10 Commandments Too Controversial!

The Ten Commandments are about to be replaced by one very simple commandment: "Thou shalt not teach God's law."

That seems to be the sum and substance of the latest advice to New York State legislators from the state wide Council of Churches, influential Protestant organization.

The Council has urged the law makers to defeat a bill which would allow the Ten Commandments to be posted in public school classrooms.

Previously, Protestant ministers, Catholic priests and Jewish rabbis had approved an interdenominational version of the Ten Commandments. Bibles published by the three major faiths have slightly differing translations for the Ten Commandments so experts worked out a form agreeable to all.

Actually the Protestant Council doesn't disagree with the new version at all. The Council objects to the very notion of posting God's laws in tax supported schools. It "would create sectarian division," said the Council.

A Long Island educator said posting the Commandments would cause "ill feeling and unwholesome controversy."

HOW FAR, OH, HOW FAR have we fallen from the example of our founding fathers who wrote into our country's Declaration of Independence that we have a right to be free because "the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God" entitle us to that freedom.

These men who risked their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor to make our country free had a courage to stand up to controversy, to fight for the right, because they were inspired "with a firm reliance on the protection of Divine Providence."

Is there no John Hancock left to stand again in valiant defense of the laws of God thundered to the earth at Mount Sinai?

Must American schools now censor those sections of the Declaration of Independence which mention God's laws? Must we forever ban from these schools the roots from which our nation's freedom came?

MUST WE NOW SURRENDER to that carping crowd who in one breath claim "academic freedom" for every passing whim and then in the next they use every ounce of political pressure to keep out the "controversial" Ten Commandments?

The issue may seem insignificant.

As Catholics we have at least the satisfaction of knowing our own schools will not ban God's law.

But a legislative ban on the Ten Commandments in public schools would be just one more step in that accelerating trend to obliterate our richest American tradition of trust in God and obedience to His laws.

How can we hope to train the youngsters in these schools to obey our nation's man made laws when they see this current insult to the sacred laws of God?

Let's Canonize

1. Zealous parish workers who take a "ribbing" from sluggards who resent the reflection they cast upon their inertia.

2. **Givers from the heart who are dubbed "suckers" by those who calculatingly spread their gifts far and thin.**

3. Christian-principled men in public life or politics whose unwavering, universal stubborn resistance upon right is labeled religious fanaticism.

4. Mothers with large families because they love children and abide by the law of God upon whom are forced planned parenthood lectures by self appointed uplifters.

5. Women preferring singleness but remaining single because they cannot find fellows who want Christian marriage of a Christian family.

6. Agitators for social justice whose unselfish efforts for their fellow man automatically condemn them to the lunatic fringe.

7. Sincerely religious politicians whose piety is always tagged as "for the polls."

8. Families devoted to the welfare of people in religion who find themselves alone in dire trouble.

9. People without habits of drinking, smoking or gambling to whom are always ascribed some secret vice.

10. Idealists for the common good who are forced to surrender their hopes to "practical business heads." —Information.

WORDS FAIL ME

"How is your wife?" the man asked a friend he hadn't seen for years.

"She's in heaven," replied the friend.

"Oh, I'm sorry." This didn't sound quite right so he said, "I mean I'm glad."

That was worse so finally he came out with, "Well, I'm surprised."

Strange But True . . .

SAINT PATRICK

By MARY ASHE

King Laoghaire of the gorse-gold beard
And cheek with purpled scar
Had come, with victory on his shield,
Back from the Leinster war.
He summoned his clansmen, that April day,
To the castle on Tara's hill
To thank propitious pagan gods
In riotous festival

* * *

They came. — Ard-Righ's vali ant knights,
Poets with painted scroll,
Druid priests with magic prayers,
Harpers, jesters, — all
Assembled at Tara, the Hill of Kings,
With revelry, feast, and games
That were played two thousand years before
By Taillte's funeral flames

* * *

When Day had locked the western door
With turn of the golden key
And the Hound of Night took up the watch,
Laoghaire made decree
Great fires to honor Druid gods
Would flame throughout the land,
But none, on pain of death, should light
Ere Tara set the brand

* * *

Sextmen waited with ready torch
Till trumpet sign be given,
When out of the dark, on Hill of Slane,
A flame shot up to Heaven
Clansmen lifted spear and shield
With furious battle cry,
Laoghaire cried, "What miscreant
My order dares defy?"

* * *

A priest made answer: "It is none else
But the stranger from the South
Who dupes the people with a new God,
And with sacrilegious mouth
Spurns our teaching. There is no god
Save his God —so his claim.
He threatens the power of king and priest:
Patricius is his name."

