

Pope's Will Asks 'Forgiveness'

The last will and testament of Pope Pius XII revealed the final wishes of the man who reigned over half a billion Catholics for nearly twenty years.

This great "Pope of Peace" movingly and humbly requested "forgiveness of those whom I may have offended."

The will, dated May 15, 1956, is as follows:

MISERERE mei Deus, secundum magnam misericordiam Tuam — Have mercy on me, Oh God, according to Your great mercy.

These words, which I, knowing me self to be unworthy of them or equal to them, pronounced when I accepted with trepidation my election to the supreme pontificate, I now repeat with much greater foundation at this time when the realization of the deficiencies, shortcomings and faults of so long a pontificate in an epoch so grave, brings my insufficiencies and unworthiness more clearly to my mind.

I HUMBLY ASK forgiveness of those whom I may have offended, harmed or scandalized by my words and my actions.

I beg those to whom it pertains not to occupy themselves with or preoccupy themselves about erecting a monument to my memory.

It will suffice that my poor mortal remains be simply deposited in a sacred place, the more obscure the more welcome.

I need not recommend myself to prayers for my soul. I know how numerous are those which the norms of the Apostolic See provide and the piety of the faithful offer for a deceased pope.

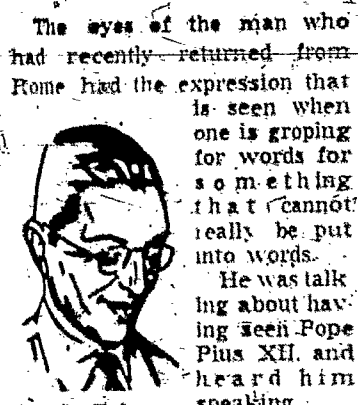
NEITHER DO I find need to leave a "spiritual testament," as so many praiseworthy prelates normally do. The many words and discourses decreed and pronounced by me because of my office, suffice to make my thoughts on various religious and moral questions known to anyone who might perhaps wish to know them.

Having set down this, I name as my universal heir the Holy Apostolic See from which I have received so much, as from a most loving Mother.

PIUS XII

JOSEPH BREIG

Death Of Pius XII



Joseph Breig, who has recently returned from Rome had the expression that is seen when one is groping for words for something that cannot really be put into words.

He was talking about having seen Pope Pius XII and heard him speaking.

The description that finally emerged went something like this: "You stand there, and you are seeing Pius XII, and you have the strangest feeling that as long as you keep your eyes on him, you are upheld."

"Even if the earth dropped away under your feet, and the universe collapsed, you would still be standing there because you were looking at him. That's how I felt."

Then the Pope began talking to us, and after the audience was over, I compared impressions with others who were present, and each of us said that it had seemed that the Holy Father was looking directly into the eyes of each individual all the time, and talking to that person personally.

I myself never saw Pope Pius XII, but I understood vividly what the man was telling me. It was not necessary to go to Rome to feel that I knew the Holy Father and was oddly close to him.

Merely from looking at pictures of him, and reading his words, I had come to realize in a new way the force and meaning of the most familiar of his titles—Holy Father.

IN MY LIFE there has been a kind of ascending ladder of appreciation of the word "father."

When I was young I was like other young people—I took for granted the presence, the strength, the stability of the man who was my parent.

Even after I became a father myself, I had little notion of what having a father means to a youngster, because I still had my own father. Then he died.

IT IS NOT at all easy to phrase the effect of that event on me, but I will try.

I had no need of my father financially. I had no need for him, indeed, in any material or worldly sense.

Yet his death left me with a sense that the sun had gone out in the sky, and the earth was rocking alarmingly, and the stars were falling from the heavens.

It was almost as if God had let the universe slip from His hands with a colossal crash. I was like the man who had been to Rome—as long as my father was there (as the Pope was there for him) my feet were planted firmly on something unshakable. When my father was gone, everything began to crumble.

