

# Monsignor Sullivan

Following is the text of the sermon given by Rev. Thomas M. Redding at the funeral Mass for Rt. Rev. Mgr. John B. Sullivan at St. John the Evangelist Church, Rochester, Saturday, Sept. 23. Monsignor Sullivan, 63, founder of St. John's parish in 1914, died Wednesday, Sept. 20, 1961.

"He became obedient — exemplar who must be the wherefore hath God exalted Him and given Him a name which is above every name." Philippians 2:9.

In our bold attempts to find the secret of Christ's priesthood we are tempted to seek the source of its magnificence in His divinity. How shocked we are to find that, contrariwise, the secret of priestliness is to be found in His humanity. For it is in the total submission of His will to the will of His Father that He is ordained the High Priest of the New Testament.

The priesthood of Christ found its beginnings in the humble stable at Bethlehem, was nurtured in the days of obedience at Nazareth and in the hours of preaching and working as He traversed the highways and byways of Palestine. But His priesthood found its perfection, first in the humble submission to the will of His Father in Gethsemane when His humanity cried out: "not My will but Thine be done," and then in the total submission as He breathed His last: "Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit."

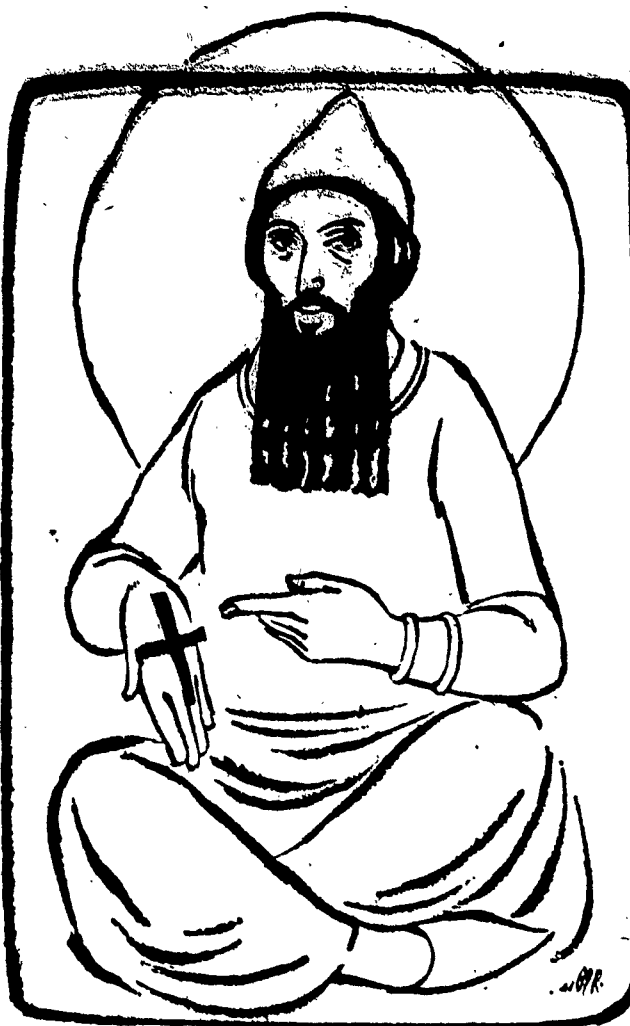
The lesson for the young student for the priesthood is quite simple, though it took the whole life of Christ to teach it. The lesson is this — perfection is not in the knowledge of God's order, but in submission to it. What else is perfection, than faithful cooperation with the will of God? It was not through His divine knowledge that Christ saved us, and became our High Priest, but in His submissive will. "He became obedient — wherefore hath God exalted Him and given Him a name which is above every name." Such is the obedience of every good priest, and in this obedience He acquires his share in the unique glory of the priesthood of Christ.

Surely, the unusual background of the youth of Monsignor Sullivan gave him early practice in submission to the will of God, training that would fit him in a particular way to share in the priesthood of Christ. The orphan boy, who trustingly put his hand into the big and charitable hand of a priest as he left the stable where he had hid for three days and nights from angry foster parents, was already beginning the remote preparation for his priesthood. Little did he realize, as he left the orphan asylum and took up residence with another priest, that he was furthering his priestly preparations. Happy days in the seminary culminated in his ordination to the priesthood that he had already begun to share.

