

### Seminarian Prayer

Vatican City — (NC) — Pope John XXIII has composed the following prayer to be recited by the world's seminarians to Our Lady of Trust, whose picture is enshrined in the Roman Seminary where the Pope studied:

"Oh Holy Virgin, Oh Our Lady of Trust, benign and pious Mother of seminarians of the whole world, you cheered with your presence in the cenacle the first Apostles of the Gospel gathered together in sweet and moving expectancy of the Divine Spirit. Look upon us now pulsing with the same expectancy of Grace and of holy sanctifying priestly ardor.

"In the same way as you were star of our morning, remain always the serene joy of our vocation, protector of our purity, flame of our good work in the service of Jesus, of the souls redeemed by His blood and by His Church, sometimes suffering but always unconquered and glorious.

"What joy for each one and all of us together, seminarians of the whole world, to be able to repeat 'opus tuum nos O Maria.' What exaltation it is to add in every event of our life, always, always: We do not fear anything because you, Oh Mary, are and will be our trust, our mother 'in seivum et in eternum.'"



## At What Age Should Children Start Going To Sunday Mass?

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

At what age should children be brought to Mass on Sunday? I'm the mother of two small children and am expecting my third very shortly. My oldest is a girl 27 months of age, and although she repeats her prayers after me, I've never had her in church. Some of my friends say I'm wrong, still other say I'm doing right. Our church does not have a "crying room," and I doubt whether my baby could keep quiet during the whole Mass. What do you think?

Well, Barbara, I don't know whether your little darling could sit still through a whole Mass, but I know a good many who can! The question of when children are old enough to be taken to Mass receives many different answers today as in the past. At what age should a child know how to behave in church? Obviously, the answer will depend in large measure on the child's training and the kind of behavior judged proper in church.

Some national groups are very tolerant of young children. They don't expect them to act as adults — even in church. Others train their children so carefully that they are never a problem when in the presence of elders.

Modern Americans present something of a paradox in this regard — they advocate "permissive" training in the home yet tend to be quite intolerant of the resulting behavior in public. Any parent who has had the experience of taking an obstreperous youngster down the aisle during church service knows what I mean.

Some parents wait until their children attend school — are preparing for First Holy Communion before they bring them to Mass. They insist that children are too young to get anything out of church before this time and will only be a source of disturbance to their parents and other worshippers. Such parents really sidestep the basic issue.

Besides placing the entire burden of "church-breaking" on the youngsters, the teachers, they ignore the significance for the child of sharing in group prayer and worship. Parents have no right to postpone this experience until the child is old enough for school. It should become a vital part of the rapidly developing child's "world" much earlier.

Studies show that many parents sadly underestimate the young child's ability to grasp and appreciate religious truths and practices. Perhaps because religion does not constitute a vital element in more the religious needs of the young child and hand over almost the entire religious training of their children to the school. The deleterious effects of this parental neglect are obvious.

Children come to identify religion with the school rather than with the whole of life; and they fail to regard their parents as religious guides or leaders, with the result that parental authority lacks necessary moral sanction particularly among teenagers.

From the whole tone and context of your letter, Barbara, I gather that your children will receive adequate religious training at home. Your oldest is a little over two years old. Should you take her to Mass?

I think it would be better to start with short visits to the church. If possible, choose a time when you can take her around the church, showing her the tabernacle, main altar, statues of the Blessed Mother, St. Joseph, and so forth. On such occasions, and also at prayer, remember that a young child's span of attention is brief. Don't be surprised if she is easily distracted or becomes restless after a short time.

A child learns by imitation. If you explain things to her in a whisper and move quietly, she will learn what kind of behavior is expected of her in church. With a little prep-

aration even very small tots quickly sense that "church" is a place that is different. I once watched an elderly little Mexican woman, probably a grandmother, take eight or nine wide-eyed youngsters on a church tour.

Pausing briefly before tabernacle, statue, and shrine, she would whisper a short explanation, recite a little prayer, and then move on. Filled with awe, her little flock followed without a sound, yet they were typical youngsters, for a few minutes later I heard them laughing and chattering out in the street.

A short, colorful ceremony like Benediction provides an excellent service for starting actual participation. Tell your daughter a little about the service, sit where she can see the altar, don't give her a prayerbook to bang around, and act as if you take for granted that she will imitate you and behave properly.

In general it is poor psychology to give any indication that you fear she will misbehave. Be positive in your approach. Explain what you're going to do and how you're going to act, but don't suggest things not to do. Make no threats or promises to encourage good behavior, for this would imply that you really expected her not to imitate you.

After she is four, she should be able to sit through a low Mass. Children differ greatly, of course, but most four-year-olds can be taught to remain reasonably quiet for thirty minutes. At least, they should be given a chance.

### Church-Backed Adoption Bill

Santa Fe — (RNS) — Major bills supported by New Mexico Protestants and Catholics and passed by the 1961 state legislature here included one improving adoption procedures and another requiring parents of a dependent or neglected child to contribute to its support.

## Is Eichmann Alone In Guilt?

(By Religious News Service)

In the case eventually expected to reach the U.S. Supreme Court, Alaska's highest tribunal split (April 3) 2-to-1 on the decision.

One of the major questions posed by religious leaders as the trial of Adolf Eichmann gets underway in Israel this week is the degree to which not only the German people, but mankind at large, share the guilt involved in the extermination of millions of Jews in the Nazi concentration camps of World War II.

A statement issued in New York by the American Jewish Committee warned that the moral questions of the trial are "in danger of being hecluded or even brushed aside."

It urged therefore that leaders of public opinion restore proper emphasis "to those issues of conscience which have the highest claim on the attention of Americans and indeed of all mankind."

