

Five Scenes in Holy Week

(Continued from page 1)

The guards dragged Jesus to the third scene of the unfolding drama. It was now about 2 a.m. on Good Friday. The guards with their swords and clubs, with lanterns and torches and with their Victim, came to the house of Caiaphas the high priest.

The chief plotters needed to frame a charge punishable by death to hang on the Victim when the trial began in the Roman governor's court in the morning. They needed something to impress Pilate—a plot to overthrow Rome perhaps? What was His plan? Who were His accomplices? Jesus stated simply, "I have spoken openly before the world . . . nothing that I have said was said in secret." His calm self control infuriated His captors and baffled them. They vented their rage by insulting Him, mocking Him and tormenting Him.

The Romans took over the Prisoner to open the fourth scene. At the fortress-palace, the Son of God confronted the representative of the emperor. The serene dignity of Jesus made a deep impression on this heathen ruler.

Pilate earlier little cared whether a member of this subject tribe lived or died and he already agreed to a quick trial and sentence. The Romans crucified those condemned to death; our Lord knew from the beginning this would be the kind of death facing Him.

Pilate, however, now upset the plans of the plotters and found "no cause" for punishment, so he proposed a compromise, "I will scourge Him and then He shall go free."

The compromise meant only added torture. Jesus was beaten over the whole surface of His naked body, others often died in

similar beatings. This time of torment gave the plotters a chance to concoct the charge of treason and warn Pilate they would appeal to Rome if he failed to execute a rebel.

The Roman received a final warning. His wife (did she hear in her dream the world reciting the Creed "suffered under Pontius Pilate?") tells him Jesus is an "innocent man" but the shouts of the crowd prevail, "Salve — crucify Him!"

And now the final scene — the way of the cross, a journey of hardly a third of a mile but one that bridged heaven and earth.

Less than half the way was down hill into a valley and then up the steep incline to the bare, limestone hill just west of Jerusalem's city wall. The upright beam of the cross was already fixed in its place at the summit of the hill, like a huge spike pointing into a clouded sky.

The cross beam was carried coolie fashion lashed across the Victim's shoulders.

While the executioners pounded the nails through the hands and feet, Jesus faced to heaven soon to be open again to souls redeemed by His Precious Blood. Except for the pierced flesh, no other damage is done a crucified body — it writhes in nauseating pain, cramp and suffocation tearing the flesh even more. The Romans lashed a body to a cross to prevent it from being ripped free in agony.

Darkness shrouded this final scene and in this eerie twilight in mid-afternoon, the Saviour completes His mission with a clear spoken, "Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit."

He bowed His head in victory, not defeat. He knew that Good Friday would soon give way to Easter Sunday.

Over Zealous Wife Feels Responsibility She Has To Solve All World Problems

By FATHER JOHN L. THOMAS, S. J.
Sociology Professor St. Louis University

Will you define a woman's responsibility to home and community? My wife can't seem to make up her mind. She tries to be a good mother but is constantly involved in church, school, and community projects, with the result she's overworked and sometimes neglects me and the children. I admire her zeal — she says somebody must do this work — yet she can't strike a happy medium. Maybe you can suggest some norms to guide her. My ideas don't seem to get through, though she means well enough.



The situation you describe, Ed, is becoming all too common particularly among the present generation of sincere, earnest young mothers. We may admire their unselfish spirit of dedication yet wonder whether they adequately estimate their own strength and resources. Perhaps it will help to analyze the situation further before attempting to offer some general norms to serve as guide-lines.

In the first place not all modern young mothers are bothered by this dilemma. Some pay no attention to their extra-familial responsibilities. Church, school, and community projects are left up to others.

Their philosophy seems to be: "Let Murt do it; we haven't got time, and she seems to enjoy it, anyway!" At least on this score you have something to be thankful for — your wife recognizes her wider responsibilities.

Second, young mothers are constantly being urged to cooperate in church, school, and community organizations. Their responsibilities in this regard are generally defined as their role in Catholic action. Particularly in school they were taught that women have serious social obligations in the modern world.

Those who have a well developed sense of responsibility consequently find it difficult to reconcile the conflicting claims of marriage and community. Although it may appear something of a paradox, even young women trained in Catholic schools sometimes fall to identify the routine, often monotonous tasks involved in housekeeping and mothering as essentially constitutive of their major role and thus fall to give them priority.

Taking care of husband,

home, and children seems far cry from the ringing challenge to Christians to a secular culture!

