

Editorials

Easter in Year of Faith

Of the holidays of the Christian year, Easter is the 'Crown' of them all in Faith and interior peace. It is a festival whose spirit is made more vivid by contrast with the somberness of its origin.

The never-ending contrasts of Christianity continues as we prepare to celebrate the day of "Jesus Christ lives" in the year of Faith. The world thought that the cross would bring death to Christ, instead it brought eternal life and existence in the hopes and plans of men.

Writers in the popular journals such as LOOK, POST, LIFE and other popular magazines of tremendous reader interest, as well as some of our own religious journalist today, see the Church of the cross. The cross beam of those who fear that she moves too fast is contrasted by the vertical beam of those who anguish that she moves too slowly. The cross of Calvary was a stumbling block to some, foolishness to others. The world sees the Church on a cross today and again prepares to repeat to sensationally interpret its disciplines in the light of current expediency or to denature it with humanitarian services.

"Jesus Christ lives." It is this amazing statement that is the essence of Christianity. When St. Paul said, "If Christ has not risen, vain is your faith," he was not only referring to the Resurrection as a concluding argument in the claim to the Divinity of Christ. He was rather stating the essence of Christianity — our God is a living God, a God who is, not a God who was, a God who is with us still.

As our Church moves into the mainstream of life, the marketplace, as it must, we members run the risk of forgetting the fact of Easter. That Jesus Christ lives and is in the world gives the Christian a different attitude of the place where he moves, lives and has his being, the place where he works out his salvation. This is evidenced in the eighth grade composition of a parochial school pupil found at the right side of this newspaper column.

In this Year of Faith 1968 Our God is alive, in His world and in us — and we know Him when we know Will, we love Him when we love His brethren, we serve Him when we serve His kingdom.

Catholics in Our Day

While the hopeful diplomatic talks begin in behalf for some semblance of peace in war torn Vietnam there are two sad stories in this weeks news relating to that unhappy country which is of interest to Catholics.

On page two of this issue we read of the retirement and exile of the former Archbishop of Hue, the brother of the late president who was assassinated with a second brother a few years ago. He never returned to his ecclesiastical post when the military overthrew the government by the two murderous acts and the Archbishop and his sister-in-law with her children fled their native country. What sorrow must fill the being of this prelate who has seen his people suffer mental and spiritual anguish. A once prosperous city and Archdiocese is now a mass of war torn rubble mixed with destitution, sickness and death.

The city of Hue had a 25-day preview of what would happen if the National Liberation Front (Viet Cong) were victorious in South Vietnam. The character of the occupational movement was true to the familiar indoctrination of the Red party line. The method was the usual one of the code of the terrorists. The communists murdered many Catholics who were pointed out to them by vengeful neighbors, yet they took care to make no general frontal attack on the Catholic Church in Hue.

A British journalist writing of his findings in the TIMES of London is quoted in TIME magazine this week as asking, "There are about 40,000 Roman Catholic Vietnamese in Hue. What happened to them?" The Catholic News Service tells that at least 14 collective graves containing bodies of the communists' victims have been found in and around Hue. Many were knocked unconscious into a trench and buried alive.

The greatest setback the communists received in their 25-day occupation was the failure of the people to rise in support of them.

Victim of Change

The 1932 edition of a textbook entitled "A Survey of Sociology" and published for use in Catholic colleges, divided the volume into two sections. The first part was called "Fundamental Institutions" and the second part was called "Problems and Agencies." Of the latter classification one of the chapters was entitled "The Negro Problem." A later revised edition happily changed the offensive title to read "Inter-Racial Problems." Today through the indomitable efforts of the late Dr. Martin Luther King, the "Inter-Racial" view has infiltrated American thinking that the nature of the problem is also a matter of the whites.

