

By Bishop Joseph L. Hogan

PASTORAL PERSPECTIVE

Happy Birthday, Dear Father in Christ!

I write these words ninety years after the birth of a boy whose life was destined by a gentle and gracious Providence to have a deep influence on my own. I have no idea whether Red Oak, Iowa could have afforded a reporter to announce on October 28, 1884 the good news that the second of three sons had been born to William Patrick and Rosina O'Doherty Kearney and that his name would be James Edward. All I do know is that the local chronicler of Lima of Livingston County, New York, thousands of miles away from Montgomery County of Iowa, reported thirty-two years later "a bouncing March boy, weighing 11 lbs. 6 oz., has come to stay at the home of proud parents, Michael and Mary Hogan."

I thank God this day for the blessed event of the conjunction of two lives so separated in time and distance. And I meditate with the Psalmist: "What return shall I make to the Lord for all He has done for me?"

The Spirit directs me, dear Bishop Kearney, to write now an open letter to thank you for all you have meant to me. And so I greet you:

Dearest Father in Christ:

Would that I had your eloquence of expression to speak my deepest thoughts to you! I rely on your charity to translate my words into a message which speaks of my abiding affection and gratitude.

Father Robert McNamara has already written in the Centennial History of the Diocese (published in 1968) a faithful and accurate summary of your impressive record of devoted service to the Church of Rochester. To every iota of 45 pages of his summation of your shepherding and his 53 pages about your efforts for renewal of the Church, I say, "Amen." All of this and more you have accomplished.

But history becomes alive when the reader identifies with it and can say: "This man did this for me — he touched my life in these precious and personal moments. He meant this to me."

Bishop Casey spoke of this personal touch that has been the story of your life, when asked to reflect, in the Centennial booklet, on your twenty-nine years as our Shepherd. I, too, have felt the same warmth of your person and your touch.

You touched me first in 1939 when I knelt before you to cast my lot with the Lord in clerical tonsure — and you confirmed me in my decision. You have followed my steps all the way to the 'fullness of the priesthood' — ordaining me as porter, lector, exorcist, acolyte, subdeacon, deacon, priest — and then five years ago escorting me to the 'Cathedra' as your second successor as bishop of the diocese — and confirming me since in every moment of these days of challenge for the Shepherd of the 70's.

I have treasured all of your letters to me — so warm and so personal — those written in the firm strokes of former years once described as 'fine copperplate script' which

caused me to tremble as you would begin, 'I have had my eyes on you for some time,' and I, trembling, would wonder 'Why?' — and those of recent years written by you with trembling hands which assured me that I knew 'Why' — that you truly cared and loved me with a father's love —

My greeting of gratitude and birthday wishes 'ad multos annos' are expressed in this selection of Pauline verses:

"I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine for you — making my prayer with joy, thankful for your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now." Phil. 1:3-5

"May grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and from Jesus Christ our Lord be with you." 2 Tim. 1:2

I thank God — whenever I remember you in my prayers — as indeed I do constantly night and day." 2 Tim. 1:3

"I find great joy and comfort in your love, because through you the hearts of God's people have been refreshed." Philemon 1:7

Happy Birthday, Dear Father in Christ!

Your devoted Son, +Joseph

vatican news

Pius XII's Role in Massacre Disputed

Rome [RNS]. — Herbert Kappler, the Nazi police chief in wartime Rome, who was the SS officer in charge of the 1944 massacre of 335 Italian hostages, has testified that preparations for the killing of the hostages were kept secret "until the last moment," and that, consequently, Pope Pius XII "could not have known of the plans."

The former SS colonel's testimony, given at Gaeta Prison, south of Rome, where he is serving a life sentence for his part in the massacre, was the latest development in a libel suit against a film version of a book, *Death in Rome*, by Robert Katz, an American.

Confessa Eleanora Rossignani, a niece of the late Pope Pius XII, filed suit some months ago against the film version on the grounds that the movie implies that Pope Pius made no effort to prevent the slaughter of hostages by Nazi troops in retaliation for the killing of 33 German soldiers by Italian partisans in downtown Rome on March 23, 1944.

