



St. Anne with her child, the Blessed Virgin Mary.

July 26th Feast

Good St. Anne

Devotion to Good St. Anne, Mother of the Blessed Virgin, has always been characteristic of Catholics of the New World.

For three centuries her shrine at Beauce in Quebec Province, Canada, has drawn increasing numbers of pilgrims — graphic evidence of even greater numbers who turn to her needs to St. Anne.

Storm tossed sailors on the St. Lawrence River in the mid-seventeenth century never dreamed that their vow to honor the saint would launch one of the world's most famous shrines. Their prayer was answered, they landed safely near a "beautiful meadow — beau pre," and began to construct a chapel to fulfill their vow.

Louis Guimond, a poor cripple of the area, placed three small stones in the chapel's foundation as his contribution to the work. He was instantaneously cured.

This miracle in 1658 was a voice from heaven to strengthen the faith of colonists struggling against frontier hardships.

In the intervening three hundred years, Good St. Anne has not ceased to answer prayers even by miracles. God in His mercy has clearly made Beauce a place where He gives sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, a cure for countless kinds of afflictions.

The splendid basilica which stands today at the foot of the Laurentine mountains and nestled on the shores of the broad St. Lawrence is impregnated by a mysterious and dominating power which heals bodies and brings back to God a multitude of souls.

For Catholics of America, every stone of the soaring edifice is an imperishable witness to the power of prayer to St. Anne.

As world news these days continues its strident reports about wars, intrigue, riots, cruelty and abuse of authority, people often ask, "Why doesn't God do something about it?"

Heaven's answer is clear and consoling.

The answer is an invitation to hope which echoes in the numerous places of pilgrimage where God gives proof that He has not abandoned His Church nor our world.

The age of martyrs and of miracles is not yet past. To those with faith, this two-fold crown of martyrs and miracles stamps our present era as one where God and His saints are still very close to all of us.

Strange But True . . .



JOSEPH BREIG

If I Were Young

As I recall, it was Chester-ton who said, 50 or 70 years ago, that if St. George were to come back to life, he would take a long look at the world around him — and prepare to be a martyr again.

Today, my guess is that Chester-ton and St. George, if they could come among us now, might take the long look together, and get ready to be in one way or another, apostles, missionaries.

Being no prophet, I may be mistaken, but I think we are emerging from our long baptism of blood and fire. I see the ending of the period in which we had to use most of our energies in holding the fort of religion and civilization.

If my judgment is correct, the person who is in his teens of 20s now ought to look forward chiefly to expanding truth, rather than chiefly defending it, as we who went before them found it necessary to do.

I AGREE with those who feel that a new wind is blowing across the world, dissipating the old fumes of error, hatred, prejudice, lies, selfishness, greed and ignorance.

Our centuries of tribulation and misunderstanding have been due for the most part to a mad individualism which blinded men and women to the common good, to the duty of loving and serving fellow-men everywhere on earth.

IN INSANE rebellion against the individualist insanity, movements like fascism, nazism and communism blackened the world with violence, cruelty, injustice, falsehood and wars.

I think the pendulum now is nearing the center. We have had more than enough of hatred and lies. Now we need love, truth and justice. We are seeking the peace which only right order can give. We ask for guidance.

If I were a youth today, looking forward to a career and wishing to serve God and man in it, I would think not so much of refuting objections as of revealing the depth, breadth and beauty of goodness, divine and human.

I would be heartened in this course by many facts about the modern world.

I would observe, for example, that racial, national and class discrimination no longer can pretend to any real respectability — not in our South, not in South Africa, not even in India where the castes are crumbling.

THE WRONGS survive, but their foundations have been washed away. There is no durability in them now.

I would perceive that, such foolishness as divorce, with its restless seeking for other mates, and birth prevention, with its nervously fawning over population growth, are beginning to look as imbecile as they are.

Such things no longer have any power of attracting vigorous youth.

