

New Encyclical, Moral Yardstick for Modern World

Father Kuchman

Following is the text of the sermon given by Bishop Kearney at the funeral Mass of Rev. Thomas J. Kuchman at Holy Family Church, Rochester, Monday, July 10. Father Kuchman, 30, died July 6, 1961, following a two year illness.

"I have glorified Thee on earth, as well as in the sight of men. I have accomplished the work that Thou hast given me to do."
—John 17:4.

These words of our divine Lord touch all of us this morning personally and intimately. They were first spoken at our Last Supper just after our Lord instituted the holy sacrifice of the Mass.

These words are part of that great prayer of the Saviour to His divine Father and are probably some of the most beautiful thoughts ever expressed in human language. They also tell the story of this young priest whose Requiem Mass we have just offered.

When Father Kuchman was a student in the seminary preparing for the priesthood, he kept always before him the idea that he was to be "another Christ."

This traditional title for the priest shows the similarity between the career of a priest and the career of our divine Lord—glory to God, salvation for souls.

Like his Master, every priest is dedicated to the spread of the kingdom of Christ, preaching what our Lord taught, showing kindness to the sick, sympathy for the poor, consolation to the sinner and love to little children.

There is not a facet of the priestly life which cannot be linked to the life of our divine Lord.

Through the centuries, however, priests have been designated by an all-wise Providence to live out one or the other particular aspect of our Lord's life. There are some priests in Europe today whose priesthood has been nothing but a continual carrying of the Cross.

In our own country, the priest as another Christ is able to go into the hospitals to visit the bedside of the sick or to go into the classrooms to bring the blessing and teachings of Christ to the little ones.

This title "another Christ" therefore has an uncertainty about it. As a young man approaches his ordination, he never knows where his role is cast by the divine High Priest—whether in sorrows and trials or in the sunshine of a joyful priesthood in service to God and the people.

When Father Kuchman was ordained, however, he knew very well how he was to be "another Christ." The cross was already heaved for his shoulders and he was ready to accept it as long as God wished him to do so, whether that time was to be long or short.

I doubt if he then realized God would spare him to enjoy two years of priesthood here in this parish. Those of you who knew him know that despite his own suffering he was in every sense of the word "another Christ."

His devotion to the people, his care for the sick, his constant interest in the young people and the little ones, his response to duty even when his condition would have excused him both in the sight of God

New York — (RNS) — Pope John XXIII's new encyclical, "Mater et Magistra (Mother and Teacher)" — is an historic document which Catholic sociologists expect will exert a profound influence on the Church's role in social and economic life for many years to come.

The encyclical, 25,000 words in length, and said to be the longest in papal history, placed the 79-year-old pontiff alongside two other modern Popes — Leo XIII and Pius XI — who have provided Catholics with authoritative moral yardsticks by which to evaluate developments and problems in a changing social world.

One of the interesting aspects of Mater et Magistra is the fact that Pope John had announced as early as last December that he was planning to issue it, thus stimulating an extraordinary amount of advance interest in the document. Another is that official translations of the Latin document in major modern languages were made immediately available, thus obviating the risk of faulty translations.

Vatican authorities said copies of the translations would be sent to all bishops. Also of interest was the fact



POPE JOHN XXIII

that Pope John stressed that his message was not for Catholics alone, but was "directed to all Christians, without distinction of class." The Latin text, published in *Osservatore Romano*, Vatican City newspaper ran to six pages. An Italian

translation filled five pages.

