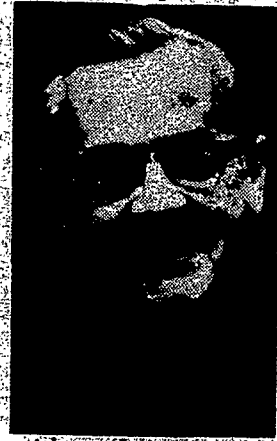


PASTORAL PERSPECTIVE

Bishop Joseph L. Hogan

Christ Is Risen! Be Alive!

A few years ago I had the privilege of establishing a new parish in the diocese. I asked Father Robert Kreckel, the newly appointed pastor, to allow his people to choose the title for their community of faith and worship and witness. How pleased I was to affirm their choice — "The Church of the Resurrection." I thought, as I wrote the document of official erection of the parish, that these people had experienced my hope for every parish in the Diocese of Rochester — that the Church everywhere would be an Alleluia people gathered to give witness to the Easter experience. For the burden of proof in the fact of Christ's Resurrection rests squarely with us. It is a mystery of faith which each liturgical celebration challenges us to proclaim. No other argument can convince the unbeliever.



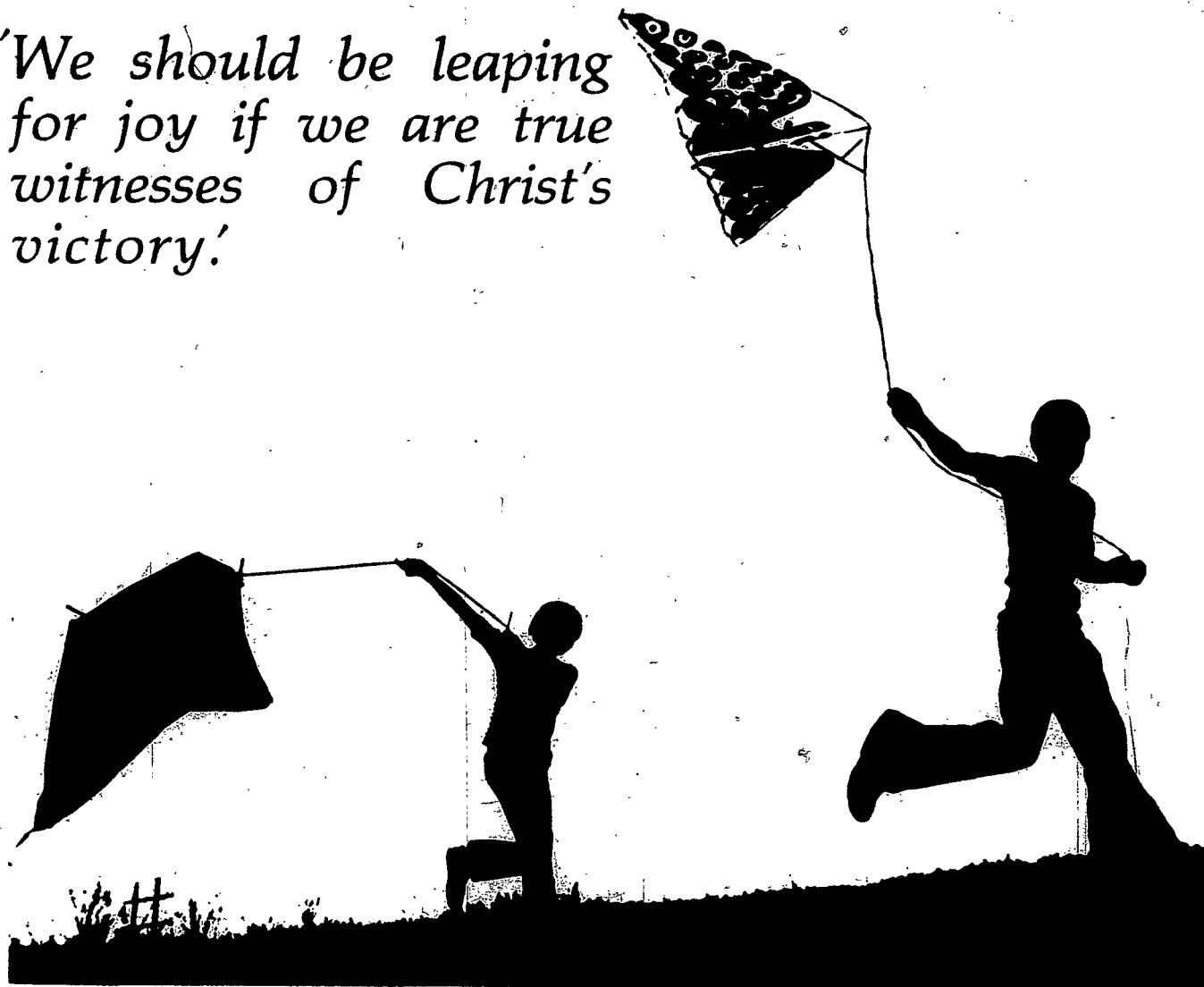
The Easter vigil service is a symbol of the unique power of our personal witness to the reality of Christ's victory. The ceremony begins in darkness. One Paschal Candle begins to penetrate the gloom. Then the light spreads from candle to candle until the whole Church is illuminated. Easter is the light which enlightens our lives filled with the darkness of the night of our own limitations and failures, of our sufferings and of our faltering faith, of our daily defeats and deaths. All are made bright by the luminous victory of Christ's Resurrection.

