It is His birthday and of all people, He certainly most deserves our gift. What can we give Him?

In grade school, we had the practice of building a crib for Him—a certain number of prayers made the manger, some Rosaries were the straw. Stations provided the linens, Masses and Communions arranged the food and friends for the Christmas coming. If that might seem a bit childish to us now, it still expresses a very real idea, and a truly basic one.

The gifts we give our friends are selected on the basis of what our friends would like. To give an elderly lady some roller skates or give a child a book on philosophy would obviously be quite a silly solution, no matter how costly the skates or book might be.

So often, we make occasional heroic acts of piety or wait to receive the Sacraments only on great feast days. While it is good that at least we do prove our faith on some special feasts, Christ certainly wants a sincere, day-to-day, humble practice of virtue. It is so easy to be good on Christmas Eve; it is not so easy to be good on New Year's Eve.

As we go about our preparations and decorating for Christmas, we need to ask ourselves just how deep our Christmas spirit really is. If it is the genuine article, it will last not just a day but all life through.

Christmas Parties

A Christian man or woman knows that some pre-Christmas parties fill people with all kinds of spirits other than the Christmas spirit. If an office or factory or neighborhood party turns into an occasion of sin, then there can be but one way to handle a situation like that—leave. Your so-called friends may be offended if you do, but God will be offended if you don't.

China's Weapon: Prosperity

Despite the exaggerations of all Communist news reports, there is considerable evidence to indicate that Red China has advanced quite remarkably in an economic way. Perhaps for the first time in history, China now has a strong and efficient centralized government. The Communist discipline and order have all helped to raise the traditionally low standards of Chinese living.

If there is any prospect for China, we know that it has to be the people's freedom, a price that we consider worth any cost. When a man is hungry, cold, and homeless, however, a life of bread is more important than the right to vote.

In the west of Asia, the poverty stricken people are obviously watching the progress being made in China, India, Indonesia, and other free peoples of the East as beginning to wonder if Americans at well-supplied tables are really concerned about the welfare of the world's needy.

We are already out our military expenses to a dangerous extent. There is no advantage in cutting our aid to Asia and Europe. If we abandon the loyal but hungry peoples, we will find them lured to the Communist side. Red China's greatest threat to us is not her military power, but her economic growth.

David Bertsch

At the top of the stage is the goal in life for David Bertsch, Aquinas center, an ardent worker with the school's St. Gabriel Club, where he first became interested in the church.

During his stay at Aquinas, Dave has appeared in many programs, including the dramatic "The Last Supper" as well as in plays at Mount Holy College. He has also been a member of the Aquinas Mission Society, which is a group of students who help to support the Aquinas Mission in Buffalo.

Dave's interest in the church is not limited to his school activities. He has been a member of the St. Gabriel Club, where he has been active in many ways. He has also been a member of the Aquinas Mission Society, which is a group of students who help to support the Aquinas Mission in Buffalo.

At the end of the year, Dave was able to collect over five hundred dollars during the last three days of the drive by house-to-house selling. Since Dave knew his home town would need over four thousand dollars to take care of the drive, he decided to take a trip to Buffalo and try "pushing" his magazine called "Our Lady's Digest."

And he "pushed" Dave sold in eighty-one parishes of Buffalo and returned to his alma mater with over four thousand dollars. He had sold more than thirty thousand copies. Dave's home town ended up on top with over seventy-five hundred dollars and held the title "Aquinas Magazine Homecoming Champs."

Dave's prize is the trip to Texas, accompanied by an Aquinas freshman, Gerald Frank. While in the South, he will attend the "Cotton Bowl" game, visit one of the famous Texas oil fields, and take a tour of the mission houses, many of which are partially supported by the Aquinas Mission Unit.

So, it's off to Texas on Dec. 30 for a well-earned week's stay. With Christmas coming, Dave was asked what he thought was the greatest human characteristic shown by people during the holy season, and his reaction was pretty grim. Unfortunately, says Dave, the main issue seems to be "how much to spend for Christmas presents."

We're getting pretty used to the phrase these days, but Dave thinks one of the most quotable quotes is "Put Christ Back Into Christmas."

A good Catholic high schooler should be a member of the Aquinas Mission Society, especially to guard the most important virtue of charity. Reception of Holy Communion and devotion to Our Blessed Mother are the best and surest safeguards.

