

Crib Displays On Increase

A sincere word of praise is extended to merchants, shopkeepers, workers and employers who gave prominent help to "keep Christ in Christmas" by displaying crib scenes during the holiday time.

Throughout the twelve-county Diocese of Rochester, the trend is obviously on the increase as year by year more and more Nativity sets tell busy shoppers the true story of Christmas.

And, just by the way, the telling of the story does not hurt business either. Reports already indicate that customers this year bought a record-high total of gifts.

There is also evidence that the roaring parties which disgraced Christmas Eve a few years back are giving way to family programs or post-season parties when there is less danger of holiday hoopla.

Cynics may say that cribs and postponed parties don't change the hard facts of every day business life. They may be right, but no one can deny that the more we are reminded of the message of Bethlehem, the more we spend time in the family circle, the more wise we become, and the more we will work for those ideals which will mean a peaceful and happier world.

U.S. Scholars Recognized

A former St. Bernard's Seminary professor has just won the distinction of gaining European recognition for theological studies done in America.

European experts tend to take a dim view of American brains in the field of theology. Our U.S. experts seem to get mixed up in their minds with Indians and covered wagons and frontier missionaries who, it seems, are not reputed by the continental scholars as top rung theologians.

Now Monsignor Joseph Fenton has exploded the myth and revealed for Europeans that Americans can probe the mysteries of faith along with their French and German co-religionists.

He has written an article published by the French "Dictionary of Catholic Theology."

Monsignor Fenton, now at Catholic University in Washington and once professor of dogma at St. Bernard's, includes five Rochester Diocese priests as outstanding American scholars in theology — Doctors Hanna, Wirth, Ryan, Baker and Brown — all of whom are well known to a whole generation of priests who were their pupils at St. Bernard's.

Monsignor Fenton's article reviews the history of theological studies in America from the colonial days when pioneer bishops like John Carroll and John England wrote their books by candlelight in a forest cabin after a day in the saddle.

Famous American scholars, according to Msgr. Fenton, are Fathers Tanqueray, author of a widely used book on the spiritual life; Pohle, dogma; Callan and McHugh, scripture; Plassmann, scripture and spiritual life; Glenn, philosophy; Farrell, philosophy; Guilday, history; Ellard and Michel, liturgy, and a score of others.

This impressive array should prove that Americans have a history of achievement in theological studies that has too long been unrecognized. Monsignor Fenton's article may well be the breakthrough which will win tardy but deserved recognition of the quiet but competent scholarship of U.S. priest-authors.

Strange But True

Juan Linde (1770-1857)
FIRST MASS IN AUSTRALIA
HE WAS THE FIRST TO CELEBRATE IN THE COUNTRY OF THE GREAT AUSTRALIA (1792) AND ESTABLISHED UNIVERSITIES IN BOTH STATES.

THE PROPHET ELIAS
is honored by CHRISTIANS, JEWS AND MOHAMMEDANS. The DEVILS hold an annual festival and offer a sacrifice in his honor.

AN IRISH TOWER IS ENCLOSED WITHIN THE SQUARE TOWER OF THE CHURCH AT KILMORE, CO. ARMAGH.

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JOSEPH BREIG

Yes Is
Not No

Even a newspaper columnist surely is entitled to at least one New Year's wish. If that be so, then I devoutly desire that certain persons among my readers will make — and keep — the following resolution for 1959: "Upon my honor I will never jump to the conclusion that because Breig praises rain, he considers sunshine inferior, and is opposed to all statements concerning its beauty."

The immediate reason for my suggestion is a letter from a man who was impressed by something I wrote about the holiness of the marriage embrace in which husband and wife cooperate with God in the creation of a new immortal being.

My text, if you recall, was the wedded love of St. Anne and St. Joachim which brought forth, in the natural order of generation and birth, the most holy and immaculate Virgin whom God Incarnate, from eternity, chose for His Mother.

I said that we might learn, from meditation upon this husband and wife and child, something about the splendor of the state of matrimony which Mary's Son, in good time, elevated to the status of nothing less than one of the seven sacraments.

