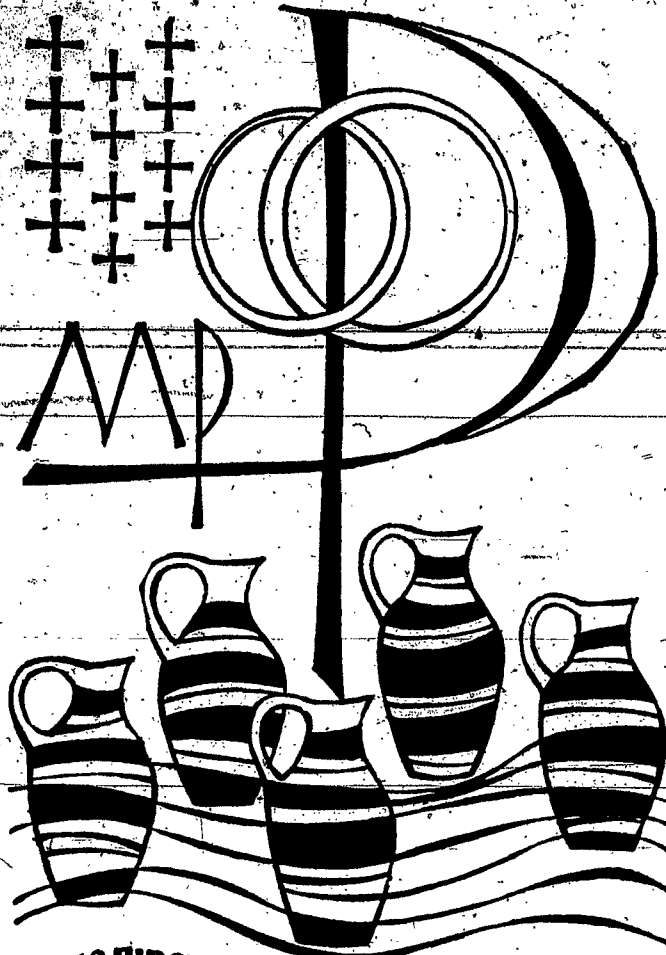


# The Church, a Pilgrim, Served by Obedience



**THIS FIRST MIRACLE JESUS WORKED IN THE PRESENCE OF HIS DISCIPLES...**

Symbol and text of Mass for second Sunday after Epiphany.

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

43. The evangelical counsels of chastity, poverty and obedience are based upon the words and examples of the Lord. They were further commended by the apostles and Fathers of the Church, as well as by the learned doctors and pastors of souls. The counsels are a divine gift, which the Church received from its Lord and which it will always observe with the help of His grace.

Church authority has the duty, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, of interpreting these evangelical counsels, of regulating their practice and finally to build on them stable forms of living. Thus it has come about, that, as if on a tree which has grown in the field of the Lord, various forms of solitary and community life, as well as various religious families have branched out in a marvelous and multiple way from this divinely given seed. Such a multiple and miraculous growth augments both the progress of the members of these various religious families themselves and the welfare of the entire Body of Christ. These religious families give their members the support of a more firm stability in their way of life and a proven doctrine of acquiring perfection.

They further offer their members the support of fraternal association in the militia of Christ and of liberty strengthened by obedience. Thus these religious are able to tranquilly fulfill and faithfully observe their religious profession and so spiritually rejoicing make progress on the road of charity.

From the point of view of the divine and hierarchical structure of the Church, the religious state of life is not an intermediate state between the clerical and lay states. But, rather, the faithful of Christ are called by God from both these states of life so that they might enjoy this particular gift in the life of the Church and thus each in one's own way, may be of some advantage to the salvific mission of the Church.

#### Vowed in Service

44. The faithful of Christ bind themselves to the three afore-said counsels either by vows, or by other sacred bonds, which are like vows in their purpose. By such a bond, a person is totally dedicated to God, beyond all things. In this way, that person is ordained to the honor and service of God under a new and special title. Indeed through Baptism a person dies to sin and is consecrated to God. However, in order that he may be capable of deriving more abundant fruit from this baptismal grace, he intends, by the profession of the evangelical counsels in the Church, to free himself from those obstacles, which might draw him away from the fervor of charity and the perfection of divine worship.

