

Three Reactions To a Crucified Christ

THEOLOGY OF THE WORLD

(Twenty-seventh in Series)

By BISHOP FULTON J. SHEEN

In the last chapter the sociological and the theological Christs were contrasted. Christ Himself refused to subscribe to either the secular which would identify Him with societal uplift and identification with the world, and that other extreme which would isolate Him from society with its muck and dust and injustices, and contemplate Him as Divinity unconcerned with the world He made.

The true Christian is one who accepts the definition that Christ gave of Himself, namely, as the Suffering Servant of God. Good men must take upon themselves the unbelief, the thoughtlessness, the strife and the guilt of evil men if the latter are to be saved. Jesus demanded this as the condition of His Discipleship (Matt. 20/28).

True progress comes only after the sacrifices for others have been made. All the great benefactors of humanity have been suffering servants wounded for its excesses, bruised for its iniquities; they have gathered to themselves the filthiness of the leper, the darkness of the blind, the wandering of the prodigal, the heartsickness of the oppressed and the fierce emptiness of the worldling. Mankind is redeemed only when others are willing to wrestle like Jacob until the break of day, even though the thigh is flung out of joint.

This vicarious element is the center of the Christian ethic. To fire others, the match itself must waste. Men must be like torches, not lighting themselves, but lighting others: "He laid down His Life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren" (1 John 3/16).

Our Blessed Lord rejected the poll version as to who He was, and accepted Peter's incomplete statement that He was the Son of God. He complemented the idea by affirming Himself as One Who, like the seed, falls to the ground and rises to new quality and quantity. Peter did not like this. Just as soon as Our Lord announced that He had to go to Jerusalem to be crucified and then rise again, Peter was stiffed with pride and full of authority as he saw the keys of the kingdom of heaven swinging from his fisherman's cincture: "Taking Him aside, Peter started to reprimand with Him, 'Heaven preserve you, Lord,' he said, 'this must not happen to you.'" (Matt. 16/22).

Peter Did Not Want A Suffering Christ

Peter, who had belonged to the theological group at the beginning, now goes over to the sociological group. He was willing to have a Divine Christ, but not a suffering Christ; an orthodox Church, but not a Church involved with the world; a theological seminary, but not one given to pastoral training. Peter evidently said this because he loved Our Lord, and he could not bear to think of Him as treading the awful path to death.

The hardest trials of any life are those which come from protecting love. The real love is not the love which holds the soldier at home when he should go to battle, but the love which sends him out, not to make life easy, but to make life great. Peter is not here the Rock, he is the stone of stumbling as he draws from Our Lord, Who turned and said to Peter: "Get behind Me Satan! You are an obstacle in My path, because the way you think is not God's way, but man's" (Matt. 16/20).

He was called Satan because the essence of Satanism is temptation from the Cross. Our Blessed Lord began His Public Life by being tempted with three shortcuts from the Cross: one, to win the world economically by filling their gullets; two, to win the world technologically by doing wonders and defying gravitation, either by flying to the moon or by jumping from steeples; three, to escape the Cross by developing a different spirit and bowing down to a Cross-less world. Anyone who tempts Christ from the Cross is Satanic, and for that reason the earthly, secular mind was blasted.

What pains are inflicted on Christ by those who call themselves Christians: "For My thoughts are not your thoughts, sayeth the Lord" (Isaiah 55/8). A. J. Cronin, in his novel *The Citadel*, shows one doctor following the easy course of coddling wealthy hypochondriacs, and another devoting himself, but with little recompense in cash, to the needs of a Welsh mining town. Here was set in contrast the love of the Suffering Servant and self-love which can often disguise itself as service. Anyone who thinks that religion is a crutch must here learn that it is not a crutch, but a Cross. To carry the Cross to a place of execution is no sentimentalism, or sensitivity, it is self-mutilation. The higher self cannot live unless the lower is nailed down to die. The Cross is the plucking off of all of the buds that one fine bud may flower at last; it is the pruning of the tree that it may bring forth great fruit: "Who, for the joy that was set before Him, endured the Cross" (Heb. 12/2).

Peter Learned the Truth

It was immediately after this discourse that Our Lord then told all of His disciples about taking up the Cross and losing their lives in imitating Him as a Suffering Servant, for what good does it do to win the whole world, and lose one's soul (Matt. 16/25-28). But to the eternal credit of Peter, he learned the lesson of the Suffering Servant, for he himself was crucified. Thinking himself unworthy to be crucified, as the Savior was, he asked that he be nailed upside down, and thus, he who was called the Rock was put into the earth as the foundation of the Church. But before he died, in his letters, he refers to Jesus as the Suffering Servant.

