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'I Am The Resurrection And The Life!'

(John 11:25)

By MONSIGNOR
PATRICK J. FLYNN

TWICE MARY Magdalen stood with Christ before a tomb. Once in Bethany before the tomb of her brother Lazarus. Again, a little later, she stood with Christ in the Garden of the Resurrection before Christ's own tomb, His empty tomb.

What happened at Bethany was a forecast of what happened on the third day after Christ's death. But it was only after Christ's resurrection that even His friends saw the connection. Only when the surprise return of Christ had shaken them did His friends understand the earlier surprise of the return of Lazarus. Even when they saw Christ bring back Lazarus, the Apostles missed the clue. They never guessed that Christ would also bring back Christ from the tomb of death.

LIKE THE Apostles, Mary Magdalen also missed the clue to Easter, the hint of hope, which Christ revealed at Bethany.

When their brother Lazarus fell sick at home in Bethany, Mary and her sister Martha sent an urgent message to Jesus. "Lord, he whom thou lovest is sick."

Christ was a day's journey away, preaching beyond the Jordan, when the message about Lazarus came to him. "Lazarus is dead," Christ told his apostles, "and I rejoice on your account that I may not there, that you may believe." This was a clue to things to come. What the Apostles would see at Bethany was meant to give them hope for that black hour when they would see their Master laid away in death.

Lazarus was dead four days when Christ arrived in Bethany. For four days Lazarus had been sealed away in his tomb. Already his body was beginning to corrupt.

The grief-stricken sisters had no more hope, only regrets. "Lord," they said to Christ, "if thou hadst been here, our brother would not have died."

Then Christ spoke those words which have become the epitaph of eternal hope on the tombs of Christians ever since. "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me, even if he die, shall live. Whoever lives and believes in me, shall never die."

BETHANY WAS a prelude to Easter in more ways than



Artist John Haggood's Risen Christ is used here through courtesy of the weekly magazine AMERICA.

one. Even Christ's friends expected nothing at Bethany, even as later they would expect nothing when they saw Christ standing before the tomb of the departed Lazarus, and weeping for love of His friend. But Christ had not come to Bethany to weep. He had come to bring life.

"Take away the stone," He ordered. And raising the voice that had stilled the storms and routed the demons, Christ cried out: "Lazarus come forth!"

Immediately life quickened in the field body of Lazarus, and he stumbled forth from his tomb, struggling to free himself from the burial sheets which held him.

"Unbind him, and let him go," said Christ.

MARY MAGDALEN and the Apostles soon forgot the events of Bethany. At least they had forgotten when the hour of Christ's own death came.

Anything like a resurrection was the furthest thing from Mary Magdalen's mind and the minds of those who mourned for Christ. The third day after His death found Mary Magdalen and the Apostles a sorry and desperate lot. They had no hope, only memories.

Even their memories were short. No longer did they remember how Christ had raised Lazarus back to life. No longer did they recall those words: "I am the resurrection and the life."

EARLY ON THE morning of the third day, before day break, Mary Magdalen gathered a few of the women together and set out for the Tomb where Christ was buried. They carried spices and ointments and linen. Christ's burial on Friday had been rushed. Now these women wished to prepare the Master's body more properly for His burial.

As they entered the garden, a great tremor shook the area. When they turned a corner in the garden, they could see the Tomb. It was open. The great slab of stone which had sealed the Tomb was flat on the ground. The soldiers who guarded the Tomb lay prostrate on the ground as if stunned. The Tomb was empty!

Mary Magdalen could think of only one answer. Somebody had stolen the Lord's body. She must tell the Apostles. Leaving her friends at the Tomb, she hurried into the City. Peter and the Apostles, a frightened and faint-hearted group, were gathered in the Upper Room.

Choked with anger as well as sorrow, Magdalen broke in upon the Apostles with the announcement: "They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre, and we know not where they have laid him."

The Apostles stared at her. She was speaking idle fables, they thought. When she insisted that the Tomb was empty, Peter signalled John and both of them started for the Tomb. Mary Magdalen followed after them but they ran on ahead of her.

WHEN MARY again reached the garden, she was weeping. She recalled all the terrible suffering and death of Jesus. And now this final indignity. His body stolen and carried away by His enemies.

Then there loomed in her path the figure of a Man. Through her tears she hardly noticed Him. The gardener, she thought. Then He spoke to her. "Woman, why weepest thou? Whom are you seeking?" She hardly looked or listened. But maybe He knew something about the Lord. "Sir," she asked, "if thou has taken him hence, tell me where thou has laid him and I will take him away."

Then she heard the stranger speak her name. "Mary!" He said. Then came recognition. "Master!" It was the Lord! Mary fell at His feet.