Recently Dave won an all-expense trip to Texas for himself and one other Aquinas student and gained the title of "Champion Magazine Salesman." Each year Aquinas holds a Magazine Drive to help defray the expenses of the school and support of the Aquinas Memorial Stadium.

Each year, Dave has pitched against the school and in this year's drive, he was the champion.

DAVID BERTSCH
place on his book shelf, and Steve Allen's "Tonight" is his preferred TV viewing.

The greatest moral evil facing teenagers, Dave thinks, is the practice of "going steady." Not only is there a moral danger involved, but Dave, from the social aspect, "going steady" tends to discourage other friendships so valuable to young people.

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JOSEPH BREIG

Act Of An Apostle

Late by little, the truth comes out about the strange deaths of martyrs at Christians behind the iron curtain.

Sometimes, the facts are decided only when some body is on his deathbed, and thus, it is sure that before his public, he will be before the eyes of Communist reviewers.

That was the case of Fr. Dragutin, who did not long ago some where in Tito's Yugoslavia.

Fr. Dragutin had been released last January from Lepoglava prison, where one of his fellow captives had been Archbishop Stepinac.

DOUBTLESS Father Dragutin was freed because he was fatally ill. The Communists do not like people dying on their hands. It had been propaganda, especially when the Red war against mankind is being waged by means of slandering about "peace" and "peaceful coexistence."

Before he died, Father Dragutin told two other priest-captives in Lepoglava had been tortured into signing false statements against Archbishop Stepinac.

One of the priests was the archbishop's secretary, Father Ivan Shalich. He was tortured for eight months.

FATHER SHALICH was long-loyal to truth. Through the eight months of agony, he reiterated that the accusations against his archbishop were lies.

Fr. Dragutin saw Father Shalich now, and then during those eight months, which started in December, 1945. By the following August, Father Shalich appeared as one sentenced with suffering.

AT THAT POINT, the Reds struck their vilest blow. They attacked Father Shalich. It was he they might call his weakest point, although the weakness was rooted in a great virtue—his love of his family.

Fr. Shalich was awakened in his cell and ordered to dress quickly. Thinking he was going to execution, he obtained final absolution from a cell-mate priest.

Instead of being led before a firing squad, Father Shalich was taken into a room and confronted with his mother and sister, in chains. They had been sentenced to death, he was told, for anti-state activities, but they would be spared if he would sign a statement that Archbishop Stepinac had supported terrorist groups.

Fr. Shalich signed. He had signed as one man from worry and sorrow over what he had done. He spoke of the statement as his "pact with the devil." He was warned by the Communists that if he repudiated it, his mother and sister would be murdered.

Ground between the great stones of his love for them and his love for his archbishop and for truth, Fr. Shalich stopped eating. It was clear that he intended to starve himself.

At this point, Father Dragutin, the priest who told this story on his deathbed, acted. By those devious channels which exist in every prison, he got word to Archbishop Stepinac about what was going on.

BY THAT TIME, Father Shalich, desperately ill both physically and mentally, was in the prison hospital. How Archbishop Stepinac obtained permission to visit him, we do not know. But he did. Here is one of the great scenes of history. Archbishop Stepinac, Primate of Yugoslavia, successor to the Apostles, a prisoner as St. Peter once was a prisoner—Archbishop Stepinac approached the bed where lay a priest whom, in all likelihood, he had personally ordained, and who had signed one of the lies that were going to "convict" him as a common criminal.

Archbishop Stepinac stood looking down at poor Father Shalich. He spoke with the vigor and decisiveness that are characteristic of him. He said:

"I heard all about your ordeal. I forgive you, and God will forgive you. Now, not one more word about the pact. You can be sure that I shall never forget you, and shall remain your friend as before."

Look upon Archbishop Stepinac in that moment. And look upon his captors, the men who had tortured Father Shalich beyond human endurance. If you want to know what is the difference between a Christian and a Communist, you see before your eyes a flaming answer.

For Welfare Of Souls

English To Be Used In Church Rites; Latin Remains Official Language

By REV. HENRY ARWELL

Prayers that have been said in Latin for over fifteen hundred years will soon be heard in English in our parish churches. The newly published "Collectio Rituum" contains the official English texts to be used in many rites and ceremonies of the Church which up to now were always said in Latin.