There are four instances of Our Lord being called the Suffering Servant in the early Church in the speeches of Peter alone. In one of his first addresses after Pentecost he said: "You are Israelites, and you are the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the God of our ancestors Who has glorified

His Servant Jesus, the same Jesus you handed over and disowned in the presence of Pilate" (Acts 3/13). And a little later on in that same speech: "It was for you in the first place that God raised up His Servant and sent Him to bless you by turning every one of you from your wicked ways" (Acts 3/26).

Peter called Jesus Servant again in two speeches before the Sanhedrin: "In this very city Herod and Pontius Pilate made an alliance with the pagan nation and the people of Israel, against your Holy Servant Jesus" (Acts 4/27). A few moments later, He bade the people to go into the world, "through the Name of your Holy Servant Jesus" (Acts 4/30). In rebuking Peter, Jesus told him to get "behind Him". The basic difference between Peter and Satan is precisely the fact that Satan would never get behind Jesus. So long as man is prepared to try to follow, even after he has fallen, there is still in him the hope of glory here and hereafter. Satan is too proud to follow, the ego must always lead.

Once again the true meaning of the Christian appears, and few have put it better than Ghandi: "A living Christ means a living Cross. Without it life is a living death". The bond between the world and the sanctuary is the Cross with the Suffering Servant on it, never relinquishing one for the other. Even on the Cross He was suspended between heaven and earth; rejected by one, abandoned by the other. He united the contradiction of the upright bar of life and the horizontal bar of death in His Own Person. The twentieth century worldliness of some who would abandon the vertical dimension, is as wrong as the eighteenth century Christianity which would abandon the horizontal.

Thus it will always be that the Church is crucified by two extremes: by the Secularists and by the Heavens. The twentieth century Secularism which crucifies Him is more in keeping with the original spirit of Calvary than the other spirit of isolation. The Lord was crucified by a cultural world, at a time when pagan civilization had reached the apogee in art, in law and in religion. Three languages wrote His death warrant—Greek, Latin and Hebrew — the vehicle of art, the language of law and the medium of religion.

At the end of time when Christ in His Mystical Body will be crucified again immediately before His second coming, it will not be done by a civilization that is without culture and knowledge. It will probably be when technology and science have reached the same peak in contemporary civilization as Athens, Rome and Jerusalem had brought the culture of the pre-Christian days. It will not be the bobtail, ragged elements of a world that will bother to drive Divinity off the edge of the earth; it will be the earth that could build a Babel, scan the stars and see the earth as just another whirling ball in space.

The spectators of the first and final Crucifixion will be divided into the same three classes. Those who witness it will take one of three psychological attitudes:

- Antipathy
- Apathy
- Empathy

Antipathy Means Lovelessness

Antipathy is the first reaction to the Cross on the part of those who are at either extreme of the worldly, or the doctrinal. Hatred of God and the Church can be very real. Sometimes those who are falling away from faith in the Church need it as a boy needs a brick wall against which he may bounce his rubber ball. They need something great to attack in order to make the attack seem great. What is psychologically curious is that the loveless person does not know that he is unloving; he imputes to others the faults in himself, and this causes him to lash out; vindictiveness often injures the innocent; revenge poisons motives. As Tennyson wrote:

"And he that shuts Love out,
In turn shall be shut out from Love
And on her threshold lie howling in utter darkness."

One needs only to read the seven words addressed to the Cross to understand the seven kinds of vindictiveness which can reside in the hearts of men: "Come down from the Cross", was the challenge hurled at Him, and the reward that was promised if He would come down would be faith. They would believe in Him. But He would not come down, because it is human to come down; it is Divine to hang there.

The Cross is the greatest basis of unity in the world. It drives men together when everything else drives them apart. The Cross unites the friends of Christ and it also unites His enemies. It united such friends as Mary Magdalene and John, innocence, penitence and priesthood, at the foot of the Cross; but it also united those who had been at cross-purposes, one with another. Caiaphas and Judas were at one time poles apart, so were Pilate and Herod, so were the Sadducees and the Pharisees, so were Caesar and the people. No power on earth, it was felt, could drive them together into each other's arms until the Supreme Figure appeared on the scene. He established a common mind among those who occupied the high places. People who stand apart in normal days consent to cease their animosities when confronted by what they believe to be a threat. It takes an overwhelming power to unite conflicting personalities and interests, then as now.

