

Alert Catholics Read The Catholic Press

(Bishop Zuroweste, Episcopal Chairman of the Press Department of the National Catholic Welfare Conference, has issued the following statement for the annual observance of February as Catholic Press Month.)

By BISHOP ALBERT ZUROWESTE

The theme of this year's Catholic Press Month "Alert Catholics Read the Catholic Press."

We have chosen this topic to emphasize the importance of Catholics keeping abreast of current events that affect their daily lives and leave an impact on the mission of the Church. The Catholic Press not only records the history of the Church as it occurs but also expounds Catholic Doctrine in the light of everyday happenings and defends the Church against attacks from her enemies.

Through the facilities of the Catholic Press, one is educated to see and know the Church in action.

Since modern communication means and travel have brought the entire world into a compact universe, educational, social, economic, political and religious problems are conscientiously considered and analyzed by the Catholic Press in the United States.

An alert Catholic thus is made aware of popular doctrines and discussions as they are brought into proper focus by the writers of the Catholic Press. Many disturbances and upheavals in far away lands affect the Church and her children in our own country.

It would be most difficult, if not impossible, for the Catholic who does not read the Catholic Press to understand the impact of these daily world happenings.

An important facet of the Catholic Press too frequently overlooked is its influence upon the spiritual growth and moral health of its readers. No one can ignore the importance of this quality in the Catholic Press. It is one of its essential functions because the Catholic is daily exposed to a diet of materialistic reading that is completely contrary to Catholic thought and teaching. It permeates almost every column of certain popular magazines and books.

Catholic magazines counteract the evil effects of such by supplying much good spiritual reading in a modern and attractive style. Without it, one's mental vision is clouded and his moral behavior distorted by writings and programs via air waves that ignore spiritual vitality and ridicule Christian morality.

A Catholic who does not read the Catholic Press deprives himself of spiritual food necessary to healthful and virtuous living.

The most successful means of combatting irreligious newspapers, immoral books and literature is to develop a taste for good reading matter. The Catholic Press supplies this type of reading material.

It is generally agreed that many frightening crimes committed by young criminals today had their birth in the pages of cheap literature. As the Cardinal of Milan said recently: "These are the exponents of ideas which offend



Christian principles. They are the vehicles of infection and of moral and spiritual poisoning. They are not suitable in the hands of Catholics who by having them give bad example and create a mentality harmful to moral resistance and order."

The Catholic Press also strives for a better understanding of the Church's teaching by those outside the Church. The Catholic is more fully enlightened in religious doctrine and practice by reading Catholic literature and, therefore, is mentally prepared to answer the inquiries of his Non-Catholic neighbor.

Further, through the cooperation of the Catholic Press with the general press and particularly through news releases of the Bureau of Information, articles and background materials are forwarded to the general press, thus enabling the daily newspaper editor to have at hand pertinent information on subjects affecting the Church. This provides for a fair and comprehensive reporting of many important issues of a religious nature that become newsworthy daily.

Through this Bureau, which is a separate office of the N.C.W.C., cooperation is being developed between the general and religious press which leads to a more factual editing of events with religious overtones.

The Catholic Press Association, whose membership comprises all working members of the Catholic Press enables the members to aid one another in technical, professional and communication problems so that their work may be improved, thus giving subscribers the benefit of a religious press comparable with the general press. Too often the value and importance of this Association is

not understood or recognized.

Through this organization, a bond of union is established and a complete comprehension of the Apostolate of the Press is encouraged and developed.

In this year's Christmas message, Pope John gave the Catholic Press further inspiration: "This message of greeting," he said, "is above all a solemn call to live in accordance with the fourfold duty of thinking, honoring, saying and doing what is true."

To this call the members of the Catholic Press pledge themselves during Catholic Press Month. The purpose and aim of their endeavors is to expound truth and in or-

der to do so effectively, they must think, honor, say and do what is true. Truth is not always popular and, therefore, its enemies are many and powerful.

In follow the mandate of the Holy Father, the Catholic Press does not cater to whims of the public, does not give what people want just because they want it, but rather strives to give what its readers need—truth. Constantly we warn Catholics and all Americans of the danger of communism, materialism and pagan practices. We urge them to arise from their apathy and to recognize the danger that surrounds them.

We plead for religious

fidelity and moral responsibility. These are not always popular topics but they are the meat of the diet which is prescribed by the Catholic Press.

The Catholic Press further awakens the Catholic to problems of other peoples and places. It opens the shades that surround him and lets in the light so that he can see the evil of communism, the tragedy of persecuted brethren, the terror of dictatorship, the injustice of segregation, the lethargy of millions to the plight of the unfortunate.

It supplants a parochial outlook with Catholic, or universal, taste. All this is done by expounding truth in the spirit of charity, thereby informing and educating its readers to their responsibilities toward their God, their country, their Church and their neighbor.