THE MAN WHO wrote to me wanted me to answer this question: If the union of a married couple as two in one flesh is so magnificent, why was Christ the Savior born of an inviolate virgin, through the power of God in the overshadowing of the Holy Spirit?

I have encountered the same kind of reaction in various respects. For example, some people have imagined that I derogated matrimony in the religious state of life, because I wrote or talked about the high dignity and sanctity of marriage.

I do not quite understand this kind of reaction. If I speak glowingly of the beauty of matrimony, why should anyone suppose that I have no use for celibacy, which as a matter of fact I consider the queen of vocations?

Must a writer, if he says he likes a very much, hasten to explain that he does not look down his nose at Germany and Ireland and England and Spain and Arabia — not one of which he has ever laid eyes on?

THE SIMPLE FACT is that nobody has ever really learned how to read unless he has consented, consciously or unconsciously, to refrain from attributing to a writer views which the writer has not expressed at all.

A writer, in other words, has got to have some freedom. He has a right to expect reasonable understanding and cooperation from readers. Otherwise he must fall into total silence, lest everything he says be misinterpreted.

A classic instance of what I mean comes to mind. Once I told a study group that although there is certainly a Hell where creatures sufficiently wicked go for eternity, the Church has never said that any human being is in Hell.

A meeting or two later the thing that I had half-foreseen came to pass. In the course of a discussion, somebody said to me, "But don't you remember? You said yourself that no human being ever has gone to Hell."

THIS IS THE KIND of mental attitude which I request readers to overcome in 1959 and succeeding years, because if it isn't overcome, something like total confusion is going to be the end result.

If I denounced marriage, you might reasonably conclude that I had a very high opinion of celibacy, because if marriage were highly undesirable — a kind of snare and delusion — then virginity would merely be an avoidance of unpleasantness.

But if I praise marriage, as I do, then obviously I consider it heroic to sacrifice marriage and embrace celibacy out of love of God and love of fellow-men. The nobility of virginity cannot be fully seen save in the light of the splendor of matrimony.



Tuesday, January 6, is the Church's feast of the Epiphany which marks the wise men to the crib of the Infant Saviour. They represent the Gentile world which would share with the Jews the grace of the Redeemer. As members of the Gentile na-

Hunger — World's Biggest Problem

San Francisco (NC) — The man who succeeded to Prof. Arnold Toynbee's chair of history at London's Royal Institute of International Affairs took a look at the world — past and future — while visiting here and gave these opinions:

- 1) The biggest problem facing humanity is how to properly feed this planet's teeming population;
- 2) The most promising solution to the problem is the potential value of nuclear energy;
- 3) In view of the decline of the West as a potential power and the subsequent emergence of the East, it would be well to emphasize the Church's position as expressed by the late Pope Pius XII: "The Church belongs to no one civilization, is not tied to the West, but belongs to and is responsible for all."
- 4) If any lesson is to be learned from history, it is the necessity for man's humility before God.

"There is one essential lesson from history," Geoffrey Barraclough, British scholar, told an interviewer, "and that is to realize human limitations. From this we should learn great humility..."

The historian was adamant about what he sees as the world's biggest problem: "A teeming, hungry population."

"The question is how to feed them all. The answer would seem to be to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes rather than war."

"As long as so much of the world's population — mostly non-white — is kept on a bare subsistence level, there will be misery, destitution and revolution. And there'll be resentment, particularly against the whites. If not for humanity's sake, then for sheer self-interest, we should help those colored peoples to attain a human level of living."

"White predominance on the world political scene is largely a thing of the past," Mr. Barraclough maintained. "I rather liked the way one of your American Bishops put it: 'This is an age when God is playing on the black keys,'" he said.

"The common man of today is not the working man of the West — it is the colic of China and India. The working man of the West is actually, in the view of the colored peoples of the world, a member of the aristocracy — and the aristocracy sooner or later always gets hanged," he declared.

The British scholar said that the West, as a political power, is on a sharp decline, but that

Western ideas are being accepted globally. "Though they are not always the best ideas, nevertheless they're being put to use throughout Asia and Africa where Western technology is transforming underdeveloped countries."

The visitor from London said that chief among Western ideas accepted in the East is the concept that "poverty was not a part of the Divine dispensation, but a remedial evil."