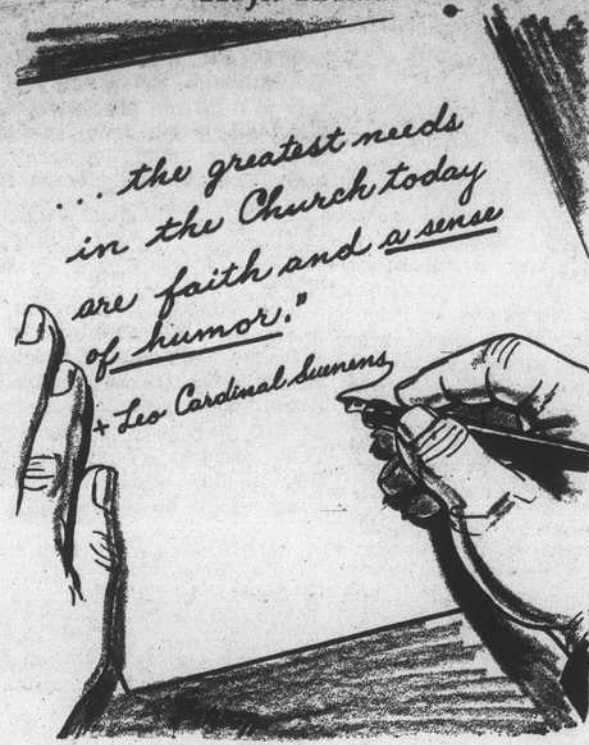
Public protest, of a non-violent sort has been recognized as a legal means of asserting justified claims at the court of public opinion. This was the powerful, moral force which has begun to pry loose traditional apathy, cultivated prejudice and made a rational readjustment in the thinking toward granting the Negro his rights. Dr. King was a figure in the new thinking by which emotions often run high and because of this he was a victim of man's basest act of reprisal at a time when our nation is struggling to implement rights for all Americans.

Dr. King represented the hopes and anticipation of millions of Americans who saw him carve an effective path of progressive Civil Rights legislation. More than this his appeal began to touch a responsive cord on the part of the majority of Americans. They began to recognize that the present time was long overdue for justice and rights to be commonly enjoyed. But what Dr. King seems to have forgotten is that all participants in his program are not non-violent. Nor could the actions of all bystanders be similarly controlled. Violence breeds violence. We recognize now that the technique of demonstration, even with a non-violent intent is impossible.

We are grateful for the accomplishments of Dr. King in effecting Civil Rights for the Negro and the opening up of the conscience of the whites. We do believe, however, had he continued in his present policy of protest his national image would have decreased to a matter of inconsequence.

We assure our sorrowing Negro Americans of our sense of shame and distress over this tragic death of one who naturally was held high in their esteem and gratitude. We are sharing their gratitude for his mission in life also for the strong appeal to all Americans at large, for the present movement and future progress of justice and rights for every citizen. May this man who motivated by a religious vocation, who fought the good fight of his convictions to this period of his life, rest in peace.

Rx for Renewal



In Current Thought

'Turn Not Your Eyes' Essay Cites Christian Concern

(The boys and girls of the eighth grade of St. Patrick's School in Charlotte have been active in putting the Faith learned in Christian Doctrine classes into practice. Their Christian duties have been lived as they have been learned. The pupils have become aware of this by adopting an amputee patient who is served by the Nursing Sisters of the city who care for patients in their own home. Inspired by the direction of their teacher, Sister M. Concetta of the Mercy Community, the class participated in a Mass offered in the patient's small living room. They presented their new friend with an orange hostess gown as a gift. The boys and girls have had an opportunity of facing real poverty and suffering and have generously responded to deep need. The following composition was written by Connie Harris of the class and is a very moving thought on the matter of Christian concern and action. Editor's note.)

TURN NOT YOUR EYES
All those around us, our own brothers and sisters in Christ, are in need. Their deficiency may be on a material level: they suffer from a lack of food, clothing and shelter. Or need may also be found on a spiritual level among those who suffer from an absence of faith, knowledge, courage or hope. Many will find their most urgent need — the need for love — neglected throughout days upon days of loneliness. There is the poverty of not having a friend!

