

# Bearing Witness

By REV. LEO J. TRESE

You will recall that John the Baptist was imprisoned and eventually beheaded by King Herod of Galilee. John's offense was that he publicly rebuked Herod for the king's adulterous marriage to his brother's divorced wife.



There were many zealous men who were devoted to John and imitators of his holy life. Now that he was in prison, John wished to detach these disciples from himself and to transfer their loyalty to Jesus. Consequently he dispatched two of them to seek out Jesus and to ask, in John's name, "Art thou he who is to come (that is, the Messiah) or shall we look for another?"

Jesus answered quite simply, "Go and report to John what you have heard and seen." Jesus pointed to His words and actions as the best proof of His divine mission.

The technique of judgment which Jesus suggested to John's disciples is the same method which we follow in appraising our fellow men. We judge others by their words and deeds. We react negatively to a person who is rude, irritable, selfish or domineering. We like and accept a person who is courteous, patient, generous and cooperative.

Sometimes our judgments are mistaken, even rash, because based on insufficient evidence. However, we feel that in general a person's behavior is a pretty safe measure of his character. The strange thing is that we so easily forget that others are evaluating us in the same way. They can judge us only by what they see us do and hear us say.

We may try to dismiss this fact by saying, "Well, if people don't want to like me they don't have to. It's all right with me." However, we have no right to be cheerful with such pretended nonchalance. The impression which we make upon others walked through the center of there is much more at stake than our own personal interests. Christ's cause is at stake, too.

**WE ARE CATHOLICS.** We are known to be Catholic by those around us every time that we say or do something which is less than Christian, we give people reason to judge Christ harshly. "How can the Catholic faith be true," others will reason logically, "when a Catholic talks and acts like that?"

We are reminded here of Marshal Villars' plea to King Louis XIV. "Defend me from my friends," Villars asked, "I can defend myself from my enemies." This is a sentiment which will might be upon the lips of Jesus as He views us in some of our less creditable moments.

It is not enough, of course, merely to abstain from unworthy behavior. This is a necessary beginning. At least we are not positively hurting the cause of Jesus if we are honest in our business dealing, temperate in our drinking, chaste in conversation and con-

duct and truthful in speech. However, this is only half the story. In baptism we were commissioned to be apostles, with the duty to bear witness to Christ and to be a constructive force in carrying His message to others. This means that we must be outstanding in our charity. We must be notable for the patience, kindness and sympathy which we show towards others, thoughtful for their feelings and generous with our time and talent when we can be of help.

It is told of St. Francis of Assisi that one day he said to a fellow friar, "Let us go into town and preach." Side by side in their ragged tunics, faces shined with such cheerful piety, they walked through the center of the money-hungry and corrupt city, then back to the monastery, then back to the monastery. "I thought that we were supposed to give a sermon somewhere," Francis' puzzled companion said. "We did give the sermon, Brother," Francis answered.

It would be well to ask ourselves, as we go to bed at night, "How did Jesus fare with me today? What kind of a message did my behavior speak to those around me? Did Christ's reputation rise or fall?"

Perhaps, as far as Jesus is concerned, I might better have stayed at home today. But to defend me from my friends, I can defend myself from my enemies.

### Minister, Priest Conduct Rite

Nijmegen, Holland — (RNS) — A Catholic priest and a Dutch Reformed pastor officiated at a "mixed marriage" in the chapel of the Catholic University of Nijmegen during which Protestant and Catholic guests joined in singing nuptial hymns.



## Mexico's Venice Near Shrine

Xochimilco's floating gardens were once the exclusive park of Aztec Indian nobility. Now they are open to Mexicans and visitors. The gardens are near Mexico City where the Blessed Virgin Mary is honored at the huge Guadalupe shrine. A tour to the shrines and scenic spots of Mexico will be made under the spiritual direction of Rev. Henry Atwell, Courier editor, from Jan. 22 to Feb. 5. Information and reservations are available from Sargent Travel Agency, Manger Hotel Arcade, Rochester, or from the Courier, 35 Selo St.

## Post Article Stirs Protest

Boston — (RNS) — Cardinal Cushing of Boston warned here that some "free-wheeling" commentators are using the second Vatican Council's approach to the modern world as a "free-way" to overturn the Roman Catholic Church with criticism.

He spoke at the New England regional meeting of the National Catholic Educational Association at Emmanuel College.