* * *

Laoghaire swore by Sun and Wind,
This stranger should die the death,
While the forbidden flames leapt high
Above the plains of Meath.
Then all that host infuriate,
Led by the King and Queen,
Marched down from Tara, across the vale,
And up the Hill of Slane,
Where Patrick, the stranger from the South,
Had lighted the Paschal fire
To honor the eve of Easter day,
The first in the land of Eire.

* * *

With cross in upraised hand, he came
Alone to meet the King,
Whose angry warriors shook their spears,
Crouching to make the spring.
But Patrick struck Laoghaire with words
Straight from Truth's own bow,
And wielded proofs miraculous
False gods to overthrow
Till Laoghaire of the Hundred Wars
Knelt on the fire-lit sod,
And vowed, with hand on Patrick's cross,
Allegiance to this God.

* * *

All this was centuries ago.
Long since the spears are rust,
Halls of Tara are grass-grown mounds,
King and saint are dust;
But the fire that Patrick lit that eve,
Above the plains of Meath
Still burns undimmed in Irish hearts,
The light of Christian Faith.

Pope Asks Aid For World's Poor

Following is the letter of Pope Pius XII appealing to the Catholic Bishops of the United States to aid him in providing urgent relief to the destitute people of the world. A nation wide collection will be taken in all Catholic churches this Sunday in response to the Pontiff's plea for the poor.

As you prepare, venerable brothers, to call once again upon the vast generosity and unfailing Christian charity of your faithful flocks in favour of Our less fortunate children throughout the world, We willingly lend Our voice to the urgent appeal you are about to make.

To the Holy See there are daily addressed countless requests for aid and relief, and no one can visualize more vividly than the Common Father of all the continuing poverty and need which afflict great and growing numbers of men, women and innocent children in every clime.

[illegible]

MANY OF THOSE who through no fault of their own are afflicted by these scourges look to Us, and We can depend only upon the unflagging goodness of those of Our children who have been granted a great abundance of temporal goods and comforts.

[illegible] the words of Saint Paul [illegible] and thus [illegible] thanksgiving [illegible] for the administration of this service not only supplies the want of the saints [illegible] through many thanksgivings to the Lord (2 Cor. 9, 12).

This, indeed, will doubtless be the recompense reserved by divine Providence for the increased munificence of your self sacrificing oblations: that, as your donations supply the material needs of your brethren, so their thankful prayers will invoke further and richer blessings upon the Church in the United States of America, and upon each family and individual contributing to this necessary and praiseworthy charity.

While emphasizing the unremitting urgency of your annual appeal, venerable brothers, We cannot omit the expression of Our heartfelt and sincere gratitude for the conspicuous assistance you and your dioceses have given us in the past years.

The fruit of your sacrifices offered to the Vicar of Christ on earth has, as it were, been placed in the very hands of Jesus to be distributed by Him Who went about doing good (Acts 10, 38). It has had compassion on the multitudes (Mark 8, 2) before going to bear His pity and love to afflicted peoples, to all who labour and are burdened in every part of the earth.

It is [illegible] further testimony of Our warmly appreciative thankfulness as well as to call down copious divine graces upon all who collaborate with you in this admirable work of mercy, that We impart from Our paternal heart to you, to the zealous clergy, fervent religious and devoted faithful of your various jurisdictions, Our loving Apostolic Blessing.

From the Vatican, January 30, 1958.

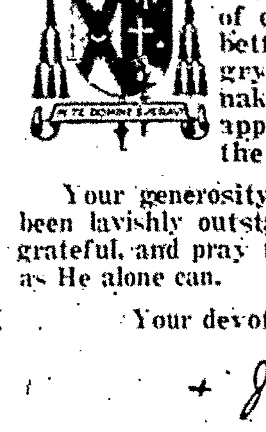
POPE PIUS XII

Pope Pius XII types personal appeal to U.S. Catholics

Bishop Echoes Pope's Plea

My dear People:

The Fourth Sunday of Lent—which we call Laetare Sunday, from the opening words of the Introit — has been set aside for many years for the annual Bishops' Relief Collection. You are all aware of the great need which still exists all over the world for the necessities of life for many people.



Once again, the Holy Father begs the bishops of our country to maintain this very generous practice during this Lenten season. Since almsgiving is part of every sincere Lenten program, what better opportunity for feeding the hungry, curing the sick, and clothing the naked than a generous response to the appeal of the Holy Father for help in the Laetare Sunday collection.