THE DEATH OF PIUS left me with the same sense of a kind of universal desolation. His reign had led me even higher in appreciation of the word "father."

The years of his papacy were decades of years, filled with awful wars, not only of flesh against flesh and nation against nation, but minds against minds and even of man against God.

They were years of the horrifying hatreds, lies, brutalities and blasphemous of nazism and communism.

YET AS LONG AS Pope Pius was alive, we could look and see that the flag of mankind was flying bravely. He stood like a mountain peak, and yet like a beloved father and elder brother—immovable, unprejudiced, serene, with the serenity of eternal things.

With his death if I may, reverently express it so, I saw the Fatherhood of God in lonely majesty. Pope Pius, tirelessly teaching us the Brotherhood of Man, under that ultimate Fatherhood, had epitomized and symbolized both those Titanic things, had made them almost physically visible. Now we must defend them without that constant vision which he communicated. It is a difficult task.



Bishop Kearney at his cathedral throne at Mass he celebrated Tuesday for Pope Pius XII.

Pope Pius, World Leader, Devoted Parish Priest

Following is the text of Bishop Kearney's sermon at the solemn Requiem Mass he offered for Pope Pius XII in Sacred Heart Cathedral, Tuesday, October 14, 1958.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, Amen.

Exactly one month to the day before his death, Pope Pius XII affixed his signature to a letter which was read in this pulpit on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of my ordination to the priesthood.

It was of course, a message which I cherish very deeply, and now probably more deeply than ever before.

It was the farthest from our thoughts that within a month from that time we should gather again in the same pulpit to pay tribute to the man who was thoughtful enough in the busy demands of his life as the Supreme Pontiff to sit down and pen a letter of recognition to one of his bishops.

DIVINE PROVIDENCE has so disposed that we gather here, just a month from the time that he wrote the letter, to offer Mass for the happy repose of his soul and in a few words to pay tribute to one of the greatest of the Popes, a man whose life will probably be able to do justice to the career of a person like Pope Pius XII.

His career is so many-sided. There are so many phases of it. His accomplishments were so outstanding that we might sum them up in the particular fashion by saying that he stands out as a great international leader and at the same time as a simple parish priest for the world.

He had the uniqueness of giving as much time and thought to the little details of how much fasting we should do before going to Holy Communion as he had to the supervision and execution of international peace and the planning and the welfare of his Church all over the world.

First of all I say he is always the parish priest of the whole world. Trying to study every possible means of bringing his little parish closer to God—is that not the work of the parish priest? To bring his people day after day closer to Jesus Christ in the Blessed Sacrament, closer to the Immaculate Mother of God, and closer to all those sources of Divine Grace which God has placed at his disposal, that is the task of every true parish priest.

We have only to review his career in order to consider the outstanding changes he made in the discipline of the Church in everything that concerned bringing people closer to God: His concern for the Blessed Sacrament and for the reception of Holy Communion.

POPE PIUS XII of course will always be known as the great apostle of the Blessed Sacrament, and of the part that the precious Body and Blood of Jesus Christ must play in our lives.

Pius XII, however, will stand out as the practical parish priest who studied every angle of the matter and found why

in particular which I am going to read for you because it expresses this so well.

Pope Pius XII had the ill fortune, or as he might have thought it, the opportunity and responsibility to be the Supreme Pontiff of the Roman Catholic Church during tragic years of dictatorships, wars and a man-to-body division of mankind between the free and the enslaved, between those who accepted the great tradition of Jesus, Greece and Rome, and those who had turned their backs on it.

He was a man of great intellect, and therefore understood the warring philosophies of his generation. He was a man of great heart, and therefore suffered with the afflicted in all the nations of the earth. He was a gifted diplomat and an accomplished administrator, but he seemed also to have a simple and unquestioning faith.

Some of the qualities that made him so great among the Popes would also have served him and his people well if he had been a plain parish priest. These Americans who had the opportunity to see him or hear his voice—and many did over the years, including numbers who were not of his faith—were aware of his unaffected modesty and the unselfish spirit which shone like a flame in his face and eyes.

