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"Nisi Dominus custodierit civitatem frustra vigilat qui custodit eam."

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WHY NOT A "NOVITIATE" FOR THE LAY APOSTOLATE?

BY M. G. C. N.

This is an age of Specialists. It is a period when we all train intensively, not only for our careers but even for our hobbies, and the sport we take up. For almost every human activity there is a "course" to be undergone. Especially is this the case where women are concerned. No longer does the girl of comparative leisure dabble in the arts, domestic science, secretarial work, etc. She does not "float" but if she is fortunate enough to be able to pass from one thing to another she systematically trains for them.

If we look on all ways of life as a "Vocation" we face another issue. In the past also there were two main vocations for women, *vis.*, the religious life and marriage. Nowadays it is generally recognised, that there are quite a large proportion of women who are not called either to the cloister or to marriage. Theirs is the lay apostolate, which is so needed in a world that is increasingly materialist in its outlook; and where the contact of the average neo-pagan with a Religious is rare, and often complicated by prejudice or inhibition. No doubt this group has arisen partly through economic circumstances, and partly through the biological effect of two major wars within a quarter of a century. And the Lord has allowed it to arise, surely not without a definite purpose in His mind.

Now each group has, or should have, its own training and preparation. But, at the moment, I think it is only the aspirant to a religious vocation who has a definite and prescribed period of spiritual training, mapped out for her and obligatory to her ultimate profession. With marriage there has been a tendency of late, but only a tendency, for the engaged girl to undergo some period of training in homemaking and mothercraft. This is on the material plane only. Still more rare is it, even among good Catholics who are marrying a fellow Catholic, and who therefore have all the opportunities before them of founding a Christian home and of bringing up and nurturing future saints and priests, to undergo any spiritual training for that vital vocation. Some make a retreat, but it cannot be many as one very seldom sees pre-marriage retreats billed in Catholic papers, as one does for chemists' and postmasters' Guild! What seems to be wrong is that people drift into marriage, without thinking of it as God's specific Will for them. Practically no one drifts into a convent! This I venture to suggest is a modern development, as there was more of the vocational aspect in it when the parents planned a marriage on continental lines. Do not think, however, that I am advocating a return to "planned marriages" were it possible. For the acceptance of a "vocation" lies in the free will of the individual concerned who is seriously seeking to do what pleases Our Lord.

Both these callings—the religious life and marriage—make considerable demands on the girl who adopts them. The bonds and vows of each are permanent and in the case of marriage, indissoluble. In this lies a deep satisfaction in many respects, though all nuns and wives will have periods of restlessness and weariness. But each receives grace to meet every eventuality. Marriage is a Sacrament and brings its own special graces. Clothing and profession although not Sacraments undoubtedly bring with them an enormous increase of the working of the Holy Spirit which

is daily renewed by the atmosphere of a community with its common goal of perfection. In brief, both the nun and married woman in the larger issues of life have surrendered their right of choice, have offered themselves and have only to "accept" what comes to them; petty naggings and humiliations, responsibility with its honours but with its worries of being a Superior for the nun, the success or failure of children, poverty or ill-health of one's husband for the married woman.

But it is of neither of these vocations that I would speak but of the third one, that has arisen in our times, and been so blessed by recent Popes. If it is to be a real "vocation" in the spiritual sense, it must be positive and not negative. There is even more of a tendency in this group to drift and call oneself a lay apostle because one has either not been called to the religious life (in the cloistered sense) or has failed to find a husband. As I have said above, people drift into, or seek marriage mainly for material reasons (rarely as a means of serving God, or being a co-creator of fresh human beings with Him); it is thought to bring economic security, it provides a home, it means in most cases the cessation of daily bread-winning and, in a word, it is "done." The realisation of a vocation to the lay apostolate can and very often is reached by a process of elimination for the other two, but that should not make it any less positive although it does make the woman in question a little older, as she may have spent the decade of, say, her twenties waiting in a sense for her "Annunciation" always ready to give her "Fiat."

This third life differs from the other two in many fundamental aspects. Although interiorly one may be a lay apostle throughout, the shape and nature of one's vocation may change tremendously as life goes on. It demands, therefore, a much greater spiritual mobility, if one may express it thus. A readiness to take up and put down, as the situation requires. This involves real detachment. Moreover, apart from specific spiritual direction, the will is left free. Herein is a potential danger, as one is not under Obedience in the canonical sense, and motives that look altruistic may often have a hidden selfishness in the satisfaction which some situations give. The material renunciation of the religious is done once and for all in one fell swoop; that of the wife and mother is for the most part intermingled with the human love of husband and children. The lay woman's sacrifices are small and constant, they recur daily in surroundings which often do not recognise the necessity of charity, humility and voluntary poverty. The drop of water in the chalice becomes more and more of a reality each morning. It is true, moreover, that she does not have the human consolations of family life, nor those of a closely knit community, but then neither has she the trials and responsibilities that these bring with them. It is just this freedom from "ties," which (excepting economic pressure) makes her a free lance, free to roam the world, live where she chooses, recreate herself as she likes in her leisure hours. But recreate for what?—if not for a giving out of the spiritual.