The years that he was given to work in the active priesthood were marked with characteristics he had learned from the Master. Ever obedient to His will, he accepted each task in turn and worked in true charity to further the kingdom of Christ. Were we to single out any particular phase of his life for praise we would do him a great injustice. He was a priest, and that is all he aspired to be. He followed in the steps of a Master whose life he knew well.

The little children whom Christ loved, flocked around the young assistant at Corpus Christi. The boys, who often accompanied him to ball games and were given fond directions in how to play ball, are grown old now, and yet they long remember their good friend who found time for them. The many sick who were ushered into eternity with his priestly ministrations must have looked back at him in gratitude many times. The worried fathers and mothers, who received plain white envelopes from him in difficult times, never forgot his charity. The many priests who were his welcome guests, recount to this day tales of prayer days and whisper a prayer for a man who was a priest's priest.

How hard to tell the whole tale of a man like Monsignor Sullivan. What God asked of him, he gave. And need we, his friends, remind ourselves this morning that this was a priest of Christ. He gloried in His priesthood and enjoyed every moment of it, and was his happiest when the day's work done, he would light up the first cigar of the day, and spend the last hours before bedtime with his fellow priests. No priest was too young to be unimportant to him. We



### Saints of Unity

ST. JOHN CALYBITES . . . after having been a monk at Gomon on the Bosphorus, he returned home and lived disguised as a beggar outside his parents' house in a little hut (Kalybe) whence his name. His feastday is January 13.

who met him as very young V. Boyle was deacon and Rev. John Leary, subdeacon.

Other officers of the Mass were the Rev. Fathers Gerald Appelby, James Collins, William Schifferli, John Whalen, Walter Fleming, John Cavanaugh, Robert Downs and Robert Kress.

A priest's choir, directed by Rev. Robert Smith chanted the Mass.

Attending the Mass were the Rt. Rev. Monsignors John E. Maney, chancellor, Leslie Whalen, William Naughton, Charles Shay, Frank Mason, George Eckl, John McCafferty, Richard Burns, John Duffy, Arthur Ratigan, Very Rev. Msgr. Richard Quinn, seventy priests, nuns and lay people.

Monsignor Sullivan is survived by one brother, Edward, of Buffalo, several nieces and nephews. Burial was in Holy Sepulchre Cemetery where Bishop Casey gave the blessing at the grave. Arrangements by Mattie.

His only complaint in his later days, despite the pain and suffering, was loneliness. The little orphan boy, who shivered in loneliness many times, had grown into manhood with a great fear of being alone. Now, loneliness became hard to bear — an echo, perhaps, of the cry of the High Priest before His final act of submission: "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken me." His peaceful death ended all this; no more suffering, no more pain, no more loneliness. We can't hold but feel a bit of happiness at his going forth from this vale of tears. Now he will know no more lonely hours. Surely, already he has found the companionship of his brother priests, to share unendingly with the High Priest the happiness of eternal reward.

Monsignor Sullivan's funeral Mass was offered by Auxiliary Bishop Lawrence B. Casey at St. John the Evangelist Church, Rochester, Saturday, Sept. 23. Bishop Kearney gave the absolution following the Mass. Rt. Rev. Msgr. James C. McAniff, V.G., was assistant priest; Rt. Rev. Msgr. Charles

## BOOK SHELF

### Two New Books By Rochesterians

By SISTER MARGARET TERESA Nazareth College

Saints of the Byzantine World, by Blanche Jennings Thompson. Vision Book 52, Farrar, Straus & Cudahy '61. 189 pp. \$1.95.

A Time for Song: Poems by Maude Lee Knox. Exposition Press '61. 63 pp. \$2.50.

In the indispensable Vision of Alexandria have parallels in the Kennedy and Rockefeller families as well as in Jim Bishop, Mary Fabyan Windeatt and Thomas Merton. The third title by Blanche Thompson now appears. Her first two were St. Elizabeth's Three Crowns and When Saints Were Young. This one, Saints of the Byzantine World, prepares the younger generation for the coming Ecumenical Council in the happiest possible fashion.