Third, there seems to be more projects now available to women at the parish, school, and community levels. Organized services have multiplied, while modern means of travel and communication render extensive participation and involvement easily accessible to most. Telephone and car make distance no longer a barrier.

Fourth, although it may be difficult to decide whether modern appliances have shortened or merely transformed women's work in the home, some efficient young mothers always manage to have time and energy to spare. Because of past training and native ability, women differ greatly in this regard. Unfortunately, their degree of efficiency in the home is not always positively correlated with their tendency to get involved outside. Indeed one sometimes feels that these extra-familial activities represent something of an escape.

Finally, modern young mothers are accustomed to considerable social activity

and involvement from their youth. Many have held jobs before marriage and now find "domestication" rather confining. They love husband, home, and children, but also experience the desire for wider social contacts and recognition. Unless they subordinate this personal need to the prior claims of marriage, they may rationalize their excessive participation in outside activities as zeal or exemplary social consciousness.

It would have been easy to say, "Tell her a mother's place is in the home," but how would she reconcile this with what she has been taught, what she reads or hears in sermons, or what she seriously feels need to be done?

The basis for the first guiding principle is the hierarchy of obligations she has accepted in marriage. The adequate fulfillment of her responsibilities to husband and children must be given priority over all others. This norm implies considerable relativity in application. Some women have more ability and energy than others; some families make greater demands than others; and the degree and scope of her responsibilities will vary with time.

Finally, if she's frequently too weary to be a good companion to her husband and children, if she must resort to tranquilizers or other drugs, it's a clear sign she must limit her outside activities at once. Remind her that prudence is a virtue — God wants a "reasonable service."

Brazil Debates UN China Spot

By FATHER CONALL O'LEARY, O.F.M.

Rio De Janeiro — (NC) — Brazil's new President, Janio Quadros, has shown a desire for cordial relations with the Church during the short time he has been in office.

Since his inauguration on January 31, the 43-year-old chief of state has assured the nation's bishops of his vital interest in Church problems and said he hopes to launch a vast campaign to lift the moral level of the country.

On one point, however, there has been disagreement. The President has been sharply criticized by Jaime Cardinal de Barros Camara for announcing that Brazil will vote to discuss Red China's admission to the United Nations. The Archbishop of Rio de Janeiro has also criticized President Quadros' plan to resume diplomatic relations with communist countries.

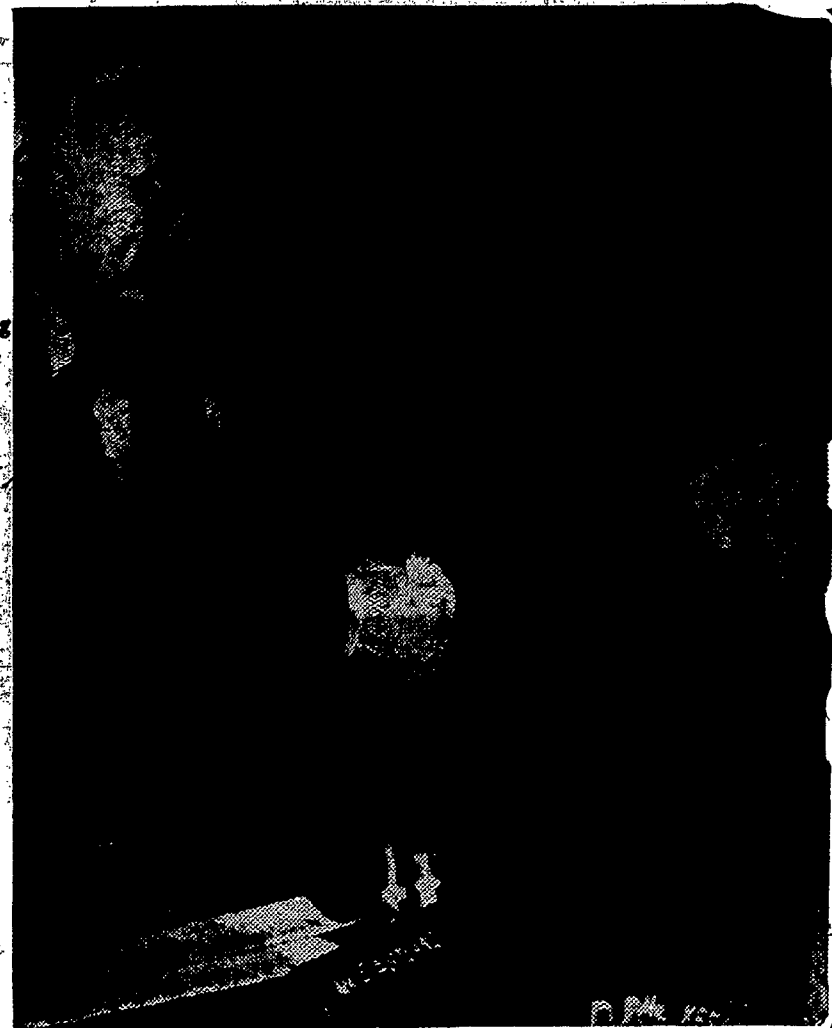
The Cardinal commented in a radio address: "The Catholic martyrs would turn over in their graves if the largest Catholic country in the world were to support the communists."