When you take your baby for baptism, or you have the priest bring Communion to an elderly shut-in at your home, or ask a priest to bless your state, you will hear these prayers conducted in the language you understand rather than in the archaic Latin which has characterized our church for so many centuries.

But I thought Latin was the Church's official language, you may say. It is supposed to be a part of the Church's unity. Now come everything has changed now?

Yes, Latin is a wonderful world-wide proof that Catholics are one and the same all over regardless of race, nationality or color. And Latin remains the official language of the Church for all her official documents as a common language for the world's Catholics. It is the language of the Mass and it will still be used to some extent in the administration of the Sacraments.

THE PRAYERS AND RITES that precede and follow the actual Sacrament are meant to help us understand and appreciate God's gift to our soul. The American Bishops believe that if people could hear these prayers in their own language, instead of having to read a translation out of a book, it would help more people to take an intelligent part in these ceremonies.

When Christ first instituted the Sacraments and held the Apostles to baptism, to forgive, to do this—the Mass, and give the other Sacraments, He spoke to them in Aramaic, the people's own language.

Peter and Paul soon went to Rome, where most of the people spoke Greek. Greek was the language of the liturgy there for just about three hundred years. Then Latin began to be spoken at Rome again, and the Church came out of the catacombs speaking Latin.

St. Patrick, St. Boniface, St. Austin, and the other great missionaries took the faith to the pagan tribes of Ireland, England, Germany, and the rest of Europe. The missionaries civilized them and converted them—and taught them Latin. For over a thousand years, all Europe spoke and understood Latin. It was the bond of unity for a continent otherwise quite divided.

Meanwhile, in the Near East, in Syria and Persia and the Balkans, Catholics had their Mass in Greek, Aramaic, Slavonic, and other languages—which are still used by Eastern Catholic Christians today.

BY ABOUT the year 1500, our modern languages like English, French, German began to take the place of Latin.

At about this same time, Luther, Henry VIII, and others broke away from the true Church. To show that they didn't want to have anything to do with the Pope, they refused to pray in the language he used. So they threw out Latin and used the national languages instead.

That was the way you could tell whether a person was loyal to the Church or not. If his Mass was in his own language, he was a Protestant. If his Mass was in Latin, he was a Catholic. In the services were in German or English, then that was a sign that he had turned against Holy Mother Church.

Latin also helped to unite the immigrants to America and make them Americans. If the Church had channeled the Mass into a dozen different languages, then the Irish and Germans, the Italians and Polish and Ukrainians—all would have built their own separate churches and kept going to them, living together but not adopting American ways.

THE FAMILIAR LATIN in every church broadened the immigrants' opportunities. They could go to St. Patrick's or St. Boniface, move out to Mumford or down to Horrell, and there they would find the Catholic church with its traditional Latin prayers they had heard in their home country. It helped to keep them loyal Catholics and assist them in developing into good Americans.

Traditions like these that date back hundreds of years cannot be disregarded or easily changed.

Latin is the language of Pope, Saints, and centuries of Christians. But just because something was good for a thousand years doesn't necessarily mean it will still be good even tomorrow. Our Ancestors sailed the high seas in frail sailboats or trudged along bumpy roads in horse-drawn wagons. That was the best they had, but who wants to keep on



A child in England at prayer, and friends both pray with it. English is being used in recent prayers prepared at request of American Bishops.

So also, circumstances which changed the exclusive use of Latin have also changed our prayers. The Church has adapted her ceremonies, as Pope Pius XII says, "to attract and stimulate Christian people to greater advantage."

If Sacraments and Sacraments all in English can help the people even a little to a greater understanding of the Church's rites, then Bishop McQuaid's great motto determines the course of action: "Salus Animarum, Lex Suprema." The welfare of souls is the supreme law.

Since 1941, a Ritual Book in their native languages was approved by Rome for New Guinea, China, Japan, Indo-China, India, Indonesia and Africa. In 1947, one was granted for France, and to Germany in 1950. Now it is our turn to receive a similar permission.

How gentle are God's ways. It may be but mere coincidence, but at the close of Mary's Year, but nation, dedicated to God's Holy Mother, is now given the rites of the Church in our own mother tongue. It is Mary's Christmas gift to us. Like her, we must now hear the word of God, and keep it in our hearts and in our lives.

Not without tears, Sister Callwell Day, S.S.D., author of "Color Ebony."