At the present time, Christ is continuing in His Church. St. Paul understood this when the Glorified Christ in Heaven spoke to him: "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute Me?" The worldly and the unworshipful, the religious and the irreligious, join their hands to pay to Christ and His Church the tribute of hostility. Evil is always hypersensitive to the presence of good. It detects a challenge to its existence long before the good man awakes to it.

(Continued on Page 12)

July 4, 1776... a Motley Crew

A slave trader from New Hampshire and a New Jersey pigeon breeder who kept a pet mouse were among those present. Debtors, speculators and a "foul-mouthed son of discord," too. Fifty-six in all, ranging in age from 26 to 70. They all signed, 193 years ago, what has come to be known as the Declaration of Independence.

The signers were a colorful and unusual group of men," says Brother C. Edward Quinn, F.S.C., an associate professor of biology at Manhattan College, who has made a separate career of documenting the lives of the signers and delivering talks on the subject. "Some were great men, but most were not."

Brother Edward's talks on the unusual biographies of many of these men have been delivered to audiences ranging from Communion breakfasts to historical societies.

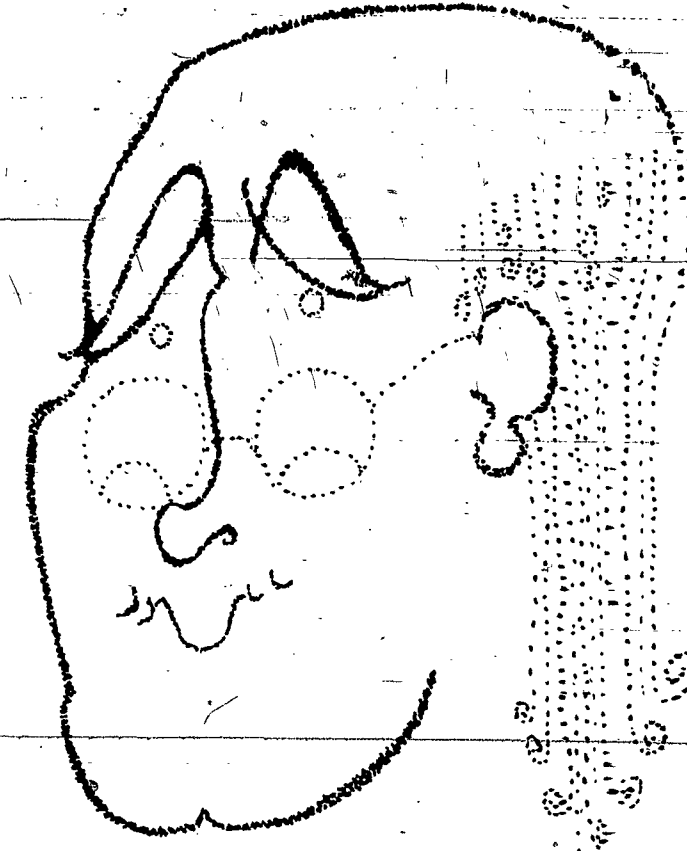
The order of signing was geographical by colonies," he notes. "Josiah Bartlett of New Hampshire, a physician, was the first to sign. Three of his sons and seven of his grandsons became doctors. Next was William Whipple, a sea captain and former slave trader.

"Massachusetts was next and John Hancock and John Adams affixed their signatures. Hancock suffered from a politically useful case of the gout that he used to protect himself from unwelcome visitors. Adams was a firebrand, a master of propaganda and mob manipulation. He held two degrees from Harvard but was a business failure."

In what may be the most curious of all the incidents connected with the Declaration's signers, both Adams and Thomas Jefferson died on July 4, 1826, the 50th anniversary of American Independence.

Another unusual Massachusetts signer was Elbridge Gerry, whose activities during the Revolution included price-fixing and privateering. Later vice president under Madison, Gerry was, Brother Edward says, "a rather foppish man."

New Jersey's signers were varied and equally remarkable. John Witherspoon, a Scottish Presbyterian minister, was the only cleric among the signers. Francis Hopkinson, a lawyer, author, musician, philanthropist, inventor — raised pigeons and kept a pet mouse. John Hart was driven from his dying wife's bedside by British troops, and Abraham Clark, a lawyer who contributed his services to the destitute, died of sunstroke while watching a bridge being built near his home in Rahway.



