

Balancing the Books

Pope John's Letters

By Father John S. Kennedy

The fact of Pope John's life-long involvement with his family was well known during his pontificate. But its intense particularity is revealed for the first time in a fascinating book just published, **Pope John XXIII: Letters to His Family** (McGraw-Hill, 330 W. 42nd St., N.Y. 10036. \$15).

The Roncallis were simple folk, and such they remained as young Angelo grew older, was with them less and less, and advanced in the hierarchy of the Church. Their ever more illustrious relative always wrote to them in simple terms, and mostly about simple matters. There is, inevitably, a vast amount of repetition, in this volume.

Yet it is, throughout, fascinating, as said above. For John XXIII is fascinating, like all great men. We want to know more and more about him, to penetrate the mystery, to resolve the paradoxes, to find the key to the magnificence which shone upon the whole world in the last years of a long life. And where better to look than in his letters to his own people?

Certainly one will not look to these letters for information about the important business and the great events with which, as papal diplomat, patriarch of an ancient See, cardinal, and pope, Roncalli was connected. He told his family practically nothing of his official concerns.

The only revelations are of the man and of his family.

He is forever instructing, correcting, sometimes chiding the people at home. As a seminarian, he writes to his mother, "I beg you, mother, to pray often and to show yourself to the family as a true pattern of meekness and patience. Accustom yourself little by little to keeping your temper on every occasion."

In a family as numerous as his, almost always there will be someone ill or in difficulty, and deaths will be occurring. So it is that he is often discussing the latest misfortune or reverse suffered by his kindred, advising as to the Christian attitude to illness, consoling the bereft. He speaks of paradise as if he beheld it, and never ceases to urge his correspondents on, through their sorrows, toward that goal.

Evidently his family consulted him about all sort of homely problems. We find him, for example, while Nuncio to Paris, writing to his brother about the wisdom of acquiring a cow. He

Earth Day Show At the Museum

The Rochester Museum and Science Center will celebrate National Earth Day April 22 with a presentation of pollution problems that ranges from Penfield to outer space.

"Visual Pollution: There Is Still Time" is an audio-visual report prepared by 28 Rochester Institute of Technology students who worked with the Penfield Zoning Board of Appeals. Roger Remington directed the production, which is scheduled for 8:15 p.m. in the Strasenburgh Planetarium's Star Theatre. Terence Dickinson, assistant director will discuss steps this nation has taken to prevent the spread of pollution into the universe. His talk will be accompanied by a projection of related images on the planetarium dome.

The first part of the program is free, but there will be a one-dollar charge for admission to the planetarium. Punch will be served during intermission.

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discusses the advisability of a brother's getting false teeth and is pleased that one of his sisters, having secured false teeth, now looks so much younger. He advises another sister how to deal with her children, who evidently are not behaving ideally: "A few words, carefully spoken, gently and perhaps tearfully, so that they may see what a mother's heart suffers."

Family money matters engaged him. It appears that there were frequent appeals for his help, and he responded as best he could, almost always giving something, but reminding his people that, however prominent his position, he was a poor man and intended so to remain.

We find here, in a letter dated 1951, something which he is reported to have repeated later, when pope: "My system," he tells his brother Giovanni, "is to observe all, ignore a great deal, and correct a little. In this way we can do great things."

Is there much else to suggest what his pontificate would be like? One concludes that he was the same kind of man before and after his choice as pope. Calmness, simplicity, patience were his watchwords all through his adult life, as the letters attest. Trust in God, courage, the policy of living from day to day in the assurance of supporting grace, these were principles he adhered to early and late.

But there is almost no hint of the changes which, once pope, he would put in train. For example, in the letters from Bulgaria and Turkey there is practically nothing to indicate the ecumenical activity he would initiate. Speaking of Mohammedans, he says, "Among them, too, if you know how to take them, there are so many good people." No more than that.

He does speak, in 1948, of giving "a modern form to the old doctrines." But as a young priest, he recommends "a Christian life after the old pattern," and he continues in this vein over the years and decades.

The spiritual books he approves are the old ones. If I am not mistaken, the only contemporary book mentioned in the whole volume is Monsignor Romano Guardini's *The Lord*, toward which he was favorable.

Writing to his sisters "and all the family" (1950), he urges, "Go on following the rules laid down by ecclesiastical authority. You will always gain by doing so, and the Lord will bless you."

There are incidental disclosures to intrigue us. In 1924, he writes, "I cannot find it in my conscience as a Christian and a priest to vote for the Fascists." From Paris he sends word that he is dieting to reduce his weight. He mentions his troubles with a typewriter, his preference in cars.

SMOKERS' CLINIC STARTS TUESDAY

A smoking withdrawal clinic for people who want to conquer the cigaret habit will begin Tuesday afternoon, April 21. It will be held on five consecutive Tuesdays, 1 to 3 p.m., at Asbury First United Methodist Church, 1050 East Avenue.

The Finger Lakes Area Tuberculosis and Respiratory Disease Association, Genesee Valley Heart Association, Monroe County Cancer and Leukemia Association, and the Monroe County Dental Society are co-operating in this venture. The Heart Association will take registrations at 232-2820.

'Salesman' Slated At Nazareth

"Salesman," a documentary film feature by Albert and David Maysles, will have its premiere Rochester showing at Nazareth Arts Center on April 16, 17 and 18 at 8:15 p.m.

