

## PASTORAL PERSPECTIVE

By Bishop Joseph L. Hogan

## The Gospel According to John —

I leave to Biblical scholarship the analysis of the inspired writings of St. John the Evangelist, the Bishop of Ephesus, who lived to the ripe old age of 90-plus years and summarized his reflections on his years of service to the Lord in his valedictory, "God is Love."

Nor would I presume to penetrate the depths of commitment of the precursor of the Lord, St. John the Baptist, who had so emptied himself of personal ambition that he could say that he was happy to be but the herald of one, the latchet of whose shoe he was unworthy to loose, and but a voice crying in the wilderness, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord."

The incarnation of the spirit of these saintly men has been made manifest to us in our times in the words and deeds of Pope John XXIII, who chose the Evangelist and the Baptist as his patron saints and made their affirmations and expectations a reality in this 20th Century.

In my lifetime I have been privileged to meet in person but one Holy Father, the late Pope Pius XII. It was May of 1951 and I was assigned that afternoon to make a public defense of my doctoral thesis. Though I was only one of a group of 50 in the morning Audience, the Holy Father made me feel that I was worthy of his personal time and attention. I sensed that I was in the presence of greatness and goodness. Others must have shared this feeling, for seven years later his death was announced to the world in a Vatican Radio bulletin, "the most esteemed

and venerated man in the world, one of the greatest pontiffs of the century, with sanctity, passed away today."

With longing expectation, I look forward to September in Rome and an audience with Pope Paul VI as I make my "ad limina" visit and present to him the story of the Church of Rochester — its hopes and anxieties, its successes and its failures.

It was never my pleasure to meet Pope John in person, and I regret it. Yet, I feel that I know him well thanks to the beautiful legacy of his self-revelation in his spiritual diary, "Journal of a Soul." Here one discerns his simplicity, his extreme human sensibility and the scrupulous moderation of his life as he aspired to bend his will to the bidding of Christ.

There has been much talk recently about the possible canonization of Pope John. Surely if the process were by popular acclamation as happened in the early centuries of the Church, he would now be called St. John. It seems that the whole world admired him and loved him. The columnist Sydney Harris, a favorite of mine, expressed this universal sentiment when he wrote just before Christmas:

"I was pleased to read recently a report from the Vatican that a move is underway to beatify the late Pope John XXIII, as a step toward naming him a saint in the Roman Catholic Church. It's hard to imagine anyone in the world today, be he Christian, Jew, Turk or Druid who wouldn't go along with this. Whether one believes in saints or not, certainly John was one of the great figures of the 20th Century, as candid, simple, shrewd, pious, endearing and humane a man as we have seen in our time."

For my spiritual reading these past few weeks, I have used an excellent biography of John recently published. I recommend it highly. It is the result of five years of research by Lawrence Elliott of the staff of Reader's Digest and is entitled, "I Will Be Called John." Bishop Loris Capovilla, former secretary of Pope John, praises the book as an accurate reflection of the Pope's true self written in words that touch the heart and make us all wish for more men so full of humanity and so capable of building bridges and of nurturing peaceful relations among men.

I suppose of all the qualities that have endeared him to the world, we could single out his simplicity and his great sense of humor. While Providence called him to offices often associated with power and grandeur and isolation from people, he remained always the humble peasant close to the poverty of his beloved Sotto il Monte and to his humble family. And, recognizing the poverty of his own being, he found it easy to poke fun at himself and to expose the folly of human conduct with a touch of authentic humor which never left him.

Just shortly before his death he was told by his doctor that he had a "gastropathic condition." He replied, "That is because I am pope. Otherwise, you would call it a stomach-ache."

And when he sensed the physician's concern, he assured him, "But don't worry about me because my bags are packed. I'm ready to go."

I personally pray to this saintly leader each day, and thank God for the blessed legacy of inspiration that we have inherited from His humble servant, John.

## vatican news

## Use Diplomacy To Build Peace, Pontiff Urges

Vatican City [RNS] — Pope Paul, stressing necessity of substituting "reason" for "force," declared that diplomacy has a "primary role" to play in the building of peace.

In an address before members of the diplomatic corps accredited to the Holy See, whom he received for the traditional exchange of New Year greetings, the pontiff also defended the role of Vatican diplomacy.

Alluding to the "temptation" succumbed to by some governments to resolve "conflicts and tensions" by "force and violence," the Pope emphasized that "today more than ever it is necessary to substitute reason for force."

That is why, he said, "diplomacy has a primary role, together with the work of politicians and intellectuals, in the building of peace."