Ben Franklin, saint or...? Sketch by John Dash

Benjamin Franklin was the most famous of Pennsylvania's signers but not the most noteworthy. Robert Morris, the Revolution's greatest financial leader, lost heavily in land speculation, was jailed a debtor and died there. Benjamin Rush was the most renowned physician in the colonies, his interest in the care of the mentally ill was inspired by the insanity of his son. He is known as the "father of American psychiatry."

Franklin, though, may have suffered more personal grief than any other signer. His son, William, the last royal governor of New Jersey, was permanently estranged from his father during the Revolution. The son died in England, loyal to the crown, never having seen his father since the war began.

Maryland's Samuel Chase was perhaps the most infamous. Described as a "busy, restless incendiary... ringleader of mobs and a foul-mouthed and inflaming son of discord" by the Tory mayor of Annapolis, Chase had a measure of love for his country. Despite this patriotism, he tried to corner the market in flour, a move which was denounced by Alexander Hamilton.

Charles Carroll, of Maryland, was the only Catholic signer. The richest man in the colonies

at the time of the Revolution, Carroll became embroiled in a newspaper controversy in which he attacked the state's poll tax for the support of the Anglican clergy. He was the last of the signers to die.

Benjamin Harrison, of Virginia, saw his father and two sisters killed by lightning. The father of future president William Henry and grandfather of future president Benjamin, the elder Harrison, was particularly fond of a large cat to which he taught a number of tricks.

Georgia's Burton Gwinnett, while president of the state, became embroiled with the powerful McIntosh family, fought a duel with the family's head and was fatally wounded.

"Although a few of the signers live on in our consciousness today, most have faded from the nation's memory," says Brother Edward, "leaving behind the heritage of that courage which enabled them to pledge to each other and to the new nation, their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor.

"The story, probably apocryphal, in which Franklin is said to have observed to Hancock, after the signing, that they had better all hang together lest they all hang separately, does not in the least overstate the heroism displayed by this group."

THE HOLY FATHER

Christianity No Easy Thing

(By Religious News Service)

Vatican City — Pope Paul VI, speaking at his weekly general audience here, urged Catholics not to "betray the reality of Christianity" in an effort to make it too "easy."

His discussion included among the symptoms of "easy" Christianity the rejection of traditional dogmas, authority, asceticism and morality, the effort to restate ancient principles in modern language and some attempts to find common doctrinal grounds with other religions.

"An easy Christianity seems to be one of the obvious and widely-diffused aspirations after the Council," the Pope said. "Easy — the word is seductive."

Paraphrasing the hope of making life easier with the abolition of "a hard law."

He asked: "But if it is a law, which

has its foundation in God, how can that be done?"

"It is quite true that the Lord has condensed the whole law of the prophets in the supreme concept of the love of God and the love of one's neighbor.

"But this does not justify the particular mentality that some people seem to have assumed after the Council. 'No jurisdiction, no dogmatism, no asceticism, no authoritarianism.' It is said in a far too free and easy way that we have to open the doors to an easy Christianity.

"In this way, it is hoped to emancipate Christian life. One tends to give the mysterious truths of the faith a dimension that can be contained within present-day language and can be understood by the modern mentality, detaching these truths from the traditional scholastic formulations that have been sanctioned by the authoritative teaching of the Church.

"One tends to loosen the constraints

of Christian morality, vulgarly described as taboos, and of its practical needs of pedagogical training and disciplined observance in order to give to Christians the so-called integration with the way of life of the common people."

"At times we ask ourselves whether one does not have to see one of the reasons for the diminishing number of vocations in the superficial presentation of an adulterated Christianity, a Christianity without heroism or sacrifice, without the cross and therefore devoid of the moral grandeur of total love.

"Christianity is truly easy under certain conditions. It is easy for the humble, with a recourse to the help of grace, with prayer, with the sacraments, with trust in God. It is easy for the courageous who are strong and know how to love above all.

"Let us say with Saint Augustine: the yoke of Christ lies lightly upon those who love it. It is heavy for those who do not."

Word for Sunday

By Father Albert Shamon

The Mass... a Time for Giving

The multiplication of the loaves and the fish instantly calls to mind the Eucharist. You know the real name for the Mass is Eucharist. And you know also, especially teenagers, are getting "hung up" about the Mass. "Why should I go to Mass every Sunday?" they ask. "To be simplistic one can say, 'You've gotta go.' But the more basic question is, 'Why does the Church want us to go to Mass frequently, every Sunday at least?'"

