

Literacy Is Task of Church

"... Where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I in the midst of them."

These words of this Sunday's Gospel are particularly important for us who are gathered here in the name of Jesus Christ. And we are not only two or three, but a very numerous community, coming from several countries in the world. And we are gathered in prayer, for the recitation of the Angelus, during which we always meditate on the first and fundamental mystery of Jesus Christ: on the mystery of the Incarnation of the Son of God through the work of the Holy Spirit in the womb of the Virgin of Nazareth, whose name was Mary. Through this prayer Christ is present among us in a very special way.



Yet I wish this assembly of ours to be even larger. I wish us to unite in prayer with those brothers and sisters of ours who are participating today, under the guidance of the Cardinal Secretary of State, in the celebration in honour of St. Anthony of Padua on the occasion of the 750th anniversary of his death. My convalescent period after the long and serious illness does not allow me personally to take part in this joyful celebration as was originally planned in my schedule. So much more intensely, therefore, do I feel the need to unite in spirit with all the devotees of the Saint, who for so many centuries has continued to call to his tomb crowds of faithful.

The phenomenon that amazed his contemporaries is repeated: people flock from everywhere and crowd around St. Anthony, drawn by an irresistible at-

traction. And what is the reason? The study of his life convinces us that the reason must be sought in the absolute fidelity with which he proclaimed the Gospel and in the courageous consistency with which he strove to embody its teachings.

The day after tomorrow, Sept. 8, the whole world will observe the "Fifteenth International Literacy Day," intended to make all men aware of the problem of illiteracy and the urgency of its solution.

Everyone knows that the Church in the course of the centuries has made her great contribution in this area. And even today, above all in mission countries, while she proclaims the Gospel, she likewise fulfills this valuable activity of human advancement by cultural education, which always begins with knowing how to read and write. The Church therefore considers herself a protagonist in this most noble commitment and heartily encourages Christians and all men of good will to direct their efforts toward this objective of human and Christian solidarity.

"God has reconciled the world in Christ, and this word of reconciliation he has entrusted to us."

Through this present meditation and our common prayer, we wish to show our fidelity to this word of reconciliation in the face of all the problems with which men and peoples of the whole earth are confronted.

"... the complete fulfilment of the law is love."

Despite all that divides the world and men, despite all that seems to threaten the world and men more and more — may love always be stronger!

Fr. Louis J. Hohman



The Open Window

Christianity And Arms

I want to live as a good Christian but how can I be fully Christian if I go along with even by silent consent the arms race and the production and storage of nuclear weapons? In other words, how can I go along with the nuclear arms race? I heard recently that the Bishop of Seattle spoke of refusing to pay taxes which would support this arms race. Don't you think that we have to at least have enough arms to deter the U.S.S.R. from attacking us or attacking Europe? Just where does a Christian draw the line?

These were questions addressed to me by someone who was asking for spiritual guidance. I realize how difficult answering those questions really is. I think the Bishop of Seattle also realized how difficult it would be to urge people not to pay taxes. There are some considerations, however, which I would like to share with you.

It seems to me that in some ways this is under, the same heading as turning the other cheek. We hear our Lord say it and we accept it in a way because He said it, but we don't really buy into the idea in the sense of living it. Some moral theologian explained this situation by saying that Christian morality means the acceptance of all that is lovingly possible in the pursuit of the impossible dream. I suppose that means that we are reaching out ever more fully to the perfection of love which is embodied only in God. Which would mean that while we would be unable to literally turn the other cheek, we would be con-

sciously leaning in the direction of forgiveness and retreat from revenge. By doing that we might ultimately be able to turn the other cheek.

In the question of the nuclear arms race and the need to defend ourselves, one could say that the absolute ideal would be to refuse to make any kind of armament so that the two-thirds of the world which is hungry could be fed. It would be a kind of turning the other cheek and leaving ourselves totally vulnerable to any enemy which would wish to attack us.

We should be urging our government to come to an agreement as quickly and as fully as possible. We should strive for arms limitation and then for the elimination of nuclear weapons entirely. We might not reach that goal in our time, but eventually maybe the human race would, I think that there is a singular lack of trust in God and his providence which is just as much my problem as anyone else's. Even from a pragmatic standpoint the idea of the Russian people garrisoning the world is somewhat ridiculous. No nation has ever accepted communism willingly while the government and the Church were not oppressive. Poland is a marvelous example of this. Maybe we put too much store in the idea of Russia taking over the world. Maybe we take too little stock of God's love and providence. In the meantime I think we are called as Christians to embrace whatever is lovingly possible in the reduction of armament and seek the impossible dream of turning every sword into plowshares.

Charities Sets Evening of Rest

Diocesan Catholic Charities will again hold an "Evening of Rest, Reflection and Refreshment," 7:30-9:30 p.m., Wednesday, Oct. 7, at Monroe Community Hospital Auditorium, 534 E. Henrietta Road.

The program, open to the public, is designed for persons working in direct human service fields such as teachers, volunteers, nurses, therapists, social workers, police and the like.

Featured on the program will be Sister Marguerite

Dynski, SSJ, a general surgeon at Rochester General Hospital; Mary Dombeck, a faculty member and clinician at the University of Rochester School of Nursing; and James Dombeck, an attorney and director of Interfaith Chapel at the University of Rochester.

According to Charities, William Privett, designer of the program, the trio will "share their insights on God, social ministry, faith and personal struggle."

Mercy Week

This is Mercy Week in Rochester as proclaimed by Mayor Thomas Ryan.

The City of Rochester honored the congregation of the Sisters of Mercy on the occasion of Mercy Day, the in-house celebration for congregational jubilarians and the occasion of each Sister's commission in ministry.

In addition, the proclamation also cites the Jubilee year of the order, during which the Sisters are celebrating the 150th anniversary of their founding, and the 125th year of their presence in the diocese.

The proclamation was read at last Saturday's Mercy Day by Councilwoman Joan M. Hensler and was presented to Sister Jean Marie Kearse, major superior.

BLUE ARMY

Father Dennis Bonsignore will celebrate the opening 9 p.m. Mass for the monthly Vigil of the Blue Army of Our Lady of Fatima, Friday, Oct. 2, at Holy Rosary Church.

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