Named in the suit are Katz, Carlo Ponti, producer of the film (entitled "Reprisal" in Italy and "Massacre in Rome" in the U.S.), and the film's director, Vercor (Pan Cosmatos).

The movie features Richard Burton in the role of SS Col. Kappler.

Defendants in the suit have been accused of "denigrating and defaming" Pope Pius XII.

In sworn testimony, Kappler told magistrates that his reprisal plans had been kept secret "for security reasons" but that, after the partisan attack on Rome's Via Rasella, "all Rome expected some kind of German retaliation."

Kappler was questioned about the role played by Father Pancrazio Pfeiffer of the Salvatorian order, who was the Pope's representative in dealing with the Germans. He answered that he did not see Father Pancrazio at all on March 24, 1944, the day when the reprisal was carried out.

Kappler added, however, "if Father Pancrazio had come to my office on that day I would have told him he had come to the wrong office and that he had to ask for clemency at the office of some higher official."

Recently, Father Robert A.

Graham, a Jesuit historian working at the Vatican Archives, was called as a witness to testify on an article he had written for the Italian Jesuit magazine, *Civiltà Cattolica*.

In his article, Father Graham disputed Katz's contention that Pius XII knew about the intended German reprisal.

Father Graham told Religious News Service he had informed the court that he had indeed described as "puerile" the suggestion that another SS colonel in Rome in 1944, Eugene Dollman, had said the Italians

could appease the Germans by giving the Via Rasella victims a fancy funeral and ringing Church bells.

Said Father Graham: "If Dollman had known Hitler was so angry that he had ordered ten Italians killed for every German victim, then Dollman also would have known that a fancy funeral and some bell-ringing was not going to appease Hitler."

Thus, said Father Graham, the author's "contention that Dollman knew of the reprisal plans is inaccurate."

Katz has maintained that Dollman told him he knew of certain reprisals that would be carried out. However, Dollman has since claimed that the only scheme he knew about was one to deport a large number of Italians from Rome.

Father Graham maintains that if Dollman had really known of the orders that had come directly from Hitler, he would not have pursued the course of action he did, which was to go to bed the night of March 23 (while Kappler sat up all night compiling the list of victims) and then go off the next day to see his superior some distance from Rome.

The Bishop's Public Appointments



November

3—Confirmation, Ithaca College — 11 a.m.

3—Confirmation, St. Pius X Church, Van Etten — 3 p.m.

4—Aquinas Institute Board of Trustees Meeting — 9 a.m.

5—Priests' Council Meeting, St. Bernard's Seminary — 10:30 a.m.

6-7-8—Clergy Conferences, St. Bernard's Seminary.

8—Confirmation, St. Vincent de Paul Church, Corning, 7:45 p.m.

10—Celebration of Eucharist and Homily, St. Mary of the Assumption, Scottsville — 10 a.m. Also, Homilies at 8 a.m. and Noon.

11—Regional Conference for the Northeast Region, Church of the Holy Spirit, Penfield — 7:30 — 10 p.m.

12—Clergy Day of Reflection, High Acres, Geneva — 10:30 a.m.

13—Celebration of Eucharist and Homily, Catholic School Principals Workshop, Notre Dame Retreat House, Canandaigua, 4:30 p.m.

14—Confirmation, St. Mary's Church, Auburn — 7:45 p.m.

17-22—National Conference of Catholic Bishops' Meeting — Washington, D.C.

24—Confirmation, Christ the King Church — 3 p.m.

25—Confirmation, St. Ann's Church, Hornell — 7:45 p.m.

26—Secondary Schools Task Force Report Meeting, Bishop Kearney High School — 1 p.m.

27—Ecumenical Service for Lawyers, St. Luke's Episcopal Church — 8 a.m.

28—Thanksgiving Day Celebration of the Eucharist and Homily, St. Michael's Church, Rochester — 9:30 a.m.