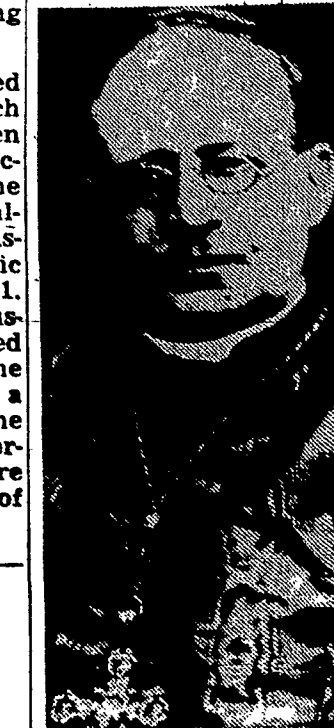
The encyclical, which was also given front-page prominence in newspapers around the world, constituted, in effect, an addition, framed in the light of new conditions and tendencies, to Leo XIII's *Rerum Novarum*, and Pius XI's *Quadragesimo Anno*, the first issued in 1891 and the second in 1931 — 40 years later.

It was being issued, Pope John stressed earlier, to mark the 70th anniversary of *Rerum Novarum*, and to confirm "the constant solicitude of the Church" over "the problem of peace and active concord among peoples."

Rerum Novarum enumerated the Christian conditions which must govern relations between capital and labor and denounced the evils resulting from the "greed of unrestrained capitalism." *Quadragesimo Anno* discussed changes in the economic system between 1891 and 1931. Examining then current industrial conditions, it denounced the economic despotism of the few, upheld the principle of a just wage, and advocated the principle of enabling "propertyless wage earners" to acquire a moderate ownership of property.

All these principles were reaffirmed by Pope John in appealing for social justice between the various economic factors within nations. But he added a new note of topical urgency by making a strong call for cooperation between developed and underdeveloped countries. In referring to communism, he warned that "experience has shown that where the personal initiative of citizens is missing, there is political tyranny."

Rerum Novarum has often been called the Magna Carta of Catholic social principles.



POPE PIUS XI

Both it and *Quadragesimo Anno* have been discussed more frequently and intensively by both Catholics and non-Catholics than any other papal pronouncement in memory. The encyclicals have not only transformed the social role of the Catholic Church, but made a deep impression on Western society generally.

It has been claimed that the Christian Democratic movements in Italy, France and Germany have all been bred out of *Rerum Novarum*, which, among other things, opposed both communism and Marxist socialism as well as unbridled capitalism.

Interest in Pope John's promised new encyclical was stimulated when Catholics in the United States, Mexico, France, Italy and many other countries commemorated the

anniversaries of the two previous papal social pronouncements.

At a symposium held at the Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C., last May, former U.S. Secretary of Labor James P. Mitchell hailed the two famous encyclicals as having spelled out the social obligations of the state, while at the same time they were careful to insist that these obligations must be met within the larger context of a viable and responsible society.

"Government can, of course," he said, "through wage and price setting, through production quota and control, through open exercise of the tax and regulatory powers, design and operate an economy in which equality is mandatory and economic welfare guaranteed, at least in theory."

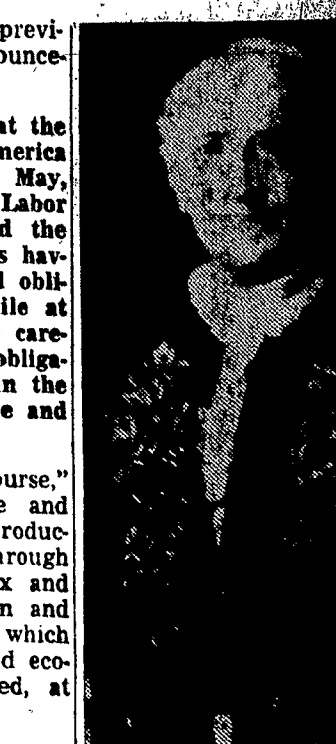
"But," added Mr. Mitchell, "the Popes have castigated that idea. Pope Pius XI calls it 'damage to human dignity.' He speaks of it as wholly ignoring, and indifferent to, the sublime end of both man and society. Men are not obliged, he says, to surrender themselves entirely to society."

Pope John, in the new encyclical — the fifth of his pontificate — reviewed the teachings on social and economic questions propounded not only by Pope Leo XIII and Pius XI but also by Pope Pius XII, and then went on to cite challenges in the sphere of social action still confronting the Church 70 years after *Rerum Novarum*.

