



Christmas is Christ's Birthday

COME LET US ADORE HIM

Faith — Hope — Love

By MONSIGNOR PATRICK J. FLYNN

And the angel said to the shepherds: "Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy which shall be to all the people. For today in the town of David a Saviour has been born to you, who is Christ the Lord!"—Luke 11, 10-11.

THESE SIMPLE WORDS of St. Luke tell a story which still staggers the imagination of men. God Himself becomes a man and enters our world to save us.

Who is this Infant that the Shepherds found hidden in the cave and resting in the arms of the Virgin Mother? He is the Son of God. He is the Divine Word who is God.

This is what St. John tells us in the very first lines of his gospel. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. . . AND THE WORD WAS MADE FLESH AND DWELT AMONG US. And we saw his glory — glory as of the only begotten of the Father — full of grace and truth."

Why did God redeem us through the Incarnation of His Divine Son? Why did God save us the way He did? What prompted divine wisdom to show us such immeasurable love?

This question brings us face to face with a mystery — the Incarnation of God. "Who among men is he who can know the counsel of God? Or who can think what the will of God is?" Why Christmas? Why was the Son of God born in a cave? Why did He die on a cross?

THE BEST answer to the why of Christmas is found in the mercy of God. God's love is the heart of the Christmas story. The birth of the Saviour at Bethlehem is God's merciful answer to the plight of a sinful world, so desperately in need of salvation.

Why did God die for mercy? Mercy exists because of sin. Only because Adam's sin brought sorrow to the world did God send His Son to save the world. The divine motive behind all that happened at Bethlehem — behind all that happened at Calvary — was God's merciful love for mankind. "For God so loved the world as to give His only begotten Son; that whosoever believeth in Him may not perish, but may have life everlasting."

What an unfathomable mystery! How often God in His mercy does more for sinners than we sometimes deserve. We see this mercy of God revealed in the timeless drama of Christmas in the crib of Christ on the Cross. Also in the tears of the penitent Magdalen; and in the prayer of the dying thief.

THROUGH HIS divine power God could have redeemed men in some way other than the way He did. In some other way than the Incarnation. But in His eternal wisdom God decreed that He Himself would be our Saviour, that the Word would become flesh.

God embraced the frail garment of our fleshly nature and came into our world, not because He had no other way of saving us. He could have redeemed us from other fallen states in many other ways, even by His mere word. The Incarnation was not necessary to God. It was necessary to man. The Incarnation — God's becoming man — was the best way, according to divine wisdom, of restoring men to the lost love of God. God always does what is best for us.

God's advent at Bethlehem gave mankind the greatest gift of all — a new birth of faith, of hope and of love.

IN THE STORY of Christ, we see faith because we believe that God Himself has

kindle the dying embers of human hope better than the discovery that God loves us? What better basis for hope can we have than that God Himself show us how much He loves us? This He has done through His Son's Incarnation. What more eloquent proof of God's love, what better reason for hope reborn can we have than to know that the Son of God has become one of us?

In Christmas we all regain hope. Through the mystery of the Incarnation God shares our nature. And if God can suffer and die with us, as He did, then we know that our tears and toil have meaning and purpose.

WITH CHRISTMAS again came love, God's love! What greater reason is there for Christ's advent among us unless it be that God wishes to show how much He loves us? What greater proof can we have of God's love than Christ's appearance at Bethlehem?

Even if God had every reason to repent His ever having loved us, Christmas shows that God does not refuse to love us again, to love us in spite of ourselves.

The story of Christmas is a story of faith, and hope, and love — returned to the world through Christ. When the Shepherds found God in a cave in the backyards of Bethlehem the secret of God's love was out — He was fatally in love with man!

Christmas is a feast of peace and joy because on that day men learned how to laugh again. On Christmas men everywhere laugh again — with God's love!

Christmas Masses On Radio, TV

Midnight Mass will be heard over radio from the following churches of the diocese at 12 o'clock on Christmas Eve:

ROCHESTER

Cathedral of the Sacred Heart (WHAM - Radio) — His Excellency Auxiliary Bishop Casey will celebrate Solemn Pontifical Mass and preach the Christmas sermon. The Rev. Edward J. McAniff will be narrator.

Old St. Mary's Church (WHEC - Radio) — The Rt. Rev. Msgr. James C. McAniff, pastor will celebrate Solemn High Mass, with the Rev. L. John Hedges as commentator. The Rev. Eugene H. McFarland will preach the sermon.

St. Boniface Church (WHEC - Radio) — The Rt. Rev. Msgr. John F. Goggin, P.A., rector-emeritus of St. Bernard's Seminary, will pontificate at High Mass, with the Rev. Walter Kohl, pastor, as preacher. The Rev. Frederick W. Straub will be narrator.

