

# World-wide Acclaim Greet Encyclical, More 'Liberal' Than U.S. Laws

New York — (RNS) — An unprecedented volume of world-wide acclaim greeted Pope John XXIII's monumental 25,000-word encyclical, *Mater et Magistra*, which now ranks as one of the Catholic Church's great social documents, along with the *Rerum Novarum* of Pope Leo XIII and the *Quadragesimo Anno* of Pope Pius XI.

Joining in hailing the new encyclical were not only Catholic leaders, but Protestant, Eastern Orthodox and Jewish churchmen both in the United States and other countries. High praise was sounded also by leading secular newspapers around the world.

Particularly extraordinary was the fact that the *New York Times* published the entire text of the encyclical, and that excerpts from it were broadcast throughout the world in many languages by the Vatican Radio. Never before in history has a papal pronouncement been so widely and promptly publicized.

It was front-page news not only in the United States, but also in most of Western Europe, where it drew warm editorial acclaim.

Among the first Protestant leaders to comment on *Mater et Magistra* was Dr. Reinhold Niebuhr, noted theologian and retired vice-president and professor emeritus of Union Theological Seminary in New York, who said he "admired" the document.

"I think the Catholic Church," he said, "is ahead of America in social legislation. The Church, as Church, has not gone so far as the Pope went, but the hierarchy has been rather liberal on social issues — opposing the 'right-to-work' laws, for instance."

Dr. Ralph Sockman, minister of New York's Christ Church (Methodist) here hailed the encyclical as "a comprehensive and generally correct diagnosis of the world's ills."

"I agree," he said, "with many of the papal prescriptions for improving economic conditions because I think the encyclical keeps a proper balance between private initiative and governmental action."

Dr. Lawrence L. Durgin, preaching at the Broadway Congregational Church here, noted the timeliness of the Pope's message in urging the wealthy nations to aid the poor ones. He said the encyclical challenged "our imagination and our responsibility."

Hailing the encyclical as "a superb reaffirmation of the too-often ignored social message of the Christian Gospel" was Archbishop Iakovos, of New York, Greek Orthodox Primate of North and South America. He said:

"It provides Christian nations, and for that matter all people who believe in God and base their laws on the divine ones, with a Christian Magna Carta of human rights, in sharp contrast with the fallacies of Marxism promised to the slaves of the totalitarian regime."

A Jewish leader — Dr. Harold H. Gordon, executive head of the New York Board of Rabbis — commented:

"The Pope's call to aid underdeveloped areas reflects man's eternal responsibility to his fellow man as recorded so well throughout our Bible. It is to the credit of the United States government that our country has been in the forefront of assistance to nations over the world which are seeking to be free. This is the most effective way of keeping them free."

Catholic commentators included Father John F. Cronin, S.S., assistant director of the Social Action Department of the National Catholic Welfare Conference, who described *Mater et Magistra* as "the most truly world-wide encyclical on social problems ever issued."

"By our standards in the United States," he said, "the document is extremely liberal. The Pope accepts a wide diversity of economic methods, provided only that the individual and the family retain their basic rights."

Father Gerard Rooney, president of the National Catholic Social Action Conference, hailed the new encyclical as "most exciting food for thought for every man concerned with today's social problems."

Calling the encyclical primarily a teaching document for Catholics, he announced that the executive committee of his organization planned shortly to make an intense study of it.

Father John B. Sheerin, editor of *The Catholic World*, monthly magazine published here by the Paulist Fathers, noted that while Pope Leo XIII had condemned the exploitation of man by man, Pope John "calls for wealthy nations to practice positive social justice in the form of foreign aid to needy nations without exploiting their needs."

A layman, Daniel K. Schuler, president of the 10,000-member Association of Catholic Trade Unionists, said Pope John "has gone beyond traditional American concepts of collective bargaining and workers' rights in calling for worker participation in vital decisions affecting both private and public enterprise."

He praised the Pope's "startling clarity" in setting "new and lofty goals for the American trade union movement which heralded a revitalized struggle for social justice for the American worker."

The *New York Times* commented editorially: "As a religious document, this encyclical, like its predecessors, is historical. In those parts which we may consider secular — that is, of friendly concern to people of other religions — it presents a picture of the conflict in our time between the crude materialism of the Communists and the humane spirit of all great and enduring faiths."

The *New York Herald-Tribune* said the Pope's encyclical, in "its reasonableness and warm solicitudes for human suffering, may well hold up a moral standard around which men of goodwill can rally."

"Its moral fervor," it said, "can be shared by those, irrespective of creed, who hold there are other

than material compulsions at work in human affairs. Whatever differences of detail may arise in the wake of *Mater et Magistra*, it should be welcomed into the army of ideas whence free man draw their weapons."

