

Sacred Heart Year

Prayer League

By REV. LOUIS J. HOHMAN

This week we begin our consideration of what Our Holy Father, Pius XII, declared to be "the perfect form of devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus."

In another place he refers to it as "a perfect form of the Christian life."

We refer to the Apostleship of Prayer, the League of the Sacred Heart.

It would be unfair to label the Apostleship as an organization. Its organizational aspects are merely incidental to its real meaning. As an organization it merely shows the unity of the millions who are endeavoring to live its spirit.

Let me try to suggest to you the foundations of the Apostleship of Prayer: God made us and keeps us in existence. We belong to him entirely, soul and body. Our purpose in life then is to be servants of God, to give ourselves back to him. We must do this not by compulsion or in fear of God as a tyrant, but lovingly, because God is not only our Lord and Master but he is our greatest good.

When Jesus Christ came to earth he came to redeem us. He did it not by force but by giving himself, body and soul, to his Heavenly Father. "I have come to do the will of God." His was a perfect dedication and sacrifice of every facet of his being to the Father. And it was this act of love, infinite love for his Heavenly Father and for us whom he came to redeem.

Sin is essentially a rebellion against God and his Will. It is a declaration of independence from God, which is an absurdity.

If we are Christians as we say we are, then it behooves us to follow Christ. As he gave himself to God, so we should give ourselves to God by union with him.

This must include every thought, word, and deed, as the morning Offering puts it, all our prayers, work, joys and sufferings.

Most of us remember back to our primary school days when Sister used to pass out the Apostleship of Prayer leaflets each month. As far as we were concerned, the important thing was which saint I had on the back of my leaflet. The morning offering was merely a prayer with which we began the school day.

To the adults who read this and remember thus, rid your minds of such ideas. The morning Offering can be for you now so much more meaningful. It can, in fact, transform your daily lives if you so will.

The Apostleship of Prayer was founded at the Jesuit Seminary in Yala, France. The seminarians looked impatiently toward the day when they would be working in mission fields. Often they expressed this to their spiritual director, Father Gasterlet. He told them they could be of immeasurable help to the mission effort even in their seminary days. How? By offering everything they did each day to God in a spirit of love.

By this they would be building not only their own spiritual lives, but would win countless graces for missionaries in the field. From here it spread to other seminaries and colleges and finally to the laity at large. Today the Apostleship of Prayer numbers over 40,000,000 enrolled members; almost ten percent of the total Catholics in the whole world.

In the weeks to come, we will attempt to present the Apostleship in such a way that you can understand how it can be made a perfect way of life; how it can be a powerful force for good in bringing souls to Christ; how it can express most perfectly your love for Jesus Christ and lead you to very intimate union with him.

Weigh-In For Champ's Son

Rockville Center — (RNS) — World's heavyweight champion Floyd Patterson admires his first-born son, Floyd II, as the baby is weighed by Sister Mary Paul, superintendent of the nursery at Mercy Hospital here. Young Floyd tipped the scales at eight pounds, two ounces. The Pattersons also have two daughters. The heavyweight champ is a convert to Catholicism.

SERMONETTE

READ A GOOD BOOK

by the Rev. James D. Moriarty

The low state of the book business is emphasized by Curtis G. Benjamin, the president of McGraw-Hill. In his assertion that the annual farm value of the peanut crop in the U.S. was \$147 million, while publishers received only \$100 million for their crop. More humbling perhaps, is another comparison: We Americans spend as much on dog food as on books.

Granted that today, there is a lot of paper and ink put between two covers which might be better used if it were planted like peanut seeds or fed to the dogs; but there are a great number of good books published, too. Have we read one lately?

With home fast becoming a place where the family isn't or if the family is at home the members are crowded around a TV attempting to confine all conversation to the commercials' time, it is almost as hard to read a book as it is to write one.

Strange isn't it that we insist that our children must be educated, . . . they must attend school until a certain age whether they want to or not and then we spend more money stuffing pennies into our mouths than we spend putting ideas into our minds.

We are a literate people. Statistics will prove that our rate is as high as any country of equal size in the world. Maybe instead of teaching our children to read we should teach them how to get the most out of TV, or how to bowl at an umpire at a ball game, or how to amiably and gracefully absorb double shots of bourbon over the period of an evening and avoid getting hung over the next day. These would be much more practical preparations for the mode of life that we are allowing to be foisted upon us.

How long has it been since you have read a good book? I don't mean the Reader's Digest condensation or some review but actually relived the experiences of the author completely.

The per-capita investment in books in the U.S. is about 80 cents. 50% more than this we spend on peanuts. We are aware that it is possible to do both at the same time, . . . to read a book and to eat peanuts. We may prefer to do one at a time. But if it becomes necessary to make a choice, . . . to get one or the other out of our lives, may we make a recommendation.