He discussed new and dangerous problems of the present age, and proceeded finally to show how the problems of social living together can be resolved in the light of the Church's teachings.

Pope John first announced that he was planning to issue his encyclical as far back as last Dec. 29 when he received an audience of foreign diplomats accredited to the Holy See. He said the new document would confirm "the constant solicitude of the Church not only in regard to this or that point of the social order, but established but to its entirety, as the times in which we live seem to demand."

The Pope's encyclical was dated May 25, the exact anniversary of both *Rerum Novarum* and *Quadragesimo Anno*. According to Vatican sources, the central ideas were supplied among theologians.



POPE LEO XIII

by the Pope himself and leading members of the Roman Curia then collaborated in composing it.

Along with *Quadragesimo Anno*, Pope John's encyclical now becomes an up-to-date supplement to *Rerum Novarum*, which, according to the Catholic Encyclopedia, has "inspired a vast Catholic social literature, while many non-Catholics have acclaimed it as one of the most definite and reasonable productions ever written on the subject."

On the question as to what doctrinal authority reposes in a papal encyclical, Pope Pius XII, in his encyclical, *Humani Generis*, published in 1950, had this to say:

"It must not be thought that what is expounded in encyclical letters does not itself demand consent, on the pretext that in writing such letters the Popes do not exercise the supreme power of their teaching authority. . . . Generally, what is expounded and declared in encyclical letters pertains to Catholic doctrine. But if the Supreme Pontiff in their official documents purport to pass judgment on a matter up to that time under dispute, it is obvious that the matter, according to the mind and will of the same Pontiff, cannot be any longer considered a question open to discussion among theologians."

Religious Lessons Outlawed

Berlin — (NC) — Poland's communist regime railroaded through parliament a bill outlawing religious instructions in the public schools, thus openly violating express provisions of the 1956 Church-State agreement.

It was learned here that the Polish Sejm passed its education "reform" bill the very day it convened in Warsaw for its third full session July 14. The law includes the declaration that "schools are lay institutions."

THE LAW in effect puts the final touches on the major drive the communists started in 1958 against religious education in the schools.

In December, 1958, shortly after the regime of Wladyslaw Gomulka replaced the old "stalinist" government, the State entered an agreement with the Church which among other things provided for optional religious classes in public schools whenever the majority of parents requested them. Religion classes were then restored in the overwhelming majority of Poland's schools.

In introducing the new ban in the Sejm, communist deputy Andrzej Werbian declared that elimination of religion classes in the schools was "in the interest of undisturbed educational progress."

New Mass Prayers For Public Officials

Following are the new prayers which may be added at Mass according to recent instructions from the Vatican. The text of the prayers replace an ancient set "for the Roman emperor" obviously anachronistic. In the current world crises, these new prayers are most appropriate both for public or private use.

Collect
Almighty, everlasting God, in whose control are all human authority and the rights of all peoples; extend thy favor to those who hold authority over us, that throughout the world sound religion and national security may find a firm and lasting foundation under thy protecting right hand.

Secret
Accept, O Lord, the prayers and offerings of thy servants, and for thy own glory protect those who govern the country; that the safety of the rulers who serve thee may enable thy people to live in peace.

Postcommunion
Protect, O Lord, thy servants with the benefits of peace; and, nourishing them with food for body and spirit, make them safe from all enemies.

Nice Dull Mud Color

Hokkaido, Japan — "If you can't beat 'em, join 'em" is an old saying put to good use by a young missionary here. After futile efforts to keep his yellow station wagon clean on the dusty dirt roads, Maryknoll Father Joseph E. Luckey, M.M., of Cincinnati, Ohio, gave in. He had the station wagon painted a nice dull, mud color.

Visits Pope

Vatican City — (RNS) — Japanese Foreign Affairs Minister Zentaro Kosaka was received in audience by Pope John XXIII. Later an official exchange of visits took place between the Japanese statesman and Domenico Cardinal Tardini, Vatican Secretary of State.

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