The *Daily News*, top-circulation tabloid daily, described the encyclical as "an enormous document which covers all subjects not only of international relations but international responsibilities."

Pope John XXIII, meanwhile, at an audience in St. Peter's Basilica to several thousand pilgrims and tourists, gave his own simple interpretation of *Mater et Magistra* by saying that, as Christ had taught not only for man's soul but also for his body, the encyclical therefore "meets the needs of the world."

He said that while God's law was "incorruptible," it had to be re-explained and applied to changing conditions.

Explaining the delay in issuing the encyclical, which bore the date of May 15, Pope John said this was to permit translations to be made into many languages.

However, left-wing newspapers in Rome speculated that the delay may have resulted from revisions of the text by Right-wing Vatican aides.

Surprisingly enough, *Unita*, Italian Communist

Party organ, had a favorable word to offer. It said the encyclical showed an effort "to take cognizance of new and essential facts that dominate today's reality; facts created by the victorious advance of the international workers' movement."

The liberal *La Stampa* of Turin called the social philosophy expounded by Pope John "enlightened conservatism."

In Brussels, the official Socialist Party newspaper reported the encyclical under the headline, "The Pope Accepts Socialization." It said: "It is certain that the encyclical will be badly received in Belgian Catholic conservative quarters, which still defend everyday ideas of another century."

Combat, independent Paris newspaper, stressed *Mater et Magistra*'s theme of the need for justice and equality among nations as a link with the thinking of President Kennedy, a Roman Catholic.

The *Guardian* of Manchester, England, said the encyclical showed a distinct shift toward the approval of concerted action aimed at the common good.

Most newspapers in Britain, France, West Germany, Italy, Spain and Austria carried prominently-placed articles dealing with the new social encyclical in which the Pope also warned against the dangers raised by fear in today's changing world.



Blueprint for peace, progress

## Victims of Spain Civil War—Stupid or Saints?

(This is the second of four articles on the 25th anniversary of the Spanish Civil War by the director of the Office of Information and Statistics of the Church in Spain and former editor of *Ecclesia*, official organ of Spanish Catholic Action.)

By MSGR. JESUS IRIBARREN (N.C.W.C. News Service)

This year we are a quarter century away from the start of the Spanish Civil War. Thus we are not dealing with a "gilded legend" pale by the distance of centuries. Only 25 years ago the priests and nuns of Spain relived the tender, heroic and sometimes humorous sagas of the early Christian martyrs.

However, we no longer live in an era of credulous piety. In examining the beatification causes of these Spanish martyrs, Church courts have looked at the facts, called in witnesses and even, in some cases, questioned the executions.

Anyone familiar with the skeptical serenity with which a beatification cause is carried out in the 20th century will understand that judges do not act like poets. So when, in spite of everything, poetry, humor, and beauty emerge triumphantly from a cause's examination, it means that they are legitimate.

SISTER MARIA JOSEFA, a Carmelite Sister of Charity, was a wise and cheerful nun in Valencia who had seen many pictures of virgin martyrs with palm branches in their hands. She too wanted to be a "martyr of the palm" and managed to go to her death with a small palm branch in her hands.

Serious things are taken seriously by cheerful nuns. In June, 1941, when the body of Sister Maria Josefa was exhumed, a small bunch of dried flowers and a fragment of palm, just like those in the pictures, were found in her hands.

SISTER JOAQUINA, 31-year-old Daughter of Charity, was gracious, strong and an optimist in love with life. On October 28, 1936, she was taken along with others to the Fosos cemetery in Valencia to be shot to death. At the last moment all her youthful love of life burst forth and she leaped like a lioness at the neck of a militiaman to strangle him.

Father Jose, an old pastor also condemned to death,

meekly reminded her: "Sister Joaquina, we shall lose heaven! Watch out! Already the angels are descending with the palm of martyrdom. An instant more and we shall be happy forever."

Sister Joaquina saw that by attacking a militiaman to defend herself she would give up her chance of being a "martyr" and be only an "executed person." She broke into tears. She knelt in front of the militiaman, asked his forgiveness and returned to her place in line of martyrs. An instant later her soul was to smile happily.

Still more nuns were martyred. In September, 1937, the Carmelites of the Cerro de los Angeles convent in Madrid learned that they were soon to be shot. Then a chief of the militia, who had a hideous face and shifty eyes, cruelly announced himself at the convent.

Without losing her smile, the prioress asked permission for the nuns to sing the religious song chosen for that day. Can you imagine a hangman listening as if he were at a festival, to a women's chorus singing of their joy at dying for God?

After the singing, the militiaman could not be anything but astonished at the calm way the nuns viewed their martyrdom. What could one do with such nuns? They were either stupid or saints. Let the reader judge.