I would mark well the fact that even the most enormous bigotry in all history — the communist bigotry against God and religion, and against man as God's image and likeness — is heaving and splintering from the pressure of its own ignorant contradictions.

IF I WERE young now, I would judge that the future belongs to those who will harvest the seed so long watered with blood and tears.

I would resolve to devote myself to positive work. I would try to grasp firmly, and set forth for others, the splendor of religious dedication, of holy marriage, of family life, of good government, of human dignity, of the literature that elevates rather than degrades, of wise education, of people-to-people help, of right international relations, and the like.

I would look upon television and radio, nuclear power, the drama, modern medicine, banking and business, as colossal opportunities to do colossal good. Oh, if I were a young person today, I would be filled with hope and determination — and courage.



Vatican City — (NC) — Pope Pius XII greets Cardinal Aloisi Masella, Prefect of the Sacred Congregation of Sacramental Discipline, during a ceremony at the Vatican. Between the Pope and Cardinal Masella is Alfred Ottaviani, Pro-Secretary of the Holy Office. Cardinal Masella is charged with the duty of drafting all legislation concerning proper use of the seven sacraments of the Church.

By JAMES C. O'NEILL

Vatican City — (NC) — There are seven sacraments but the Sacred Congregation of Sacramental Discipline must devote most of its working time to the problems of only one — Matrimony.

This congregation is one of the 12 top administrative offices of the Catholic Church. Specifically its task is to help the pope regulate and safeguard the daily use of the seven sacraments.

The congregation takes its name from its duties as described in canon 249 of the Codes of Canon Law which states that "to it is entrusted all legislation on the discipline of the seven sacraments."

By far the greatest part of this discipline concerns marriage. Two out of three of the congregation's commissions are devoted exclusively to its problems.

One section deals solely with the claims of valid but non-consummated marriages. Since the claim of non-consummation can lead to a dissolution of the marriage vow — one of a pope's heaviest responsibilities — a local bishop may not even begin investigating such a claim until he is expressly given permission by the congregation to do so.

COMMONLY known as the Congregation of the Sacraments, it has a short history. It was established 50 years ago by Pope St. Pius X. Before it existed the various dispensations and problems connected with the seven sacraments were scattered among half a dozen other congregations. It was often a puzzle to know which congregation had jurisdiction in a specific case.

Today the only marriage cases which do not come within the jurisdiction of this con-

How Church Safeguards Sacraments

gregation are those involving mixed marriages. Since these involve matters of differing faiths and are assigned to the Sacred Congregation of the Holy Office.

From the Congregation of Sacraments come such permissions as that which allows blind priests to memorize the Votive Mass of the Blessed Virgin and to celebrate it throughout the year instead of following the normal liturgical calendar.

It is this congregation also that grants permission to reserve the Blessed Sacrament in private chapels. During World War II it relaxed many peacetime regulations, permitting a shorter pre-Communion fast, authorizing the use of knish altarcloths and vestments, and allowing Mass to be celebrated in the afternoon.

While it governs the daily use of the sacraments, this congregation does not have jurisdiction over the ceremonies and rites surrounding these sacraments. This is properly the work of the Sacred Congregation of Rites.

Heading the Congregation of Sacraments is its 70-year-old Prefect, His Eminence Beneditto Cardinal Aloisi Masella. The Cardinal has been an official of the Holy See for more than 50 years. Much of his experience was acquired as a diplomat representing the Church in Portugal, Chile and Argentina.

A total of 20 cardinals are

members of this congregation. Those living in Rome meet every Friday to discuss its problems and work. On the second and fourth Monday of each month, the Prefect has an audience with Pope Pius XII to keep him abreast of the congregation's activities and to present its decisions for his personal approval or disapproval.

THIRTY-SIX consultants are on the congregation's staff. These are priests, mostly members of religious orders, who are experts in canon law and related fields. They serve as a panel of advisers and specialists guiding the cardinals and, ultimately, the Pope. Most of them live in Rome and have a full-time job in addition to their work for the congregation.

