

Respect for Law Is Basis for Peace

Following is the text of Pope John Paul II's address to the participants in the ninth World Conference on Law.

I thank you for your visit at the end of the important conference which brings to completion your discussions at Madrid. It offers me this happy occasion of meeting you and of expressing to you my profound esteem and encouragement for the work of peace to



which you dedicate your exceptional talents by sharing in common your experiences. The World Peace through Law Center and the associations affiliated to it rightly pride themselves in being "the first association on a world scale to coordinate the efforts of thousands of judges, lawyers, professors and students of law from all the nations of the world in a positive drive to involve themselves in the common problems of humanity, in trials, procedures, principles and institutions universally accepted by the rule of law." To this task, the Holy See wishes to make its own impartial contribution within the limits and in the spirit of the mission entrusted to the Church by Christ our Lord.

The rapid development, both in extension and in depth, of relations between men and nations calls for an unprecedented effort to be mastered by man, lest he be carried away on the tumultuous wave of self-interest and instinct, so that an ordered structure be found which expresses and promotes the unity of the human family with respect for the paramount dignity of every individual, of every human group. This endeavour finds in the rule of law, the *imperium legis*, an indispensable support that guarantees its continuity, its rectitude and its creative force. The rule of law in no way implies a rigid immobility. Being founded on a rich tradition and on lasting human values, which themselves draw force from it and have thereby also been refined, it becomes more capable than ever of facing with resolve the constantly changing situations and of impressing upon them the hallmark of man. Its traditional and essential application to all circumstances finds precisely in the present unification of humanity a vast new terrain for devising fresh ways and at the same time rejuvenating the varying accepted expressions that it has forged according to the traditions of different nations.

Rule of law does not ignore the tensions that arise

from life, nor the aspects of truth contained in the protests and contestations of those people which a given legal system refuses to recognize as legitimate aspirations. But it has sufficient confidence in itself, in the law of the heart and of reason from which it emanates, to look for solutions, not in the further exasperation of those tensions, but rather in an appeal to the higher faculties of man, capable of devising and creating organized systems more appropriate to the present development of humanity. It is this conviction that has led you to examine at Madrid the whole range of challenges of our times: Human Rights and the Helsinki Agreements, Maritime Law, the codification of rules governing multinational corporations, the rights of the family, data processing technology and the right to privacy, international control of alternative sources of energy, the progressive reduction of the sale of conventional weapons, international arbitration etc.

The Holy See actively participates in the international conferences that deal with these diverse problems and its original contribution, of an ethical nature, finds the ground all that more fertile where the patterns of legal systems have been better worked out, thanks especially to your efforts. It does so from a standpoint of change and evolution which must characterize law, because it is also characteristic of the development of mankind and of nations. As I have said already, the Declaration of Human Rights and the setting up of the United Nations Organization certainly had as its aim not only to depart from the horrible experiences of the last world war, but also to create the basis for a continual revision of programmes, systems, and regimes, precisely from this unique and fundamental point of view, namely the welfare of man — or, let us say, of the individual in the community — which must, as a fundamental factor in the common good, constitute the essential criterion for all programmes, systems and regimes.

Yes, man is at the basis of everything. He must be respected in this personal and unsurpassed dignity. His social dimension must be respected: the human and the Christian personality cannot realize itself, in effect, except in the degree that exclusive self-centeredness is rejected, because its call is both personal and social. Canon Law admits and favours this characteristic improvement because it leads to overcoming egoism: abnegation of self, as exclusive individuality, leads to the affirmation of self in an authentic social perspective, in the recognition and respect of the other as a "person" having universal, inviolable, inalienable rights, and a transcendental dignity.

Human values, moral values are at the basis of everything. Law cannot set them aside, neither in its objectives nor in its means. Its rightful ordered autonomy is intrinsic to the moral law, in which, besides, it encounters not really a brake, or a restriction, but the fertile soil of its dynamic and planned development. You know — and I know too — that it is difficult to define man in what constitutes his permanent being and his universality in time and space; beyond customs and different cultures. It is likewise difficult to trace the institutional elements that favor human growth in solidarity, while taking into account the variety of man's convictions and counting on his creative conscience, thus assuring the indispensable freedom wherein this conscience can be formed, reformed, and in which it can act. But the whole history of law shows that law loses its stability and its moral authority, that it is then tempted to make an increasing appeal to constraint and physical force, or on the other to renounce its responsibility — in favour of the unborn or the stability of marriage, or, on the international plane, in favour of entire populations abandoned to oppression — whenever it ceases to search for the truth concerning man and allows itself to be bought off with some harmful form of relativism. A difficult search, a groping search, but a necessary search of which the jurist least of all may divest himself.

For the Church, the solid foundation of this pursuit is Jesus Christ. But, whatever the believer discovers in the light of faith, he believes and affirms about all men, believer or nonbeliever, because Christ is united in some way to all men, to each man. Moreover, it is our certainty: the life of Christ speaks, also, to many who are not capable of repeating with Peter: "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God". He, the Son of the living God, speaks to people also as Man: it is his life, that speaks, his humanity, his fidelity to the truth, his all-embracing love.

Ladies and Gentlemen, with deep respect for your convictions, allow me to invite you to listen to the voice of Christ, to the message of the Gospel concerning man. It cannot but strengthen you in your desire to build world peace through law.

