

In Hope, Not with Contempt

Our Times Which Are Out of Joint

The woes of the world are our daily headlines. The Catholic Church, although protected by an unconquerable Providence, is not immune from the world's turmoil.

In times of crisis, Catholics through the centuries have instinctively turned in prayer to the Blessed Virgin Mary to manifest again her maternal care for the Church of her divine Son.

Now in our present time which, as Shakespeare's Hamlet said of his era, is so "out of joint," Bishop Kearney has called Catholics of this Diocese to a year of honor and prayer to our Lady, the Mother of the Church.

Josef Stalin once in contempt asked, "How many divisions does the Pope have?"

To use the word in a different connotation, the Pope today might admit he has too many divisions in the Church — a situation which rocks the ancient barque of Peter at a time when it needs all hands to steady the helm on its storm tossed journey.

As the Bishop stated in his pastoral read in parish churches last Sunday, extremists by their articles and talks in recent months have injured "the traditional sturdy confidence of our people in their faith."

Pope Paul in his talk to the world's bishops at the opening of the Vatican Council in 1963 cited this hazardous condition of the Church today and admitted he felt tempted "to be frightened rather than comforted, saddened rather than gladdened, anxious for self-defense and condemnation rather than for trust and friendship."

In a somewhat similarly pessimistic situation, Hamlet spat out his irritation at the "cursed spite" that he "was born to set it right."

Many Catholics these days also complain that their comfortable old ways have been disturbed. Like the Pope they are also anxious to condemn the wicked world, let it sink in the mess it's made for itself, and, like Hamlet, cure it while they have to endure it.

Hamlet, however, was not the best Christian, and as Bishop Kearney pointed out in his pastoral, "Shakespeare was not a theologian," so our outlook goes beyond the final chapter of the bard's dramatic masterpiece.

As Catholics, "we look upon our times and upon their varied and contrasting manifestations with immense tenderness and with an immense desire to offer to men of today the message of friendship, of salvation and of hope which Christ brought into the world," Pope Paul told the bishops.

This is the reason why Pope John "opened the windows" — to look out at our world and to speak to it not in contempt nor scorn — "for God did not send his Son into the world in order to judge the world but that the world might be saved through him" — and to speak through these opened windows, as Pope Paul stated, "to the poor, the needy, the afflicted, the hungry, the suffering and sorrowing."

Here is the tragedy of our times in the Church — precisely at that moment when the world in its agony looks to the Church for guidance and hope, precisely at a time when the Church stirs with new vigor, it finds itself thwarted not hardly so much by its traditional enemies as by its own bungling members who sap its strength by their petty stubbornness and extreme idiosyncrasies, each "damned error," as Bishop Kearney described them, again quoting Shakespeare, being these days approved by some "somber brow" who hides the grossness of personal preference "with fair ornament."

Pope John summoned the Vatican Council in the hope it would be a new Pentecost, a fresh beginning, a daring jump into the world for a new missionary adventure. There is every evidence that the Spirit of God is thrusting the Church to this new horizon.

We have every confidence that our Lady's prayers will heal the Church's present wounds, strengthen its members in unity and send them as her Son sent his apostles "into the whole world."

William Shakespeare indeed expressed all this well on the lips of Brutus in the play Julius Caesar:

There is a tide in the affairs of men,
Which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune;
Omitted, all the voyage of their life
Is bound in shallows and in miseries.
On such a sea as we now float,
And we must take the current when it serves,
Or lose our ventures.

—Father Henry Atwell.

the parents of JESUS took him up to Jerusalem to present him to the LORD

Text from the Holy Family Mass

Mother of the Church Patron for 1965

My dear People:

It has been our custom to dedicate each year to some special devotion. We have had years dedicated to the Blessed Sacrament, to the Sacred Heart, to Our Lady of Lourdes, to Saint Joseph, and others.



This year I shall take the dedication from the closing address of the Vicar of Christ at the recent session of the Ecumenical Council. The year will be dedicated to the "Mother of the Church."

We know only too well that the "opening of the windows," as Pope John expressed it, has had some weird results. What concerns us especially is the danger of injuring the traditional sturdy confidence of our people in their faith. Extreme liturgical writers ask us to soften the concept of heresy. Extreme modern theologians ask us to minimize devotion to Mary and the Saints. What aggravates the situation is that the extremist always has a good press coverage. Unfortunately, too, some of the articles appearing in so many magazines, supposedly Catholic, remind us of the words of "Hamlet."

