

## The Final Session . . .

### The End or a Beginning?

We are still of the persuasion that, by itself, the Decree on Liturgy has made the Second Vatican Council a success. Were the Fathers to accomplish nothing else, this one decision to rejuvenate the Church's worship would prove their repeated trips to Rome worthwhile.

Yet, when John XXIII was inspired to attempt the aggiornamento, his vision was not limited to one aspect of the Church's life. He did not intend to examine this or that discipline, or one or another regulation. He wanted fresh air to invade every corner of the Church, so that the Church might emerge with renewed vitality . . . so that she might give forceful and progressive leadership not only to the faithful, but to all mankind.

So it has been. The missions, the morality of atomic warfare, religious freedom — these and dozens of other considerations have been freely debated by the bishops. Thus the interest of the world which was perhaps at first based upon the novelty of the Council, has been kept alive by the scope of the Council's deliberations and the expectation that the bishops will deliver themselves of decisions and directives which will be beneficial to all men.

Now, seemingly all too quickly, the bishops are entrained and emplaned to Rome for the fourth and final session. Will all the expectations be met? Surely not, for even under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, the bishops remain human beings working in a limited space of time.

The success of this final session (and accordingly of the Council itself) will depend not on how many problems are solved, but upon how many are left open for further consideration and development. Will the Church, with so many new energies and new talents stirring within herself, establish an atmosphere in which these energies and talents can mature, or will she be satisfied to have come so far so fast and venture nothing more?

Some issues, such as the question of religious liberty, must be acted upon with courageous decisiveness, but others should be handed on to post-conciliar commissions. Unfortunately, the false prophets of gloom and despair whom Pope John so strenuously opposed are again raising their voices. There are those who maintain that at the conclusion of the Council the Church will revert to a more rigoristic and unyielding discipline and that decades will pass before she will make another bid to reach and uplift the modern world. We, on the contrary, are optimistic. We prefer to wait and see . . . and pray.

## The Council at a Glance

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back for amendment and a schema on ecumenism was approved and sent back for amendments.

### THIRD SESSION—Sept. 15 to Nov. 21, 1964

Fifteen schemas formed the agenda of this session. Three were promulgated; on the nature of the Church, on Eastern Catholic Churches and on ecumenism.

Of the remaining 13: five were brought to an advanced state of completion; these included schemas on bishops, non-Christian religions, seminaries, life of religious, and Christian education. One schema on matrimony, after brief debate, was removed from the council agenda and placed in the hands of the Pope.

The schema on missions was sent back for redrafting as was the schema on priestly life and on the Church in the modern world. These three documents, plus the schema on religious freedom, which had been revised but not voted on, will form the core of council debate at the fourth session.

Two other schemas, on divine Revelation and on the lay apostolate, were debated and sent back for amendment.

### FOURTH SESSION—Sept. 14, 1965 . . .

Eleven schemas form the agenda of this final session; four must complete the conciliar cycle of debate, vote revision, vote, etc. They are: religious liberty, the Church in the modern world, missions, and priestly life and ministry.

Two documents are in a "semi-final stage," that is, debated and revised but not yet voted on. They are schemas on divine revelation and lay apostolate.

Five other schemas are in a "final" stage, that is, they have been debated and voted on part by part, but must await a final voting on the revisions made in light of the earlier voting. They are: non-Christian religions, bishops, life of Religious, seminaries and Christian education.

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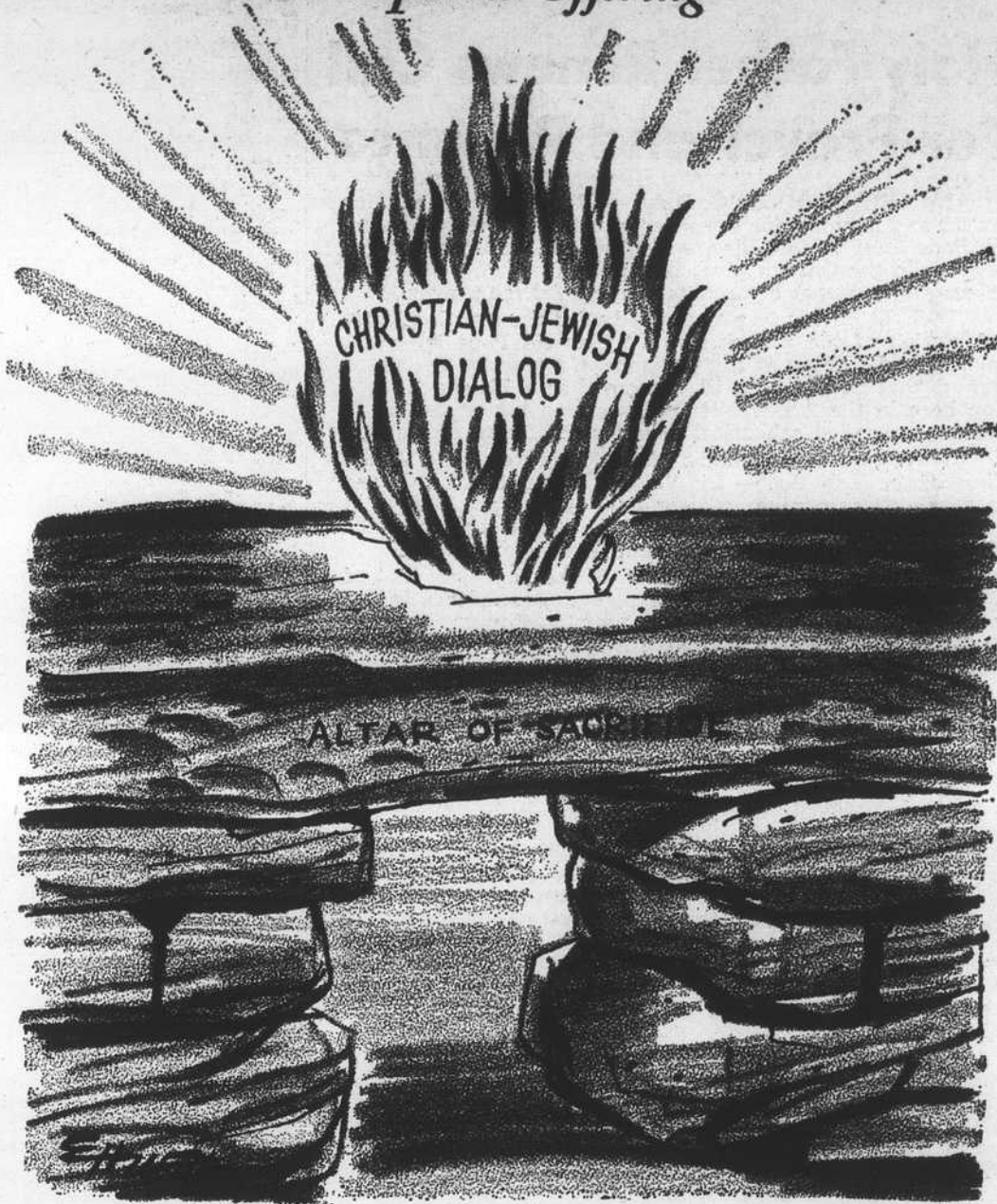
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## Acceptable Offering



