

'We Cannot Afford to be Spiritual Isolationists'

When Father McMannus graciously asked me to celebrate Mass at your annual convention, I accepted gladly because it gave me an opportunity to pay tribute to one of the finest and most vigorous Catholic Action groups in the entire Diocese of Rochester.

It is a happy coincidence that your convention occurs during Easter week itself, with its sublime message of our joy in the Risen Christ. Even the text of this Mass, in which you are taking an active part, contains a sentence which foreshadows your convention theme: "Personal Commitment in Today's World."

On Holy Saturday night, over at the Cathedral, seventeen converts were baptized during the beautiful Easter Vigil service. This ceremony followed the tradition of the ancient Christian Church of baptizing the catechumens the night before Easter. At their baptism, these early Christians were clothed in the special white robe of the newly baptized.

The whole idea was that those who had recently "put on Christ" needed no special garment to tell their friends and neighbors they were Christians.

ment to tell their friends and neighbors they were Christians. Rather, they were expected to show the outside world by their actions, by their love for others, that they were true followers of Christ.

You recall that phrase the pagans of Rome used: "See how these Christians love one another." And what about us, the Christians of today? We too, as witnesses to the Risen Christ, have, each of us, an assignment from Him to sanctify the world.

Your convention theme echoes this commission of Christ. You and I must have a personal commitment to Christ in today's world.

And that world, paradoxically, is even smaller than the world of the early Christians. Jet travel and modern communications have combined to shrink our globe. Today, what happens in any part of the world — or in space itself — is made known to us almost immediately. Today, no part of the world is any longer comfortably remote from us in Rochester, or Brockport, or Red Creek, or Apalachin, or Rexville. Today, whether we like it or not, we Christians are involved with the rest of the world.

Nowhere has this truth been better realized than at the Vatican Council. It has been an eye-opener for those bishops who have attended the sessions the past three years.

This is the text of Bishop Casey's talk at the Convention of the Diocesan Council of Catholic Women held Saturday, April 24, at Bishop Kearney High School, Irondequoit.

The Church must live among them," he said. "She can never declare before anyone that she is 'not interested.' Catholics have a duty to take an active part in public life, and to contribute toward the common good of the entire human family."

Pope John sounded the same theme, warning us against what he called "inert indifference" to those secular affairs which affect our lives, and mankind itself.

And finally, our Pope Paul tells us that "the mission of the Church is to establish a determined relationship between the sacred and the secular, so that the sacred will not be contaminated, and so that the secular will not be altered, but sanctified. We must never forget," the Pope concluded, "that the fundamental attitude of Catholics who wish to convert the world is to love it."

So we come back to our original thought, "All of you who have been baptized in Christ, have put on Christ." You who are here today believe in love in action. You want to do the "work of the Church." You are not interested — and correctly so — in doing merely "church-work," as understood in a narrow, restricted sense.

What I have admired about the Diocesan Council of Catholic Women — and my contacts with your organization go back over thirty years to the days

when Cecilia Yawman of blessed memory was struggling to keep the D.C.C.W. alive in the depression days — is your effort, through your many committee programs, not alone to know God but to help in making Him known to others; not alone to love Him personally but to help in making Him loved by others; not alone to serve Him but to help in bringing others to His service.

Thus, as your exhibits here today will demonstrate in concrete fashion, you are really trying to draw closer to Christ in your own personal lives and in the lives of your loved ones at home. But your love is also wider than this. It is not confined to those who are bound to you by blood and marriage ties. This love flows over into the world of your neighborhood and community. Your love of Christ is prompting you to work with others in worthwhile community projects.

You are not expected to take part in every recommended program which you will hear about today. Some of you, due to heavy domestic duties, will be unable to take part in any projects outside your homes. But no Catholic woman can say, on principle, that "she is not interested," that "she doesn't care." In today's world your duties, as Pope John once said, "are no longer confined, as formerly, within the restricted area of family life."

You will pray. You will inform yourselves. You will witness. And because you will be

living the life of grace, nourished by the Eucharist, the love of Christ will be apparent to others by your words and actions. After all, what a witness is in her inmost being is what makes her testimony credible and effective.