Such anecdotes and a thousand more like them are very important because they show a constant characteristic of the Spanish martyrs: from 1896 to 1939, the anticipation and joyful acceptance of death, in a street fight one meets death by surprise. But a martyr knows the value of his sacrifice and cheerfully uses it for the purchase of glory.

THE CLARETIAN seminarians of Barbastro on August 15, 1936, kissed the rope with which their hands had been bound and which was stained with the blood of those who had preceded them in martyrdom a few hours earlier. They kissed the rope because they knew that this blood was already a holy relic.

FATHER ANSELMO PALAU went to his death barefooted so he could enter respectfully. Father Palau, C.M.F., asked as a last wish on his way to his martyrdom to be allowed to take leave of "his mother." The militiamen, thinking that his

mother was sick in the hospital, agreed to stop the truck. But the priest wanted to take leave of Our Lady, in whose chapel he said a wonderful prayer telling "his mother" goodbye before the final meeting above.

On August 20, 1936, 74 priests and Religious of Lerida were put to death together. They were not crestfallen, with eyes distorted by fear. Instead they went to their deaths singing hymns — the "Ave Maria Stella" and the "Magnificat" — in the most solemn veppers of their lives.

Ten priests from Tarragona chose for their last procession another hymn, one they had taught to the faithful many times in the Catalan language, the Hymn of Perseverance.

Marxist propaganda has at times attempted to spread outside of Spain the false idea that Spanish proletarians, mercilessly oppressed by the rich, killed priests because they thought the clergy were

allied with or defenders of a feudal economic regime. But no one goes to his death singing if he believes that he is dying for capitalism.

The problem of the true cause of the deaths of the Spanish priests is important. If they were killed out of hatred for God or the Christian virtues, they may be considered martyrs and attain the honors of the altar. But if they were shot for defending an unjust situation, for holding certain political ideas, for simple personal vengeance or by error, then their deaths may be humanly regrettable, but do not give them an aura of glory.

FATHER FRANCISCO DE RODA, Canon of Almeria, had his tongue cut out for praising God. Yet he assured his executioners that he would continue to praise God without it. Efforts were made to force the Franciscans of Azusa in Badajoz into blasphemy. When the efforts

failed, the priests' eyes were put out.

"Say 'Death to God' and we shall set you free," Father Antonio Roig from the Balearic Islands was told. Already lying on the ground and dying, he pulled himself up as best he could to say his last words: "Hail to Christ the King!"

An attempt was made to force Father Felipe Casar in Denia, Valencia, to reveal secrets of the confessional. He took them with him to the other world.

Father Andres Molina, 27, a priest from Granada, was told that his life would be spared if he married. He wrote to his mother about this offer in a letter dated September 16, 1936, to bid her farewell and tell her he chose to remain faithful to the priesthood and die.

THE TRAPPISTS of Co-breces had consecrated their lips to the praise of God in choir chant. When in December, 1936, they were cast alive into the sea and the waves brought their bodies back to shore, a number of them were found with their lips sewn

together with wire by the executioners.

The number of martyrdom cases is countless. Only this year Father Antonio Moreno has written a masterly "History of the Religious Persecution" with 900 pages of heretofore unpublished material. The Church is now studying the beatification causes of 809 Spaniards. No other nation can show anything to equal this.

In studying these causes the Church is not trying to condemn the executioners, spread rancor against the exiles or exalt a political cause. It is offering to the world an eternal lesson. In the defense of God there is no defeat. He who loses his life for God, wins it.



### Daily Mass Calendar

- Sunday, July 23 — Ninth Sunday after Pentecost (green). Gloria, Creed, Trinity Preface. 1921—Rev. Stephen McPadden.
  - Monday, July 24 — St. Christina, martyr (red). Gloria, 2nd prayer of Sunday. 1929—Rev. Edward Bayer.
  - Tuesday, July 25 — St. James, apostle (red). Gloria, 2nd prayer of St. Christopher, Creed, Preface of Apostles. 1920 — Rev. John Gleeson.
  - Wednesday, July 26 — St. Anne (white). Gloria. 1931 — Monsignor Michael Nolan.
  - Thursday, July 27 — St. Pantaleon, martyr (red). Gloria 2nd prayer of Sunday.
  - Friday, July 28 — Sts. Nazarius, Celsus, Victor and Innocent, martyrs (red). Gloria. 1943—Rev. Joseph Wurzer.
  - Saturday, July 29 — St. Martha (white). Gloria, 2nd prayer of the martyrs. 1892 — Rev. John Butler.
- Priests listed above died on the date indicated. Please pray for them.

• Six-year old Charles went fishing with his grandfather and proudly came home with two fish.

"This one is a perch," he explained excitedly to his mother. "And this one's a loudmouth bass."

