



Essay Winner

John Monaco, 16, one of five winners in the first United Societies Essay Contest, is shown receiving a Savings Bond recently from Msgr. Joseph Vogt, pastor of John's parish, Holy Redeemer, while his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Luigi Monaco look on. Below is John's winning essay.

MY RESPONSIBILITY AS A CITIZEN OF THE UNITED STATES

My responsibility as a citizen of the United States is neither simple nor blind.

I must educate myself as to my role within our democratic political process.

When given the privilege of the franchise, I must make responsible decisions based upon knowledge of issues and candidates, and on a non-partisan basis. This is of the utmost importance because the franchise is the major tool available to us by which our government can be made responsible.

My responsibility to the United States is not a blind loyalty to any particular administration. Rather, it is a responsibility to see to it that the power structure in our country pursues policies which are just and in the best welfare of the people.

There are those who will follow any government blindly and who will claim that doing otherwise is unpatriotic. It is they who are usually responsible when a government becomes insensitive to the needs of the people.

A true patriot must continually question his government's policies. That is my responsibility. I must always ask whether my nation's policies are the best possible, or if they can be improved. I must not fear to question the very form of political system which we have. I believe that the performance of a political system should be judged by how beneficial it is to the people in a particular area at a particular time.

As a citizen of the United States then, I must not blindly adhere to our present form of democracy at the risk of stagnation.

I must see to it, through intelligent use of the franchise and my other rights as a citizen, that our nation's government is always justly responsive to the needs of the people, and that it is able to evolve with the changing times.

John Monaco
Rochester, New York
Age 16

Mary Bethune Statue Unveiled

Washington, D.C. [RNS] — A bronze statue of the late Dr. Mary McLeod Bethune, black educator and champion of human rights, was unveiled in Lincoln Park July 10.

The memorial is the first to a black American and a woman erected in a public park in the nation's capital.

A crowd estimated at 18,000 watched as a light blue veil fell, disclosing the 17-foot likeness of the daughter of tenant farmers.

Among those present was Albert Bethune, 75, son of the Methodist laywoman who founded what is today Bethune-Cookman College, Daytona Beach, Fla., and the National Council of Negro Women.

The black women's organization worked for 15 years to achieve the dedication of the memorial, accepted for the U.S. by Secretary of the Interior Rogers C.B. Morton, whose department oversees statues in federal parks.

Dr. Bethune, who died in 1955 at the age of 79, founded the Daytona Normal and Industrial School for Girls in 1899 with \$1.50 in cash. Five years later the school merged with Cookman Boys Institute and Bethune-Cookman developed into a four-year liberal arts institution related to the United Methodist Church.

In 1935, Dr. Bethune founded the National Council of Negro Women. She was adviser to several presidents including Franklin D. Roosevelt.

Pope Begins Vacation

Vatican City [RNS] — Pope Paul, following a long-established papal custom of retreating from Rome's oppressive summer heat, left the Vatican on the evening of July 17 for his annual working-vacation at his Summer residence in Castelgandolfo, a town in the Alban hills some 1,300 feet above sea level, about 15 miles southeast of the city of Rome.

In the morning, he held his usual Wednesday general audience, appearing to be completely recovered from a flareup of a painful arthritic condition in his right knee that forced him to cancel the general audience of July 10.

The pontiff, in his address to

pilgrims and tourists assembled in the Vatican's huge Audience Hall, warned against what he called "the most serious temptation of our times — that of keeping our attention fixed on the horizontal sphere and thus forgetting, or even denying, the vertical sphere."

"It is the temptation," he explained, "to fix our concerns upon the visible, the temporal, and the human, and so abdicate from our vocation towards the invisible, the eternal, the supernatural."

"Of course," he went on, "we must recognize the genuine values in the human — the horizontal — sphere, but we must

not stop there. The vision of the truth and thus of whatever is good in the world does not allow us to forget the integral vision of truth as a whole."

He said this integral vision necessarily entailed awareness and recognition of "absolute and transcendental principles," the denial of which, he added, was a mark of "secularism."

The "secular" attitude, said the Pope, must be offset by a genuinely Christian attitude that recognizes that love of one's neighbor — on the horizontal plane — is founded on and derives its efficacy from one's love of God.

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