

Opinion

Meaning Of Mass

Editor:

Ref: C/J 7/28/76 "Think Twice." The eternal meaning of the Mass and the perfection of Jesus Christ should be the top priority and concern of the family of God. "It would need a seraph to say Mass. If we really knew what a Mass is, we should die of it." (Cure d'Ars) "When you are teaching in the church it is not the applause of the people but the tearful sighs which you draw from them which are your true praise." (St. Jerome Ep. 2)

One who assists devoutly at Mass automatically participates. But one can participate without devoutly assisting at Mass through humanistic speculations. "Knowledge is of no use unless it is joined to a firm piety." (Blessed John of Avila) Could it be that so many no longer go to Mass because in some churches reverence and respect no longer exist? If true Christianity exist among the parish

staffs, etc., such statements as "they are merely mortal" should be no excuse to protect. Too often we hear this excuse as a cover up for guilt. "It is natural for any man to err but only for a fool to persist in his error." (Cicero)

Why do changes take place? In these modern times the only reason seems to be for an individual to receive recognition for his own satisfaction. When Pope John XXIII called for change it was for the recognition of God and the redemption of all mankind, to know love and serve God and in so doing men could love and serve all mankind in unity.

Somewhere along the road has the physical Church gone the same way as our universities? Example: Replacement of Tradition, authority and obedience — Students making their rules rather than abiding by rules and tradition. The curricula in our universities were brought down to meet the students' needs, rather than students reaching for higher goals. The product becomes a mini sheepskin which never reached its goal.

One need not go far to be enveloped in the jungle which exists all around us. Crime, poverty, cheating, robbing, adultery, greed, sloth, pride, etc. There are many

professing Christians today yet there definitely seems to be something radically wrong with modern Christianity. Could it be man's will being done rather than Our Father's will? "With pride comes disgrace, but with the humble is wisdom (c.f. Proverbs 11:2) "Pride is the queen and mother of all vices" (St. Thomas Aquinas)

Quotes from Pope John XXIII "AT ALL TIMES" "When you attend services in church always wear your cassock." "Dress according to the regulation without any variation or display." "Always be assiduous at these functions, behaving VERY DEVOUTLY. By so doing you will prove in yourself the truth of that saying: 'Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.'" AMEN!

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Must Heed Fatima Message

Editor:

Even though not on our own American soil, the wars that we have experienced in the past several decades have meant untold grief and suffering. But how much greater the agony — physical, emotional, spiritual — were the world at large to be afflicted by a nuclear war!

In the face of such an appalling possibility it seems worth repeating, many times over, the Fatima message (there are fortunately millions, including the institutional Church, who do accept the authenticity of that message). At Fatima, Our Lady said that what could bring on yet another war would be the continuing state of our moral decadence. Thus the primary cause of war (versus a secondary cause such as a military buildup and all that that process implies) is seen to be in the moral quality of the lives we lead now, today, tomorrow, on the basis of Mary's words, logic is not being strained to see in every act where free moral choice is involved potential input for or against a nuclear holocaust. Via Fatima, Christians are asked to return to the full dignity and beauty of the behavioral code inherent in the Baptismal commitment; refusal to respond to that call may be catastrophic for all of us.

In looking back on the nadir periods of the ancient Israelite pilgrimage, it is compelling to note possible parallels with them in the journey of the "New Israelites," the Christians of today. The ancient Hebrews were overtaken by the Assyrians and then by the Babylonians; their dwindled community, a mere remnant, uncannily tenacious in its fidelity to the God of its Fathers, was, after a full share of suffering, fully turned to Yahweh. May there not be seen in the zealous young Marxists who invade our streets and every



"MR. LANE HERE WANTS TO INTERVIEW ALL YOU FOLKS WHO ATTEND CHURCH REGULARLY. HE'S WRITING A BOOK ON ENDANGERED SPECIES."

Editorial

Another 'Hunger'

And speaking of hunger, figurative or literal, work has been going on in our own diocese which represents the function of Christianity as a source of healing.

For some time, a group of diocesans including Father James Lawlor of St. Charles Borromeo parish have been working with divorced and separated people "to help them get the pieces of their lives back together," as Father Lawlor puts it.

At the Eucharistic Congress, Father James J. Young, director of Ministerial Studies at the Weston School of Theology in Cambridge, Mass., spoke on the subject at a Family Life Conference. He termed separated, divorced and remarried Catholics the "forgotten minority."

Obviously recognizing the delicacy of the subject, Father Young cited the Canon Law Society of America stand on the matter — "the traditional position that the mere fact of civil divorce does not alter one's status in the Church community. A separated or divorced Catholic remains a Catholic in good standing."