I always remember especially one paragraph in one of his statements to the Rosary which he referred to as:

He said that people are inclined to criticize the rather insignificant appearance of this prayer, and he took as an example the story of David and Goliath. As Goliath came out in armor and carrying a mighty sword, David came to him, took up a little pebble, and he put it in a sling and struck the giant and destroyed him. So also, said the Pope, the people of our Rosary are powerful prayers to destroy the enemies of our soul. That is why he encouraged the faithful to recite the Rosary daily and thoughtfully and made it the most widespread devotion the world has ever seen.

On the other hand, despite this tremendous consecration and success as the parish priest of the world, the world has recognized and expressed in many ways the influence that he was over the entire international picture and the world in which he lived.

This has been expressed, of course, by the heads of government, by editorial writers, and in a New York Times editorial:

"The struggle is not over. Another in the long line of Popes will take the vacant seat in the Vatican. But the man who was born Eugenio Pacelli would not have doubted the final victory, and when it comes his contribution to it will be recognized."

There is a very delicate little scene which is described in Shakespeare's famous play, "Hamlet," when his friend Horatio comes to offer him sympathy on the death of his father.

Horatio says, "I saw him once; he was a goodly king." Hamlet replies, "He was a man, take him for all in all, I shall not look upon his like again."

So today in similar words we can say of our spiritual king, Pope Pius XII, "He was a great saint, take him for all in all, we shall not look upon his like again."

Deathbed Of The Pope

Castelgandolfo — (N.C.) The sun rose hot and bright in the sky the morning after the death of His Holiness Pope Pius XII at his summer residence here.

The Swiss Guards stationed at the main portal of the residence perspired under its glare.

But they filled an endless stream of diplomats in formal attire, bright-robed monks and Religious in their distinctive cowls and scapulars. All wore on a solemn errand to give sad and affectionate reviews to a man, who the day before was their Supreme Shepherd.

In the second floor bedroom lay the dead Pope who a few short days before had chosen "familiarity with the angels," to a group of New York pilgrims. Never had the frail figure of Pius XII looked so small and helpless.

Entering the room, one stepped quietly through rows of churchmen and laymen and blackveiled women all praying in fervent silence, their eyes riveted on the familiar countenance now strangely unfamiliar in death.

Two helmeted officers of the Noble Guard in black and gold uniforms, stood like statues at either side of the pillow on which the head of the late Pontiff rested. Two androgynous in purple knit on the floor at the bedside, so close they could have reached out and touched the waxen hands that held a black rosary with a small golden crucifix.

The face of the Pope was ashen. It was hard to imagine that the body on the bed was the last remains of the lively, energetic Eugenio Pacelli.

SOME 40 JOURNALISTS of every nationality entered the room to see the figure who had been "one of the greatest stories of the century." For four days and nights they had stood clamoring outside in the street.

Now they were like bashful, embarrassed children. Some genuflected as they entered the room, while those behind them stumbled awkwardly forward. Four abreast they passed the silent form. Many of them crossed themselves. Others genuflected again, trying to give the reverence they knew was due to the man and the Pope they knew so well from their "copy."

Sunlight filled the bedroom. A sea breeze from the Mediterranean blew the beige curtains at the windows inward, brushing the faces of the mourners.

The antechamber outside the Pope's apartments in which countless numbers had waited to see him during his pontificate was lined with vases of freshly cut flowers. The riotously appointed audience and those rooms were still hung with the red damask bearing the coat-of-arms of Pius XII.

The damask would soon be replaced with that bearing the seal of another, as yet unknown Pope. Pious world from the street with the trappings of the Swiss and Noble Guards.

Passing from room to room on leaving the papal apartments one passed three thrones. They were empty—vacated by Pope Pius XII at the summons of his Lord and only King.



