

Divinity, Stones & Calvary

(Continued from Page 6A)

other bed was someone rebelliously silent. He listened to me talk about the love of God, and then he broke out with a challenge: "Did Jesus ever hurt?" the answer was: "He surely did". He hurt in himself, he hurts in suffering flesh, and maybe he hurts more in Christians who fail to see His Presence in others.

The Conscious Pain of Christ in the Christian

That brings us to the other side of the Pain of God and Christ and those who have the faith. First of all, we see it as prolonging the sufferings that are necessary to save the Church. Our Lord suffered all that He could in His Physical Body, but the redemption of the world is a continuous thing, and therefore He must continue to suffer in His Mystical Body. One of the most theological exact paintings of the Crucifixion is not one that sees the Cross of Christ planted firmly in the rocks of Calvary as a static thing that happened once in history and is finished. I once asked Dali where he got the vision of the floating, living, suffering Christ which he depicted in his painting. He said that he received it from St. John of the Cross who left a tiny painting on a piece of wood depicting a floating Crucifix.

I told him that this was the way we should present the Crucifix above the altar if it were structurally possible, namely, as the enduring Passion of Christ in His Church. The Mass is not just a meal where no one ever sits down to food at table without that food having undergone a Calvary of suffering; pulled from the earth, subjected to fire and perhaps even to the knife, Communion at every meal demands a sacrifice.

The routine trials of our human situation, the agonies of mothers with a houseful of screaming children, the incessant labor of the father working daily to feed little mouths, with fear and dread as we walk city streets, with thousands little pricks and needles of unhappy consciences that must blame others — all of these are the filling up of the Passion of Christ for the sake of His Church. St. Paul told the unruly Galatians: "The marks on my body are those of Jesus". (Gal. 6/17)

No need exists today for hair shirts, long fasting and scourings, for modern living has become a hair shirt. To seek pain is wrong; to accept it is implementing redemption in contemporary time and space.

Formerly in the Church there were some offices which implied honor, such as that of a bishop. Today that honor is gone: first of all because the Church has stripped the apostle of his pomp; secondly, because the Vatican Council reminded them that the mark of authority is service; and thirdly, because those in authority suffer too much to be concerned about themselves.

But over and above this, the vocation of a bishop is to suffer for the sake of the Church, to absorb like a sponge evil and scandal; to act as a target for bitter arrows that are sucked in and never shot back from a bow; to remain silent, as Christ was silent seven times during His trial when to speak would only be egotistic recrimination; to be like a sea wall against which the dashing tides of publicity and discord spend their force; to carry noise, ridicule and false accusations quietly within one's breast, speaking of it only in the sanctuary of God.

The Vulnerability of Christians

But this should be also the lot of every Christian in these troubled times, namely, to be the Christ which vibrates to every ache. No foot can be stepped upon, no finger burned, no rib pushed, no cheek struck, but that the nerve of each sends its messengers to the brain to register there a pain. No breadlessness, no scandal, no defection from the sanctuary, no falling from the priesthood or the religious life, no story of yaws and brutality ever comes to the eye or ear of a Christian without its being Christ that feels it.

Christ made Himself vulnerable to the world. The Church makes itself vulnerable to the world. The Christian must make himself vulnerable to the world. They who call themselves Christians and become professional critics of God and the Church must ask themselves how many marriages they have tried to save, how many neurotic women they confronted with the Gospel of Christ and how much violence they put down in the shape of a clenched fist.

In the novel, *The Nun's Story*, by Kathryn Hulme, a mother superior is instructing the nurses in what it means to be a Christian in the face of pain: "My dear students, every time you are called upon for what seems an impossible task, say 'All for Jesus', then you can do anything with serenity. Say it for the bed pans you carry, for the old incontinents you bathe, for those sputum cups of the tubercular. See how easy it is to dress these foul wounds, as you say 'All for Jesus'? This is the Body of Christ, and this suppurating sore is one of His Wounds".

Too many of those who by vocation are called to be the ambassadors of Christ, have gone down into the world to do the world's work, with the world's vision, but without Christ they never do it even as well as the humanitarians.