"The time is out of joint, O cursed spite
That ever I was born to set it right."

Saint Paul years ago gave this solemn warning in his second epistle to Timothy:

"There shall be a time when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires they will grow tired of sound doctrine, always itching to hear something fresh, turning a deaf ear to the truth."

Shakespeare was not a theologian, but he certainly "hit the nail on the head" when he wrote in "The Merchant of Venice":

"In religion,
What damned error but some sober brow
Will bless it, and approve it with a text,
Hiding the grossness with fair ornament?"

Mary was chosen by God to be the Mother of the Incarnate Word. It was not an easy burden for a young girl. The Vicar of Christ, her Son, has called her to be Mother once again, now, of the Mystical Body, the Church. She has learned a lot since the day of the Annunciation, and it is with utmost confidence that we commit His Church to her maternal care as we dedicate 1965 to Mary, "Mother of the Church."

In seeking her maternal care of the Mystical Body of her Son, she herself has given us her Rosary as the most acceptable form of supplication for her aid. At Lourdes and at Fatima, that story was the same.

We, therefore, dedicate this year of 1965 to the "Mother of the Church." May she bring rich blessings to her children throughout the world, but especially to the flock of

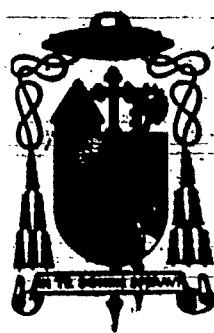
Your devoted Shepherd in Christ,

Bishop of Rochester

Family Communion On Sunday, Jan. 10

My dear People:

For many years we have sanctified the Feast of the Holy Family by a very beautiful liturgy — The Family Communion Sunday. It has been a very rewarding experience for your bishop to hear from the various parishes the story of the large numbers of families walking together to the Altar rail to receive the Lord together in the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist.



I feel sure that this practice is most pleasing to the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph to whom the day is dedicated. May I ask a renewal of the devotion this year on next Sunday, the Feast of the Holy Family. Why not take Mother out to breakfast after Mass and make her "Queen for a day," at least.

With my blessing, I am

Your devoted Shepherd in Christ,

Bishop of Rochester

Holiness, Vocation for All

(This is the fifth of the eight chapters of the Vatican Council's Constitution on the Church, as released by N.C.W.C. News Service.)

Foreward

39. The Church, whose mystery is being set forth by this sacred synod, is believed to be indefectibly holy. Indeed Christ, the Son of God, who with the Father and the Spirit is praised as "uniquely holy," loved the Church as His bride, delivering Himself up for her. He did this that He might sanctify her (cf. Eph. 5, 25-26). He united her to Himself as His own body and brought it to perfection by the gift of the Holy Spirit for God's glory.

Therefore in the Church, everyone whether belonging to the hierarchy, or being cared for by it, is called to holiness, according to the saying of the Apostle: "For this is the will of God, your sanctification" (1 Thess. 4, 3; Eph. 1, 4). However, this "holiness" of the Church is increasingly manifested; and must be manifested, in the fruits of grace which the Spirit produces in the faithful; it is expressed in many ways in individuals, who in their walk of life, tend toward the perfection of charity, thus causing the edification of others; in a very special way this (holiness) appears in the practice of the counsels, customarily called "evangelical."

This practice of the counsels, under the impulsion of the Holy Spirit, undertaken by many Christians, either privately or in a Church-approved condition of life, gives and must give to the world an outstanding witness and example of this same holiness.

Call to Holiness

40. The Lord Jesus, the divine Teacher and Model of all perfection, preached holiness of life to each and everyone of His disciples of every condition. He Himself stands as the author and consummator of this holiness in life: "You therefore are the perfect, even as your heavenly Father is perfect" (Mt. 5, 48). Indeed He sent the Holy Spirit upon all men that He might move them inwardly to love God with their whole heart and their whole soul, with all their mind and all their strength (cf. Mt. 22, 37) and that they might love each other as Christ loves them (cf. Jn. 13, 34; 15, 12). The followers of Christ are called by God, not because of their works, but according to His own purpose and grace.

They are justified in the Lord Jesus, because in the baptism of faith they truly become sons of God and sharers in the divine nature. In this way they are really made holy. Then too, by God's gift, they must hold on to and complete in their lives this holiness they have received. They are warned by the Apostle to live "as becomes saints" (Eph. 5, 3), and to put on "as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, a heart of mercy, kindness, humility, meekness, patience" (Col. 3, 12), and to possess the fruit of the Spirit in holiness (cf. Gal. 5, 22; Rom. 8, 22).