Others will see Christ in your witnessing — only if you first see Christ in others. Truly it is Christ's Holy Family that is found huddled among the refugees of today's world. It is Christ's children who need to be taught religion. It is His Mother whom you find in the poor mothers of today's world, whom you will seek to feed.

It is Christ in today's naked whom you will clothe in your ambitious relief programs.

It is Christ who is turned away because there is no room in the better neighborhood.

It is Christ who carries the cross of political, or economic, or racial oppression.

It is Christ who is invited to your homes in the students who are so far from theirs.

It is Christ who is visited — or forgotten — in the nursing homes or the homes for the aging.

It is Christ who falters in the braces of the polio victim as He falters and fell on His way of the Cross. It is Christ who reaches gropingly toward us in the blind, or fretfully, in the disturbed child, or pleadingly, in the needy.

Perhaps our own need is even greater than these. We need to be committed.

Latin America

Protestants Top 10 Million

Bogota (NC)—A Spanish priest has reported here that the Church has lost more people to Protestantism in 20th-century Latin America than it did in Europe during the Reformation.

Father Prudente Damboriena, S.J., professor at the Xavierian University here, said a three-month survey he made in all but three of the Latin American nations (Brazil, Cuba, Haiti) showed the amazing growth and vitality of Protestant missionary activity in Latin America.

Writing in Revista Javeriana, Father Damboriena stated: "The Protestant Reform did not fail in Spain. It was simply put off so as to surge triumphantly ahead in its former possessions across the seas." Latin America, he said, is the only major region of the world where Protestantism is growing faster than the population. The population is increasing 2.6 per cent a year while Protestantism grows by 15 per cent annually.

After talking with bishops, religious superiors, pastors, and hundreds of priests throughout the continent, Father Damboriena reported that the spread of Protestantism is not limited to any one part of Latin America.

"In many nations the preferred places for Protestant activity are the suburbs of the larger cities. These are far less cared for by the Catholic Church and consequently far more open to external influence. . . . But Protestantism is also penetrating the hearts of the cities and making its influence felt in the well-to-do neighborhoods of the continent's capitals."

To show the rapid rate of Protestant growth, the priest noted that in 1914 there were only 100,000 Protestants in Latin America. Their number grew to 1.5 million by 1938 and in 1960 to 10 million. Annual increase, counting converts and those born into Protestant homes, is around 700,000.

Protestantism, Father Damboriena said, is likely to continue its rapid growth in Latin America. Within 50 years there will be 50 million Protestants in Latin America, he estimated.

Protestantism in Latin America, Father Damboriena said, is diverse in its composition and its procedures. The majority of its missionaries are North Americans. They belong either to what he terms the "historical churches" — that is, Methodist, Episcopal, Lutheran — or to one of the many "sects," that is, Mormons, Jehovah's Witnesses and other evangelical bodies.

The methods used by the "churches" are quite different from those used by the "sects," he said.

Many of those sent by the churches have abandoned the frequently distasteful street preaching. They now rely on personal contacts, home visits, letters, books and pamphlets. Their presentation of their beliefs is for the most part not in the negative and polemic tone of times past.

In their book store windows are no longer found works attacking the Catholic priesthood, the life of nuns, devotion to Our Lady, and the Mass. "On the contrary," said Father Damboriena, "they display Catholic

Bibles and the works of some of our best theologians. They also have spread favorable propaganda about the Ecumenical Council."

The effort of the "churches" in education has had overwhelming results, he said. Much of this is to be explained by the fact that they offer instruction in English, a language that has great attraction for most Latin Americans interested in rising socially and economically.

There is, however, no general policy concerning formal instruction in Protestant teachings in their schools, the priest stated. Some demand a requisite for admission a document signed by parents stating that their children should attend the Bible classes. In others there is time set aside for the local priest to come and teach a religion class.

This distinction is also applicable to Protestant hospitals. In some the patients are bombarded with written and oral propaganda; in others visiting Catholic priests talk more religion than the Protestants running the hospital.

It is, however, a fact that the immense majority of the Protestant churches in Latin America are active in trying to win converts from Catholicism.