• Sign over a rack of paperbacks in a Mt. Vernon, N.Y. bookstore: "Books for people with more brains than money."

• A troupe of penniless actors was stranded in a remote part of Tennessee and talked the captain of a river boat into giving them passage on the cuff to the next town.

The thespians were pretty discouraged, and as they passed a bend in the river a voice from shore called out: "Hey, Cap'n Bob, what are you hauling this trip?"

"A load of garbage and a bunch of actors," was the reply. The leading man raised his eyes to the sky and clapped a hand to his forehead. "Ye gods!" he exclaimed. "Not even first billing."



Saints of Unity

St. Athanasia was widowed a few days after her marriage but married again. After a time her second husband wished to become a monk, and Athanasia turned her own house into a convent and ruled it as Abbess. The last seven years of her life were passed in a cell at Constantinople as adviser to the Empress Theodora. Her feastday is Aug. 14.

### Reapings at Random

By GERARD E. SHERRY, Editor, Central California Register

This has been called the age of the laity, but I am wondering whether it really is.

We find exhortation in bishops' pastorals, from the pulpit, and in the Catholic Press, calling on the laity to take a more active part in the work of the Church. In recent years the verbal tempo of the Lay Apostolate has been speeded up. Yet, can we say that the laity has responded to the call?

It must be admitted that our lay organizations have increased their membership rolls. But this has not resulted in a corresponding increase of lay activity. Apart from fund raising, bingo, carnivals and Communion breakfasts, the Lay Apostolate in this country has not yet come to grips with the real problem of Christian influence in the secular world.

Some laymen and women are doing a magnificent job, but the vast majority are not touched at all. Why? To me there are two basic reasons for this failure of the Lay Apostolate to have an impact.

One is the point brought up several months ago by Donald Thorman, managing editor of *Ave Maria*. He said, in effect, there was a lack of real communication between the laity and the hierarchy. The other is a

lack of understanding by both priests and laymen of the fact that the laity are an integral part of the Church.

There is much contact between the bishop of the diocese and the laity as a whole. This comes about through the pastorals and the doctrinal teaching which the bishop's office impose upon him. But the real failure as I see it, is in the other side of the communication. Most lay people meet their bishop only at Confirmation time, or at an annual meeting of this or that organization. They seldom meet him personally. Their problems are often communicated to him second hand. The link between the Shepherd and the Faithful is not as close as it should be.

For instance, there are quite a number of laymen who on hearing the call of their bishop generally wish to participate as true Apostles in the work of the Church. Yet, on a parochial and organizational level they are met with frustrations. Some men and women do something despite the rebuffs. Too many others respond by withdrawing.

One often comes across the case of a talented lay person who has offered his services to the pastor only to be told to mind his own business. There are many places where the only jobs open to the laity are that of serving on fund raising committees or in the gory operations of parish life.

Of course, there are some places where the pastor will invite real cooperation of the laity in all the works of the parish only to find that few will follow him. But I think, in the main, that the clergy has a greater mistrust of the laity than vice versa.

This mistrust is engendered, I believe, through the sad experiences of the 19th century evil of lay trusteeship. But those days are gone. Laymen do not want to run parishes. They realize that it is the function of the pastor. But they do want to have a say in the works of the parish. And this because they are members of the parish community and are part of all its functions. An awful lot of the frustrations of the laity would be eliminated if they were accepted as important to the spiritual as well as the temporal order of things.

Christ's Kingdom is spiritual because it is for souls, but these souls are of men. The function of the laity is to grow with Christ without losing their human identity or character in their activities.

Some lay people try to find Christ merely through retreating from the world even though they have to live in it. Others try to work in the world compromising the spiritual to the benefit of the material. The Kingdom of Christ is aimed at men who will cooperate to live as men with all the physical, intel-

lectual and social capabilities at their command. This does not mean they cannot attain the sanctity and spiritual formation which is their heritage.

What we need is a greater collaboration and genuine participation by laymen in the Church. The laity of themselves do not have the power or the authority to continue or to realize a genuine Apostolate. The laity are, completely dependent on, and subordinate to the Hierarchy. Alas, this is often interpreted to mean that the laity has neither the say nor the right to collaborate in the spiritual as well as the temporal works of the Church.

If anyone should think that I have spoken out of turn, let him reflect on these wise words from the late-lamented Pope Pius XII:

"The tasks of the Church are too immense today to leave room for petty disputes. In order to preserve the sphere of action of each, it is sufficient that all should possess enough spirit of faith, disinterestedness and mutual esteem and confidence.

"Respect for the dignity of the priest has always been one of the most typical characteristics of the Christian community. On the other hand, the layman also has rights and the priest on his part must recognize them."

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