AUBURN

St. Mary Church (WMBZ - Radio) — The Rt. Rev. Msgr. William E. Cowen, pastor, will celebrate Solemn High Mass. Sermon will be preached by Rev. David Murphy and the Rev. Edward Metzger will be narrator. Program begins at 11:45 p. m., with carols preceding Mass.

ELMIRA

St. Patrick Church (WENY - Radio) — The Rev. Cassian Kirk, O.F.M., will preach the sermon. Narrator will be Robert F. Sullivan.

CHRISTMAS DAY MASS ON TV

Mass will be televised over Rochester's WHAM-TV at 10 a. m. Christmas Day from the Sisters of Mercy Motherhouse chapel. The Rev. Dr. William H. Shanley, chaplain of Nazareth College, will be celebrant. Sermon will be given by the Rev. Dr. Alphonse Malone, O.S.B., of the St. John Fisher College faculty. The Rev. Richard Torney, chaplain of Our Lady of Mercy High School, will give the commentary. The Sisters' Choir, under the direction of Sister Mary Joanne, R.N.M., will sing the Mass.

Official

All parish churches of the Diocese are permitted to have an afternoon Mass at 5 p. m. on New Year's Day, January 1, 1957. Monsignor John E. Maney, Chancellor



Rochester Priest Alaska Ski Chaplain

Fort Richardson, Alaska — (RNS) — Out-of-door Mass offered by Chaplain (Major) Gerard J. Gefell, of the Diocese of Rochester, was the focus of the 3rd Infantry Regiment, 2nd Infantry Division, stationed here in Alaska. Chaplain Gefell, who took part in ski training at Ft. Richardson because many areas traveled by the troops are accessible only by ski. Bottom photo shows Chaplain Gefell (at left) leading way in ski-training exercise.

Rome Jews Thank Catholics For Help

Rome — (RNS) — Roman Catholic priests, nuns, laymen and religious orders were among 65 persons and organizations awarded honor certificates by Rome's Jewish community for helping Jews here during the Nazi and Fascist persecutions. Mayor Umberto Tupini presented the certificates in a solemn ceremony on Capitol Hill. Sergio Piperno, president of the Union of Italian Jewish Communities, paid special homage to Pope Pius XII for offering "concrete help to Jews" during the persecutions. He recalled that the Pontiff had instructed religious orders to harbor Jews in convents.



Public Seen Last Defense Against Obscenity

Magazines Face Court Test

By REV. HENRY ATWELL

The eyes of Rochesterians will focus on City Court come January 14 when eight local cigar store operators go on trial charged with selling obscene magazines.

Will the court action result in a clear-cut decision? Or will it bog down in the incredible inability to decide whether the questionable magazines are obscene or not?

In similar cases throughout the country, judge and jury have debated for hours whether allegedly indecent magazines were offensive or not — a fact which any person with common sense could decide in a matter of minutes.

It has been stated that our laws are not yet clear enough. New York State Law bans from publication or sale "any obscene, lewd, lascivious, filthy, indecent or disgusting book, magazine, pamphlet, newspaper." The difficulty in all this is that the courts are apparently confused as to just what this quite obvious law means.

IT IS DOUBTLESS puzzling to understand why the courts can be so helpless on this matter, where

the eyes of Rochesterians will focus on City Court come January 14 when eight local cigar store operators go on trial charged with selling obscene magazines.

In other cases they are very clear and quick with decisions — such as penalizing a citizen for driving five miles faster than the legal limit.

It is a sad commentary on our American system if we have to debate in courts and decide by vote whether this nation is to observe the basic laws of God and decent morality.

If the coming City Court trial sustains our suspicious that laws and courts are ineffective in curbing obscene publications, then it will fall to the citizens of the community to halt the menace of indecent literature.

This is confirmed by a statement from city officials who said "Public opinion against the sale of filthy magazines can be even more effective than laws or court decisions in this matter."

They cited as proof of this that the Dewey-Ridgeway sec-

tion of Rochester is reported "practically devoid of indecent publications." Credit for this accomplishment is given to the vigilance of a special committee of the Sacred Heart Cathedral Post of the Catholic War Veterans.

C.W.V. members and merchants in the Cathedral area have co-operated for over a year to keep objectionable publications from sale.

THE ROCHESTER court case resulted from a police campaign to clean up city magazine stands.

Georgetown School To Change Name

Washington, D. C. — (RNS) — The name of Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service will be changed next year to The Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service.