As we observe Catholic Press Month of 1961, we look back with pride on the faithfulness and dedication of our members to the Apostolate of the Press. Not content, however, with the achievements of the past, we fully realize our responsibilities and are determined to improve our products technically and to strive for more professional competence.

In the words of Pope John, "we must move forward, laying the foundations of a new 'a,' exercising our journalistic endeavors, 'in the light of the Gospel and of the living and perennial teaching of the Church."

During the month of February, we rededicate ourselves to the Apostolate of the Press under the patronage of our patron, St. Francis de Sales, confident of his heavenly intercession that our efforts will not be in vain and that truth, honor and fidelity may prosper and eventually conquer the evils so prevalent in society today.

The Catholic Press is a powerful force for the preservation of all that is good, honorable and right; it will continue to serve and in return asks the generous support and loyalty of its Catholic audience.



Bishop Kearney last night attended a Fordham University rite honoring Cardinal Spellman of New York, a 1911 graduate of the famed Jesuit school. Prelates and alumni paid tribute to the noted Cardinal "a great religious leader and a great American citizen." This photo shows the Cardinal in a 1948 visit to the Bishop of Rochester.

'I'll Call Him Francis'

When Ellen Spellman looked at her baby in a little New England town some 70 years ago, she probably did not consider it a very momentous decision when she said, "I'll call him Francis." Just which of the famous saints who bore the name was in her mind, we do not know.

What we do know is that the choice seems to have been inspired, for in the apostolate of that son there have been combined all the special virtues that marked the three outstanding saints that bore the name; the little Man of Assisi, the great de Sales of Geneva and the patron of missionary zeal, Francis Xavier.

Combining the Christian simplicity of purpose, devotion to the poor, the sick and the orphaned that marked the life of the Saint of Assisi, with the culture and pastoral zeal of the great Francis de Sales, he has still found time for a challenging and often dangerous apostolate as the Shepherd in Christ of our Armed Forces, so like the adventurous apostolate of the greatest of the missionaries, Francis Xavier.

Fordham University Alumni do themselves and their Alma Mater great honor when they pause to salute this graduate of 50 years ago; for this great priest has brought to their Alma Mater the credit of giving to the Church in America the man who is universally acknowledged as the outstanding churchman of our generation, a great priest and a great American. The name Francis has always had an honored place in the history of our Church. It now has a unique place in the hearts of Fordham men.

So let us say that the little mother in Whitman, years ago, probably never realized that she was a prophetess when she said: "I'll call him Francis."

+ J.E.K.

SERMONETTE

ACCENTUATE THE POSITIVE

By Rev. James D. Moriarty

Mabel, age 9, was spending the summer with her family at a large resort hotel. In a huge central parlor there was a grand piano. Often during the day Mabel would run to the piano and pound out a senseless little tune which she had learned at school. With each repetition the miserable music would send the other guests scampering for cover like so many mice from a hungry tom cat.

One day a talented professor of music registered at the hotel. He, too, saw and heard the child at the piano. He also watched the nerve wracked guests fleeing the daily ordeal. One morning when Mabel began pounding the ivories in deafening discord the professor stood behind her and put one arm around each side of her. He chordeed with Mabel. And her simple little tune became the melody of a highly embellished rendition. Even when she struck a discordant note he changed it to harmony. As the beautiful music carried outside, the guests who had so lately fled returned to listen. They realized for the first time how beautiful Mabel's melody was if it were properly and intelligently executed.

We live in an age when juvenile delinquency is a reality. Discordant youth, daily make the headlines. Problems of young people become vexing and nerve wracking for many. We could learn much from the help given Mabel by the professor.

When we read about or experience the escapades, serious and otherwise of our teen-agers today, instinct prompts us to run for cover in self preservation. This is not our problem. These kids have parents. This is the job of the authorities. Why don't they put the kids away somewhere and make them behave.

The simplest solution for the guests at the hotel would have been to forbid Mabel to use the piano. But this might have caused hard feelings. The easiest way then was to get up and walk away from the problem. This child was none of their business. They didn't want to get involved. And so they left.

But the real solution was to help the child make something of what she was attempting to do by filling in what she lacked.

It takes intelligence. It takes study. But it's worth the try.



The Bell Tower



• "HURRY UP at the blackboard, John. Your time is almost up," said the teacher. "Just a minute, please," replied the pupil. "I haven't gotten the answer out of my chalk yet."

• KINDERGARTNER: "Mother, what will I wear to school tomorrow?" Mother: "Tomorrow is Saturday. You won't go to school." Kindergartner: "What's the matter? Have I been fired?"

