

Pope of Aggiornamento

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encyclical will see, the Pope himself took the social teachings he applied mostly from the brilliant social writings of three popes who had gone before him: the Rerum Novarum of Leo XIII, the Quadragesimo Anno of Pius XI, and the Fiftieth Anniversary of Pius XII. These popes surely deserve to share with John XXIII the title "Pope of Social Justice."

Well, you may say, thinking now of John's last great letter, Pacem in Terris, can we not call its author the "Pope of Peace?"

Pacem in Terris is assuredly a great document, and probably the greatest issued by the late pope. With keen common sense, it presents a host of considerations on the means to maintain peace in today's world, counsels not only national governments but to you and to me.

But here, too, the Holy Father is speaking as his predecessors have spoken; the rights of the individual and his duties, the rights of states and their duties. Even when he urges the mutual destruction of the present-day stockpiles of atomic weapons, he is reaching the disarmament pleas of the popes before him.

Did not Benedict XV, in the midst of World War I, urge the leaders of belligerent nations to agree to the "simultaneous and reciprocal diminution of armaments?" Did not Pius XI pray for international disarmament, that doctrine proclaimed by "the unarmed King of Peace, the unarmed Omnipotence?"

And did not Pius XII, in his famous "peace points" of Christmas Eve, 1959, urge that "the nations be delivered from the slavery imposed upon them by the race for armaments?" Atomic weapons are new and frightful, but the fact remains that so long as nations are armed in enmity against other nations, even with only bows and arrows, they are too easily tempted to war.

JOHN XXIII likewise devoted some paragraphs to explicit praise of the work of the United Nations. This was a reasoned appraisal and a welcome commendation.

Here, again, however, the late Pope spoke in concert with other recent popes. In the same letter of August 1, 1917 in which he urged the belligerent powers to end World War I, Pope Benedict XV advocated, as a preventive of future wars, "the institution of arbitration, with its peace-making function, subject to regulations to be agreed on and sanctions to be determined." Pius XI, it is true, in 1922 voiced his discouragement of the failure of the League of Nations, but he still taught the need of settling international disputes by peaceful means.

Pius XII, on the other hand, championed once more the establishment of an organization of nations which would perform effectively the task which the League of Nations had failed to perform. "It is of first importance," he said in his five-points address of 1959, "to erect some judicial institution which shall guarantee the loyal and faithful fulfillment of the conditions agreed upon."

While he was disappointed with some phases of the United Nations as an organization, he praised others of its accomplishments, and welcomed an opportunity to send delegates to its affiliated international agencies.

No, we cannot call Pope John exclusively either the "Pope of International Organizations," the "Pope of Disarmament," or the "Pope of Peace."

CAN WE CALL him the "Pope of Men of Good Will?" That would be a happy — if clumsy — title and a welcome tradition by addressing Pacem in Terris not only to Catholic bishops and faithful, but also to "men of good will." Did we not speak of all men as his brothers under God, and did he not personally set to work those whom he met — Catholic, Protestant, Jew, Buddhist, Mohammedan, unbeliever — as if the blood of the sons of God is indeed thicker than water?

The almost untranslatable Italian phrase, "il papa simpatico" might be even more exact. As Cardinal Meyer pointed out, the Pope's gracious personality could win people who only saw him in pictures or over television.

Methodist Bishop Fred P. Carson says that during his audience with Pope John, the Pope would pat him on the arm whenever he said something "And," said the Bishop, "I had all I could do to keep from patting him back." Non-Catholics felt a personal loss when he died. "They felt that he somehow belonged to them, too," Father Hesburgh of Notre Dame explained. "And he did." It might be taken as detracting from the unquestionable "good will" of other popes to call John the Pope of Good Will. Pius XII in particular set no barriers against any man by reason of race or creed, and he too addressed appeals, if not encyclicals, to "men of good will."

But none can deny that Pope John had a winsomeness which no pope since Pius IX has possessed. That was the human key to his great leadership.

"A truly universal man," Adlai Stevenson termed him. "— one for all seasons."

Of course, you may always prefer to John XXIII the "Pope of Vatican Council II." I suppose that the pope who sees the council to its conclu-

sion could be designated by the same name; but the pope who, acting on what he inspired was divine inspiration, launched the council, certainly has prior claim to the title. Once more, though, it was inevitable that the first Vatican Council of 1869-1870 left off. And we must not forget that both Pius XII and Pius XII have consideration to that project.

IN MANY ways the best designation for Pope John is the "Pope of the Aggiornamento." Another Italian word, aggiornamento can best be translated by the phrase "a bringing up to date." John's outstanding feat, I think, has been to advocate the bringing up to date of the Church's principles. Conditions do not change. Conditions do. Both in his personal dealings, in his encyclicals, and in the Vatican Council itself, the late Holy Father has sought, sensitively and sensibly, to revise the approach of the Church to current realities.