The American Christmas, Barnett Macmillan, \$2.50. Good history. (And—this is personal. One who never kept anybody smiling and chawing at Santa Claus will help us to stop from God, who works, being a powerful saint and who happens to have taken out American citizenship papers almost before anyone else. Incidentally—candles, holy bells, are beautiful and thoroughly Catholic. Some people don't get any closer but at least they get that much which frees them out of Christmas. Together! The blue-spirit has suddenly sprang to "some Catholic" Exclaim! It pleases!)

Fr. J. P. Frawley, S.S.D., author of "The Church Speaks to the Modern World" (Leo XIII, Imago), Mc. Doubleday, Imago Books, paper, 97 Madison Ave. N. Y. 22

FOR PRIESTS
The Human Element in the Church of Christ, Rev. Paul S. Murray, Newman Press, Author is German leader of the stature of Karl Adam or Guardini.

More Blessed Than Kings, Rev. Vincent McCorry, Stimulating and joyous defense of the Holy priesthood.

Mail the Altar Boy, ed. Rev. Rosalge, \$1.25. Writers: Cardinal

Last Mass administered in English will be said in Latin and dying people is to accept suffering in union with Christ and for His Church.

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BOOK SHELF

Christmas Suggestions

FOR CHILDREN:
"Nativity Play" by Mrs. Margaret Teresa Spellman, Father Lord, "Ring", Loretta Young, Catherine De Hueck.

"The Manger in Oremburg, Rev. John LaFarge. Fine book of the year in a dozen ways; read as much outside the Church as in it. Hardcover, \$4.75.

"The Lord, Guardian, Regency, AND FOR OTHER APOSTLES: The Spirit of Catholicism, Karl Adam. Imago Book, paper, 75c.

"Born Catholicism, ed. Frank Sheed. Great contemporary autobiographies, containing much about yourself. \$3.50. Sheed.

"Bishop Sheen: Life in 'Work' History, 2nd Series. The Right Follow-Up for TV listeners. \$3.50. Virgil Kelly (Knights of Columbus advertiser). The Truth About Catholics, Dial Press, \$2.75.

"Mop, Look, and Live, Rev. Keller, \$2.00.

FOR TEENAGERS:
"The Family Nobody Wanted, Helen Thayer, Lippincott, \$3.75. A book of the highest quality, reaching until Everest. A factual story of pure bravery, a climb undertaken by Frenchmen of high culture and ideals.

FOR COLLEGE STUDENTS:
"Ronald Knox, The His and Her, \$3.00. How to meet the world, Gerald Vann, \$2.50. The Gypsies (woman's role), The Whims of a Fire (Kerry Boyd's), Sheed & Wobeser, New World Dictionary, \$5.00. Real help: Indispensable, Sheed & Wobeser, Mark Van Doren, Anchor Book, paper, 65c.

Wonders of Catholicism—anthology of great Catholic lit of all ages, ed. Anton Pegib, About \$6.

"God, Man, and the Universe, ultra-modern literary in little. Sixteen stories, ed. De la Baude, Knopf, \$5.00.

"The Dark is Light Enough, play by Christopher Fry, Oxford, \$3.75.

AND FOR OLDER MEN AND WOMEN:
"The Life of the West, Douglas Jerrold, Harcourt Brace, \$2.75.

"Abraham Lincoln, the Frank Years & the War Years—two excellent volumes, \$7.50. Carl Sandburg.

"The United States, Karl Stern, Abner Perry & Christianity, Harcourt, \$4.00.

"The U.S. of America, Igor Grizenko, Norton, \$4.00. Horrible reality.

Reviewed by Rev. Flood, C.S.B. (Basilian) in "Our Book on Trial," St. Mary's, \$1.00.

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SUNDAY SERMON

Fourth Sunday of Advent

The Mass texts of this Sunday are taken from the Ember Day Masses which were observed this week. In the ancient Church, Ember week was the time of ordination for priests and consecration of bishops. The Breviary biographies of early Popes often conclude with a mention that the Pope had "three December ordinations" or "five" or whatever the number might be.

SUNDAY'S EPISTLE very clearly refers to the priests of the Church as "ministers of Christ and dispensers of the mysteries of God." The word "minister" means "helper" or "assistant". St. Paul calls priests the "helpers of Christ."

