



They All Came To Bethlehem...

ST. JOSEPH

By MONSIGNOR PATRICK J. RYNN

ST. JOSEPH IS the forgotten man of Christmas. Today his memory enjoys brief honors in our modern Christmas crisis where spotlights play on the figures of the Mother and Child but often keep the statue of Joseph peering reverently from the shadows.

This is the way Joseph himself may want it. Even at the first Christmas he was pretty much in the dark about what was going on, at least for a while.

When the drama of the Incarnation first began to unfold at Nazareth Mary kept the whole affair a secret between herself and God. Apparently she did not tell her betrothed husband the message of the Angel. This was how she was to become the Mother of the Divine Redeemer, how she had conceived a Son by the power of God.

For a while it seemed that even God himself was going to keep Joseph in the dark about the mystery of Mary's Child.

Not that Joseph really minded being pushed into the background. Quiet and retiring as he was, the young carpenter of Nazareth enjoyed standing in the shadows. He was content to let others walk in the spotlight.

His neighbors knew Joseph as a man who minded his own business. And he was too humble to presume that his business would ever become involved with God's business, particularly the way it did.

Like most poor men, Joseph had his moments when he liked to dream. Yet, this back woodsman never dreamed that the arm of God would sweep him out of the shadows of Nazareth to play a great role on the stage of Bethlehem.

Like the religious Jews of his day, Joseph prayed that he might live to see the coming of the Christ. He never suspected that he would be the first to hold the Christ in his arms. Although he could boast membership in the royal house of David, Joseph never expected that he would be the foster father of David's greatest son—the Messiah.

THE STORY of Bethlehem began very simply for Joseph. This was when he became betrothed to Mary at Nazareth. The betrothals of the young carpenter and the even younger teen-age maiden did not surprise those who knew them both.

Those two are made for each other. If neighbors made this observation, as they very probably did, then they spoke with more truth than they realized. Mary and Joseph were made for each other and for God. More than human love had brought these two together. Divine love had joined their hearts for the special service of God and for the moment God's secret service.

Mary and Joseph had their own special secret too. Hidden in their public betrothal ceremony was their secret pledge of mutual continence. Joseph agreed to respect Mary's holy desire for virginity and, as a guarantee of surety to her, he pledged his own virginity. It was as simple as that.

This predestined couple kept their secret to themselves. They told nobody. Only Mary told the Angel Gabriel when he revealed to her her role of Divine Maternity. "How shall this happen," she asked, "since I do not know man?"

Virginial union of Mary and Joseph was the first step in God's masterplan for the redemption of the world. The holy union of these two hearts is the beginning of the story of Bethlehem.

As the months passed by Mary's condition became evident. Joseph was forced to recognize the truth of what his eyes told him. Then his original began. A thousand thoughts and worries crowded upon his mind to torture him.

He readily rejected any temptation to believe that Mary was guilty of infidelity or sin in the face of apparent evidence.

But Joseph saw no difficulty

Orange Blossom Diamond Rings, Terms, William S. Thorne, Jeweler, 318 Main St. East—Adv.

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New Diocese Established In Minnesota

Washington—(NC)—Pope Pius XII has established the new diocese of New Ulm, Minnesota.

He has named Mgr. Alphons Schiavone, pastor of St. Agnes Church in St. Paul, Minn., to be the first Bishop of New Ulm.

THE POSITIVE has also named the Very Rev. Leonard P. Cowley, pastor of St. Olaf's Church, Minneapolis, Minn., to be Titular Bishop of Pertusa and Auxiliary Bishop of Archbishop William O. Brady of St. Paul.

THE DIOCESE of New Ulm consists of 15 counties in the State of Minnesota which were formerly part of the Archdiocese of St. Paul. It embraces an area of 9,863 square miles. Holy Trinity Church in New Ulm has been designated as the cathedral of the new diocese.

EIGHTYFOUR parishes and ten missions within the new diocese embrace a Catholic population of 87,311 in a general population of 233,984, served by 93 diocesan and two religious-order priests. There are also in the diocese 283 Sisters, seven parish high schools, 37 grade schools and two hospitals.

The counties within the new diocese are Big Stone, Brown, Chippewa, Kandiyohi, Lac Qui Parle, Lincoln, Lyon, McLeod, Meeker, Nicollet, Redwood, Renville, Sibley, Swift and Yellow Medicine.