Besides the consultants the Congregation of Sacraments has three commissions. The first is devoted to problems connected with the Sacrament of Holy Orders. This commission, which currently has 18 officials, studies such matters as the validity of ordinations or the obligations connected with major orders and how they are met by those who have been ordained.

The second commission deals with valid but "non-consummated" marriages. It has 50 priests on its staff — 35 consultants and 15 defenders of the marriage bond. Like the consultants most of these priests have full-time jobs in addition to their work with the commission.

WHEN A LOCAL bishop is granted permission to investigate a claim of non-consummation of marriage, he appoints a diocesan court to gather the facts. Both parties to the contested marriage must supply from seven to 10 trustworthy witnesses. Physical evidence, if any, is usually determined by court-appointed physicians.

Throughout the hearing, the diocesan appointed defender of the bond does his best to prevent dissolution of the marriage bond. When he has no more objections, the hearing is closed. A full report together with the bishop's recommendations is forwarded to the congregation.

One of the 35 consultants at Rome examines the case on its arrival. If he is satisfied with the formal presentation of facts — and often he is not — he turns it over to one of the congregation's own defenders of the bond. Either the consultant or the defender of the bond may send the case back to its diocese of origin for further investigation.

After it is examined by Rome's defender of the bond, the case then goes to three commissioners who examine it separately. They each submit a written decision, with the majority vote deciding pro or con. Once again it goes back to the defender of the bond. He has a chance to attack the reasoning of the consultants if they conclude the marriage has not been consummated.

Finally, after the defender of the bond draws up his conclusions, the case goes to the cardinals in plenary session. They pass on it and then it goes to the Pope who grants or denies the requested dispensation.

Belgian Congo Africa, No Longer 'Dark' Continent

By FATHER PATRICK O'CONNOR
Society of St. Columban

Leopoldville, Belgian Congo — (NC) — Is Africa still the "Dark Continent?"

"No!" is the answer proclaimed by this bright city and the Belgian Congo of which it is the capital.

Africa, like other continents, has indeed its heavy shadows but it is a continent brightened by amazing progress. Nowhere has the progress been greater than in this vast Congo, spread above and below the Equator.

It took explorer-journalist H. M. Stanley more than two years to cross it in the 1870's. I flew across it in less than 11 hours, making four stops on the way. One of them was in a sunny modern town called Stanleyville.

That was where I saw a delegation of African girl students (Young Catholic workers) at the airport. In the restaurant, while an orchestra played "Ramona," I ate at a table with a Scandinavian businessman and an African Methodist teacher and his wife bound for Brussels. The Methodist asked me if I thought they could visit Rome on their way back.

The contrast between modern Africa and the Dark Continent of 80 years ago is most striking in the growth of the Catholic Church. Here in the Belgian Congo and its neighbors, Rwanda-Urundi, Christianity has spread on a scale and at a rate probably unprecedented in history.

In the past 50 years the Catholic population of the Belgian Congo has risen from about 20,000 to more than 4.5 million, in a population now numbering 12,800,000. When Stanley first pushed his way through the jungles in 1874, there was not one Christian mission in the Congo.

Today one of every three persons in the Congo is a baptized Catholic. One in every 10 of the others has asked to be prepared for baptism. In 1954-57 converts to the Church numbered 145,664.

Protestants of various kinds in the Congo amount to nearly one million.

The Belgian Congo has enormous educational progress to its credit and Catholic schools have done most of the work. This is recognized by the Belgian government, which gives liberal grants to schools of all missions, Protestant as well as Catholic.

About 1,500,000 pupils, boys and girls, attend schools in the Belgian Congo. Of these a good million, that is, two-thirds, are in Catholic schools.

Making Marriage Click

Why Chain Catholics To A Bad Marriage?

By MSGR. IRVING A. DeBLANC
(Director, Family Life Bureau, N.C.W.C.)