Easter must be a sacramental event — a luminous sign — if man is to believe in it and have the hope of resurrection from his seeming hopelessness. We must never make use of our faith in Christ's Resurrection nor of our hope in a final resurrection to avoid LIVING THE RESURRECTION NOW. The power of the Risen Christ should be penetrating our everyday lives.

We should be leaping for joy if we are true witnesses of Christ's victory. When we merely limp along, as we so often do, leading frightened, anxious, constricted lives, we discredit the Easter reality. **GOOD NEWS IS NEVER ANNOUNCED BY 'UPTIGHT' PEOPLE.**

Our Mission as witness should be one of urgency to tell everyone we see that the time of peace has been established, that reconciliation is within our grasp,

'We should be leaping for joy if we are true witnesses of Christ's victory.'



that the world has nothing to lose and everything to gain by accepting the new creation established by the Risen Lord. It is ours to tell our brothers and sisters who are still casting their lot with the forces of greed, hatred, war, bigotry, fierce competition and exploitation, that their allies are already defeated; that judgment has been rendered; that Christ is Lord; that He has won the victory over the powers of darkness.

If the question be asked: "What single truth must the Christian seek to make real, deep and effective in his life", the answer must be the Resurrection of Christ. It is this truth which throws light on all the rest: the ultimate identity of Jesus, the problem of evil, the forbidding mystery of death, the coming of the Spirit, faith, the Church, eternity. Nothing makes

sense except through the shining radiance of Easter Sunday morning.

During this Easter Season I shall pray for your renewal to a deepening sense of your vocation as Easter people. The poet expresses my hope and blessing:

Lord, it's morning!
Your sun — on Easter feet —
has crept into my room
and called me
from my slumber tomb.
"Arise, be risen
And spread the news
It's morning!"

Defend Real Moral Values

Pope Paul delivered the following address to participants in an assembly for social communications on March 8.

We are happy to receive you during the Plenary Assembly of the Pontifical Commission for Social Communications, in which you have been called to participate, according to the provisions of the Second Vatican Council, in order to collaborate with us in pastoral care of such a delicate and important sector of the modern apostolate.



You have met to survey the pastoral situation that has arisen all over the world as a result of the imposing and, we would say, vortical development of the media of social communication. And we willingly take the opportunity to assure each of you, and, through you, the Episcopal Conferences, the Religious Congregations, the Catholic Laity and all those directly responsible for these instruments, of our constant solicitude in order that these marvels of modern communications be always used, especially by Christians, with a vigilant conscience, that is enlightened in respect of the indispensable moral norms and in the service of the Christian proclamation.

Not infrequently, in fact, voices reach us that are concerned about humiliating shows, indecorous publications, manipulations of truth, obstacles

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placed by means of these media to the legitimate expression of religious life.

Fortunately there also reaches us comforting news about the commitment of so many persons of good will, who are working to give a Christian character to the press, to make religious broadcasts correspond to the excellence of the evangelical message they transmit, to direct the media of communication to the purposes of education, development, culture, healthy entertainment and, above all, in the service of true information.

These are problems to which we do not need to call your attention, because they are already the object of

your concerns and constitute the purpose of your present meeting. In this field — as you well know — every continent presents its own problems derived from the various socio-cultural conditions existing there. Everywhere, however, there is urgent need of a more intense, generous and incisive Christian commitment as well as of a clearer view of the responsibilities of each one with regard to the good to be promoted or, unfortunately, also to the evil that might come from a harmful tolerance, a dimming of ethico-religious principles, and insufficient application in proclaiming "over the rooftops" the message of salvation achieved by Christ.

In this connection we wish to address to you a special and sorrowful appeal, inspired by the particular subjects developed by the recent assembly of the Synod of Bishops on catechesis, especially catechesis of children and of the young.

We understand catechesis as a full initiation to Christian life, and which today can avail itself of the effective aid of the media of social communication; it could no longer reach everyone, or be completely convincing without these instruments now tested by modern pedagogy.

In the apostolate of social communications, absolute precedence must be given to information and to religious formation, thinking not only of human society, which today — far more than in the past — needs spiritual sap, but also and above all of the requirements of the new generations which in the lack of models and examples run the risk of hardening at an early age owing to the crisis of values in which to believe. Let the fulfillment of this primary requirement be the qualified contributions which you make to the evangelizing action of the Church.