Reapings at Random

Rocky Debate Ahead For Federal School Aid

By GERARD E. SHERRY
Editor, Central California Register

One of the most controversial pieces of legislation to be faced by Congress in the coming months is Federal Aid to Education. Already it has generated both heat and light.

Inasmuch as the first Catholic President is now in office and is pushing for educational legislation which will omit benefits for private and religious schools, we must obviously tread very warily. Enemies of the Church, both in and out of Congress, have become extra vigilant. The overworked cry of separation of Church and State has been constantly repeated in the past few weeks.

More recently Francis Cardinal Spellman, Archbishop of New York, charged that the administration's proposals on legislation are blatantly discriminatory and threaten "thought control" for millions of citizens. He said parents and children will be deprived of freedom of mind and freedom of religion guaranteed by the Constitution.

The administration's recommendations to Congress are expected to call for a \$9,300,000,000 program of Federal Aid to Education with \$5,800,000 allotted to public elementary and high schools. No Catholic schools, or schools of other religious denomination are expected to be included in the proposals.

This is discriminatory against religious schools, all the more so when we consider that Catholics, Protestants and Jews who finance their own schools are still expected to pay the same taxes as other citizens who benefit from Federal Aid to public schools. Indeed, the Catholic school system has some 1,000,000

students out of a total parochial and private school population of 6,800,000. The Lutherans come next with 158,000. Obviously these privately supported schools save all tax payers millions of dollars a year in local, State and Federal funds.

Despite the obvious discrimination in the proposed Federal Aid to Education, I think it clear our Bishops soundly support the Constitutional principle of the separation of Church and State. They would resent as we all should, any Federal encroachment on parental or Church rights in the education of children. However, there are many things which we can rightly demand from the Federal Government which do not affect separation of Church and State.

We can demand assistance in relation to school transportation, especially where such transportation to public schools passes private schools on route; then there is the school luncheon programs, and health and medical services; all these things can be given private schools without rocking the Constitutional boat.

There is also the question of scholarship grants and student loans, an area where Federal discrimination is definitely being practiced.

Take for instance the National Defense Education Act. It provides some 5,500 graduate fellowships with grants up to \$2,400 a year with the addition of \$400 for each dependent. These fellowships give the student tremendous freedom to pursue courses on all subjects in both secular and Church conducted colleges. Direct grants can also be obtained, under the Act, for graduate schools, includ-

ing religious ones, to help pay the cost of educating those receiving grants.

Jesuit Father Virgil C. Blum of Marquette University points out that Congress, while encouraging the graduate student to think for himself, in no way intrudes on the sacred precincts of the students' minds by telling them what to do and what to think. But he adds:

"Congressional violations of freedom of mind and freedom of religion, of academic freedom in the pursuit of truth, are crudely exemplified, however, in NDEA student-loan and institute provisions. A qualified student may borrow \$5,000 to finance his education, regardless of the school he attends. If on graduating, the student decides to teach in a public school, one half of his loan, plus interest, will be cancelled. If, however, he decides to teach in a private school, he must repay the entire loan, plus interest."

There are many other instances in the National Defense Education Act which give the impression that private school teachers and their students are second-class citizens. And, as Father Blum points out, "these second-class citizens are expected to shoulder the duties and burdens of citizenship, but solely because of their color or religious beliefs they are denied many of the general welfare benefits."

There is something else, too, which should be borne in mind. Cardinal Spellman's comments have drawn responses from several Protestant and Jewish spokesmen who contend that what His Eminence is advocating is a violation of the Church-State separation concept. These statements by Non-Catholic religious leaders almost all address themselves

to the issue of direct aid to parochial schools, although the Cardinal stressed he was speaking of aid to children attending these schools rather than aid to the schools themselves.

This is the essential point. In order to preserve the autonomy of our parochial and private schools we do not want direct Federal Aid. In other words we don't want the Government to provide the money for the building or the teachers, or for the text books. If we did want this, then we would be sounding the death bells of Catholic education. Federal aid is nearly always accompanied by Federal interference.

But what is to stop the Government from directly aiding the students of private schools? After all, they are entitled to as many benefits as those in public schools. According to our Constitution there are no second class citizens in these United States. Hence, we don't expect the Government, especially, to treat us as if we were.

Catholic parents and educators should get well acquainted with this crucial problem. We should all find out what is involved, then we should let our congressmen and Senators know just how we feel. There is no use sitting back until after the legislation has been agreed upon. If we don't like the final measure that's approved, and we haven't let our voice be heard, we have no right to complain.

We have a vital stake in the matter. We must therefore become active and articulate citizens. This is in order that our right will be protected and our educational system furthered in the interest of all people. We will discuss this question in further detail next week.

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MOST REV. JAMES E. KEARNEY, D.D., President
HEAD OFFICE: 25 So. St. - Phone 5-1111 - Rochester, N. Y.
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