As a Minor, no longer a blank space looming dully above Palestine on the map, comes alive with its great cities and great saints of the early Christian centuries, and its great struggle between a dying, positionally resisting paganism and a young, passionately earnest faith in Jesus Christ. Out of this struggle we see rising an Eastern Church, and then a second Eastern Church that will no longer recognize Rome. No story ever lovelier for a hearing today than this one.

Like the true teacher she is Sister Thompson begins at a great beginning, with the most telling anecdote of Antony of Egypt and Paul the Hermit and the awakening of the desert. We see hermit-cells and lauras developing. What the first solitudes were, what they ate, what they did with and without the aid of wild animals and dedicated followers, how they elated make history of unending vigor.

After them, we pass to the Gera Stris with Hilarius, and back in the Nile with Pachomius, who leaves the world with a library established, complete with libraries, scriptoria, houses of hospitality, ways of self-support that made the monks a part of the world's business schools that made them the educators of Christians and others.

Then opens the great era of doctrinal development, with its mighty teachers Athanasius, Basil, Gregory Nazianzen, Gregory of Nyssa, Cyril of Jerusalem, Cyril of Alexandria. Their careers and that of the beloved St. Nicholas show us at what cost we have a Creed. We find out how it is that we speak properly now about Our Lord and the Mother of God, and how the great heresies were defeated. John of Damascus, a Church Father three centuries late, is tucked in none the less to show that the same strength of mind and love of God functioned in Moslem times to prevent Christians from falling into appeasement and destroying all holy images to please others.

The great families that produced such men as Basil and his mild younger brother Gregory of Nyssa, and the irre-

The volume opens with an autumn poem — the world's beauty — and closes with a love-song — the heart's eagerness to give itself. And in between come all sorts: taxpayers, scientists, wives and husbands, Sunday drivers, crowded streets, lost people and happy people, failures and success — all the world-scene that we half notice every day is brought lovingly to our attention. Says the author (a Rochesterian too): "No daughter of Rachel's I, but allowed to sip and taste. Though hurried ever onward in a most unseemly haste. And she manages to slow us down, to make us see values hidden behind the obvious."

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## GOD LOVE YOU!

By MOST REV. FULTON J. SHEEN

In our present babble of self-interest—each race, class and group shouting for "its rights" (but never about its duties); youth saying he has to live "his own life," forgetting that no life is lived apart from his fellow men; all men seeking more comfort, more money, more cars—the Church must preach Christ, and Him Crucified. For the world will be saved only by the few who understand the words of Our Lord: "A man's life consists not in the abundance of things he possesses."

The Cross is frightening to those who see only its shadows. It can be hated. Peter tempted Our Lord from it—he was willing to believe in a Divine Christ but not a Suffering Christ. Satan tempted Our Lord from the Cross by appealing to three short cuts by which He could win the world: plenty of bread, scientific marvels and political power. "Come down from the Cross" was the last and final challenge on Good Friday. We will take Christ but not His Cross, the Teacher but not the Saviour.

But though the Cross can be hated, it can also be loved. As George Meredith put it: "This, that killed Thee, missed Thee, Lord! Touched Thee, and we touch it, dear, Dark it is adored, abhorred; Vildest, yet most sainted here. Red of heat, O white of heat, In it hell and heaven meet."

This means that the Cross is the condition of the crown; union with the Crucified Christ, the means to victory over Communism. It alone can teach us that we bear the burden of the world's poverty and sin and grief as did Our Lord on the Cross.

To help anyone, as Dante wrote, "grief must be healed by grief," namely, by taking on the tears of others. Why, then, should not pastors, when building a new rectory or convent or school, cut down the expenditures 1/10 of 1 per cent and give the savings to the Holy Father for the poor of the world? Why should not the laity deny themselves a movie or a magazine once a month and send their sacrifices to the Holy Father through his Society for the Propagation of the Faith? The Lord needs our help to save the world. Spend less time listening to news on the hour which agitates the spirit and give more time to prayers and little acts of self-denial to spiritualize the world. We read Mass every Sunday for those who help the Holy Father's Society for the Propagation of the Faith. May we include you?

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Cut out this column, pin your sacrifice to it and mail it to Most Rev. Fulton J. Sheen, National Director of the Society for the Propagation of the Faith, 366 Fifth Avenue, New York 1, N.Y., or your Diocesan Director, the Rev. John F. Duffy, 50 Chestnut St., Rochester 4, New York.

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