By this profession of the evangelical counsels, then, he is more intimately consecrated to divine service. This consecration will be the more perfect, in as much as the indissoluble bond of the union of Christ and His bride, the Church, is represented by firm and more stable bonds.

The evangelical counsels which lead to charity join their followers to the Church and its mystery in a special way. Since this is so, the spiritual life of these people should then be devoted to the welfare of the whole Church. From this arises their duty of working to implant and strengthen the Kingdom of Christ in souls and to extend that Kingdom to every clime. This duty is to be undertaken to the extent of their capacities and in keeping with the proper type of their own vocation. This can be realized through prayer or active works of the apostolate. It is for this reason that the Church preserves and fosters the special character of her various religious institutes.

The profession of the evangelical counsels, then, appears as a sign which can and ought to attract all the members of the Church to an effective and prompt fulfillment of the duties of their Christian vocation. The people of God have no lasting city here below, but look forward to one that is to come. Since this is so, the religious state, whose purpose is to free its members from earthly cares, more fully manifests to all believers the presence of heavenly goods already possessed here below.

Furthermore, it not only witnesses to the fact of a new and eternal life acquired by the redemption of Christ, but it foretells the future resurrection and the glory of the heavenly Kingdom. Christ proposed to His disciples this form of life, which He, as the Son of God, accepted in entering this world to do the will of the Father. This same state of life is accurately exemplified and perpetually made present in the Church. The religious state clearly manifests that the Kingdom of God and its needs, in a very special way, are raised above all earthly considerations.

Finally it clearly shows all men both the unsurpassed

breadth of the strength of Christ the King and the infinite power of the Holy Spirit marvelously working in the Church. Thus, the state which is constituted by the profession of the evangelical counsels, though it is not the hierarchical structure of the Church, nevertheless, undeniably belongs to its life and holiness.

#### Under Authority

45. It is the duty of the ecclesiastical hierarchy to regulate the practice of the evangelical counsels by law, since it is the duty of the same hierarchy to care for the People of God and to offer them abundant possibilities of spiritual growth. The importance of the profession of the evangelical counsels is seen in the fact that it fosters the perfection of love of God and love of neighbor in an outstanding manner and that this profession is strengthened by vows.

Furthermore, the hierarchy, following with docility the prompting of the Holy Spirit, accepts the rules presented by outstanding men and women and authentically approves these rules after further necessary adjustments. It also aids by its vigilant and safeguarding authority those institutes variously established for the building up of Christ's Body in order that these same institutes may grow and flourish according to the spirit of the founders.

Any institute of perfection and its individual members may be removed from the jurisdiction of the local Ordinaries by the Supreme Pontiff and subjected to himself alone. This is done in virtue of his primacy over the entire Church in order to more fully provide for the necessities of the entire flock of the Lord and in consideration of the common good. In like manner, these institutes may be freed from or committed to the charge of the proper patriarchal authority. The members of these institutes, in fulfilling their obligation to the Church due to their particular form of life, ought to show reverence and obedience to bishops according to the sacred canons.

The bishops are owed this respect because of their pastoral authority in their own churches and because of the need of unity and harmony in the apostolate.

The Church not only raises the religious profession to the dignity of a canonical state by her approval, but even manifests that this profession is a state consecrated to God by the liturgical setting of that profession. The Church itself, by the authority given to it by God, accepts the vows of the newly professed. It begs aid and grace from God for them by its public prayers. It commends them to God, imparts a spiritual blessing on them and accompanies their self-offering by the Eucharistic sacrifice.

#### Image of Christ

46. Religious should carefully keep before their minds the fact that the Church presents Christ to believers not as a model, but as a living reality through them. The Church thus portrays Christ in contemplation on the mountain, in His proclamation of the kingdom of God to the multitudes, in His healing of the sick and maimed, in His work of converting sinners to a better life, in His solitude for youth and His goodness to all men, always obedient to the will of the Father who sent Him.