But the President's first months in office have been characterized by the courteous attention he has shown to the bishops who have had meetings with him.

He conferred with Auxiliary Bishop Helder Pessoa Camara of Rio de Janeiro who was seeking the release from customs of food supplies sent to Brazil's poor by Catholics of the U.S. through Catholic Relief Services — National Catholic Welfare Conference.

Red Plots Told

Senator Kenneth Keating of Rochester of the Senate Internal Security subcommittee thanks Father Joseph F. Thorning, professor of Latin American history at Marymount College, Arlington, Va., and associate editor of "World Affairs" for his testimony on current Communist-front developments in Mexico and Cuba.



Peace Meet Castro Front

Washington — (RNS) — A Catholic priest warned here the "Latin American Conference for National Sovereignty, Economic Emancipation, and Peace" held March 5-9 in Mexico City under the leadership of General Lazaro Cardenas, ex-President of Mexico, was organized by the Communist Party and represents a dangerous development south of the border.

Father Joseph F. Thorning, professor of Latin American History at Marymount College, Arlington, Va., and associate editor of "World Affairs," told the Senate Internal Security subcommittee that it was a "continuation of many other Soviet-oriented peace congresses" held in the past 12 years in various world capitals.

Father Thorning, known as the Padre of the Americas, because the House of Representatives annually invites him to serve as guest chaplain on Pan American Day, said that General Cardenas is playing an "ominous and ever-expanding role in a wide variety of Communist-front activities."

He read to the Senators a ten-year record showing that Cardenas, whom he accused of conspiring to turn Mexico into

States and by support for Panama's efforts to obtain control of the Panama Canal.

Throughout the conference, a key figure, said Father Thorning, was Senora Vilma Espin de Castro, the Communist wife of Raul Castro, brother of Fidel.

Major purposes of the conference, he said, were to win support for Castro in Latin America and "launch a new Communist offensive against the democratic governments of the Western Hemisphere."

He called attention to the importance which Radio Peeping attached to the departure of a Red Chinese delegation to the Mexican conference.

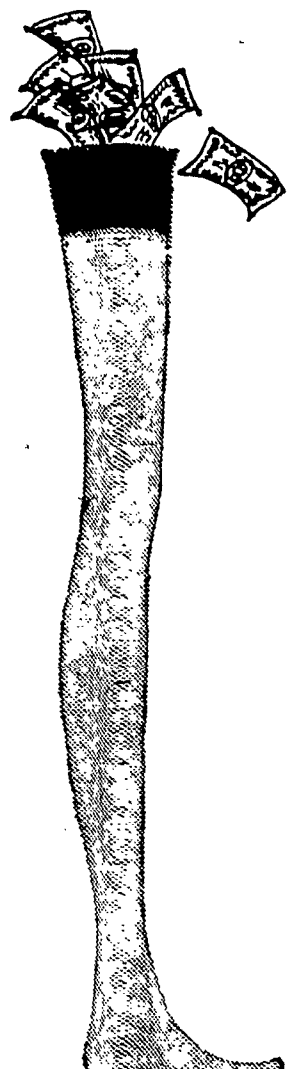
"It is fair to draw certain conclusions from the evidence," Father Thorning told the Internal Security group, adding:

"With the failure of the proposed conference of non-aligned nations of Latin America which was to have taken place in 1960, Castro and his Soviet allies found themselves isolated from the main body of the American Republics. The March 5-9 conference was intended to bridge that gap with the aid of General Cardenas, who played a strategic role in that effort."

Prelate's Car Auctioned

Warsaw — (RNS) — Local state authorities ordered an American-made automobile belonging to Bishop Eugeniusz Baziak, Apostolic Administrator of the Cracow diocese in southern Poland, to be sold at auction to cover tax arrears unpaid by the diocese.

The action followed new heavy tax impositions on all church-owned property by the Communist government.



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