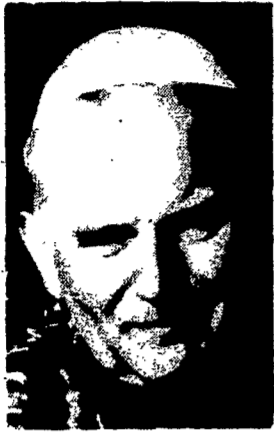


The Church Is Missionary from Birth

The following is excerpted from the text of a recent general audience of Pope John Paul II on mission work.

Beloved Brothers in the Episcopate, beloved Daughters and Sons, it is with particularly warm feelings that I receive you today, thanking you also for having expressed the desire for this meeting.



I extend my most cordial greeting to everyone, seeing in you, and in the many members of the Pontifical Mission Aid Societies which you represent here, particularly active members of the Italian Church who have a mature sense of responsibility as regards the missionary requirements of the People of God.

On the 60th anniversary of the Encyclical Maximum Illud, issued by my predecessor Benedict XV of revered memory, your meeting opportunely chose as its subject of study, the "Mission in the heart of the Church."

The Church, in fact, was born missionary. On the very day of the first Pentecost, according to the narrative of the Acts of the Apostles, peoples of various origin were the spectators and at the same time the addressees and first beneficiaries of what the Spirit of God operated powerfully in the disciples gathered in the Upper Room in Jerusalem. Irresistibly invested by that Spirit, they could not but proclaim in different languages "the mighty works of God." The apostle of the Gentiles echoes these first heralds when he affirms: "If I preach the gospel . . . necessity is laid upon me. Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel!" All this applies in the first place and personally to individual missionaries, on the basis of their specific vocation. But

"The Second Vatican Council, therefore, expressed itself rightly: 'Missionary activity flows immediately from the very nature of the Church — Missionary activity extends the saving faith of the Church'

it also applies, by extension, to the whole Christian community, whose members, already because of the baptismal call alone, must "shine as lights in the world, holding fast the word of life," that is, must spread and communicate that treasure of faith and communion that every Christian possesses.

The Second Vatican Council, therefore, expressed itself rightly: "Missionary activity flows immediately from the very nature of the Church. Missionary activity extends the saving faith of the Church, it expands and perfects in its catholic unity, it is sustained by its apostolicity, it activates the collegiate sense of its

hierarchy, and bears witness to its sanctity which it both extends and promotes."

And it is in this sense of common participation that the aforementioned encyclical of Pope Benedict XV must be read when, in advance of his times, he called upon the bishops to give some diocesan priestly vocations for the vaster and more urgent needs of the universal Church.

The mission, therefore, is not a marginal commitment, far less a superfluous one. To say that it is in the heart of the Church means stressing that it is a vital question for the Christian community. Not for nothing does St. Paul compare the proclamation of the Gospel to the action of planting, laying the foundations, and begetting. They are all images which describe so many activities of primary importance, and which all converge in highlighting the fundamental value of the evangelizing mission. And they are not activities which are carried out once and for all, since it is necessary to cultivate the seed sown, to build the construction, to bring up what was born "until Christ be formed in you." That calls for constant and careful attention; in fact, according to the parable of Jesus, it is not impossible, unfortunately, to fall asleep and thus encourage the intervention of the enemy who sows weeds.

You, members of the Pontifical Mission Aid Societies, are certainly among those who watch out diligently and solicitously so that missionary action may really be fruitful and continuous, and that living consciousness of her responsibility in this connection may never fail in the Church. To you, therefore, go my most cordial applause and encouragement, with the sincere wish, entrusted to the hands of the Lord for an ever greater impact of your useful action. As a token of these wishes, I am happy to impart the most ample Apostolic Blessing to you all, extending it particularly to the well-deserving missionaries all over the world.