Prominent religious leaders — Protestant, Catholic and Jewish — are on record as opposed to the death penalty for the Nazi official whose crimes, according to one Jewish spokesman, are of "such cosmic proportions that only God can mete out adequate punishment."

THE QUESTION of collective guilt — specifically the guilt of the German people — was raised in Germany itself immediately after the war in 1945 when the full horror of the ovens and the gas chambers was bared by the liberating Allied armies for all the world to see. Interestingly enough, it revealed a sharp divergence of opinion among the country's Protestant leaders, on the one hand, and Catholic spokesmen, on the other.

The Council of the Evangelical Church in Germany made public a statement "voicing great sorrow" that "through us endless suffering has been brought to many peoples and countries." This was followed by a statement of Pastor Martin Niemoller, leader of the so-called Confessional Wing of the Church, who said the German people themselves were to blame for their present sufferings and the "horrors of the past twelve years."

German Catholic leaders were not so ready to admit guilt, however.

The late Archbishop Konrad Groeber of Freiburg-in-Breisgau, who was known for his outspoken condemnation of Nazism during the war, said: "Those living among us have tried to the utmost (to rise up against the Nazi Party), risking imprisonment and persecution, but the organized power of those in control was so brutal and cunning, so tremendous, that we Christians and Catholics, particularly, could not think of revolution."

Statements in the same vein were issued as well by such other Catholic leaders as Michael Cardinal Faulhaber, Archbishop of Munich, and Conrad Cardinal Count von Preysing, Bishop of Berlin, also well known for their valiant denunciations of Nazi excesses.

A Vatican report, based on German Jesuit sources, stressed that although the existence of the concentration camps was no secret, skilled propaganda and the impossibility of direct contact with prisoners made the masses believe Propaganda Minister Joseph Goebbels' description of them as "educational establishments."

One of the most touching appeals against any blanket condemnation of the German people came only recently from a German Catholic prelate who was himself an inmate of the Dachau concentration camp when American soldiers liberated survivors marked for imminent destruction.

"The trial (of Adolf Eichmann) must be held, wherever it is held," declared Auxiliary Bishop Johann Neuhäusler of Munich. "If there is a danger

in it, it is that many may say, 'As Eichmann was, so are all Germans.' Please, not all were."

The German churchmen have not been alone in pleading the case of the German people. In the latter part of 1944, when the "almost-unbelievable" barbarism of the gas chambers and ovens of Auschwitz, Birkenau and other camps first came to public knowledge, the Rev. John LaFarge, S.J., distinguished American priest, said that the German people themselves had been kept in ignorance of the mass exterminations of Jews.

This was confirmed when conquering Allied forces pushing on to Berlin were impressed by the shocked and amazed reactions of local populations toward the systematic killings which had been taking place in their midst.

Commenting this week on the Eichmann trial, America, national Catholic weekly published in New York, stressed that it was of universal rather than of exclusively German significance because what is really on trial is Nazi racism.

It said a million Germans went to concentration camps before the war because of their position to Nazi racial doctrines and the mass-murder of Jews was only part of a program aimed ultimately at establishing the "unquestioned supremacy of the German race."

"The crimes of Eichmann and of the Nazi regime," the magazine said, "were not merely wrongs done to the Jews, but, essentially, crimes against humanity. . . . It would be a setback to all of us if the Eichmann case were to lose its universal significance."

## TV Soon To Link World Leaders

Detroit — (NC) — Summit meetings of world leaders by television were envisioned here by Brig. Gen. Sarnoff, Radio Corporation of America chairman.

Addressing a University of Detroit convocation April 5, General Sarnoff proposed a global satellite television channel for worldwide United Nations telecasts of Security Council and Assembly deliberations. He suggested global TV be employed for summit meetings in which heads of state "would confer face-to-face without leaving their capitals."

Gen. Sarnoff said global TV will be a reality sooner than popularly believed. He asserted the Federal Communications Commission already has received proposals for global satellite relays.

He predicted television signals will be moving through outer space "within five years, and probably sooner."

UN LEADERS should begin plans for programming now, he said, for if they are not ready when global TV is a reality, other programs will fill the void.

Gen. Sarnoff said it "would be wonderful to view a live performance of the La Scala opera in New York or Cape-

town or Anchorage; or watch a Mozart Festival from Salzburg in glorious color," but it is imperative "in the international and political sphere that we must find programs which will anchor, at the earliest possible time, the concept of free international usage."

Envisioning TV at the summit.

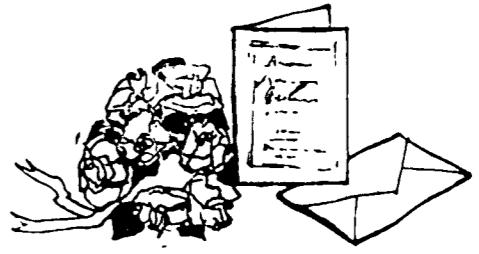
Church Destroyed  
Buenos Aires — (NC) — The interior of 300-year-old Montserrat church here, which was declared a national monument in 1940 because of its valuable art work dating from the early colonial period, has been completely destroyed by fire.

### Students Carry Crosses

Walsingham — (RNS) — More than 100 Catholic university students carrying wooden crosses weighing 100 pounds arrived here at the English national shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham after a trek from various parts of the country.

Walking the 130-mile distance from London to here, student-pilgrims were joined by other student groups from Kettering and Northampton. They spent nights on the floors of church halls and club rooms and fed themselves through a mobile canteen carried on three bicycles and a trailer.

At the ancient Slipper Chapel, about a mile from the shrine, members of the Union of Catholic Students were met by Newman Association members.



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