Father Damboriena stressed that the Mormons, Jehovah's Witnesses, and other evangelical groups, work in quite a different way.

Within their program is great zeal to do away with the "Roman superstition" which dominates the hemisphere. Leaving to one side indirect mission works like schools, hospitals and other social works, they dedicate themselves to street preaching, tent meetings, and the distribution of crude anti-Catholic propaganda. They also make use of

the radio, home visits, and other methods of the direct apostolate.

Besides merely extending itself, Protestantism is consolidating its gains in Latin America, the priest reported. The missionaries sent by their churches have a large amount of economic help from the United States.

They are now working to limit the overly obvious foreign element in their churches by bringing more and more Latin Americans into the ministry. There are some 130 Biblical institutes to train them. The methods they use are quite modern and could well serve as examples for Catholic missionary activity, Father Damboriena said.

Protestants of the "churches" have carefully cultivated education in Latin America, he noted. They have concentrated on secondary education which they feel provides the greatest impact in religious conversion. According to an estimate of Father Damboriena, there are more than 1,000 Protestant secondary schools in Latin America.

If these schools make good Christians of bad Catholics, the presence of such a powerful educational influence might be viewed with less alarm, he said. But he added that "the majority of the students leave Protestant high schools thoroughly confused or imbued with real indifference."

Having heard so many confusing and contradictory things about religion, they solve everything by merely deciding to "live a decent life and to love their neighbors." They learn to live a "practical Deism, without dogmatic worry, and as long as they meet no major crisis, they keep up the externals of Catholicism."



Text and Symbol, 2nd Sunday after Easter

Bishop Kearney's Appointments

- MAY
1 Saturday—St. Andrew's Seminary—Good Counsel Alumnae Mass—11 a.m.
Nazareth College—Alumnae Dinner—7:30 p.m.
2 Sunday—Immaculate Conception Church—Catholic Interracial Council Mass—10 a.m.
St. Thomas the Apostle Church—Confirmation—3 p.m. and 4:30 p.m.
3 Monday—Holy Ghost Church, Coldwater—Confirmation—7 p.m.
Fowers Hotel—Nazareth Academy Alumnae Banquet—8:30 p.m.
4 Tuesday—St. Monica Church—St. Monica Sodality Mass—9 a.m.
Chamber of Commerce—Community Chest Luncheon—12:15 p.m.
5 Wednesday—St. Agnes High School—May Day Ceremony—9 a.m.
6 Friday—Nazareth College—Glee Club Concert—8 p.m.
7 Saturday—St. Joseph Church—I.F.C.A. Mass in honor of Our Lady—12 noon
Sheraton Hotel—Central Chapter of Knights of Columbus Dinner—6:30 p.m.
8 Sunday—St. Joseph Church—Police Holy Name Communion Breakfast—8:30 a.m.
St. Ann's Home—Community Chest Mass—11 a.m.
St. Thomas the Apostle Church—Dedication of new Church—5 p.m.
11 Tuesday—St. John Fisher College—Low Mass—9 a.m.
St. Thomas More Auditorium—Boy Scout Committee Dinner—7 p.m.
12 Wednesday—Nazareth College—May Day Ceremony—4:15 p.m.
13 Thursday—Nazareth Academy—May Day Ceremony—10 a.m.
14 Saturday—Dobbs Ferry—Sisters of Mercy Jubilee
15 Sunday—St. Joseph Church—Flemish Holy Name Communion Breakfast—7:30 a.m.
16 Tuesday—Notre Dame High School, Elmira—May Day Ceremony—10 a.m.
St. Peter & Paul Church—Ladies of Charity Affiliation Mass—5 p.m.
19 Wednesday—St. Stephen Church, Geneva—25th Anniversary Mass for Ordination Class of 1940—11 a.m.
23 Sunday—Good Counsel College, White Plains—Dedication of Leo I. Kearney Building.
25 Tuesday—Academy of the Sacred Heart—Patronal Feast Mass on 100th Anniversary of the death of St. Madeline Sophie
Academy of the Sacred Heart—Preside at Solemn High Mass—4:30 p.m.
26 Wednesday—Mercy High School—May Day Ceremony—9 a.m.
Manger Hotel—Luncheon in honor of Mr. William Vaughn—11:30 a.m.
29 Saturday—Cenacle Convent—Feast Day Mass—10 a.m.
30 Sunday—Nazareth College—Baccalaureate Mass—5 p.m.
31 Monday—Our Lady of Lourdes Church—Low Mass in new Church—9 a.m.
Nazareth College—Commencement Exercises—4 p.m.