We go to Mass not to receive favors; we go to give thanks. The essence of religion is to believe in God's love for us and to rejoice in the thought of what He did for us. Religion does not consist in what we do for God — for in the last analysis we can do nothing, absolutely nothing, for Him. Religion consists in understanding what God has done for us. Religion is — or should be — a great "thank-you-God" — a Eucharist.

Had God permitted us only to receive, we certainly would be poor images of Him. God is love and love gives. If He gives us everything, especially His Son, He must give us the power to give — else we cannot be like Him.

The Hindu poet, Rabindranath Tagore, tells this parable:

I was going begging from door to door along the street of the village when your gifted chariot appeared in the distance. It was like to a dream, a splendid thing, and I adored him who was the king of kings. My hopes

rose high and I thought: This is the end of my misery. I was already sure that I would receive large alms, offered spontaneously, and that coins would be scattered about me in the dust.

Your chariot stopped there where I was standing.

Your glance fell upon me and you alighted and smiled at me. I felt that the chance of a lifetime had come to me.

Then, suddenly, you held out your hand to me and said to me: What have you to give me?

Ah, what royal game was this? To come begging from a beggar?

I was bewildered and then perplexed, and finally, from my sack, I took a tiny grain of wheat and I gave it to you.

You went on your way, but what was my surprise when, at the end of the day, I emptied my sack out on the ground, I found a grain of gold amid the grains of wheat. Then did I weep and I thought: Why did I not have the courage to give you all that I had!

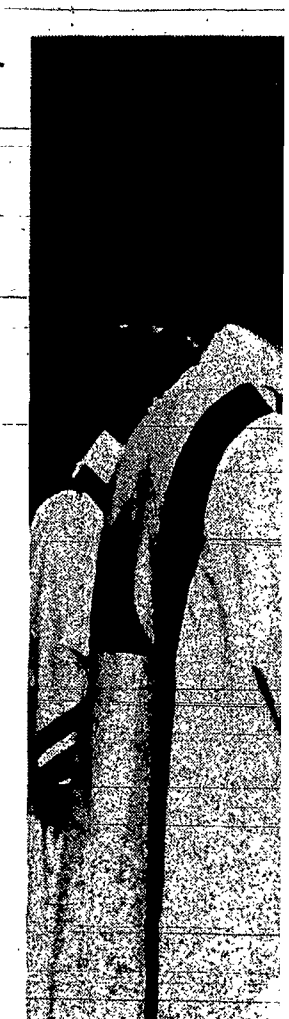
And so with us. Only that which we have offered will be preserved. Perhaps we have gotten so little from our Masses because, so far, our Masses have brought us only what they have cost us. Have they cost us much — honestly?

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NEWSPAPER OF

Bish...

Bishop Fulton J. Sheen parallels between husband for wife and Christ — the bridegroom of the Church.
In his sermon at 5 p.m. Mass for 200 anni in Sacred Heart Cathedral asked prayers for...



COUPLES AT A Cathedral last S... them with photo (at Bishop's right)

Signu...

Registrations are accepted for a parent-ment session program mornings during each week beginning July 13 at St. Joseph's Church, 1000 E. Main St., Brighton.

The classes will be 9:30 to 11 a.m. Tuesdays through Thursdays through Sponsoring the program diocesan Office of Formation.

While adults discuss Authority" topics, child kindergarten through grade will be divided into groups and attend religious experiments. The "faculty" will include Capuchin priests, two St. Joseph, and two persons.
Registration fees course are \$8 for adults and \$4 for children. They may contact Mrs. Raymond (654-8960, or Mrs. Pa (271-4464).

Cyril Krieg 1 Monsignor's

Mass for repose of Cyril A. Krieg, Msgr. Gerard Krieg, celebrated Monday at Our Lourdes Church, Br...

Mr. Krieg, of 201 S. died June 28. He was veteran of World War member of the Holy city of Our Lady of Church.

Among clergy at were Bishop James I and Auxiliary Bishop McCafferty.

Surviving Mr. Krieg's wife, Loretta Roland daughter, A. Virgil two sons — Msgr. officials of the Diocese Tribunal, and Krieg, who resides in Mass., and two grand Robert and Paul Krieg.

PARISH FESTI... Our Lady of G... parish will hold a 7:25-26 on the convent 595 Brooks Avenue.

Eye-L...

The Rochester Eye Research Society, in expanding its services all body parts.

John N. Dimlich, dent, announced today society has changed to the Rochester Eye man Paris Bank, Inc. the Human Paris Bank the following year.

*Soliciting donated tissues, organs and help by pledges to be after death and to be