

# No More Civil Wars

**THEOLOGY OF SPACE**  
(Tenth in Series)  
By BISHOP FULTON J. SHEEN

Naturally anyone who loves the Church is concerned about the turmoil and defections within her. Though not a bone of her body is broken (John 19/36), there are some signs of cancer in the flesh. Destined as it is to be the Bride of Christ arrayed in the white linen of prayers of the saints (Rev. 5/8), we dislike to see it courted by unworthy swains and mud-stained from the hands of its bad-conscience children.

In order to get a true picture of this Total-Christ, or the Church which will endure to the end of time, we must take a telescopic rather than a microscopic view. If we limit ourselves to "Heddomadal theology", or that which appears in weekly magazines, we may find ourselves answering one another's silly questions. Sometimes it appears today that theologians read only one another's books and never the great thoughts of the ages.

Suppose we look at the Church in periods of her greatest crises which occurred roughly about every 500 years. For the first five centuries, the turmoil and doctrinal shock were in the area of the Nature of the Physical Christ Who walked the earth. The authority of the Church had to settle such questions as His Divinity, His intellect, His will, His human nature, His relation to the Spirit, hence the condemnation of such heresies as Arianism, Donatism, Monophysitism, etc.

The next 500 years brought a kind of schizophrenia or splitting of the Personality of Christ from within. What was at stake here was Christ the Head of the Church. This produced the Eastern Schism and the break of Constantinople from Rome. Then about 1500 years after His Birth, the attack was not against His Person as the Word of God, nor against Him as the Head, but against Him in His Body the Church. With this disruption of organic unity came the rending of the seamless robe of Christ into parts or sections or sects in the Religious Revolution.

How do we describe this present period of the second millennium? It is not a crisis of faith, authority or morals, though these are the concomitants of every religious tension. The difference is this: Every tension that went before was intra-Christian; it was within Christ either in Himself, in His Headship of the Church, or in His Body the Church. The present turmoil is something quite different. It is extra-Christian. It is beyond Christ; the pull is now between Christ and what is "Outside the Walls". Very simply, it is the world and even the cosmos widening and expanding dimensions of Space-Time.

What was before a demilitarized zone of off-limit conflict, the world, is now the theatre of the conflict. For the first time in the history of Christianity, the disease afflicting the Church, if it is not functional, originates in the body itself; it is environmental; it stems from Space, from Time, from the Cosmos, from Science, from a world that gives tremendous promise, along with a threat of cataclysmic fallout.

For 20 centuries Christians had a family quarrel, and even though there was violence in defense of doctrine, it was in its worst moments, like the Mafia, always within the clan. Today, the dissonance is like a Hong Kong flu in relation to the Western world, the invasion of bug from outside the pole of Christendom. Nor is it just a more generous concession to comfort, carnality and conceit. Rather it is the discovery of something good which once may have been thought to be bad.

Whoever would have believed that a Council of the Church would have a Decree on the "Modern World" stating: "Meanwhile the conviction grows that not only humanity can and should increasingly consolidate its control over creation, but even more, that it devolves on humanity to establish a political, social and economic order which will, to an even greater extent, serve man and help individuals as well as groups to affirm and develop the dignity proper to them". (# 9)

## Saeculum

This new thing of the 20th Century is the saeculum or, including humanity, the Latin word we use here to describe the world as a good thing and also to distinguish it from "worldliness".

The saeculum is the whole universe, including man who has been put into it to master it, control it, subdue it, with hands, with mind, with tools, with telescopes and space ships. The saeculum is the scene of the human controllable forces of life, whether in the biological, genetic, psychic or social order. It embraces astronomical, geological and human history, with all its organization in the field of education, economics and politics. The astronauts reveal the saeculum unfolding in the 20th Century. These new, "three wise men" recognized Divinity not from alongside a crib, but while encircling the moon. Humanity also now dwells on its long origins, rather than its final end.

H. J. Muller, the biologist, has graphically illustrated how long it took man to appear on earth since the first protoplasmic cell. This total span of all life he compares to the distance of a trip from New Haven, Conn., to a desk in a Wall Street office. The first man on earth is only 7 1/2 feet from the desk. Thanks to the wedding of technics and electricity to produce technetronics, we will presumably enter an era of industrial fruitfulness beyond all imagination. Computers will give us "alternate futures" in social sciences as well as in engineering. The sphere of the possible includes the unlocking of the genetic code by which life originates. The awakened social conscience with new thrusts toward racial equality, civil rights, and better housing creates an optimism in some that we are "at the end of the Dark Ages".