The Very Rev. Edward B. Dunn, S.J., president of the Jesuit-conducted university, said the change is being made to honor the memory of the late Father Edmund A. Walsh, who founded the school in 1919 and served as its rector for more than 35 years. The

Pope's Christmas Address Advanced To Day Earlier

Vatican City — (RNS) — Pope Pius XII will deliver his annual Christmas message to the world a day earlier than usual this year.

The Pontiff normally broadcasts his message on Christmas Eve, but he decided to advance the date to Dec. 23 to accommodate holiday newspaper schedules and thus assure the widest possible distribution.

Church officials from various nations were said to have pointed out to the Pope that newspapers in their countries are not published, or go to press early, on Christmas.

The Pope's Christmas message — his 18th — will be delivered over the Vatican Radio beginning at 11 a. m. (5 a. m. EST) and will be relayed over various European networks. It will later be beamed by the Vatican Radio in some 28 languages to all parts of the world.

World Report

Red Persecutions Of Church Still In Full Force

The Bishops of the United States have called upon the faithful of the country to make Sunday, December 30, a Day of Prayer for the Persecuted. The following article, a review of the persecution to which the Church throughout the world continued to be subjected during the last 12 months, is of particular interest at this time.

By PAUL W. McLOSKEY (Staff Writer, NCWC News Service)

The persecution which communism unleashed against Christians and all men of good will 39 years ago is still being pursued systematically in every land where the Marxist "ideal" holds sway.

One person in every three in the vast heartland of the world, from its distant Indochinese fringe in southeast Asia to the Arctic and across the west to Scandinavia and the Adriatic Sea — is subject to terror.

The year 1956 saw a loosening of the vise torturing the Church in some of this area. In parts of eastern Europe — nowhere more than in Poland — the Church made gains in the direction of freedom. But in other large areas — notably China, northern Vietnam and elsewhere — the communist onslaught continued unabated.

IN THE minds of those who have suffered under the dread

Bishop Kearney Making Progress

Bishop Kearney is continuing to make satisfactory progress following a serious operation a week ago. He repeats his gratitude for the prayers offered for him by the people of the Diocese and asks for continued prayers for his speedy and complete recovery.

weight of the hammer and sickle, and know better than anyone else what relaxation there has been in persecution is the result of one thing: prayer.

This was said most plainly by an American Jesuit, Father John Clifford, on reaching home after three years in a succession of Red Chinese jails. There was just one thing to "get straight first," he said: "My being here is a direct result of the prayers that were offered for me. Of that I'm convinced."

Another missionary, one who suffered five years under the Chinese communist jail system, has warned that the 2,000 native Chinese priests are facing "martyrdom or worse."

Martyrdom can take many forms. A U. S. Navy doctor, Lt. Thomas A. Dooley, testified to one instance of it in "Deliver Us from Evil," a book published last spring. Dr. Dooley had been assigned to aid the refugees from northern Vietnam who fled southward as the communists took over their country after the 1954 Geneva truce agreement.

THESE, HE SAID, were the first "results of a communist 're-education' class" he saw during his Vietnam duty.

"Having set up their controls in the village of Hailuogang, communists visited the village schoolhouse and took seven children out of class and into the courtyard. All were ordered to sit on the ground, and their hands and arms were tied behind their backs. . . Then they brought out one of the young teachers, with hands also tied. . .

"A 'patriot' had informed the police that this teacher was holding classes secretly, at night, and that the subject of these classes was religion. They had even been reading the catechism. As a punishment they were to be de-

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Inauguration Lists Cardinal Mooney

Washington — (NC) — His Eminence Edward Cardinal Mooney, Archbishop of Detroit, will give the benediction at the inaugural ceremonies for President Eisenhower on January 21.

This was announced by Sen. Styles Bridges of New Hampshire, chairman of the Senate House Inauguration committee.

Archbishop Patrick A. O'Reilly of Washington gave the invocation at the ceremonies of President Eisenhower's first inauguration in 1953. Archbishop O'Reilly also gave the benediction at President Truman's inauguration in 1949.

The late Msgr. John A. Ryan, Director of the Department of Social Action, National Catholic Welfare Conference, gave the benediction at President Franklin D. Roosevelt's second and fourth inaugurations.

Bishop Michael J. Ready of Columbus, then General Secretary of the N.C.W.C., gave the benediction at President Roosevelt's third inauguration in 1941.

Have you seen BLANCHARD'S Christmas Display? Well, don't miss it. You know at BLANCHARD'S you may get any of the materials to make your own Holiday Decorations — BLANCHARD'S FLORIST — 55 Lake Ave. Open daily until 9 p. m. Free parking on premises. Adv.