Since truly we all offend in many things (cf. Jac. 3, 2) we all need God's mercies continually and we all must daily pray: "Forgive us our debts" (Mt. 6, 12).

Thus it is evident to everyone, that all the faithful of Christ of whatever rank or status, are called to the fullness of the Christian life and to the perfection of charity; by this holiness as such a more human manner of living is promoted in this earthly society. In order that the faithful may reach this perfection, they must use their strength accordingly as they have received it, as a gift from Christ. They must follow in His footsteps and conform themselves to His image seeking the will of the Father in all things.

They must devote themselves with all their being to the glory of God and the service of their neighbor. In this way, the holiness of the People of God will grow into an abundant harvest of good, as is admirably shown

by the life of so many saints in Church history.

Varied Forms

41. In the various classes and differing duties of life, one and the same holiness is cultivated by all, who are moved by the Spirit of God, and who obey the voice of the Father and worship God the Father in spirit and in truth. These people follow the poor Christ, the humble and cross-bearing Christ in order to be worthy of being sharers in His glory. Every person must walk unhesitatingly according to his own personal gifts and duties in the path of living faith, which arouses hope and works through charity.

In the first place, the shepherds of Christ's flock ought to be holly and eagerly, humbly and courageously carry out their ministry in imitation of the eternal high Priest, the Shepherd and Guardian of our souls. They ought to fulfill this duty in such a way that it will be the principal means of their sanctification. Those chosen for the fullness of the priesthood are granted the ability of exercising the perfect duty of pastoral charity by the grace of the sacrament of orders. This perfect duty of pastoral charity is exercised in every form of episcopal care and service, be it prayer, sacrifice or preaching.

By this same sacramental grace, they are given the courage necessary to lay down their lives for their sheep, not to mention the ability of promoting greater holiness in the Church by their daily example — a pattern to their flock (1 Pet. 5, 3). Priests, who resemble the bishops to a certain degree in their participation of the sacrament of Orders, form the spiritual crown of the bishops. They participate in the grace of their office and they should grow daily in the love of God and their neighbor by the exercise of their office through Christ, the eternal and unique Mediator.

They should preserve the bond of priestly communion, and they should abound in every spiritual good and thus present to all men a living witness to God. All this they should do in emulation of those priests who often, down through the course of the centuries, left an outstanding example of the holiness of humble and hidden service. Their praise lives on in the Church of God. By their very office of praying and offering sacrifice for their own people and the entire people of God, they should rise to greater holiness. Keeping in mind what they are "doing and imitating

what they are handling, these priests, in their apostolic labors, rather than being ensnared by perils and hardships, should rather rise to greater holiness through these perils and hardships.

They should ever nourish and strengthen their action from an abundance of contemplation; doing all this for the comfort of the entire Church of God. All priests, and especially those who are called "diocesan priests," due to the special title of their ordination, should keep continually before their minds the fact that their faithful loyalty toward and their generous cooperation with their bishop is of the greatest value in their growth in holiness.

Ministers of lesser rank are also sharers in the mission and grace of the Supreme Priest. In the first place among these ministers are deacons, who, in as much as they are dispensers of Christ's mysteries and servants of the Church, should keep themselves free from every vice and stand before men as personifications of goodness and friends of God (cf. 1 Tim. 3, 8-10 and 12-13).

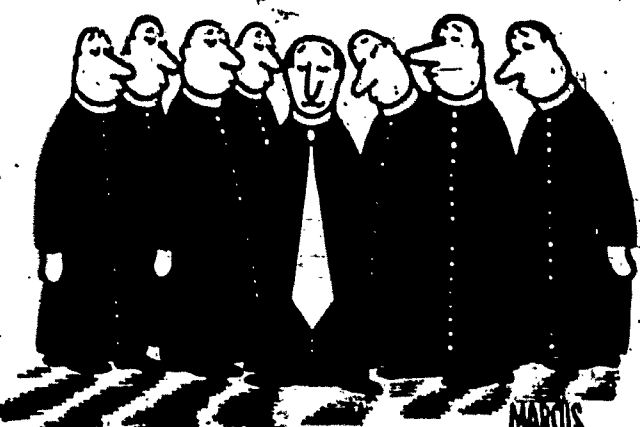
Clerics, who are called by the Lord and are set aside as His portion in order to prepare themselves for the various ministerial offices under the watchful eye of pastors, are bound to bring their hearts and minds into accord with this special election (which is theirs). They will accomplish this by their constance in prayer, by their burning love, and by their unremitting recollection of whatever is true, just and of good repute. They will accomplish all this for the glory and honor of God. Besides these already named, there are also lay-folk, chosen by God and called by the bishop. These lay-folk spend themselves completely in apostolic labors, working the Lord's field with much success.