"I am bitterly unhappy with the Catholic position on divorce. Why must we poor unfortunate be chained all our lives to the consequences of an error for which often we are not responsible? Why must a bad choice in the past forever bar our future?" Minnie.

Hope you go to a wise, understanding counselor, Minnie. Am afraid the approach I will take will not meet the emotional needs you are really asking for. The following reasons, however, I hope will be of some consolation.

If there is no possibility of annulling your marriage, then the answer must be as clear as it may seem cruel: you are married to this man until death. "But, why such sacrifice?" you ask. It is an important principle that the general good is preferable to the individual good.

EXCEPTIONS in the case of divorce and remarriage can never be allowed for everyone is an exception; everyone is a unique case. This would be catastrophic.

Is it not morbidly true of our age that we are sensitive to the "me," to the success of the individual? "This is his unconditional right!" we say, but there are some things greater than this "me." There was once a time when individuals enthusiastically served prince until death; more because it was a symbol than a person. This prince was a link with the past.

The indissolubility of marri-

While the chief aim has been to give a primary education to the largest possible number, there are more than 100 Catholic secondary schools and some hundreds of Catholic technical and normal schools.

Outside Leopoldville (called "Leo" for short) stands the Lovanium, an interracial Catholic university sponsored by the University of Louvain in Belgium and now ending its fourth academic year. In 1958 the government opened a state university in Elizabethville (E'ville, they call it).

INDUSTRIALLY the Belgian Congo has developed with giant strides. More than three times the size of Texas, more than four times the size of France, it is underpopulated but possesses vast natural wealth. This includes copper, diamonds, uranium and tin; land that feeds great herds of cattle, sheep and goats and yields timber, cotton, rubber, coffee, vegetable oils; waterways that offer immeasurable hydro-electric power.

Here in "Leo" and half a dozen other cities you see factories and mills that have sprung up in recent years. Some are processing raw material for export in semi-finished condition. Others make consumer goods to meet the demands created by improved standards of living in the Congo.

POLITICALLY the Belgian Congo is moving slowly towards some measure of self-government. Last December in Leopoldville and two other towns, Africans elected African members of ward councils. Next step was to be election by Africans of African members of small rural councils.

"The Belgian government prefers to work from evolving situations, rather than follow a preconceived plan," an official spokesman told me. "A movement certainly exists here for internal self-rule but none for outright separation. The tie between Belgium and the Congo will be maintained, but what form it will take has not been decided."

SERMONETTE

By REV. JAMES D. MORIARTY

"It Is In Dying That We Are Born To Eternal Life"

If you are interested in winning friends and influencing people you know that death is not a popular subject. In the effort to take away the natural sadness of the bereaved the modern mind uses every available means to mellow the normal decline of man back to the ashes from which he came.

Gold plated, plush lined coffins . . . sweet smelling flowers . . . beautifully decorated, pastel parlors with soft, deep carpeting . . . low slung, smooth-purring Cadillacs and believe it or not cemeteries with soft music playing all the day long are all intended to take man's mind off the fact that one day the body beautiful will finally come to rest six feet under the ground.

Though each single effort may have its sympathetic purpose, when carried to the extreme it often turns out to be the great deceit. It seems only to make modern man fear death the more.

Nature teaches us that a seed must be planted in the dark earth and rot before the beautiful flower comes forth. No matter how beautiful or protected the seed it must undergo the change. And as the immortal poet tells us: "Our harvest must be sown with rotten death."

Death, then is not to be feared.

Pain there must be, it is true. But pain must come from the dentist who extracts the tooth and makes life once more livable without the agony of the toothache. Pain comes from the surgeon's scalpel but it is temporary. It may make life once again possible. The sick man looks not at the pain that he must endure though it may be almost unbearable. He looks rather to the health of the life beyond.

And the realistic Christian looks rather at the necessity of death. These portals must be entered before he can possibly enjoy the abundant life that God has prepared for him from the foundation of the world.

Yes, it is only by dying that we can possibly be born to eternal life.

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