A drunken man never walks as steady as a sober man, because he has stepped down from the stage of reason to the stage of senses. When one surrenders a higher life, one never walks as well in the lower one. Having been called to represent Christ and to be Christ, he who becomes deafened to that appeal never becomes a good humanitarian. An elephant could be reduced to a dandelion, it is not likely that he would ever be a good dandelion.

The Vocation of Social Reform

Social reform takes place through humanitarians living up to the highest ideals of humanitarians, but Christian reform means living up to the mission of Christ. Judas was probably a good financier when he was chosen to be an Apostle, and for that reason was given the office of apostolic exchequer. But when he lost Christ, he spilled the money on a temple floor.

The Christian vocation is inseparable from God

Who became Pain in Christ and from the Christian, who is vulnerable to the needs of others and even their insults. The Japanese have a proverb: "When the eternal falls into the sea, it becomes a fish". This is an Oriental way of expressing that when love fell into human nature, it became suffering. When Christ's Love falls into a Christian, it becomes love of the Cross and the beautiful vocation of "filling up what is wanting to the Passion of Christ."

Perhaps one can bring home the mission of the Christian by recalling the vocation of the yurodivy in Russia. Yurodivy means "born fool". These are Christians who go into concentration camps to take on the pain and suffering of others. They know that a man who is hated will hate back, and thus increase the anti-Godliness of the world. By absorbing wickedness, they diminish it. They undergo great torture at the hands of the ascetically minded rulers bent on destroying every vestige of personality in their victims so as to reduce them to cogs in the machine of the State. The yurodivys are actually prolonging Christ in the Garden of Gethsemane Who drank the chalice of iniquity when it was full to the brim, consuming every drop of it. When the chalice fell to the ground, the earth could not then absorb even a single drop.

New insight comes to the human situation when seen through the Christ on the Cross. Any of the Stations of the Cross reveals a mystery of love. I can imagine the crippled, the lame, those suffering from muscular dystrophy, the wheelchair and the limping, pondering lovingly and understandingly at the third, seventh and ninth Station when Christ fell.

When the rich were robbed of their possessions, the healthy reduced to sickness, the human mind blurred by an accident, the virtuous despoiled by rapists, the aged thrown to the mercy of the gutter — all of these must have seen themselves as Christs — stripped of His garments and reduced to that nothingness which brings one back to the very edge of creation when God made the world from nothing.

Two Philosophies of Life

There are only two philosophies of life, first the fast then the feast, or first the feast then the headache. God's love became pain. His love in us absorbs the pain of others. Jesus is in agony until the end of the world. He who loves least is always the strongest. Those who hate God and fellowman are unlimited in their power over those who love God. God is weak in the face of our sins. That is why, when He became Man, He could be Crucified.

The very moment love puts itself at the service of another, it becomes weak. Pain becomes a possibility; where the Love is Eternal, pain becomes a Crucified Death as "the desperate tides of the whole great world's anguish is forced through the channels of a single heart".

The theology of the world must be adapted to the Atomic Age. What is the atom? It is a closed self, independent, an infinitesimally little thing with electrons turning around its nucleus, which is its ego. The Atomic Age burst that little thing, released its dynamic power, tore it up from its eternal concentration upon its ego, and released thrust that could send a man to the moon.

What fission is to that atom, the Cross is to the Christian. It alone can release him from his negativism, his rebellion, his selfishness and his egotism, and make him see that the circle is the symbol of the selfish world, and the Cross with its arms outstretched to embrace all humanity is Christ's way of reconciling life and death.

Edward Sheen

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MAXI-SKIRT SCENE — Aquinas Institute Performing Arts Club will stage "Half a Sixpence," musical adapted from H. G. Wells' humorous novel, turn-of-the-century "Klippers," at Aquinas Friday and Saturday evening, May 23-24.

Catholic Students Win Jr. Achievement Awards

Six students in Rochester Catholic high schools were singled out for honors at the close of their business year in the Junior Achievement program. Two of them were among the five who received \$100 scholarships.

Daniel Tasciotti of Aquinas Institute was named "President of the Year." His company, Burroco, a group counseled by Burroughs Corp., took first place in "Company of the Year" awards, and also was judged to have turned out the best report to stockholders.

Tasciotti received a scholarship, as did Florence Paniewicz, a student at St. Joseph's High School.

The awards were made at a banquet at the Chamber of Commerce Bldg. last week for the achievers, their parents, and business sponsors and advisers involved in the program. Father Charles J. Lavery, C.S.B., president of St. John Fisher College, was the principal speaker.