All men should take note that the profession of the evangelical counsels, though entailing the renunciation of certain values which are to be undoubtedly esteemed, does not detract from a genuine development of the human persons, but rather by its very nature is most beneficial to that development. Indeed the counsels, voluntarily undertaken according to each one's personal vocation, contribute a great deal to the purification of heart and spiritual liberty. They continually stir up the fervor of charity. But especially they are able to more fully mold the Christian man to that type of virginal and detached life, which Christ the Lord chose for Himself and which His Mother also embraced. This is clearly proven by the example of so many holy founders. Let no one think that religious have become strangers to their fellowmen or useless citizens of this earthly city by their consecration. For even

though it sometimes happens that religious do not directly mingle with their contemporaries, yet in a more profound sense, these same religious are united with them in the heart of Christ and spiritually cooperate with them. In this way the building up of the earthly city may have its foundation in the Lord and may tend toward Him, lest—perhaps those who build this city shall have labored in vain.

Finally, this sacred synod encourages and praises the men and women, Brothers and Sisters, who in monasteries, or in schools and hospitals, or in the missions, adorn the Bride of Christ by their unswerving and humble faithfulness in their chosen consecration.

47. Let each of the faithful, therefore, carefully see to it that he persevere and ever grow in whatever vocation God has given him. Let him do this for the increased holiness of the Church, for the greater glory of the one and undivided Trinity, which in and through Christ is the font and the source of all holiness.

#### CHAPTER VII

##### The Pilgrim Church and Its Union with the Church in Heaven

48. The Church, to which we are all called in Christ Jesus, and in which we acquire sanctity through the grace of God, will attain its full perfection only in the glory of heaven, when there will come the time of the restoration of all things (Acts 3, 21). At that time the human race as well as the entire world, which is intimately related to man and attains to its end through him, will be perfectly re-established in Christ (Eph. 1, 10; Col. 1, 20; II Pet. 3, 10-13).

Christ, having been lifted up from the earth has drawn all to Himself (Jn. 12, 32). Rising from the dead (Rom. 8, 9) He sent His life-giving Spirit upon His disciples and through Him has established His Body which is the Church as the universal sacrament of salvation. Sitting at the right hand of the Father He is continually active in the world that He might lead men to the Church and through it join them to Himself and that He might make them partakers of His glorious life by nourishing them with His own Body and Blood.

Therefore the promised restoration which we are awaiting has already begun in Christ, is carried forward in the mission of the Holy Spirit and through Him continues in the Church in which we learn the meaning of our terrestrial life through our faith, while we perform with hope in the future the work committed to us in this world, by the Father who has sent us out for our salvation (Phil. 2, 12).

Already the final age of the world has come upon us (I Cor. 10, 11) and the renovation of the world is irrevocably decreed and is already anticipated in some kind of a real way; for the Church already on this earth is signed with a sanctity which is real although imperfect. However, until there shall be new heavens and a new earth in which justice dwells, the pilgrim Church in her sacraments and institutions, which pertain to this present time, has the appearance of this world which is passing and she herself dwells among structures which groan and travail in pain until now and await the revelation of the sons of God (Rom. 8, 22 and 19).

Joined with Christ in the Church and signed with the Holy Spirit "who is the pledge of our inheritance" (Eph. 1, 14), truly we are called and we are sons of God (I Jo. 3, 1) but we have not yet appeared with Christ in glory (Col. 3, 4), in which we shall be like to God, since we shall see Him as He is (I Jo. 3, 2). And therefore while we are in the body, we are exiled from the Lord (II Cor. 5, 6) and having the first-fruits of the Spirit we groan within ourselves (Rom. 8, 23) and we desire to be with Christ" (Phil. 1, 23). By that same charity however, we are urged to live more for Him, who died for us and rose again (2 Cor. 5, 15).