The new holy trinity of the cosmos is jet-atomic-space, which combine to give us the jet-age, the atomic-age, the space-age. This saeculum may be anything from the slums, the inner-city, to schools and industry. It is so vast with more facets than a diamond to reflect its light, it is no wonder that so many moths love to fly into its flame.

## The Saeculum is A-Moral

The saeculum just described is a-moral; it is to be looked upon as having neither goodness nor badness; these result from the way men use the saeculum. Plus XII spoke to the Pontifical Academy of Science, concerning the exact explosive power of one ounce of uranium subjected to atomic fission. This was two years before the bomb exploded on Hiroshima. He hoped that nuclear energy would always be used for peaceful purposes, but if it were ever turned by man into pre-verse uses it would "bring great harm to those areas where it would be used, and eventually to the planet itself". Atomic bombs are the evil use of atomic energy which is good.

The saeculum is as indifferent to goodness and badness as a sword which can be used either to lay on the shoulders of a gentleman to create him a knight, or to cut off his head. Man may prevent the saeculum as he did the Garden; he may also, using the example of Engles, Marx's associate in Communism, convert quantity into a new quality and produce a destructive Frankenstein; he may even, as Oppenheimer, said of some of the builders of the atomic bomb, become so drunk with the sweet wine of technology that they are controlled by it, rather than at the controls.

## The Saeculum and the Church

1. The days of the Civil War of the Church are over: there will be no more rending schisms, no more splitting heresies. All that can be in dispute about Christ has been disputed. There is nothing more for the theological anatomists to amputate; there are no more seamless robes to be rent.

2. The new conflict of the Church is from without. It is not like the conflict with Muslimism which Belloc called a "heresy within Christianity", for it affirmed the Sovereignty of God. It is not like Communism, which based its alleged interest in humanity on a hatred of God. The very thing which stirs the Church is something very natural which has been here all along with its four pillars: Creation, Man, Freedom and Society. There is nothing supernatural about it, but just the world's capacity for expanding its knowledge, its production and its consumption.

## The Present Turmoil

The saeculum, to repeat, is of and by itself, indifferent to moral values. But it creates a crisis for the Church the moment the saeculum turns into secularism, or the world into worldliness. Just as there are some who have said "there is no God", so there have been those who said "there is no world". The result was an exaggerated contempt of the world, a flight from it to the desert.

The Church indeed did suffer from this exaggeration. St. Jerome justified his flight from the world by his fear of worldliness: I do not want to fight in the hopes of winning, lest I lose the victory. . . . If I run away, I have avoided the sword. . . . If I stand and fight, I must either win or be killed. But must a sure thing be let go, and what is uncertain be pursued? . . . you that fight can both be defeated and win. When I run away, I do not win by so doing, but I run away to avoid being defeated."

That was the old error: loyal members of the Church in those ages despised the saeculum out of fear of being secularists. But today, the flight is not from the world; it is from Christ and the Church. The saeculum is now the Divinum: the world is the sacred, not the Church. Confusion in the Church today issues from the refusal to distinguish between the world which God saw as good, and the spirit of the world, which is at enmity with God.

## Identification

From the earlier rejection of the world for the sake of the Church, Christians now go to the opposite extreme of rejection of Christ and the Church for the sake of the world. Hence, we hear: "The Church is an institution and institutions are structures and structures are establishments, and establishments must be destroyed." Bullman empties the Gospel of the Historical Christ and leaves only a Kerygma or a post-Christian message. The focus of attention is on "The Secular City", "The world come of Age", "Secularism", "God is Dead", "Existentialism", "Post-Christian", "Contemporary Iconoclasm", "Underground Church" and "Go where the Action is".

As the discovery of America opened up emigration to the new world, so the discovery of the new world of science, technology and social consciousness has opened up emigration from the Church to the world.

Nuns, priests and some faithful find the "old world" of the Church too "cabin'd, cribb'd, confined". So they plunged into the warm gulf currents that washed up on the shores of secularism. Religion becomes identified exclusively with civil rights, inner-city, migrant workers and occupation of colleges.