The subjects of "Salesman" are four real door-to-door Bible salesmen. The Maysles Brothers spent six weeks with their subjects as they moved through New England and Florida in pursuit of the American capitalistic dream. We see them making house calls, in their lonely motel rooms, and at a Chicago convention.

What finally emerges, after 15 months of editing, is a kind

of a cinematic mural, of America's lower middle class landscape—a mural of faces, words, parlors, kitchens, streets, radio and television images, a footnote to contemporary history and values.

In its review of "Salesman," the National Catholic Office for Motion Pictures said that "by photographing the spontaneous reality of the door-to-door salesman's life on the road, this film has made visible for the viewer's objective consideration certain aspects of the commercialization of American society...."

The salesmen are shown calling upon mostly low-income

families, who, as "Life" magazine put it in a review, "undoubtedly need the comfort of the Gospels but scarcely need to pay \$50 for a lavishly illustrated, gilt-edged, Fabrikoid-bound edition that is, as the spiel goes, 'washable and outlasts leather 4 to 1.'"

"Salesman" is "surely one of the most moving and accomplished examples of 'cinema verite' so far," commented "Time." The "Saturday Review" calls it "one of the most important American films ever made... because it catches and distills some unsettling truths about American life."

AQUINAS SENIOR AT MOON LAUNCH

William T. Stephany, an Aquinas Institute senior, was selected to represent Otetiana Council of the Boy Scouts of America at the launching of the Apollo 13 moon flight from Cape Kennedy, Fla.

The Council said it selected Stephany "because of his exceptional ability to stimulate people of his own age and get them involved in youth programs and community projects."

Stephany, the son of Mr. and Mrs. Austin Stephany of Garden Drive, is a member of St. James parish. He is president of the Marine Midland Young Men's Bank Club, which serves as an introduction to the field of banking and finance for interested high school students.

The Concert Chorale

OF THE SISTERS OF SAINT JOSEPH OF ROCHESTER

in performance

ITHACA
April 25 3:30 p.m.
Ithaca College
ELMIRA
April 25 8:00 p.m.
Notre Dame High School
GENEVA
April 26 4:00 p.m.
DeSales High School
AUBURN
April 26 8:00 p.m.
Emerson Auditorium
ROCHESTER
May 1, 2 8:15 p.m.
May 3 3:00 p.m.
St. Agnes High School



More help, more comfort, more entertainment. More power to you.

There are more than 150 different household appliances on the market today. And most people are surprised at how many they own, until they take the time to count them. Oh sure, they know their electric bill has increased over the years, but that's only because they are using more electricity for a greater number of work-saving appliances. So, just for fun, check off the appliances you have in your home or apartment. We think you'll be surprised at just how many jobs electricity does year after year. We figure it this way: if we can add to your comfort, health and entertainment... more power to you.

- Clothes dryer
- Distwasher
- Food freezer
- Food waste disposer
- Ice cube maker
- Incinerator
- Ironer
- Range
- Refrigerator
- Clothes washer
- Water heater
- Baby food warmer
- Blender
- Bottle warmer
- Can opener
- Broiler
- Carving knife
- Casserole
- Chaffing dish
- Coffee grinder
- Coffee maker
- Corn popper
- Deep fat fryer
- Dutch oven
- Egg cooker
- Fish scaler
- Food mixer
- Food warmer
- Giddle
- Hot dog roaster
- Hot plate
- Ice cream freezer
- Ice crusher
- Juice extractor
- Kettle
- Meat grinder
- Plate warmer
- Potato baker
- Pressure cooker
- Roaster
- Roll warmer
- Rotisserie oven
- Sandwich grill
- Saucepan
- Sharpener
- (knife and scissor)
- Shredder
- Skillet
- Skillet
- Snack grill
- Sterilizer
- Timer
- Toaster
- Vegetable peeler
- Waffle iron
- Warming tray
- Adjustable bed
- Air conditioner
- Air cooler
- Air purifier
- Blanket
- Carpet
- Cooler
- Curling iron
- Dehumidifier
- Deodorizer
- Electrostatic air cleaner
- Juice crusher
- Facial massager
- Fans
- Attic
- Circulating
- Exhaust (kitchen)
- Furnace
- Faucet
- Foot massager
- Germicidal lamp
- Hair clippers
- Hair dryer
- Hair-curling set
- Heat lamp
- Heat pad
- Slicer
- Humidifier
- Illuminated dial telephone
- Insect exterminator
- Instant water heater and cooler
- Lighted mirror
- Manicure set
- Mattress (massaging)
- Oil burner
- Range hood
- Reducing belt
- Sauna (dry heat bath)
- Screen door insect exterminator
- Shaver
- Sheet
- Shoe polisher
- Steam bath
- Sun lamp
- Teeth brush
- Vaporizer
- Vibrator
- Water pump
- Whirlpool bath
- Whiskbroom
- Electric broom
- Floor polisher
- Floor scrubber
- Iron
- Rug shampooer
- Cigarette lighter
- Clock
- Cradle rocker
- Defroster (refrigerator)
- De-icer
- Gutter
- Pavement
- Door bell
- Door chimes
- Door litter (garage)
- Door number (illuminated)
- Fire alarm
- Fireplace
- Flashlight (rechargeable)
- Foot warmer
- Fountain (ornamental)
- Hedge trimmer
- Intercommunication system
- Lawn edger
- Lawn mower
- Lighting
- General illumination
- Yard-outdoor
- Decorative
- Safety
- Signal
- Snow thrower
- Traverse curtain rod

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