The Pope's revisionism has surprised all, and shocked some. The surprise is refreshing. The shock is unnecessary, for his action, properly understood, is no more novel now than when Christ said: "Every Scribe instructed in the kingdom of heaven is like a householder who brings forth from his storehouse things new and old."

The popes, you see, are not essentially innovators. There is a thrilling continuity in their teachings and their practice, for their duty is to preserve a precious heritage, the revelation of Christ. "Peter has spoken these things through the Holy Spirit," cried the Fathers of the Ecumenical Council of Chalcedon in 451. St. Peter, guided by the Holy Spirit, continues to speak through the popes who have followed Pope St. Leo.

But although Peter speaks, it is in the person and with the voice of a Leo XIII, a Pius X, a Benedict XV, a Pius XI, a Pius XII, a John XXIII. No pope can give equal stress to all Christian truths. Each must of necessity concentrate on a few, according to his own gifts and his own needs.

That is why history, while aware of the common doctrine of the Vicars of Christ, must attune its ear to the personal accents of each pope if it is to mark his characteristic contribution.

Maybe, in the last analysis, history will simply give up any attempt to fit a name to John XXIII. Maybe it will be content to allow him many grateful titles — those suggested above and other notable possibilities like "Pope of the Jailbirds," "Pope of the Street Sweepers," "Pope of the Farmers."

But the fact that John XXIII will have their way, and we will all call him "Everybody's Pope."

A dear, dear man at all events. Thank God for him.

400th Birthday

San Francisco — (NC) — The 400th anniversary of the decree of the Council of Trent which stimulated the development of the Church's modern seminary system was celebrated with an open house at St. Patrick's Seminary in nearby Menlo Park.



'The Home That Music Built'

Osimo, Italy — (RNS) — This is the main building of St. Charles Institute in Osimo, Italy, a vocational trade school founded by a priest-composer through proceeds from his published works. Known as the "Home That Music Built," the institute was started in 1953 by Father Carlo Rossini, P.S.S.C. (shown below). Widely known as a composer and compiler of church music, Father Rossini is a member of the Pious Society of the Missionaries of St. Charles, known unofficially as the Scalabrini Fathers. Currently serving his golden jubilee year as a priest, he is in residence at St. Joseph's church in New York. In September he plans to return to the school for a visit. Some 350 boys, teen-age sons of emigrants, receive a high school education and vocational training at the institute. Upon graduation they get diplomas from the Italian government certifying their proficiency, thus enabling them to get highly-paid jobs in any of the six Common Market countries. Father Rossini hopes eventually to enlarge St. Charles to care for 1,000 boys.

Music Aids Emigrants

Osimo, Italy — (RNS) — "The father having served as an Italian they could find. Usually these youngsters remained uneducated and unskilled for the rest of their lives." In 1925 Father Rossini was called by the late Bishop Hugh C. Boyle of Pittsburgh to be organist and choir director of his cathedral. But the priest never forgot his parish work at St. Joachim's.

During 25 years at Pittsburgh, Father Rossini composed and compiled scores of Masses, hymns, arrangements and instruction in liturgical music. He also taught organ at Duquesne University and the Pittsburgh Musical Institute.

His compositions and theories of church music are now well known in Catholic churches in the U.S. and Europe.

Widely known as a composer and compiler, Father Rossini is a member of the Pious Society of the Missionaries of St. Charles, known unofficially as the Scalabrini Fathers. Born in Italy, he was ordained in 1913.

THE IDEA for the institute had its germs in 1921 when Father Rossini came to the U.S.

As a result, the young priest saw the tragedy of uprooted family life and the removal of the oldest children, especially priests in the Byzantine Rite, whatever mental law-paying jobs

they across to the U.S. frequently one member of the family at a time.

Father Robert F. Taft of Cranston, R.I., was permitted to transfer from the Latin Rite because of the shortage of priests in the Byzantine Rite.

WESTON, Mass. — (RNS) — A Jesuit seminary at Weston College was ordained in the Byzantine Rite here after receiving permission from the Vatican.

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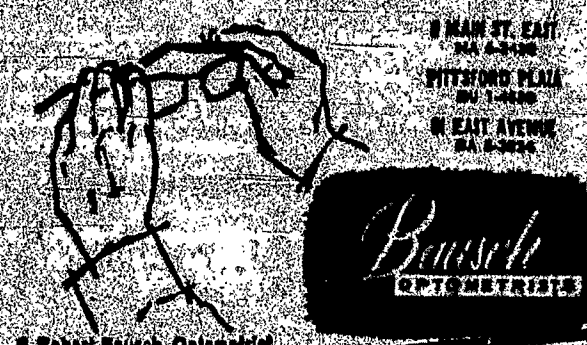
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