Diplomacy, he explained, calls for "great wisdom" and "untiring patience" in the dogged pursuit of solutions that will reflect "honest" concern for conflicting claims of opponents or antagonists, as well as for "the requirements of the common good."

Pope Paul then affirmed that in fulfilling its "noble task" the diplomacy of states will continue

to find in the Holy See "an ally," capable of proclaiming general moral principles and also, "when necessary," of engaging in "concrete action."

Recalling that this stance of the Vatican has been criticized by persons who see in it "a kind of political commitment which lowers the Holy See to the rank of a secular power and makes it less free and less credible in the exercise of its prophetic mission," the pontiff said:

"We are not insensitive to these voices which reach us from various sides, nor are we offended by their tone which is sometimes pressing and almost vehement."

"We are always ready to reflect anew, with serious and calm awareness, on our attitudes and actions, so that they will better correspond to the requirements of the apostolic ministry and to the time in which we live."

"It is necessary," the Pope went on, "for the Church to be both a prophetic voice and to be capable of understanding the human reality with all its limitations and its resistance to conformity to the ideals it should follow in order to respond to its responsibilities before God and before history."

At the same time, he added, the Church's concrete collaboration in the solution of human problems "certainly does not lead us to excuse the inexcusable: the abuse of power, extremes of repression, the use of torture, unjust economic pressures, and so on."

"In the area of international life," Pope Paul concluded, "the

Holy See intends to contribute particularly to the promotion of honorable and peaceful contacts between peoples in order to remove the ruinous clash of arms from the scene and in order to try to shore up the precarious balance of incompatible interests that are ever ready to present themselves from unilateral points of view."

## 'Reconciliation' Holy Year Idea

Vatican City [RNS] — Cardinal Maximilien De Furstenberg, president of the papal Central Committee for the Holy Year, said here that it was the "duty" of all Roman Catholics, during the year of spiritual renewal, "to work for reconciliation with all men — believers and non-believers alike."

The Dutch-born prelate spoke on Vatican Radio, in the first of a planned series of special weekly broadcast reports on the 1975 Holy Year proclaimed by Pope Paul.

(The year begins in Rome formally at Christmas 1974, and will end on Christmas 1975. An 18-month period of preparation began last June 10. Over-riding purposes of the Holy Year are "spiritual renewal" and "reconciliation of men with God and each other.")

"Reconciliation among men," said Cardinal De Furstenberg, "is clearly a call to foster a spirit of peace at an individual, person-to-person level, until the pacifying spirit of the Christian is translated into social involvement and becomes . . . a force for unity among all men."

## Islam to Raise Mosque In Rome

Vatican City [RNS] — Rome, one of the few important European capitals without a mosque, will soon have one.

The Vatican spokesman, Federico Alessandrini, said:

"The Pope has no objections regarding the construction of a

mosque, so that the Moslem residents of, and visitors to, Rome will have a proper place of worship."

According to Alessandrini, however, the Vatican would like the mosque to be a modest building in order not to conflict with the special character of Rome, Center of Catholicism.

position in the Church's central administration — earns no more than \$1,000 a month. Only if a cardinal presides over a congregation or secretariat is this basic salary increased by an additional \$80.

Other Vatican officials, such as bishops who serve as secretaries of congregations and secretariats, earn little more than \$500 a month.

The majority of minor ecclesiastical and lay workers at the Vatican barely make more than \$200 monthly. All lay employees receive an additional \$20 a month if married, and a further monthly payment of \$25 for each child.

Thus towering minarets that might overshadow neighboring churches would not be welcomed.

Pope Pius XII was not favorable to the building of a mosque in "the cradle of Christianity" and Mussolini was quoted as saying that if the Moslems wanted a mosque in Rome they should allow a Catholic church to be built in Mecca.

There are as yet no architectural plans for the mosque, nor any ideas for its location. The eventual site will be determined by Rome's city hall.

Sites on the outskirts of Rome have been suggested but a spokesman for Rome's Center of Islamic Culture has stated a preference for a mosque in Rome's center, and would even consider a "disused" Catholic church.

There are some four to five thousand Moslems in Rome — Arab diplomats and their families, officials at Rome's U.N. Food and Agricultural Organization, students and visitors.

## Money Crunch Hits Vatican

Vatican City [RNS] — Vatican City, the tiniest of states, is experiencing the same economic stress as that facing all of Europe.

Cardinal Jean Villot, the French-born Secretary of State, has urged Vatican departments and agencies to reduce expenditures and enforce a strict economy drive.

Vatican City's 3,000 ecclesiastical and lay employees have been among the first to suffer from rising prices and inflation. Their wages are no longer adequate to cope with continuously rising costs in the "outside" world.

An "unemployed" cardinal — i.e., one who holds no active