Without specifying a particular article or author by name, Cardinal Cushing clearly indicated that his observations included a Saturday Evening Post report by Edward R. F. Sheehan.

THE POST writer is a Boston College graduate, a former foreign correspondent and press officer for American embassies in Cairo and Beirut, and author of the recently published novel, Kingdom of Illusion.

His article was described by the Post as "a monumental, searching and reverent report," "the Council was intended as an opening of the windows, a historic ferment now transforming the Roman Catholic Church in America. It was entitled, 'glories.'"

## Critic Fired Blames School

Washington — (NC) — A controversy has erupted here over the dismissal of a Georgetown University faculty member who believes he lost his job because he published articles critical of the university.

Francis E. Kearns, an assistant professor of English at Georgetown who joined the faculty in 1960, has asked the American Association of University Professors to investigate "questionable circumstances surrounding my dismissal."

Kearns said he thought Georgetown terminated his contract because of articles he published in the Commonwealth and Ramparts magazines criticizing the attitude of the Catholic Church in general and Georgetown in particular on racial justice and academic freedom. However, university officials never said the articles were the reason for his dismissal.

Noting that Mr. Sheehan once served him as an altar boy, Cardinal Cushing observed: "He has a facility for writing and a nice personality, but he would place if he took a positive approach to the Church rather than relishing everything critical that's been said before." In contrast to "carping" criticism, Cardinal Cushing added, "the Council was intended as an opening of the windows, a historic ferment now transforming the Roman Catholic Church in America. It was entitled, 'glories.'"

## Our Lady Image of Beauty

Vatican City — (NC) — Pope Paul VI eulogized the beauty of Our Lady on the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, remarking that the world has "almost lost the concept of a beauty of such sublimity."

Because of this, he told the crowd in St. Peter's Square, and because "we have such desire for beauty, we go around looking for it in exterior human and visible appearances."

"But the Madonna provides for us the image of an essential beauty, the interior harmony of the total perfection of her being. It is beauty which we find in children — the beauty of innocence."

"This is the beauty we must hail in Mary, and we ought to be glad that it reflects in us, reminding us where to look for it . . ."

"If the world were indeed capable of appreciating this beauty of the Madonna, what torrents of goodness, spiritual energy and joy it would find rising in itself! Let us beg the Madonna, 'totally beautiful,' that she assist us and smile upon us, revealing to us the secret of her life full of virtue."