Once more Christians hear the challenge: "Come down from the Cross and we will believe". "Mortification", "Fasting", "Self Denial" give way to "Self-fulfillment", "Self-identity", "Feel it in here". Religious education is soft peddled for the sake of Federal aid: "What will you give me" said Judas; "and I will deliver Him over to you". (Matt. 26/15) Ambassadors of Christ desert the priesthood. Demas, who once accompanied with Luke and Paul, passes from being "fellow-laborer" in the Gospel (Phil. 24) to plain "Demas" who begins denying his role in the Church. (Col. 4/14) He ends in final spiritual degradation, "Demas has deserted me, because he loved this present world". (Tim. 4/10)

The tragic result of secularism in those consecrated to God and the faithful manifests itself in three psychological effects:

1. A loss of a sense of humor. A new seriousness has crept into the Church. Few smiles ever come from the lips of those whose feet stay in the Church, but whose hearts are outside; when they write, their pens are poisoned; when they speak, their sentences begin with "The trouble with the Church is . . ."

(Continued on Page 3)

# Right-to-Abortion Proponents Neglect Child's Right to Life

New Providence, N.J. — (NC) — Proponents of abortion law repeal maintain that they intend not only to guarantee every woman the right to abort her child, but will work to assure "the availability of abortion services to all women regardless of economic status."

So declared Juan J. Ryan, president of the National Right-To-Life Committee in a statement issued here. Ryan continued:

"Presumably this will mean that the cost of free abortion will be borne by medical-insurance programs and by government-sponsored health programs."

"The taxpayer will be called upon to pay for some women's decisions, whether they are responsibly arrived at or not."

Ryan issued the statement in response to a new move by abortion proponents who met recently in Chicago. The Chicago group voted to form an organization to work for repeal of all abortion laws rather

## Fight for Dignity!

Editor: With the repealing of the abortion laws so close at hand, Catholics should be more active in making their voice heard to condemn this action. I read and hear about so much being done for "civil" rights, but what good are they if "human" rights are jeopardized?

The proponents of that heinous bill say that we have reached the point where the "quality" of life is becoming more important, and their bill would improve it. What kind of "quality" is it if we are allowed to deny some the right to life itself?

I've written letters to my congressmen and passionately urge all other humanists to do the same. Don't let this ignominious act be foisted on us — let us maintain dignity as the human race.

— Nancy Pollot, Canandaigua

than working for nationwide acceptance of the American Law Institute's Model Penal Code statute on abortion.

Those who endorsed the ALI statute maintained that it is too difficult for the law to cover every single case, and they suggested that some exceptions might be made to allow abortions — under proper medical supervision — when the continuation of pregnancy would endanger the life or health of the mother, when the pregnancy was the result of rape or incest, or when there was a possibility of the child being born with mental or physical defects.

"In all other cases abortion would remain a criminal act, and law enforcement agencies would be expected to maintain the law," the national committee president stated.

"The proposal of the ALI statute has initiated an open discussion," Ryan said, "and lawyers, doctors, ethicists and social scientists contributed their opinions and convictions. Participants in the discussion immediately recognized the complexity of the problem, and the implication of a hasty and uncertain change of laws." Ryan continued:

"The recent meeting in Chicago of persons and groups interested in changing the present laws is dramatic proof that these people are not interested in discussing the issues, and will not be satisfied with exploring possibilities for modifying present laws."

"The meeting ended with the formation of the National Association for the Repeal of Abortion Laws, and the purpose of this organization is to do away with all prohibitive legislation."

"The campaign to repeal all abortion laws is based on the thesis that no woman should have to bear a child against her will. In effect, this treats abortion as just another method of birth control. It ignores

the fact that abortion has never been accepted by Americans as an alternate method of birth control, and studies of public opinion indicate that there has not been any drastic change in this thinking."

"In fact, the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists firmly stated that the College will not condone nor support the concept that an abortion be considered or performed for any unwanted pregnancy or as a means of population control. It is emphasized that the inherent risk of such an abortion is not fully appreciated both by many in the profession and certainly not by the public. . . ."

Ryan said the thesis is also faulty "in its assertion concerning the rights of the individual woman."

"We cannot speak of one person's rights without also looking to the relative responsibilities and the rights of other persons," he said.

"In this case," he added, "the child in the womb has a right to be born; the father has a right to decide about terminating the life of the child; the doctor has a right to determine what is medically responsible and ethically right and society has a right to protect the lives of its citizens."