We strive therefore to please God in all things (2 Cor. 5, 9) and we put on the armor of God, that we may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil and resist in the evil day (Eph. 6, 11-13). Since however

we know not the day nor the hour, on our Lord's advice we must be constantly vigilant so that, having finished the course of our earthly life, we may merit to enter into the marriage feast with Him (Mt. 25, 1-13) and to be numbered among the blessed (Mt. 25, 31-46) and that we may not be ordered to go into eternal fire (Mt. 25, 41) like the wicked and slothful servant (Mt. 25, 26), into the exterior darkness where "there will be the weeping and the gnashing of teeth" (Mt. 22, 13 and 25, 30). For before we reign with Christ in glory, all of us will be made manifest "before the tribunal of Christ, so that each one may receive what he has won through the body, according to his works, whether good or evil" (2 Cor. 5, 10) and at the end of the world "they who have done good shall come forth unto resurrection of life; but those who have done evil unto resurrection of judgment" (Jo. 5, 29; 25, 46).

Reckoning therefore that "the sufferings of the present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory to come that will be revealed in us" (Rom. 8, 18; 2 Tim. 2, 11-12). Strong in faith we look for the "blessed hope and the glorious coming of our great God and Saviour, Jesus Christ" (Tit. 2, 13) "who will refashion the body of our lowliness, conforming it to the body of His glory" (Phil. 3, 21) and who will come "to be glorified in His saints and to be marveled at in all those who have believed" (2 Thess. 1, 10).

#### Exiles on Earth

49. Until the Lord shall come in His Majesty, and all the angels with Him (Mt. 25, 31) and death being destroyed, all things are subject to Him (I Cor. 15, 26-27), some of His disciples are exiles on earth, some having died and purified, and others are in glory beholding "clearly God Himself triune and one, as He is"; but all in various ways and degrees are in communion in the same charity of God and neighbor and all sing the same hymn of glory to our God. For all who are in Christ, having His Spirit, form one Church and cleave together in Him (Eph. 4, 16).

Therefore the union of the wayfarers with the brethren who have gone to sleep in the peace of Christ is not the least weakened or interrupted, but on the contrary, according to the perpetual faith of the Church, is strengthened by a communication of spiritual goods. For by reason of the fact that those in heaven are more closely united with Christ, they establish the whole Church more firmly in holiness, lend nobility to the worship which is offered to God, and thus contribute to the glorification of God (I Cor. 12, 12-27). For after they have been received into their heavenly home and are present to the Lord (II Cor. 5, 8), through Him and with Him and in Him they do not cease to intercede with the Father for us, showing forth the merits which they won on earth through the one Mediator between God and man (I Tim. 2, 5), serving God in all things and filling up in their flesh those things which are lacking of the sufferings of Christ for His Body which is the Church (Col. 3, 24). Thus by their brotherly interest our weakness is greatly strengthened.

#### Memory of the Dead

50. Fully conscious of this communion of the whole Mystical Body of Jesus Christ, the pilgrim Church from the very first ages of the Christian religion has cultivated with great piety the memory of the dead, and "because it is a holy and wholesome thought to pray for the dead that they may be loosed from their sins" (2 Mach. 12, 46), also offers suffrages for them. The Church has always believed that the apostles, and Christ's martyrs who had given the supreme witness of faith and charity by the shedding of their blood, are closely joined with us in Christ, and she has always venerated them with special devotion, together with the Blessed Virgin Mary and the holy angels. The Church has piously implored the aid of their intercession.

To these were soon added also those who had more closely imitated Christ's virginity

and poverty, and finally others whom the outstanding practice of the Christian virtues and the divine charisms recommended to the pious devotion and imitation of the faithful.

When we look at the lives of those who have faithfully followed Christ, we are inspired with a new reason for seeking the City that is to come (Heb. 13, 14; II Tim. 4) and at the same time we are shown a most safe path by which among the vicissitudes of this world, in keeping with the state in life and condition proper to each of us, we will be able to arrive at perfect union with Christ, that is, perfect holiness. In the lives of those who, sharing in our humanity, are however more perfectly transformed into the image of Christ, God vividly manifests His presence and His love to men.