Let's give up peanuts.

Church Without Religion

Washington — (RNS) — A congregation organized in 1945 by an ex-paratrooper chaplain with a nucleus of ex-GIs has opened a refined "coffee house" in the Mount Pleasant northwest area to draw non-religious intellectuals to the Church through cultural activities. It is called "The Father's House."

The Rev. N. Gordon Cosby, 40-year-old pastor of the non-denominational, interracial Church of the Saviour, said the coffee house idea occurred to him last year after he had addressed a cold, unresponsive congregation in a New York State church. He went to bed that night feeling "beat," he recalled, but a boisterous crowd in a tavern beneath his hotel window kept him from sleeping.

"Then I realized there was more warmth and fellowship in that tavern than there was in that church," said Mr. Cosby. "I think Christ would have been more at home in that tavern."

The Father's House, where most of the painting and other work was done by members of the Church of the Saviour, "is designed as a place where thoughtful people of any belief can relax, hear music, look at art, and just talk," Pastor Cosby explained.

Poetry is read several times a week and guests eat by candlelight. There are paintings, photographs and sculpture by young artists attending the talks. There is no direct suggestion of religion, not even a cross.

Mr. Cosby, who led a small Baptist congregation near Alexandria, Va., before becoming an Air Force chaplain in World War II, has a reputation of seeking non-traditional channels to spread the message of Christianity.

Highway Doooms Four Parishes

Philadelphia — (RNS) — Pennsylvania State Highway Department officials have thus far turned a deaf ear to petitions of parishioners and clergy of four long-established Roman Catholic churches in South Philadelphia.

They are protesting the proposed route of a Delaware River expressway that would cut wide swaths through an old residential area of brick row homes, a majority of which are occupied by members of the four Catholic parishes.

Lourdes Cure Reported

Lourdes — (RNS) — Mme. Jeanette Prat (above) of Ales, France, who has been almost totally paralyzed for the past three years, was reported able to walk freely after visiting the shrine of Our Lady of Lourdes here. The 38-year-old woman is shown in the Lourdes hospital where she is undergoing medical observation.

Prelate Named In Red Area

Belgrade — (RNS) — Titular Bishop Maksimilijan Drosnik of Aletto was named by Pope John XIII as Bishop of Maribor, Yugoslavia, where he had served since 1944 as Apostolic Administrator. The See is located in an area of the strongly Catholic region of Slovenia near the Austrian border.

Considerable prominence was given the appointment in the official press of this Communist country. Observers saw in the new appointment, together with that of Archbishop Franjo Soper of Zagreb, Croatia, following the death of Alojzius Cardinal Stepinac last February, an indication of some improvement in the tense relations that have existed between the Catholic Church and the Tito regime.

President Signs

Laws Combat Mailed Smut

Washington — (NC) — President Eisenhower has signed into law two measures designed to give the Post Office Department greater power to combat mail order obscenity.

A third bill, which would establish a presidential commission on the obscenity problem, has passed the Senate and is pending before a House committee. It is expected to win approval when the House reconvenes on August 18.

THE NEW LAWS signed by President Eisenhower (July 14) have the following purposes:

—One authorizes the Post Office to seek a court order imposing mail penalties on persons believed to be distributing obscene matter, pending a department hearing on the case.

—The other gives statutory status to the position of Post Office judicial officer, who ordinarily hands down the final departmental decision in obscenity cases.

Both bills were originally introduced in the House by Rep. Kathryn E. Granahan of Pennsylvania. They have been endorsed by Post Office spokesmen and by many organizations and individuals concerned with the obscenity problem.

Award For Vocations

New York — (RNS) — A Brooklyn couple, five of whose 13 children are nuns, were cited by Fordham University's ninth annual Institute on Religious and Secular Vocations here as "models of an upright, industrious and pious life."

They are Mr. and Mrs. Thomas H. Johnson, both 73 years old.



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Paper Predicts Castro Regime To Crumble

Rome — (RNS) — A leading Roman Catholic daily predicted that the Castro regime in Cuba will shortly crumble from within.

El Pueblo, referring to the United States, said that Cuba "cannot afford the luxury of biting the hand that has been helping to sustain its economic life."

Meanwhile, it said, Cuba's switch to Communism has, in effect, separated it from the community of American peoples.

"Cuba has ceased to be our brother," El Pueblo declared. "It is now an enemy—no more our own Cuba."

It underscored the traditional spiritual and blood ties between the Cuban people and the rest of Latin America, but said the government of Havana and Latin America are destroying this relationship.

However, it added, Soviet strategists are endeavoring to convince the United States and other American countries that any attempt to prevent Cuba's rapid advance toward a "people's democracy" such as that of Rumania or Poland might lead to war.

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