Bishop Casey's Appointments

- MAY
2 Sunday—St. John the Evangelist Church, Greece—Centenary Celebration, Blessing of New Church, Pontifical Low Mass—4:30 p.m.
Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary Church, Brockport—Confirmation—7:30 p.m.
3 Monday—St. Bernard's Seminary—Subdiaconate Ordination—6:30 a.m.
4 Tuesday—Sacred Heart School Hall—S.H.S. Spring Concert—7:30 p.m.
5 Wednesday—St. Patrick's Hall, Elmira—Clergy Conference, Address, "Vatican II, Third Session"—10:30 a.m.
St. Patrick's Church, Elmira—Adult Confirmation and CCD Graduation—8:00 p.m.
8 Saturday—Sacred Heart Cathedral—Pontifical Low Mass, First Holy Communion—9:00 a.m.
9 Sunday—St. Ambrose Church—Confirmation—4:30 p.m.
10 Monday—Cardinal Mooney High School—District Census Workers' Meeting—8:00 p.m.
11 Tuesday—St. John the Evangelist Church, Greece—Confirmation—7:45 p.m.
12 Wednesday—Sacred Heart Rectory Hall—Clergy Conference, Address: "Vatican II, Third Session"—10:30 a.m.
Cardinal Mooney High School—District Census Workers' Meeting—8:00 p.m.
13 Thursday—Sacred Heart Rectory Hall—Men's Club Father-Son Dinner—6:30 p.m.
15 Saturday—Sacred Heart Convent—Sister Agatha Silver Jubilee Mass—7:30 a.m.
16 Sunday—Sacred Heart Cathedral—Presiding, Confraternity of Christian Doctrine Graduation Exercises—4:00 p.m.
Our Lady of Mercy Church, Greece—Confirmation—7:30 p.m.
17 Monday—Sacred Heart Rectory Hall—Rosary Guild Annual Dinner—7:00 p.m.
18 Tuesday—Sacred Heart Cathedral—Girl Scout Marian Award Ceremony—7:30 p.m.
19 Wednesday—St. Stephen's Church, Geneva—Silver Jubilee Celebration, Class of 1940—11 a.m.
Immaculate Conception Church, Ithaca—Confirmation (St. Catherine of Siena parish also included)—7:45 p.m.
20 Thursday—Sacred Heart Rectory Hall—Home-School Association—8:00 p.m.
21 Friday—Sheraton Hotel—Invocation, N.Y.S. Plumbing Heating and Cooling Contractors' Convention—10:00 a.m.
23 Sunday—Sacred Heart Cathedral—Benediction for Sacred Heart Census Workers—1:30 p.m.
Sacred Heart Cathedral—Adult Confirmation—4:00 p.m.
St. Ambrose Church—Adult Confirmation—7:30 p.m.
24 Monday—Sacred Heart School Hall—Kindergarten Graduation Exercises (Morning Class)—8:00 p.m.
25 Tuesday—Sacred Heart School Hall—Kindergarten Graduation Exercises (Afternoon Class)—8:00 p.m.
29 Saturday—St. Boniface Church—Silver Jubilee Mass of Rev. Charles Adams, O.F.M.—11 a.m.
30 Sunday—Holy Angels Church, Nunda—Confirmation—2:15 p.m.
St. Lucy's Church, Retsof—Dedication of New Church, Pontifical Low Mass—4:30 p.m.

You can continue to help Bishop Kearney in his work for immortal souls. Include the Diocese of Rochester in your will. Phone, 454-1155, or write the Chancery, 50 Chestnut St., Rochester, for details.

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