In repeating my profound esteem for the work you have already accomplished and in encouraging you to continue with it without pausing, I invoke upon you and your families, and above all on your work, the blessing of Almighty God.

Insights in Liturgy

By Father Robert J. Kennedy

Celebrating The Saints

Have you wondered why the feast of St. Thomas Aquinas is no longer on March 7, but on Jan. 28? Or perhaps you've wondered why we no longer have a feast of the Seven Sorrows of Mary one Friday after the first Sunday of the Passion. Or, if these aren't burning issues with you, maybe you've just wondered why Mary and the saints have seemingly lost some of their honor and place in the liturgy and devotion of the Church.

It has been 10 years since the reform of the liturgical year and calendar was promulgated by Paul VI. The pastoral purpose of the restoration of the liturgical years and the revision of its norms was "to allow the faithful, through their faith, hope and love to share more deeply in the whole mystery of Christ as it unfolds throughout the year."

To fulfill this purpose the Church presented a simpler liturgical calendar that focused on the principal mysteries of Christ's life: the seasons of Lent-Easter (redemption) and Advent-

Christmas (incarnation and second coming). It also developed a new plan for Ordinary Time during which the entire panorama of Christ's ministry is presented for our reflection and edification.

The celebration of Mary and the saints is not — and should never be considered — outside of this purpose. While not as important as the actual celebrations of the mysteries of the Lord, these feasts are nonetheless integral to that whole mystery. "The feasts of the saints proclaim the wonderful work of Christ in his servants, and offer fitting example for the faithful to follow. The Catholic Church has always believed that the feasts of the saints proclaim and renew the paschal mystery of Christ."

And so, in order to present this proclamation and renewal in a more effective way, the reform of 10 years ago sought a simpler, more universal and more traditional cycle of the saints.

To achieve a simpler sanctoral cycle, all duplication was removed. (And so there was to be only one feast of the Seven Sorrows of Mary — on Sept.

15 — and not two.) Also, the number of saints on the calendar was greatly reduced, removing those especially about whom there was more legend than fact (Christopher or Philomena) and for whom there would be only limited local devotion (most Roman martyrs).

The reform sought to offer the faithful universal examples of holiness and so divided the celebrations of the saints into three categories: feasts, obligatory memorials and optional memorials. (Celebrations of the principal mysteries of the Lord, four major feasts of Mary, Joseph, John the Baptist, Peter and Paul, and All Saints fall into the highest category as "Solemnities.")

The feasts of the saints include celebrations of the Apostles, evangelists, Paul, Lawrence the Deacon, Stephen the first martyr and the Holy Innocents. These are central and the closest witnesses to the paschal mystery of Christ, and they are truly festive days. Memorials are simple remembrances of an outstanding servant of God. The 63 obligatory memorials celebrate saints of universal significance and represent the international and truly catholic nature of our faith (Gregory the Great, Teresa of Avila, Francis of Assisi, Mary Magdalen, Paul Miki

and his companions). The 95 optional memorials, while no less international in character, do not have the same universal appeal and so can be celebrated or not according to the devotion of each place (Patrick, Frances of Rome, Thomas Becket, Elizabeth of Hungary).

Some celebrations that are optional memorials for the universal Church become obligatory memorials or feasts for the national and local Churches. In the United States, Our Lady of Guadalupe, the North American Martyrs, Elizabeth Ann Seton, Frances Xavier Cabrini and John Neumann are obligatory; in the Diocese of Rochester, John Fisher, our patron, is a feast.

Finally, the calendar reform sought to restore the traditional practice of celebrating the saints on their "birthdays" (dies natalis), that is, their death-days, the day they were born into eternal life. In using this title and plan from the early Church's cult of the martyrs, the present reform began moving the saints around. For example, this writer's patron, Robert Bellarmine, moved from May 13 to Sept. 17, the day he died. However, the principle of dies natalis could only work outside the major seasons, which took precedence. So even though Thomas Aquinas died March 7, his

feast was moved because this almost always occurs in Lent and Thomas is too important to us to be reduced in rank. So Jan. 28 was chosen since this is the day his body was moved to Toulouse.

Regardless of the nitty-gritty of dates and classification, it is necessary

for the Church to celebrate the saints. In every age the Church is renewed because God raises up men and women outstanding in holiness, living witnesses of His unchanging love. "They inspire us by their holy lives, and help us by their constant prayers to be living signs of your saving power." (Preface 70)

Broken Window A Gift from Here

New York — A window donated to St. Patrick's Cathedral here by the Diocese of Rochester was found broken last week. The window was broken, apparently, by intruders. It was the first break-in in memory for the 100-year-old structure.

Nothing was reported missing from the cathedral and a spokesman said that nothing would be made of the incident.

The portion of the window which was broken is in a border area and is considered repairable.

A sidelight to the story of the window is that it is

located above a side altar dedicated to the Holy Face of Jesus as it appears on the legendary veil of Veronica.

The late Bishop James E. Kearney recounted once to Father Joseph Reinhart, chief of the diocesan Missions Office, that Mrs. Kearney had a great devotion to the Holy Face and would often take her sons, James, Leo and William, to pray at the altar.

In the window, St. Bernard of Clairvaux is pictured championing the Crusades. "Little did the young James know," Father Reinhart said last week, "that one day he would tend the flock which he gave the cathedral this window."

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