According to Religious News Service, the priest said the church lawyers went even further and concluded "that it is safe to say that most Catholics in the U.S. who are in a second marriage are not excommunicated from the Church."

Our own Father Lawlor, and there are others, such as the Cenacle House, involved in this needed apostolate in the diocese, tells of the psychological and sociological ramifications of a separation or divorce. "People so involved tend to think of themselves as failures. They think other people see them as failures, they even think the Church sees them as failures. So it is important at times like this for people and the Church to remind the separated and the divorced that they are not failures, that they are not 'bad.' It is just a people thing and we try to be supportive."

Many times, because of the growing pains the Church is experiencing these days, we tend to overlook much of the important work going on right under our combative noses. Father Lawlor says there are some 400 persons on his mailing lists and more than that have attended meetings throughout the diocese. Obviously because of past treatment there are many more who are fearful of coming forth. Afraid of the reception.

This is another of the "hungers" the Church in general and some good people of prophetic nature in our own backyard are hoping to erase. Hopefully, someday the diocese will help in a more official way, perhaps on a departmental basis.

In the meantime, however, the situation can be dealt with by everyone. Most of us know people in such circumstances. Let's suppress the urge to criticize. Instead nourish the best that's in us to reach out to these people who need reassurance, acceptance and friendship. It's really not very hard to do.

gathering place an incipient stage of God's "scourge" for our times? Or, far more bitter, are the proliferating "Christian Marxists," specious prophets, tactically treacherous, even now functioning as God's instruments of justice?

The signs are that a principal Communist maneuver is blackmail. Also, terms related to that of "entrapment" are more and more heard in the daily newscasts. And is an Elizabeth Ray in fact capable on her own of the shrewdness and strategy required for her coup? (Her book was off the press in record time.) Will either or both (Communists, Christian Marxists) be used as instruments of God so intensively that the effect will be not only that Christians will have bared before themselves and the world their scarlet sins (e.g., abortion), but also, that the Marxists, having held sustained, behind-the-scenes control over appointments — government, Church, school, etc. — will go on simply to topple our government, making unnecessary the physical violence of bombs?

Whatever the answer to these questions, it is not difficult to correlate the Fatima message with the evening news. According to Our Lady, prayer-filled, genuinely Christian lives could turn the tide. Our Lady of Fatima, pray for us!

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A Religious Declaration

Editor:

July 4, 1976 does not commemorate the American Revolution. The Constitution of the United States will not be 200 years old until 1988. July 4, 1976 does not even memorialize the "Shot heard 'round the world."

Exactly what is this big bicentennial all about? It commemorates a document. This document, according to the Honorable Clarence Manion, former dean of the Law School at Notre Dame University is: "the most important, God-inspired proclamation of religious and political principle ever officially declared to be the foundation for a new nation. It is unique in the history of man."

Under the title, "Declaration of Independence," this document, at the very onset traces our title to national independence to Almighty God Himself. The members of the Continental Congress signed the Declaration because they knew that God exists. "self-evident that all men are created Created—in other words, God exists no evidence is offered. His existence is "self-evident"

Few Americans know how many times, and in what ways Almighty

God is referred to in our "Declaration." Read the Declaration of Independence and underline such phrases as "Divine Providence." Please count them and contemplate their extraordinary application.

Whoever reads the "Declaration" from beginning to end will realize that it was and is, one of the most profound acts of religious faith in all history.

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Life's Quality Important Too

Editor:

Re: Will Catholics Back Jimmie Carter? (C-J, July 21)

With all due respect for pro-life, the writer would ask its supporters what they expect Jimmie Carter to do about it — more than he has — and still get elected? Pro-lifers must be commended for their action on the floor of the Democratic National Convention; but the cog reception given them by the assembled delegates gave it all the earmarks of a lost cause.

The whole problem with pro-life is that it was born a twin, and its counterpart died. In John 10:10, Our Lord was specific: "I came that they may have life, and have it more abundantly." Right to life in a mother's womb is not fulfilled if her child must later starve to death in her arms. Therefore in demanding right to life, we must include quality of life as well.

We have abortion because — in the midst of plenty — the poor cannot afford children, and the affluent have other things to do. Thus while abortion denies the right to life, inflation denies the right to sustain it. By inflating the money supply, the poor are robbed, and their hard-earned wages accumulated — unearned — in the hands of money creators and fellow-traveling speculators. If we would stop abortion, we must stop the plunder of our lower income brackets.

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