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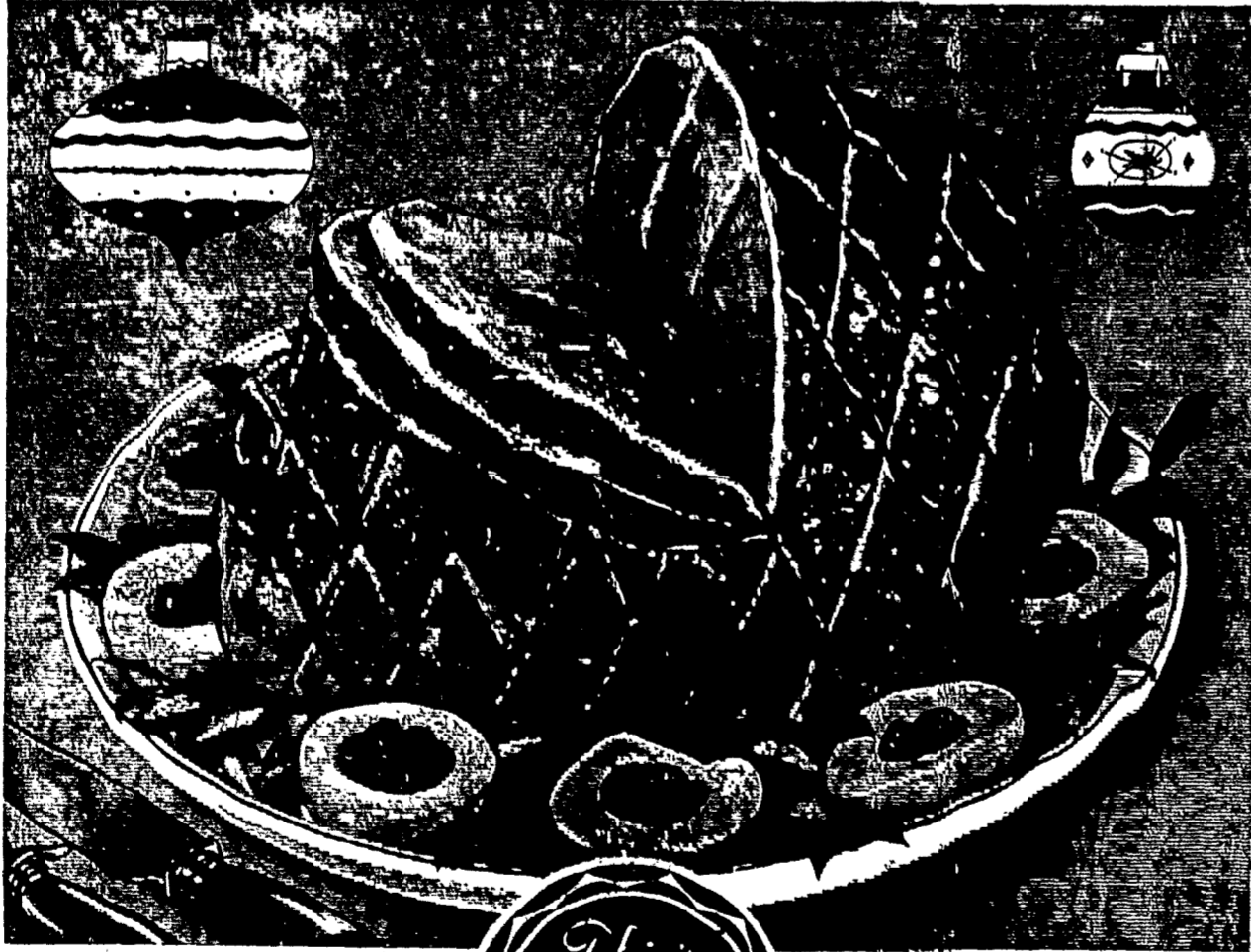
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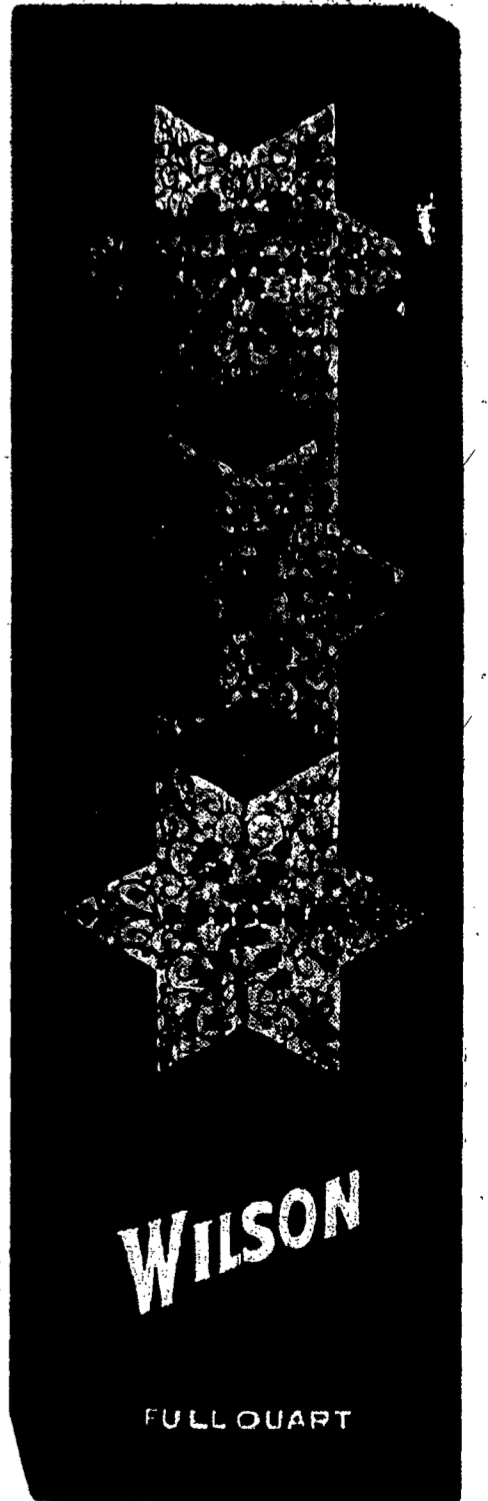


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