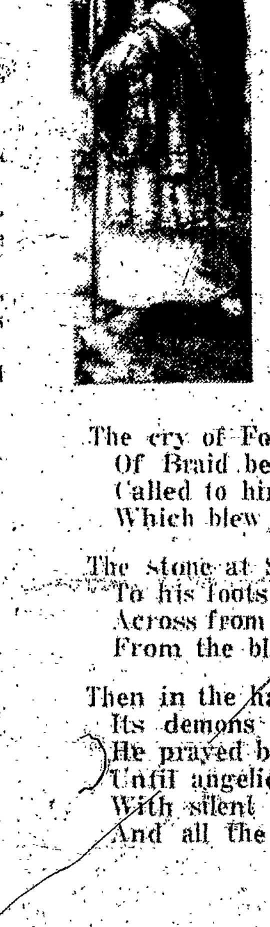
Your generosity to this special appeal has always been lavishly outstanding. For that I am most deeply grateful, and pray that God may bless your generosity as He alone can.

Your devoted Shepherd in Christ

+ James E. Kearney,
Bishop of Rochester

P. S. The Bishops' Relief Collection for the world's needy is to be taken in all churches of the Rochester Diocese Sunday, March 16.

☆



Croagh Patrick

☆

By FATHER RALPH THOMAS, S.A.

Croagh Patrick is the mountainous summit on the west coast of Ireland where the Apostle of the Irish spent a Lenten-long vigil of prayer and won God's promise that the Faith would never fail in Ireland.

The cry of Focluth's children and the vale
Of Braid beneath the slopes of Slemish
Called to him above the northern gale
Which blew for Crom-cru and his conjurers.

The stone at Skerries' entrance yielded
To his footstep; the paschal fire of Slane
Across from darkened Tara next was shielded
From the blast to light an Easter Day.

Then in the hallowed calm of this rough ledge,
Its demons drenched and sinners reconciled,
He prayed beyond the horizons of his sight
Until angelic voices spoke a pledge
With silent answers ranging through the isle
And all the valleys blazed in morning light.

Joy In Sorrow

A hen-pecked little man was escorting his wife to a concert. They arrived late.

"What are they playing?" he whispered to his neighbor.

"The Fifth Symphony," replied the man.

"Well, thank goodness," sighed the husband. "I've missed four of them anyway."

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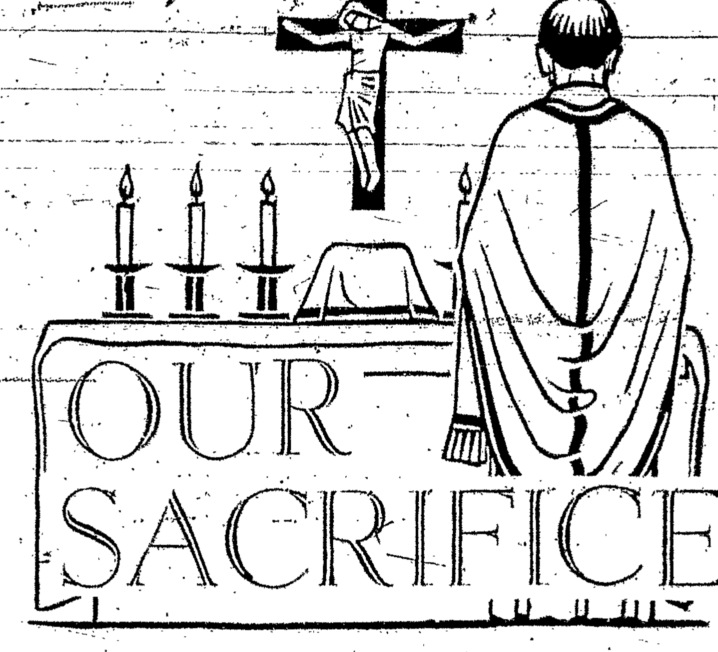
By FATHER HENRY ATWELL



V — The Best Gift

The consecration is the heart and center of the Mass.

At this most sacred moment, the priest says and does exactly what our Lord said and did at the Last Supper to change bread and wine into the Precious Body and Blood of Jesus Christ.

From the very dawn of Christianity, the Church of God has surrounded this mystery of the consecration with rites and prayers which form an exquisite tapestry of worship.

This central portion of the Mass ceremony begins with the Preface and ends just before the Lord's Prayer. It is called the Canon of the Mass. "Canon" is a Greek word which present day business men would translate as "standard operational procedure."

The Canon is the same — only on rare occasions is there a very slight change — at every Mass. And it has been the same for the past fifteen hundred years.

The Canon prayers come to us hallowed by saints and centuries of devout Christians.

> **LENTEN FEATURE**
>
> This is the fifth in a series of articles explaining the history and ceremonies of Holy Mass.