He speaks to us in them, and gives us a sign of His Kingdom, to which we are strongly drawn, having so great a cloud of witnesses over us (Heb. 12, 1) and such a witness to the truth of the Gospel.

Nor is it by the title of example only that we cherish the memory of those in heaven, but still more in order that the union of the whole Church may be strengthened in the Spirit by the practice of fraternal charity (Eph. 4, 1-6). For just as Christian communion among wayfarers brings us closer to Christ, so our companionship with the saints joins us to Christ, from whom as from its Fountain and Head issues every grace and the very life of the people of God.

It is supremely fitting, therefore, that we love those friends and coheirs of Jesus Christ, who are also our brothers and extraordinary benefactors, that we render due thanks to God for them and "suppliantly invoke them and have recourse to their prayers, their power and help in obtaining benefits from God through His Son, Jesus Christ, who is our Redeemer and Saviour." For every genuine testimony of love shown by us to those in heaven, by its very nature tends toward and terminates in Christ who is the "crown of all saints" and through Him, in God Who is wonderful in His Saints and is magnified in them.

Our union with the Church in heaven is put into effect in its noblest manner especially in the sacred Liturgy, wherein the power of the Holy Spirit acts upon us through sacramental signs. Then, with combined rejoicing we celebrate together the praise of the divine majesty; then all those from every tribe and tongue and people and nation (Apoc. 5, 9) who have been redeemed by the blood of Christ and gathered into the Church, glorify and magnify the one and triune God.

Celebrating the Eucharistic sacrifice therefore, we are most closely united to the Church in heaven in communion with and venerating the memory first of all of the glorious ever-Virgin Mary, of Blessed Joseph and of the blessed apostles and martyrs and of all the saints.

#### Devotion to Saints

51. This sacred council accepts with great devotion this venerable faith of our ancestors regarding this vital fellowship with our brethren who are in heavenly glory or who having died are still being purified; and it proposes again the decrees of the Second Council of Nicea, the Council of Florence and the Council of Trent. And at the same time, in conformity with our own pastoral interests, we urge all concerned, if any abuses, excesses or defects have crept in here or there, to do what is in their power to remove or correct them, and to restore all things to a fuller praise of Christ and of God.

Let them therefore teach the faithful the authentic cult of the saints consists not so much in the multiplying of external acts, but rather in the greater intensity of our love, whereby, for our own greater good and that of the whole Church, we seek from the saints "example in their way of life, fellowship in their communion, and aid by their intercession. On the other hand, let them teach the faithful that our communion with those in heaven, provided that it is understood in the fuller light of faith according to its genuine nature, in no way weakens, but conversely, more thoroughly enriches the latetastic worship we give to God the Father through Christ, in the Spirit.

For all of us who are sons of God and constitute one family in Christ (Heb. 3, 6), as long as we remain in communion with one another in mutual charity and in one praise of the most holy Trinity, are corresponding with the intimate vocation of the Church and partaking in foretaste the liturgy of consummate glory. For when Christ shall appear, and the glorious resurrection of the dead will take place, the glory of God will light up the heavenly City and the Lamb will be the lamp thereof (Apoc. 21, 24).

Then the whole Church of the saints in the supreme happiness of charity will adore God and "the Lamb who was slain" (Apoc. 5, 12), proclaiming with one voice: "To Him who sits upon the throne, and to the Lamb—blessing, and honor, and glory, and dominion forever and ever" (Apoc. 5, 13-14).

**NEXT WEEK — The Blessed Virgin Mary, model for all Christians.**

## Showdown Near On School Aid

We are on the brink of a showdown.

Will pupils in Catholic schools share in a vast multimillion dollar federal aid to education program or will they suffer the same fate they've had to endure from state and local governments — a penalty for the exercise of a constitutional right?

Weary as it may be, we have to go over once more and this time with emphasis why pupils in Catholic schools should at last be set free from their present second-class citizenship condition.

President Johnson touched off what looks like the final round in the long debated issue. In his message to Congress, he asked for a first step, across-the-boards, no discrimination aid program for all American school children regardless of the school they attend, public or private, to be given only on the basis of need, not creed.