He said, too, that the idea of individual freedom — often exaggerated in the West — was under close scrutiny everywhere.

"Trim away the exaggeration and you have the Christian idea with its emphasis on duties as well as rights. But so many people outside of Europe and America have seen the exaggerated form of individual freedom at work — the freedom to exploit others — that they have reacted, sometimes violently."

"I doubt very much if, under present global conditions, the economic problems of India and the rest of the Orient can be overcome by leaving it to individual initiative," he said.

Mr. Barraclough said; he

thought the reaction against some Western ideas would run their course in the East, and that the idea of the dignity of the individual man would ultimately be accepted and universally applied.

The disgruntled English historian said that "any study of the past reveals that things happen that couldn't be foreseen. The unexpected, and the unimagined, come along to change the course of history."

"One trouble with the study of history," Mr. Barraclough asserted, "is that people try to solve today's problems with answers arrived at for yesterday's problems."

No pessimist, Barraclough believes there is less evidence today of an impending nuclear war than there was in 1945.

"Life was never more worth living," he said, "and for the young there has never been a period in history with greater potential for good. There are exhilarating prospects for the job to be done in feeding the world's peoples and stamping out disease."

He dismissed the pessimism that has formed around these problems as largely the "views of disgruntled intelligentsia."

SERMONETTE

Charity Endureth All Things. I Cor. 13, 7
By THE REVEREND JAMES D. MORIARTY

When St. Ignatius, the founder of the Society and asked, "What is the shortest and the surest way to holiness and heaven?" he did not hesitate in his reply.

"It is," he answered, "to suffer several great adversities for the love of God." And then he added, "Ask this grace of God for it comprises all others."

Our crosses . . . yours and mine, may never be the weighty ones allotted to many of God's children. Our cross, please God, will never be the stinking, back-breaking cell of a communist prison or the brain washing technique of a Red jaller but each of us will have his own to carry. By resistance a loving God gives opportunity to strengthen us spiritually.

However, the emphasis on St. Paul's words should not be so much on the "endureth" as on "all." Sometimes it is easy to bear the big cross. Not only do we recognize it as such but as those about us see our plight they may offer the quasi reward of commiseration. The little crosses are hard to understand. Meeting our friends with the weight of an evident burden — showing sometimes has its own reward. The trials we bear alone and without sympathy are more difficult. It is the little "matchstick" crosses that no one recognizes which break our backs. They have a way of seeming so altogether unnecessary.

The test of true charity, then, is not to be found in the activities which attract the headline writers. Most of us are never going to do big things. We are the small fry of the world. That's precisely why St. Paul in a parting shot of his inspired description of love states, "Charity endureth ALL things."

Unity Octave Jan. 18 to 25

Blessed Virgin, Bridge For Return Of Separated

Garrison, N. Y. — (NC) — Since its inception a half-century ago, the Chair of Unity Octave, now observed world-wide, has been under the protection of the Blessed Mother, Father Titus Cranny, S.A., national director of the observance, recalled here.

The Octave is an eight-day period of prayer observed annually from January 18, feast of St. Peter's Chair at Rome, to January 25, feast of the conversion of St. Paul. Its intention is for the reunion of all Christendom and for the conversion of unbelievers.

The Octave was begun by Father Paul Francis Watson, head of the community of the Atonement friars and nuns at Graymoor Monastery here, in 1908 when it was an Anglican church community.

"When Father Paul wrote his famous letter about beginning the Octave to Spencer Jones, an Anglican clergyman in England in 1907," Father Cranny recalled, "he said that the whole movement was under the direction of Our Blessed Lady. He urged his co-religionists to join the Rosary League of Mary dedicated to Christian unity."

After the Octave was observed for the second time, Father Paul led his entire Anglican community of friars and nuns into the Catholic Church in 1909.

Father Cranny said that Father Paul while promoting the spread of the Octave, also advanced "veneration and love of the Mother of God as the principal-patroness of unity under the title of Our Lady of Atonement."

Father Paul always insisted that "Mary would win back millions of souls to the unity of the Church among the Orthodox of the East and the Protestants of the West," Father Cranny said. He added that Father Paul called her

"the Mother of Unity and Reconciliation, Our Lady of the Atonement."