He said these rights are totally ignored by the abortion proponents. Ryan's statement concluded:

"As a consequence, after thoughtfully considering the arguments, the National Right-To-Life Committee takes a strong and definite stand in opposition to the repeal of existing abortion laws."

"Moreover, although research and responsible discussion of the problem of abortion should continue, there is no compelling evidence that the proposed alternatives to the present laws will in fact decrease the number of illegal abortions or lead to the indictment and prosecution of those involved in the criminal abortion business."

COL  
NEWSPAPER OF THE



VISUAL AIDS BRINTON as Mrs. Ma Bridget's parish in made the front page York Times. The he "Bishop Sheen Gives Property to U.S. as I for Poor."

# St. B

One year ago this Bridget's parish in made the front page York Times. The he "Bishop Sheen Gives Property to U.S. as I for Poor."

What followed was a field-day as local and media trumpeted the Bishop had made arrange Federal government to get's church property in nantly Negro and P neighborhood for housing. The Bishop's concern did touch the diocese tion: "We are under a perative," he said "to church; not just a minist but a surrendering church. But parishioners of

# Farew

number of prominent notable victim of the.

Without doubt, t the centennial conce Arts Center. Organize O.F.M. Cap., this pr religious music.

The second half missioned cantata, "V Barlow of the Eastm much enthusiasm fr another commission popular Rochester pe

The last importa sand Steeples", a hal sented on Channel 10 and produced by Eddi (This show, by the wa at other TV stations.

The centennial l relative to the Dioces the Rochester Museu John Fisher College County Museum. The and the daily press e knowledge; the C in news items but in Father McNamara, t supplement on Octob

Looking back, t Commission did well

So much for our intended to pay tribu ents, wash the birth the next hundred ye

What will the ne ter? Who knows?

Perhaps our dit change. Perhaps the more years of post-tempest may be alre ly and the religious l some sudden grace pendulum back in th and more to the sect haps surprise us with

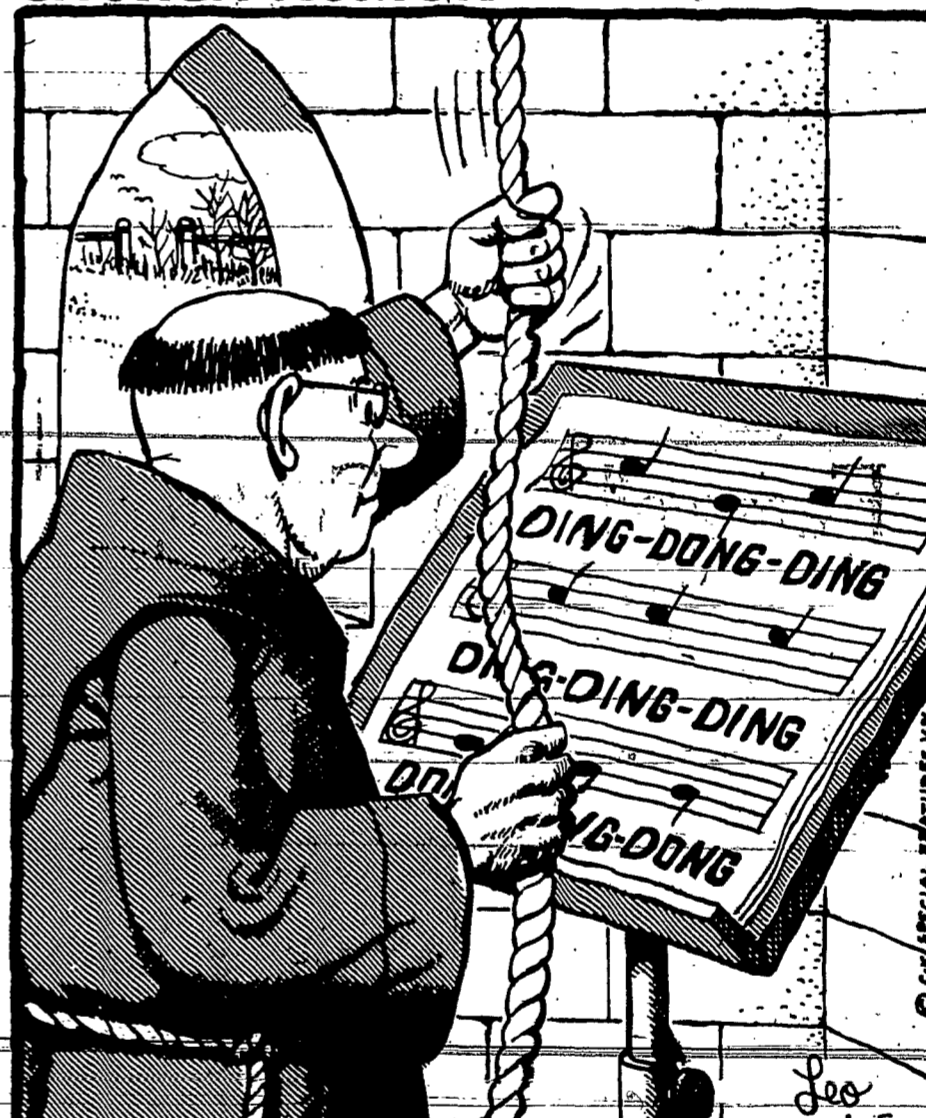
Leadership — t every field.