BISHOP KEARNEY and Father James R. Barnett, S.J., McQuaid High School rector, study new painting of St. Francis Xavier, patron saint of the Rochester boys high school. Lay members of the school's faculty presented the painting to Rochester artist John C. Menihan on the school on Tuesday, Dec. 3, feast day of St. Francis.

Bishop Kearney Warns Youth On 'Faith' Test

Bishop Kearney told McQuaid high school students this week that every Catholic must someday "fight a battle to preserve his faith."

The Bishop warned the students that they must equip themselves now to prepare for this inevitable battle.

"The Catholic faith came to most of us quite easily," the Bishop said, "but it can also be lost easily."

He said the battlefield of their faith struggle may be "the inevitable tension we encounter between the non-Christian attitudes we meet and the Christian attitudes we possess."

HE SINGLED out as an example the widespread notion that people of different religions "all worship the same God." Such a statement, said the Bishop, is "ridiculous."

He also told the students the "battle for your faith" could result from the "conflict which frequently arises between Divine love and a human love."

THE BISHOP cited McQuaid High School's patron saint, St. Francis Xavier, as a model for the students to imitate.

He stated "prayer and study" will be the weapons which will assure the students victory in their impending battle.

The Bishop said St. Francis had such a "thorough and deep" knowledge of the faith, he "could discuss it familiarly both with philosophers and with the little children who harkened to the tinkle of his catechism bell."

Like St. Francis, the students should learn their faith well during their school years, said the Bishop, and told them, "We must keep the faith, and we must share it."

St. Francis Xavier, explained the Bishop, is also patron saint of the Propagation of the Faith Society.

"You too are to be apostles," Bishop Kearney said to the McQuaid students, "and right now you are apostles-in-training."

NO MATTER how great is the world's present need for science and technology, Bishop Kearney stated, Catholic schools will always give "top priority" to religion.

"Our schools must always stress the importance of the gift of faith," he said, "because its consequences are eternal."

He concluded his talk to the students with a story from the early days of his priesthood in New York City:

"Twenty-seven years ago, when I was a young priest in a New York City parish, I heard the most eloquent sermon on the importance of our faith that I have ever heard. And it came from the lips of a college student.

"He was in a hospital room at the time, surrounded by his family; and he was lying on his deathbed. He sat up a little, and, as he began to speak, he smiled. All he said was, 'What a wonderful thing our faith is!'"

"There, on the doorstep of heaven, was speaking the most eloquent vocabulary there is. 'What a wonderful thing our faith is!'"

Bishop Kearney gave his talk to the McQuaid students at Mass celebrated at the Elmwood Ave. school Tuesday, December 3, feast day of St. Francis Xavier, patron of the four year old Jesuit high school for boys.

Assisting Bishop Kearney at the Mass were Father Robert Boyle, S.J., and Father Edward Dolan, S.J., faculty members.

People In News



POPE PIUS XII

STAN MUSIAL

Pope Sends President Wishes For Recovery

Vatican City — (NC) — Pope Pius XII has sent a telegram to President Eisenhower expressing his best wishes for recovery from his illness and giving the President assurances of his prayers.

Following is the telegram's text: "With sincere regret we have learned of Your Excellency's indisposition. We assure you of our prayers for your recovery and your well-being, and we fervently invoke upon you an abundance of divine blessings and heavenly favors."

Cincinnati, O. — (CRNS) — Stanley Musial, star of the St. Louis Cardinals baseball team, will receive the St. Francis Xavier Medal here on Dec. 8. It is awarded annually by Xavier University to persons who demonstrate in their lives qualities which distinguished St. Francis Xavier, 16th century Jesuit and patron of the university.

Mr. Musial, his wife and three children are active members of St. Raphael's Roman Catholic Parish in St. Louis. His son and two daughters attend St. Louis Catholic schools.

Washington — (NC) — Adm. Lewis L. Strauss, chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission, said a discovery more important than atomic energy was made when man found that "God existed and controlled the universe."

"Atomic energy is not new," he said, "it has been with us since God created the universe. What is new is man's application of atomic principles and the challenge for good or evil that goes with it."

Adm. Strauss was a participant in a panel discussion of "Religion and Power" at George Washington University here.