The Lord was back. Christ was risen. He had a message for Mary. "Go to my brethren." He told her, "and say to them: 'I ascend to my Father and to my Father, to my God and to your God.'"

Mary Magdalen's heart beat with a new joy as she raced back to the City with Christ's message for the Apostles. Mary Magdalen, converted from sin and forgiven by Christ, was now the first official herald of the Resurrection. Proudly, she delivered the good news to the Apostles.

"I have seen the Lord," she told them, "and these things He said to me..." From Bethany to the Garden of the Resurrection was a long road for Mary Magdalen. There were weeks of worry and hours of heartbreak before Mary Magdalen really saw the truth of Christ.

Only in the early hour of the first Easter morning could she say in truth, "I have seen the Lord." Only then did Mary Magdalen understand what Christ tried to tell her and the world at Bethany.

"I am the Resurrection, and the Life. He who believes in Me, even if he die, shall live!"

Jewish Scholar Backs Catholic School Support

Buffalo, N. Y. — (RNS) — A Jewish educator contended here that parochial schools are "public institutions" and are therefore entitled to public funds for their support.

In a lecture at Canisius College, Dr. Will Herberg, professor of Judaic studies and social philosophy at Drew University, Madison, N. J., declared that "the criterion of eligibility for public funds should be whether the school renders a service to the public."

"The government already pays religious functionaries to serve as chaplains in the armed forces," he said. "The Bill of Rights permitted the veteran to use his college tuition money for seminary study."

THE EDUCATOR'S contention was immediately challenged by the Buffalo chapter of Protestants and Other Americans United for Separation of Church and State. It cited a Supreme Court decision which held that public schools may not "undertake religious instruction nor blend secular and sectarian instruction." Dr. Herberg would have had "considerable difficulty qualifying parochial and private schools as public institutions if he had borne this decision in mind," the chapter said.

However, the Very Rev. Philip E. Dobson, S.J., president of Canisius College, said that Dr. Herberg "was stating a fact which has received substantial recognition in the sense that the function of the parochial schools is to perform a public service by their preparing and training future citizens with the comprehensive scope of American thought, ideals and traditions."

NOTING THAT "the philosophy of the Supreme Court is not static, but evolving," Father Dobson declared that the Court "does not mechanically rule that decisions delivered in a former age must remain rigid in every succeeding decade regardless of the birth of new and broader concepts of the nature of our American institutions."

In its statement, the POAU chapter said:

"Dr. Herberg's advice to work for piecemeal reforms such as bus rides, school lunches and other fringe benefits is, in fact, telling the people that sometimes it's better to tear down the walls of Church-State separation piecemeal, nibbling away at it little by little until the wall crumbles of its own weakness."

C-J Tops 56,000 Subscribers

The Catholic Courier Journal now counts 56,047 subscribers, highest total in the 69 year old history of the diocesan paper.

This is the first time the circulation total has topped the 56,000 mark.

It also represents the seventh consecutive year in which subscriptions have gained over the previous year's totals.

The new total is an increase of 165 over last year's 55,881 total. All subscriptions of new subscribers to the Courier Journal start with this week's issue. Most

A detailed report of each parish is listed on page 9 of this issue.

of the new subscriptions were submitted to parish priests during the paper's February circulation campaign.

130 of the 150 parishes of the Rochester Diocese are now enrolled under the "total coverage" plan, three more than last year. This means 85 to 100 per cent of the families in these 130 parishes subscribe to the Courier Journal.

Webster's Holy Trinity parish this week adopted the total coverage plan.

BLANCHARD'S is open from 8 A.M. to 8 P.M. during Easter season and Easter Sunday until noon. For the finest showing of Easter flowers, plants and smart corsages (special for those who order early, \$3.49) only \$3.99. Flowers telegraphed to F. T. D. guaranteed way anywhere. Blanchard Florist, 68 Lake Ave. Free Parking. Phone BAKER 5-9444. —Adv.

Khrushchev In Stalin's Seat

Communism Has New Dictator Says Vatican Broadcast

Vatican City — (NC) — Vatican Radio, commenting on the speed with which Nikita Khrushchev took over as Soviet Premier, declared: "Communism remains what it is and what history has proved it to be."

The Vatican Radio commentator said the move was "not surprising" but was "the only real novelty which has occurred in the Soviet Union since Stalin's death."

While the various events which have taken place since Stalin died in 1953 are not unimportant, he said, they actually occurred only as a result "of the vacant seat and of the difficult and tortuous road followed by him who was preparing to take it over."

THE COMMENTATOR continued:

"Today this task is finished. Stalin has a successor. Communism once again has a leader. This is the real, new, fact which should lead the free nations to reflect and bring their conduct up to date."