Twenty-six Achievement companies were operated during the year by 520 students learning about business by being in business.

Among those cited for outstanding work were Rick Fetzner of Aquinas, named "Vice President of Manufacturing"; Ronald Boemi, also of Aquinas, "Treasurer of the Year"; and Patricia Pogroszewski of Nazareth Academy, "Safety Director of the Year."

Miss Pogroszewski and Paul Scheuerman of McQuaid Jesuit High School were among the eight students selected for the National Junior Achievement Conference to be held Aug. 17-22 at the University of Indiana.

Classes Planned For Teenage Mother-to-Be

A series of classes for teenage mothers-to-be will be conducted by the Monroe County Department of Health and the Catholic Family Service beginning next month.

The classes will be held at Immaculate Conception School, 445 Plymouth Ave. S., and the first class will be held from 3 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. on Wednesday, June 18.

Interested young women may enroll by calling Mrs. Thelma Horton at 546-5440 or 546-7220.

The classes will discuss how to get medical attention, how to prepare for childbirth, how babies are adopted, how to continue education or to obtain occupational training.

Doug Duke Jazz At MOS Sunday

Doug Duke and the Dixieland Ramblers will entertain at Mother of Sorrows again this Sunday night, May 25, at 7:30.

The third in a series of jazz concerts sponsored by the parish will feature a Connecticut musician, Steve Booker, who will demonstrate and explain the use of various percussion instruments. Admission: \$1.50 for adults; half that for students.

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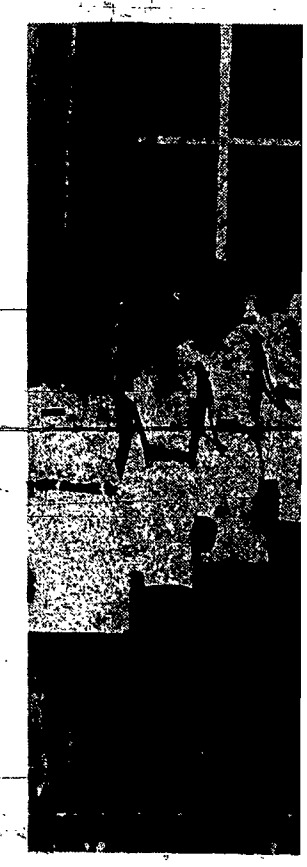
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M

Women's

Members of the new ed Women's Club Salome's Church, Iron were told at their orga meeting May 5 that "it easy to love — but the b is to stay close to the of love — Our Lord."

Speaker was Sister Peter, R.S.M., a counse the Order of Our S Mercy, who is the first S the state to receive a



FLORIDA COLI
regularly sendin
orphanage are 41

Collegian

Long Binh, Vietnam group of collegians r sending relief packag Vietnam orphans has 1 an accolade from Msgr Joseph G. Getell, R priest chaplain for 15 ages.

"In this day when s of our college students... cerned with demon: protesting and taking buildings," Msgr. Get clared, "it is hearte know that other gro

Bishop S. Nine Ret

Geneva — Bishop F Sheen bestowed the Sa of Confirmation on 50 damaged young peopl Mass in the Chapel of maculate Heart Friary.

The Bishop told the they could carry awa of himself, but that th truly carrying awa share of God and his lo that this Sacrament of mation fills them with charity, love, goodne strength.

Those confirmed are Notebaert, Donna Tolt Cole, Rita Eddy, B Toombs Cooper, Josej rano and Thomas DeM Geneva; Gloria Calarco

Mercy Hospi
Employees Fe

Auburn — Veteran e of Mercy Hospital v sented with service p week as part of the ob of National Hospital V

Sister Joan Alice, O ministrator, presented to the following:

Twenty years — Mrs Carner, Mrs. Agnes Miss Mary Mulvaney.

Fifteen years — Jul Beatrice Lares, Helen Eleanor Spinks; ten y Grace Guter, Mary L Florence Rindge.

Five years — Bernadi M, Edie Buer, Edwar Jane C, Edwina — E William Foster, Pauline Ann Koenig, Irene La saphine Manzano, Joyce Marilyn Shields, Franc win, Dr. William Ven