Castelgandolfo — (RNS) — Cardinal Tisserant, Dean of the Sacred College of Cardinals, blesses Pope Pius XII after officially pronouncing him dead. Looking on (left to right) are Msgr. Carlo Nasalli Rocca of the Vatican Secretariate of State; Msgr. Angelo Dell'Acqua, Secretary of State for Ordinary Affairs; Msgr. Federico Allori Di Signale, Papal chamberlain; and a valet in the Papal household.

Bishop's Appeal For Missions

My dear People, Throughout the Catholic world, the third Sunday in October is known as Mission Sunday. Our Holy Father calls on all of us once a year to help his own Mission Society for the Propagation of the Faith.

On that day, October 19th, we encourage membership and the renewal of membership in the Society for the Propagation of the Holy Father's Community Chest for the Missions. Just as citizens of scores of nations look to the United States for material help, so the Catholics of the same nations look to us for spiritual help, for the means to spread the word of God.

The United States, when it was a missionary country, received \$10 million dollars from France through the Society for the Propagation of the Faith. That vast sum, which had then twenty times the value it has now, enabled us to build churches and schools. Mission Sunday is our opportunity to do for Africa and Asia and other sections of the world what France did for us.

You have received a Mission Sunday envelope. May I suggest that you return it next Sunday with an offering of at least two dollars to help support our home and foreign missions? The Holy Father needs your personal help to maintain the seven hundred mission areas under his care.

Thanking you for your continued cooperation, and deeply grateful for your zeal in promoting the mission Christ entrusted to His Church, I am

Your devoted Shepherd in Christ,
+ James J. Kearney
Bishop of Rochester

P.S. The Mission Collection will be taken up on Sunday, October 19.

SERMONETTE

Sharing is Not Ambitious. I Corinthians 13, 1.

By THE REV. MICHAEL MADDEN, O.D.D.

I don't have any ambitions. Or at least, I like to think I don't. I'm not trying to make myself king because my vow of humility puts the stammer on this. I don't feel that I am hungry for leadership because my vow of obedience wouldn't let me get away with it. And I don't think I have any desire for great riches because my vow of poverty leaves me no alternative but to be poor.

In short, I am bogged down in the universal gold-fish for advancement. Why, if I try to become just the least bit ambitious, I get some kind of an interdict, slapped on me. Evidently, my vocation shields me from ambition.

Or so I think! Actually, ambition has many faces — many loopholes. My inordinate ambition, quietly asserts itself when old Mrs. Plump seeks spiritual guidance from Father John instead of Father Me. (And my thoughts of Father John are far from charitable.) My inordinate ambition gets a good jostling when, having given my best sermon on Sunday morning, I get nothing from the scrutinist but a sneer . . . for having talked too long. And right away I begin to hate scrutinists.

A husband can strive for greater things for his family's sake. This is love for them, not personal ambition. But as a monk, the only thing I can be ambitious about is heaven.

And so I shall. I will freely sacrifice personal ambition in this life. But I shall be very ambitious in eternity, fighting with all my might for the highest possible place.

And at the general judgment, the guy with the loudest mouth, screaming for the most . . . that'll be me.

Strange But True



ST. PETER'S CLOCKS, ROME. STRIKE THE 15th HOUR — THE 15 CHIMES SIGNAL THE "AVE MARIA" HOUR — MARKING SUNDOWN. FOR A THOUSAND YEARS UNTIL THIS YEAR THE HOLY MOTHER OF GOD WAS TRADITIONALLY LED BY A VOLUNTEER ARMOURED SQUAD. THE LOVELY CELTIC CROSS AND CROWN SERMONIZES THE ROSARY BASILICA, LONDRES. IT WAS A GIFT FROM THE SECOND IRISH NATIONAL PARLIAMENT TO LOURDES.

MISSOURIANS LIVE HIGH LIVE IN HIGH CHINESE SUPER, AND HIGH UNIVERSITY.