Your parish priest, therefore, is truly a man of great dignity and power, not because he is a good speaker or organizer, or even because he is devout and prayerful. The essence of the Catholic priesthood is that a man like ourselves is taken into a partnership, as it were, with Christ Himself. The priest, like Christ, is our bridge to God in heaven. Jesus gives to priests the

Priests Continue Work of Savior

very same power and authority He had to save souls.

The Church would have us think of priest and Christ as really one and the same person.

When the priest gives the Sacraments, he says, "I baptize you," "I absolve," "This is My Body," as if he were Christ the Savior in our midst. That is why Catholics respect a priest and "adore" him as if he were Christ.

The Epistle calls the priest a "steward" as we'd say today, a "manager." The blessings and graces given by the priest are not his own gift; these belong to God, come from God, but are left in the hands of the priest to be distributed. Souls are either saved or lost depending on how well the priest distributes these precious treasures of God's mercy.

It is a tremendous responsibility for a human person to assume the office of a priest. If he fails in his task, then he loses

his own soul, and countless other souls suffer too.

That is why sincere Catholics faithfully and regularly pray for their priests, and why they are anxious to assist their priests in parish work and to follow their guidance loyally.

Some thoughtless people are quick to criticize a priest and point out his human failings. No one knows this weakness better than the priest himself. Rather than hastily judging him, a good Christian will realize the many spiritual duties which press upon the priest and endeavor to help him in this work rather than talking against him.

Like John the Baptist mentioned in the Gospel, the priest spends his life trying to prepare you for the day when Christ will come to you—preparing you for Communion, for grace, and for the day of your judgment.

Prevention or cure? Better put a strong fence round the top of the cliff than an ambulance down in the valley.—Joseph Mallin.

Christmas for a baby? Hang up the baby's stockings; be sure you don't forget the dear little, dimpled, darling. She'll see Christmas yet.—Emily Miller.

Daily Mass Calendar

Sunday, Dec. 19—Fourth Sunday of Advent (Violet). No Gloria and Communion. 2nd Prayer of B.V.M. 2nd Church or Pope, Creed, Preface of Trinity.

Monday, Dec. 20—Vigil of St. Thomas (Violet). No Gloria and Communion. 2nd Prayer of B.V.M. 2nd Church or Pope, Creed, Preface of Apostles.

Tuesday, Dec. 21—St. Thomas, Apostle (red). Gloria. 2nd Prayer from Sunday's Mass. Creed, Preface of Apostles.

Wednesday, Dec. 22—St. Francis Xavier (white) (Gloria) 2nd Prayer from Sunday's Mass.

Thursday, Dec. 23—Mass same as Sunday. Vigil of Christ and Communion. 2nd Prayer of B.V.M. 2nd Church or Pope, Creed, Preface of Trinity.

Friday, Dec. 24—Christmas (white). Vigil of St. Mary. Day of fast and abstinence.

Saturday, Dec. 25—Christmas (white). Special "Communion" in Canon throughout octave. At 2nd Mass, 2nd Prayer of St. Anastasia.

*Indicates Votive or Requiem also permitted. Bishop Kearney has directed that the "Imperata" or final Prayer be for the Pope.

ST. THOMAS, APOSTLE

Martyr
How to recognize St. Thomas—Builder's rule: Alludes to his being employed as an architect by the King of India to build the Spear or dagger; Instruments of his martyrdom by stabbing.

Probably because of Thomas' doubts of Our Lord's Resurrection, known to all from the Gospel, there grew up a legend that Thomas was also not present at the time of Our Lady's Assumption and refused to believe it. He demanded that he be shown the wound, and when this was done and he believed, Our Lady dropped her girdle or belt to him from heaven. Thus, in addition to the attributes given above, he comes with Our Lady dropping the girdle to him.

According to tradition, Thomas is believed to have gone to India to preach the Gospel. Legend has it that the King of India, Gundaphor, gave him a large sum of money to build a palace. Thomas, however, distributed the money to the poor. The king, on discovering it, cast Thomas into prison.

About this time God, the king's brother, died and in heaven was asked where he would like to live. Upon seeing a beautiful few families, he said, "I would like to live here." The king, however, told him he could not live there for this was the palace the Christian had built for Gundaphor. God revealed this in a dream to Gundaphor who joyfully released Thomas from prison.

St. Thomas is the patron saint of scholars and theologians.

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