At all events, w bring, whether good for we must move ab of God, says Vatican the Lord in a faithfu be revealed in total s

So we must hee challenges of the fut continue to progress teaching. The world example.

May we meet th have met those of th

## CHURCH HUMOR



## Word for Sunday

### Christ Wants No Neutrals

By Father Albert Shamon

Soon we shall be celebrating St. Patrick's Day. Shamrocks, pots of gold, and leprechauns come to mind.

Did you ever hear how leprechauns came to be? Legend has it that when Michael and his angels struggled against Lucifer and his demons, other angels just stood by and joined neither side. After the battle, they could not be sentenced to hell with the rebellious ones, nor could they enter heaven with the victorious angels.

They had been neutral; what was God to do with them? He sent them to a place that was neither heaven nor hell and to live in a way that was neither demonic nor angelic — the place was earth, and their way of life was that of the leprechaun.

In Sunday's Gospel when Christ drove out a devil, He evoked four reactions. The common crowds, who have common sense, were amazed.

The Scribes and the Pharisees malevolently malign Him — probably out of earshot, too. Christ ("knowing their thoughts") retorted with the words Lincoln used to denounce civil war: "A house divided against itself falls."

A mother, like all good mothers, praised His mother in true Oriental fashion. Finally, there were the neutrals; they demanded a sign from heaven.

To the neutrals Christ said: "He who is not with me is against me, and he who does not gather with me scatters."

Here we have a glimpse of the radical ethics of Christ. He wants no neu-

trals. Either — or: either gather or scatter; either with me or against me. We can divide our time, but we cannot divide our soul. We cannot walk east and west at the same time.

We have a saying: "Are you with me?" Not to be with a person need not imply active opposition to him. Yet Christ equated neutrality with enmity. Can we say to Christ, "I have done nothing against You" and expect to be on His side? What have we done for Christ?

The public school system is an example of neutrality. It is neither for Christ nor against Christ. And yet by its not being for Christ, it is in reality, though not intentionally, nor actively, against Christ. "He who is not with me is against me."

Today when tuition grants are not

yet forthcoming to children going to a school of their choice — and until that time comes — I suggest that the State grant parents a choice of schools. Let there be two kinds of tax-supported schools: the secular or neutral one and the Christian school, to which the millions of Christian parents (Catholics and Protestants) dissatisfied with the neutral school's secularism, can send their children. (A Christian school is one in which God can be mentioned, one in which the deep spiritual and moral values that have made this nation great will be emphasized.)

At a football game some come to play, some to sell pop and popcorn, some to cheer, and some just to watch, in the arena of life only angels and God can be watchers. All others must take sides!

**COURIER-JOURNAL**  
NEWSPAPER OF THE CITY OF ROCHESTER

**BISHOP FULTON J. SHEEN**  
President

Mgr. John S. Randall — Managing Editor  
Rev. Richard Tormey — Editor  
Anthony J. Costello — Advertising Director

Carmen J. Vignucci — Associate Editor  
Arthur P. Farren — Associate Editor

MAIN OFFICE: 550 State St., Rochester, N.Y. 14604  
ELMIRA OFFICE: 317 Robinson Bldg., Lakota St., Elmira, N.Y. 14850  
ALBANY OFFICE: 168 E. Genesee St., Albany, N.Y. 12201