Air Lift Brings Nuns To Island For Religious Class

Fishers Island, N.Y. — (NC) — Youngsters of Our Lady of Grace parish on this island in Long Island Sound are getting weekly religious instruction via a novel air lift.

Every Monday afternoon two Sisters of Mercy leave the Waterford Conn. airport in a single engine monoplane and make the six-minute flight out over the Sound to this island parish. Geographically, Fishers Island is a part of New York State but the island's only Catholic parish is a part of the Norwich Conn. diocese.

The two instructors, Sister Mary Edwina and Sister Mary Thomasina, are assigned regularly to the faculty of St. Mary's School, New London, Conn.

The unusual air lift was the idea of Father William P. Loftus, pastor at Fishers Island, who found after he took over the parish last summer that he had no one other than himself to teach the weekly religious instruction classes. He found the two Sisters enthusiastic. Though neither had ever been in a plane previously.

Seasoned air travelers now, the two Sisters depart regularly from Connecticut mainland every Monday afternoon and return to their convent in New London in time for the evening meal.



DR. FRANCIS FORSTER

DR. THOMAS MATTINGLY

Catholic Doctors Consulted During President's Illness

Washington — (NC) — Dr. Francis M. Forster, dean of the Georgetown University Medical School, is one of several consulting physicians to his illness.

The President suffered a stoppage of blood in a small branch artery in his brain on November 25. Consulting physicians here reported that his chances for complete recovery are excellent.

DR. FORSTER and at least one other Catholic physician, Brig. Gen. Thomas W. Mattingly, are among the specialists attending the President.

Dr. Forster is currently president of the American Academy of Neurology, and director of the department of neurology at Georgetown University Medical School.

In February, 1956, he received the St. Luke Medal of the Guild of St. Luke, Boston, Mass. It is given annually to an outstanding Catholic physician. Dr. Forster attended Xavier University in Cincinnati from 1930 to 1932.

DR. MATTINGLY, a heart specialist, is medical department chief at Walter Reed Hospital in Washington. In addition to his duties at the hospital, he is clinical associate professor of medicine at Georgetown University Medical School.

He is one of the physicians who attended the President following his heart attack in Denver, Colo., in 1955.

Man's Travel Into Space At Present Held 'Suicidal'

Newark, N. J. — (NC) — A noted Catholic theologian said here that he believes it would be suicidal and therefore morally wrong for a man to risk his life to travel into outer space at the present time.

Redemptorist Father Francis J. Connell, dean of the school of sacred theology at the Catholic University of America, Washington, D.C., gave his views on the morality of space travel on "Zero 60," a television program sponsored by the Blue Army of Our Lady of Fatima.

INTERVIEWER KEVIN Kennedy asked the theologian if there is any moral objection to a man risking his life to reach the moon. Father Connell replied: "It depends. I believe that it would involve some risk. I think a person would be entitled to take the risk in view of the immense benefit that would come to science.

"But if it were merely a suicidal effort, namely, if a man started off with the certainty that he would be dead in a few days, he would not be allowed to take

Priests To Advise Firm On Contracts

Detroit — (NC) — Three priests prominent in the field of social action are among the 18 clergy men who have accepted invitations to advise the American Motors Corporation in its 1958 contract negotiations.

The firm said that the clergymen will advise American Motors on "human values" in negotiations with the United Auto Workers Union. The firm's contract with the union expires next June 15.

The priests are Mgr. George G. Higgins, director, Department of Social Action, National Catholic Welfare Conference, Washington; Father Robert Allen, director, Social Action, Archdiocese of Detroit; and Father Leo C. Brown, S.J., director, Institute of Social Order, St. Louis (Mo.) University.

LAST WEEK'S PAID CIRCULATION

55,610

Italy Bishop's Red Foe Stricken With Paralysis

Prato, Italy — (NC) — Mauro Bellandi, a young communist worker whose civil marriage to a Catholic girl led to a libel suit against Bishop Pietro Fiordelli of Prato, has been stricken with paralysis of the face.

The incident has attracted nationwide attention because Bellandi was stricken after taking the Bishop to court last publicly denouncing his civil marriage.

In a letter to the girl's parish, the Bishop named Bellandi and his wife and condemned civil marriages as "public concubinage" ("scandal" and "sin").

Suit was brought against Bishop Fiordelli in a trial proceeding the judge declared that the suit must have to be carried into court.