Just as an opera has its overture, just as books have an introduction, so the Canon of the Mass has its preview prayer called the preface. It is a prayer of thanksgiving and praise. It recalls that our Lord Himself at the Last Supper "gave thanks" (Luke 22:19) just before speaking the words of consecration.

To give the people a share in this hymn of gratitude the preface begins with a dialogue between priest and people.

The priest greets them with the familiar, "Dominus vobiscum" and they reply "Et cum spiritu tuo."

"Sursum corda" — Lift up your hearts!" says the priest.

"Habemus ad Dominum — We have lifted them to the Lord," the people answer recalling the offertory when they gave their gifts and themselves to the service of God.

"Gratias agamus" — Let us give thanks to the Lord our God," the priest continues and the people respond in agreement.

Then the priest says the majestic preface. At High Mass the priest chants the preface in a wonderful melody.

Mozart, the great musician, once said he would gladly renounce all the fame his compositions won for him if he could have composed the preface chant.

PRIEST, CHOIR and congregation join in the final phrases of the preface, the Sanctus, the angels' song, which the prophet Isaias heard when he was given a glimpse of heaven.

Now all is quiet. Only the priest speaks and even his voice is hushed in awe as the solemn moment of consecration draws near.

The priest raises his hands, looks up to the cross, bows low, places his hands on the altar as Christ placed His hands on the cross, kisses the altar, and then with outstretched hands reverently proceeds with the ancient words of the Canon of the Mass.

The words unfold a dramatic picture in which the world-wide Church, our loved ones, and the saints in heaven are all summoned to share in this great ceremony of worship. Three memorial prayers beg God's mercy for our Pope and Bishop and all faithful Christians. Then we pause to include those especially dear to our heart for whom we wish to pray.

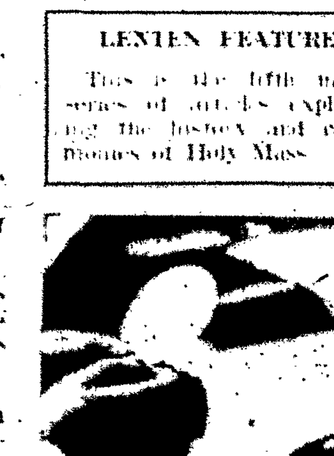
The Church wisely leaves room for our personal intentions even in the official public prayers of the liturgy.

The third memorial prayer depicts a procession led by our Lady in company with the twelve apostles and twelve early martyrs of Rome as the saints join us in this most sacred rite, the memorial of Christ's great love for us.

TWO PRAYERS next ask God to accept the sacrifice we offer.

The priest now speaks the words of Christ, repeats the actions of Christ. He takes the bread, looks to heaven, blesses the bread, says the words, "This is My Body," changes lifeless bread to the Bread of Life.

He genuflects in adoration, lifts the Sacred Body that the flock may see their Shepherd and they say in their hearts, "My Lord and My God!" He places the consecrated Host on the altar and again genuflects.



Consecration

Then the chalice is blessed, a few words, "This is the chalice of My Blood" and the drops of wine become the stream of redemption in which the sins of the world are blotted out. The priest genuflects, lifts the chalice, replaces it on the altar, and again genuflects.

There on the altar, now under the appearance of bread and wine, is the same Saviour who once hung on Golgatha's summit. What a moment — when Eternity steps into our time!

To remind us that this is the same sacrifice Jesus offered on the cross, the priest makes the sign of the cross five times in memory of our Lord's five most precious wounds.

Three more memorial prayers recall the needs of the faithful departed and of us sinners. As before the consecration, now another remembrance is made of the Church's heroic saints. This second procession is led by St. John the Baptist and he is followed by seven men martyrs and seven women martyrs. All the names are saints from the very earliest years of the Christian faith and thus indicate the venerable age of these Canon prayers.

A brief but deeply significant rite concludes the Canon of the Mass.

The priest holds the Sacred Host over the chalice to make the sign of the cross five times, a final reminder that under these appearances of bread and wine is the same Body and Blood Jesus offered on the first Good Friday. The priest then elevates Host and chalice together saying as he does so, "Through Christ, with Christ, and in Christ be to Thee, God the Father, in union with the Holy Spirit, all honor and glory forever and ever ... per omnia saecula saeculorum."

The people now voice their "Great Amen" to signify their approval of all that has been said and done through the silent Canon of the Mass.

WHAT BEGAN at the offertory as mere gifts of bread and wine has now become the best gift, the perfect sacrifice, the most sacred Body and Blood of Jesus Christ, the price of our redemption and the means by which we render all honor and glory to our Father who is in heaven.

Next week: God gives His Gift to us.