Khrushchev's new power sweeps away the theories to the effect that communism is weakening or that there is a crisis in the Soviet Union or that there is greater hope for "the more human development of the Soviet peoples," the commentator said.

HOLDING THAT communism "intends to follow the same road with its same threatening aspect — the antireligious and antidemocratic policies which characterize the conduct of the communist parties of the free nations are clear and unequivocal symptoms," the commentator concluded.

New Soviet Premier Reaffirms Atheism

Moscow — (RNS) — Nikita S. Khrushchev reaffirmed his belief that "there is no God" in an interview with a French journalist here, shortly before he was elected by the Supreme Soviet as Premier of the U.S.S.R.

The 63-year-old Ukrainian, now Russia's most powerful figure since the death of Stalin, described himself instead as "an adherent of a scientific outlook."

AT THE SAME time the successor of ousted Nikolai A. Bulganin declared in the interview, the full text of which was published in Pravda and Izvestia, top Communist Party organs, that question of religious belief is "a private matter for each person."

Mr. Khrushchev made world headlines in November, 1954, by signing a Communist Party decree that called for a halt to certain church persecutions. The decree criticized officials who had tolerated interference with church activities and told Russian anti-religious workers to stop insulting the feelings of clergymen and churchgoers.

However, other parts of the decree made it clear that the Communists intended no change in their policy of "educating" the people away from religion. Recent years have witnessed systematic campaigns by Communist propagandists to wear the people, especially youths, from "religious superstition."

PREMIER KHRUSHCHEV was interviewed by a correspondent of the Paris Figaro, who asked: "Do you think that God exists or some other Higher Power?"

Before putting the question, the correspondent said he knew very well that Mr. Khrushchev had "dedicated the greater part of his life to the struggle against religion." But he noted also that "you have never spoken openly against religious feelings."

"I think that there is no God and for a long time I have had such an idea," the new Premier replied. "I am an adherent of a scientific outlook. Sciences and the belief in supernatural powers cannot go together, especially if you have a thoroughly logical outlook."

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Pontiff Greet Youth

Vatican City — (NC) — His Holiness Pope Pius XII blesses Italian Catholic Action Youth Members in Saint Peter's Square. He is carried in his gascatorial chair.

Pope Asks War Prisoners Return

Vatican City — (NC) — Pope Pius XII has appealed to rulers holding World War II prisoners to return the men to their homes and families and to consider this question as "above all political implications and aims."

Speaking to an audience of 30,000 people in St. Peter's basilica, the Pope told his hearers, who had come from Austria, Belgium, France, Italy, Germany and the Netherlands, that responsible parties should consider the return of prisoners.

"It is in reality — a question of humanity and moral responsibility before God," the Pope said.

"Return all prisoners to their families, their comforts and their freedom," he pleaded.

Earlier in his talk the Pope said:

"In the past, we have repeatedly dealt with this sad subject of war, passing on its iltiness, investigating its cause, stressing its consequences and suggesting remedies."

THE PONTIFF told his hearers:

"Here we again return, if only for a few moments, to innumerable battlefields where, in the flash-of-wilts between leaders, youthful strong and generous lives fought and were destroyed."

Since we then foresaw what afterward unfortunately happened, the Pope recalled, "we did not fail to give solemn warning to the leaders of nations so that nothing might be overlooked, which could check men who were standing on the edge of an abyss."

"On that now far past day," he said, "we proclaimed that nothing was lost by peace, whereas everything could be lost by war. Unfortunately, our voice, the voice of an afflicted father, was not heeded."

The many people attending the audience were commemorating a day for those missing in World War II and prisoners of that war. The day's observance began with a Mass at the tomb of the unknown soldier in Rome.

The Pontiff welcomed the ex-prisoners in the audience and the families of missing prisoners, saying:

"The dead are gone forever, reduced to dust now intermingled with the earth which received them when they fell on the battlefields. But the missing did not suffer a better fate. One does not know whether they are still alive. One does not know where or how they live."

Fr. Whalen Pastor Of Mercy Parish

Bishop Kearney has appointed Rev. John S. Whalen pastor of Our Lady of Mercy Parish in the Town of Greece, the Chancery has announced.

He succeeded the late Father Michael P. O'Brien who died suddenly March 23, 1938. For the past four years Father Whalen



REV. JOHN S. WHALEN

has been assistant pastor at St. John the Evangelist Church on Humboldt St., Rochester.

Rev. Robert H. Kress, assistant pastor of St. Mary's Church, Auburn, has been named assistant pastor of St. John the Evangelist Church, the Chancery also announced.

Both appointments were effective Tuesday, April 1.

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You'll know after you've read...
MASTERS OF DECEIT

J. EDGAR HOOVER'S Own Story: Communism in America Today and How to Fight It. STARTS APRIL 15th in the COURIER JOURNAL