We are all poor in some sense. If it is the wealth of this world that we possess, then giving this to those who do not have it is a means of giving ourselves. By sharing our help and our talents with others we are stepping out of a midst of indifference which shrugs off responsibility; and thus we are bringing forth Christ who lives and acts through us. We become involved and concerned with the sufferings of others. In return for our humble act of giving, we receive an even greater gift: that of knowing we have brought happiness to another. We should open our eyes and seek those who do not believe in God or know of His great love for them. We must share our knowledge of the great Gift of Love our Father has given to all: Jesus. If one has not known the love of another person, he will not be able to understand the great love God has for him. We must show him, help him understand, that as God's child, and our brother, he is loved.

As the aim of our Civics Club this year, we are seeking "To

Legion of Mary

Annual Observance Has 27 Members to Continue Apostolate

Raleigh — Twenty-seven members of the Legion of Mary from Durham, Chapel Hill, Goldsboro and this city pledged loyalty to the Blessed Virgin under the program of their Apostolic Society. The annual ceremony took place at the Cathedral here on March 24 and Bishop Waters led the procession of spiritual directors and members in making their pledge before a special shrine erected for the ceremony. Earlier in the afternoon there were reports given by the various local groups.

At the service Bishop Waters stressed in a spiritual talk the concern which the Blessed Virgin Mary had for her divine Son. "Christ's interests are her interests," he said. The Legion actively shares in the mission of Christ for the good of souls.

The "Acies" was concluded with Benediction of the Most blessed Sacrament.

Harmony Reigns In Hungarian Church

Bonn — (NC) — There is complete harmony in the Catholic Church in Hungary among the bishops, priests and laymen, according to a report in Magyar Kurir, the Hungarian Church's official news agency.

The agency noted that the Hungarian Church seems to be free of the dissension that exists in the Church in many Western countries.

Harmony in the Hungarian Church, the agency said, is demonstrated by the generous financial support given by Catholics, support which has made possible the repair of church buildings and facilities to care for the aged and infirm priests and Religious.

Learn What It Means To Be Poor." When we find poverty, we should TURN NOT OUR EYES.

New Publication

'Parish Council' Will Aid Church Advisory Groups, Said a 'Must'

Parish Council — published monthly by The national Liturgical Conference. First issue: April, 1968. Price: \$2.00 per year each subscription.

Parish Council will be an open forum for parish councils and other groups concerned with parish renewal. Also short articles, editorials and reprints prepared and assembled by The Liturgical Conference Editors. A must for every Parish Council member.

Send subscriptions to: Parish Council, The Liturgical Conference, 2900 Newton Street, N.E., Washington, D.C. 20018.

Bishops Echo Nation's

Praise For Johnson

Vietnam Peace Move

Washington — In statements issued soon after President Lyndon B. Johnson announced de-escalation of the Vietnam war, several American bishops repeated the nearly universal praise that met the President's announcement that he was ordering a halt to most bombing operations against North Vietnam.

Emphasizing that he was not speaking as president of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, but only as archbishop of Detroit, Archbishop John F. Dearden commented:

"The initiative shown by President Johnson in deciding to suspend the bombing of North Vietnam seems a step in the right direction. We are all concerned about achieving peace. If this action can open the way to discussions, as many world leaders believe, we may find a solution to the dreadful impasse of war. And surely we must pray that this may speedily come about."

From San Antonio, Tex., Archbishop Robert E. Lucey, who has defended the U.S. commitment to Vietnam as moral, commended the President for taking the initiative in pursuing an honorable solution to the war in Southeast Asia.

The archbishop said that the President's address to the nation was "well reasoned and balanced, because the President made it clear he is seeking a peace based on justice."

Archbishop Lucey added that he hoped North Vietnam's leaders would "accept the fact that their war of tyranny and slavery can never succeed and that they respond favorably to the President's plea to bring about an end to the hostilities."

Supporting the President's statement in his address that "if peace does not now come through negotiations, it will come when Hanoi understands that our common resolve is unshakable and our common strength invincible," the archbishop commented.

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