Furthermore, married couples and Christian parents should follow their own proper path (to holiness) by faithful love. They should sustain one another in grace through out the entire length of their lives. They should embue their offspring, lovingly welcomed as God's gift, with Christian doctrine and the evangelical virtues.

In this manner, they offer all men the example of unwearying and generous love; in this way they build up the brotherhood of charity; in so doing, they stand as the witnesses and cooperators in the fruitfulness of Holy Mother Church; by such lives, they are a sign and a part.

(Continued on Page 5)

MEDITATIONS OF MARCUS



Necktie for a priest. This is aggrionamento?
From America magazine.

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MAIN OFFICE 35 Scio St. — BAKER 5-6210 — Rochester, N.Y. 14604
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Popular Support Wanes in Vietnam War

by GARY MacEoin

Since I recently reported from Vietnam in this column on the grave deterioration of our position in that critical area, things have become steadily worse. The military situation is today comparable to that in the spring of 1954, just before the disastrous French defeat at Dienbienphu. As U.S. Ambassador Maxwell Taylor has said, there are 45 wars being fought in the 45 provinces of the Republic of South Vietnam.

Ambassador Taylor has been in the United States for talks with military chiefs and President. No new policy has been announced, but Administration statements indicate a belief that what is needed is to step up the military effort. In other words, if we put on enough pressure, we can make the war no longer worth the Communist's while.

I have the opportunity to discuss the situation at length with leading members of the American Friends of Vietnam, a new Vietnam group in this country's top experts on South-East Asia, men who have been working tirelessly since the Republic of South Vietnam was created to help

it fulfill its promise, and to develop in the United States a better understanding of its problems and of the contribution we can make to solve them.

These men have no miracle drug, no simple solution. They all agree that the deterioration is progressive, that we are approaching disintegration. But they have not abandoned hope. They believe that stable democratic government can be established in Vietnam, but not by military effort alone.

"The primary problem always was and still is political," according to Mr. Joseph Buttinger. Author of *The Smaller Dragon*, a book which describes Vietnam's successful 2,000-year effort to prevent China from grabbing the rich rice bowl of the lower Mekong Valley, Mr. Buttinger is this country's leading student of Vietnamese history.

"A stable government with broad popular support is the primary need if we are to convince the enemy that he cannot win, and such support is almost entirely lacking," he says. "To gain the people, we must convince them that it is worth their while to support the government. This can be done only by a program of im-

mediate reforms coupled with a prospect of peace to follow soon."

What kind of reforms does Mr. Buttinger have in mind? "Eighty per cent of Vietnamese are peasants, and only a small minority of these own land on which they live. We should proclaim immediately that the land they are cultivating belongs to them, that they own it free and clear, without rent or other payment."

It is an extreme measure, but it is precisely what the Communists promise them when they win. By itself, in Mr. Buttinger's view, it is not enough. It must be accompanied by what the Communists are not today able to provide, a prospect of peace.

"Peace involves compromise," says Mr. Buttinger. "That does not however, imply neutralization as proposed by President de Gaulle. We can compromise on co-existence which will enable the south to sell to the north its surplus food, the thing the north most needs. Now I believe that the Communists will reject such a compromise because they need war to gain their objectives. If they do, we shall have gained the psychological initiative. We

shall have not only the Vietnamese peasants on our side but also a world opinion which today is universally hostile."

Can South-Vietnamese leaders be persuaded to undertake such a program? Professor Wesley Fishel of Michigan State University believes they could. A one-time adviser to the late President Ngo Dinh Diem, Dr. Fishel has spent more than half of the past ten years in Vietnam, his most recent visit being in November 1964.

"Conditions in Saigon were never so bad," he says. "There is a lack of popular support for the government, a lack of leadership, a lack of administration, a lack of responsibility and an absence of justice. But that is not the entire picture. There is still a resilience among the Vietnamese, a toughness, a fire, similar to what we saw in the past. There are elements in the society which desire desperately to save the independence of their country. They are anti-Communist. They are ready to sacrifice. They would accept land reform. They would give their lives."

If such elements in fact exist, it is time to ask what is wrong with our policies. We certainly are not using them.