"The spiritually displaced of the world constitute a wide variety of men, holding to many different degrees of separation," Father Cranny said.

"The Orthodox of the East, Russian, Greek and Syrian, and other groups always have maintained a special love for the Mother of God."

It can be quite generally said that between Catholics and Orthodox there is only one question — that of papal supremacy.

"Some Anglicans and Lutherans honor Mary; other consider devotion to her as a great obstacle to reunion. Moslems respect her and seem to accept some of the truths as held by the faithful. Some Jews honor her as a noble and holy woman; the Mother of the Great Prophet. Some deny any devotion to Mary but they show respect and esteem for her and her mission in life."

Father Cranny also reminded: "While we pray for Christian unity during the Octave of devotion to Our Lady among the faithful and the non-Catholics. The more this love spreads throughout the world the nearer is the goal of unity for all men."

China Mobilizes Clergy, Nuns

Hong Kong — (RNS) — A revealing account of how bishops, priests and sisters are being put to work in factories and fields in Communist China is given in the "patrol" Catholic publication "Review," published in Tientsin.

A copy received here by official Catholic sources confirmed earlier reports that Chinese bishops, priests, and nuns are obliged to undertake hard labor.

The "enthusiastic" account was written by a Sister Superior Sun Tsong-yi of Sienhsien. "All the Sisters as well as the bishop and priests," she wrote "are taking part in labor in the fields — from 6 a.m. to 9 p.m. At midday we take our meals in turns so as not to interrupt work. When wells are being dug supper is passed over and work continues on empty stomachs until 9:30 p.m."

"At harvest time we naturally clear our own fields. But in the spirit of charity, we also help to harvest the fields of the cooperative. We rise at 3 a.m. and then after Mass set out to work."

"During the dry season we irrigate fields. As we turn the handles of the pumps we sing songs such as 'The New Way' and 'The Lighthouse.' During rest hours we study the writings of Liu Shao-chi."

"Of course we no longer wear our religious habits. On our heads we wear a white bowl-shaped coil, just big enough to cover our short hair."

"Sister Wang Se-min, an aged Sister of more than 70 years, has a veritable passion for labor and she is consecrating her old age to socialist constructions."

"In Kaifeng capital city of Honan, so we are told, Archbishop Ho Chin-mia (unidentifiable in Hong Kong) is working at the harvest with all his priests and Sisters. He is 62 years old. He took a bundle of wheat in his hands and said: 'I am 62. Very well. I have never in my life seen such good wheat. It is only under the Party and thanks to Chairman Mao that we can obtain such good wheat.'"

Another Communist-inspired report tells of a Sister who was so "zealous for the cause" that she received a special award for her work.

The report said: "Jan Tsong,

Sister of Han Tal (in Hopesh) works even on Sundays and holidays. In production she is as good as the average male worker. She never loses any time. If she cannot work in the fields, because of rain, she goes out doing propaganda work among Catholics. She was named 'model woman worker' and decorated as such with the 'Flower of Glory.'"

How To Amaze Gay 90's

Baltimore — (NC) — What an "average intelligent man of the latter 19th century" might think if he suddenly stepped into our times was touched upon by Archbishop Francis P. Keough of Baltimore in a Christmas pastoral letter.

Such a visitor, the Archbishop said, would undoubtedly be "stupefied" amazed by our television, refrigerators, probings of outer space, advances in medicine and technology, guided missiles, mass production and automation. This would only be "momentary," the Archbishop said.

"What would truly amaze, shock and bewilder our refugees from another age," the Archbishop continued, "would be the spiritual bankruptcy of the ideals in which he had put his faith."

"The spectacle of the world reeling under the impact of the monstrous debacle of the two most destructive wars in history with half its population enslaved under a tyranny more cruel, more thoroughgoing, more irresponsible than any yet witnessed by mankind, of a world beset by hunger, unrest and insecurity — this sight would indeed leave him aghast."

Farsighted

"Father Paul" asked little Tommy, "why do you need three pairs of glasses?" "One pair is for outdoors," explained the good Father. "One pair is for indoors. And the third pair is to look for the other two."