## The Week in Liturgy

BY REV. PASCHAL BOLAND, O.S.B.

### Financing the Kingdom of Heaven

September 12

**FOURTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.** If a man has a choice to be a slave to his job and become wealthy, or to use his job only as a means to make a livelihood, he may frequently enough choose the latter. For a man may choose to be content with less luxury and fewer conveniences and have more time and energy to enjoy what he does possess.

Not every person has the opportunity to become a millionaire, although all can become slaves to money and what it can purchase. However, all have the opportunity to become spiritual millionaires by leading dedicated lives as Christians faithful to the precepts and counsels of Christ. Christ persuaded us that we should not be too concerned about money and what it could do for us; that we should not be unduly distressed about a lack of material possessions for the Heavenly Father will provide the necessities of life. He gave all this principle, "Seek first the kingdom of God and His service and all these things will be given you as well" (Gospel). One cannot finance Heaven except with spiritual treasures.

Monday, Sept. 13

**MASS AS OF SUNDAY.** Money is a status symbol. Those who are born with it usually seek to maintain it; many of those born without it may dedicate their life to the acquisition of it to achieve this status. Men in politics often seek a power status. They may not desire to live in a governor's mansion or have a seat in the U.S. Senate, but seek rather the power to make governors, senators, or even presidents. These, too, make god of finances. Money and power are strange gods. The authentic Christian makes them subservient to the one true God.

Tuesday, Sept. 14

**THE TRIUMPH OF THE CROSS.** To die on a cross as a common criminal in the time of Christ is equivalent to death today in the electric chair of a prison. Christ's resurrection from the dead glorified the instrument of His death and changes its disgrace into triumph.

No matter how poor, humiliated, disgraced in life or at the time of death a Christian may be in the eyes of the world, on the Day of Judgment the triumph of such "failures" will be evident to all. As St. Paul wrote of Christ, "He humbled Himself and became obedient to

death, even to death on a cross. Therefore, God has exalted Him" (1st Lesson). In a like manner God will exalt the faithful Christian.

Wednesday, Sept. 15

**SEVEN SORROWS OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY.** Yesterday the Liturgy honored the Holy Cross, the instrument of Christ's death. Today we call to mind the grief and sorrow of the Mother of Christ. Her first intimation of Christ's suffering and her first great sorrow was Simeon's prophecy. Her seventh and last was the entombment of the dead body of Christ. On the cross Christ gave her to be our mother also in the person of St. John, "Behold your mother" (Gospel). At the time of her greatest sorrow she became our spiritual mother.

Thursday, Sept. 16

**SS. CORNELIUS AND CYPRIAN.** These two saints were friends although a continent apart. One was the pope in Rome, the other the African bishop of Carthage. Both are named in the Canon of the Mass. Pope Cornelius was martyred in 253 and St. Cyprian was beheaded in 258, "The souls of the righteous are in the hands of God" (1st Lesson).

Friday, Sept. 17

**STIGMATA OF ST. FRANCIS ASSISI.** "If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me" (Gospel). This St. Francis did and in 1224, two years before his death at the age of 44, Christ put the seal of approval on St. Francis by impressing His own wounds in the hands, feet, and side in a mystical experience. These were visible to others and remained in his body in death.

Saturday, Sept. 18

**ST. JOSEPH CUPERTINO.** A king prepared a wedding banquet for his son and the invited guests did not come. He had his servants to go into the streets and bring in any one they found, the poor, the crippled, the outcasts of society (Gospel). Joseph of Cupertino was the most unlikely person to become a saint, as were those guests the most unlikely at the wedding of a prince. Since he, by the grace of God, became a saint, there is hope for us to be faithful Christians.