Fellowship Retreat

Some 34 people, including patients, staff and volunteers of the Monroe County Community Hospital, spent a day at the Notre Dame Retreat House in Canandaigua last week for the first ecumenical retreat shared by the hospital. Upon returning, Edie Macartney described the experience to volunteer Helen Murphy, center, and Joyce Zorn, left, as "a chance to develop real fellowship".



Planning the Bishop Kearney High School Parents' Homecoming are (left to right) Mr. and Mrs. Arnold Eckert, Brother John O'Brien, moderator of the parents' club; Brother Brian Walsh, principal; and Mr. and Mrs. Fred Lapple, chairmen of the event.

BK Slates Homecoming

The parents of Bishop Kearney High School are starting off the school year with a homecoming, Saturday, Oct. 6. The gala event will include

a football game, starting at 2 p.m., a social hour following the game, and a dance at 8:30 p.m. to the music of the Len Hawley Orchestra.

Tickets for the event cost \$25 per couple and may be obtained at the school or from Mr. and Mrs. Fred Lapple, 467-0365.

Word for Sunday

By Father Albert Shamon

If Good Men Do Nothing, Evil Results

Sunday's Readings: (R3) Mk. 9:38-43, 45, 47-48. (R1) Num. 11:25-29. (R2) Jas 5:1-6.

The Book of Numbers has been called the Book of Murmurings, because in their 40-year sojourn in the desert all Israel did was complain. Their constant carping so exasperated Moses that he wanted out. God told Moses to share his leadership with seventy elders. Upon them God bestowed His Spirit.

Two men, Eldad and Medad, also received the Spirit even though they were not among the seventy. Moses was asked to stop these two from prophesying in the camp. "Why?" Moses retorted. "Would that all the people were prophets!" Moses was saying, in effect, "Do you think that I am the only one through whom the Lord can work?"

A very similar incident occurred in the gospel. John wanted Jesus to stop a man casting out demons in His

name. Like Moses, Jesus answered, "Do not try to stop him . . . Anyone who is not against us is with us."

Pius XII once called for all men of good will to unite against evil. The followers of Christ should unite with all people who are fighting against moral evil. One Tuesday night (Sept. 11) Dick Shipley, the Rev. Gail Von Wald (a Protestant minister) and I went to the Board of Directors meeting for the United Way of Seneca County. I did the talking. I asked UW not to fund Planned Parenthood (PP), because PP has been the most active organization in America promoting abortion, a sex-free society, and legislation "freeing" children from parents and wives from husbands.

When I had finished, the Rev. Von Wald asked if he might say a word. "I am a Protestant minister," he told the assembly. "Abortion is not just a Catholic issue. My entire congregation and I feel as Rev. Shamon on this issue. We too shall not support UW if it funds PP."

Afterwards, I went to Rev. Von Wald and commended him for his backing, even though we were of different persuasions.

Despite our appeal, the UW opted to fund PP. As a result, we are asking all

Christians in our area not to support UW. Instead, we are asking them to make their contributions directly to worthy agencies of their choice, like the Red Cross, Heart Fund, Cerebral Palsy, the Scouts, Library Association, Ambulance Service, etc.

A Christian congressman recently stated, "I am against abortion, but I won't impose my morality on others." What a cop out! Every person in jail might say to society, "Why are you imposing your morality on me? I see nothing wrong in rape, theft, murder or arson."

Ideological pluralism (each having his own opinion) is one thing; ethical pluralism (acting on those opinions) is another. When Hitler began to act on his opinions, there was war.

Far from a minority imposing its will on the majority by trying to pass a Human Life Amendment, this reverse is true. Forty-six states had legislation against abortion. That was the will of the majority. Yet less than a minority — five Supreme Court judges — by raw judicial power on Jan. 22, 1973, imposed their amorality on the entire nation. Would that the Lord might bestow His spirit on all Christians to rise up in righteous anger and remove this blot on the escutcheon of the nation! Evil has succeeded because good men do nothing — nothing together!