U.S. public opinion has come a long way in the last decade—from overwhelming opposition to the idea of any tax-paid benefits for Catholic school pupils to today's well over fifty per cent favorable opinion.

Opposition is, however, still formidable. Some of the opposition is, unfortunately, rooted in a now quite obsolete bigotry. This factor, we believe, is held by a negligible minority. Most of the opposition, as far as we can probe it, is based on a sincere conviction that government aid to pupils in religious-related schools would violate the First Amendment of the nation's Constitution which prohibits the "establishment" of religion. There is also a widespread blind-spot as just what is taught in Catholic schools.

In order to get an insight into the whole question, the men of Temple B'rith Kodesh in Brighton invited two Catholic laymen, Kenneth O'Loane and John Schmitt to present the two sides of the debate.

Dr. Schmitt cited the "traditional" objections—the tax-supported public schools, like public swimming pools or golf links, are there for all to use; if you choose a private school, like choosing to have a pool of your own or to belong to a private golf club, then you pay for it yourself.

Dr. O'Loane countered with the claim that all certified American schools are "public" because they render a public service — the education of American citizens. He said cutting off all tax-paid benefits to pupils in religious-related schools was a denial of these pupils' civil rights, a violation of the Constitution's Fourteenth Amendment, a weakening of our national defense program and provided a "free ride" of \$24,000,000 to secular public school pupils in the Rochester area because Catholics whose children attend parochial schools get no tax-paid benefits even though these same Catholics pay their full share of taxes.

Dr. O'Loane said one seventh of the children in the nation, one fourth in New York State and three quarters of them in Rochester are "practically" denied their inalienable constitutional right to attend the school of their choice by the "economic penalty" now imposed by state and local governments in their distribution of tax-paid benefits.

He said such a penalty violates U.S. constitutional provisions and the United Nations human rights declaration, to which the U.S. is signatory, which recognizes the right of parents to choose the "kind of education that shall be given to their children."

American Negroes have shown us that recognition of civil rights, even though theoretically admitted, has to be gained through persistent and sometimes irritating pressure. Pope John once said people must insist on their rights — to permit them to be violated is another way of destroying such rights for others.

American Catholics are now faced with the same urgent responsibility — to know the issue which confronts the nation, to know the reasons for both sides of the issue and to speak up loud and clear for the cause of justice for 7,000,000 youngsters in U.S. Catholic schools.

—Father Henry Atwell.

## Four Decades of Red Genocide

Washington (NC)—Statistics purporting to reflect "the fate of the Catholic Church" in the Soviet Union and occupied countries for the past four decades are given in a recently published Congressional document.

A study made by a team of research specialists for the Judiciary Committee of the U.S. House of Representatives contains a paragraph which says: "The fate of the Catholic Church in the USSR and countries occupied by the Russians from 1917 to 1953 shows the following: (a) the number killed: 55 bishops; 12,000 priests and monks; 2.5 million Catholic believers; (b) imprisoned or deported: 195 bishops; 32,000 priests and 10 million believers; (c) 15,700 priests were forced to abandon their priesthood and accept other jobs;

and (d) 8,334 theological seminaries were nationalized, 31,779 churches were closed, 400 newspapers were prohibited and all the Catholic organizations were dissolved."

It also stated that "the same fate met the Islamic religion."

The study says "the whole Ukrainian Autocephalic Orthodox Church, with all its clergy, was dissolved and many of its members were deported to Siberia."

Milwaukee, and Salvatore L. Constabile of Georgetown.

Dr. Dobriansky introduced the study before the committee. He noted that it is "more accurate scientifically to speak of populations in the Soviet Union," and said the various "district national organisms" are not the same as the "so-called ethnic groups here in the United States."

The researcher said it was unfortunately the notion of many that genocide involves solely the physical destruction of people. He said its many forms include the elimination of languages and the suppression of religious forms.

The study shows that the Russian Reds began in 1913 to confiscate church property, while asserting that "every citizen has the right to practice or not practice religion."