Thus, it may be seen that the life of the unmarried woman in the world may become intensely selfish and non-vocational if it is not highly spiritualised. And when I say "highly spiritualised,"

I mean something hundred per cent positive, not the outworn concept of religion filling a gap to the spinster, a sop, a second best. Oh! no, a thousand times no.

This brings me back to my opening remarks on training. One used to hear it said, amongst Catholic families, of a girl who had tried her vocation to the religious life and come out: "It has been such a good thing, it has made such a difference to so and so's character. It has formed habits that will be of use to her anywhere—married, in a profession or at home." That was doubtless what Our Lord had intended for her, a chastening, a fashioning of which the suffering brought about by a sense of failure to "make" the conventual life bore no small part. But to enter a novitiate with any intention but that of remaining, would indeed be wrong, much as one might covet the spiritual training provided therein. But this does not prevent lay woman who intend serving God through their professions and the contact that this gives them with souls, seeking a definite period of residential spiritual training to supplement their professional one, and to lay the basis of a really apostolic life. With Ecclesiastical approval, and the co-operation of one or more religious communities (preferably those dedicated to retreat work or education) would it not be possible to start something on these lines?

I know that we go to summer schools, retreats, study week-ends and so forth, almost without number, but these are too brief and hurried and too lacking in any consistent discipline to lay the foundation of an interior life lived in the world. I would not attempt to postulate where this should be started, as it should be equally applicable to Catholic women everywhere, and in thinking of something for the Church one almost instinctively thinks in terms of the world in keeping with her universal spirit. More recruits in the first instance, however, would probably be forthcoming in N.W. Europe & U.S.A. where there are already large groups of women trying to live and practise the lay apostolate. The scheme, as I see it, would need to be very fluid, and adapted to individual requirements. The minimum period of training would be six months and the maximum two years, to be decided, of course, by the individual's spiritual director, possibly in conjunction with an experienced nun, who filled a role similar to that of a novice mistress. If the aspirant's progress had been inadequate in two years, it might be possible at a later date to arrange a further course for her. But those who are training to live in the world must not lose touch with it, and beyond two years I think it likely that this might happen. Nor would there be anything binding about age. More and more I find this is not to be measured in years but in depths of experience. Especially where growth of character is concerned, some people rush on, with a kind of spiritual moonsoon; others grow slowly and steadily. For the most part, however, it would probably fill a need for the average woman between 25 and 40 with the maximum age group 28-35. It should not exclude the youngish widow (war or otherwise) as well as the girl who has lost her fiancée and decided prayerfully that this other way is for her.

It is women in the "human" profes-

sions, e.g. doctors, teachers, social workers, nurses, etc., who are, I think, in most need of such a course as the actual material with which they work is composed of human souls, whereas the apostolic field of those who work with things is limited to their colleagues, employers and employees. No distinctions of this sort, however, should be made and courses would include business managers and domestic servants, shop girls and research students, film stars and factory workers of every race and nationality. Ideally, this training or "novitiate" would take place in a large house set well in the country, as the life of most professional women is passed in towns. It should not be a convent where any active work is carried on, e.g., a school, orphanage or hospital, as again many of the trainees will be returning to spend the rest of their lives in such an atmosphere. It could well be a retreat house, where other lay people come at intervals for retreats, or a house where the Order or Congregation which has undertaken to give the training sends its elderly and ailing religious, or where they spend their holidays. For the latter it would mean that those serving a novitiate for the world would have the inestimable value of contact with the immutable wisdom of those who have lived out of it for long. The training would for the most part be purely spiritual, including, of course, a very regular time-table of devotion, and a considerable element of manual work, both domestic and out-of-doors in gardening and on the land which is customary in novitiates to the religious life. Dress should be simple but not necessarily uniform, rather on the lines of that worn by the services in the war. But it should be dull and monotonous for reasons of detachment and mortification. Cosmetics, jewellery and all unnecessary accessories should be voluntarily surrendered, or not brought for the period of training. For the more intellectual woman it might be wise to have long periods with hardly any mental stimulus, or this might be introduced gradually towards the end of the course.

Instruction opens a vast field. The convert, even those received in very early maturity rarely catches up, however hard she tries, on the Apologetic, Logic, Philosophy that the Catholic child has had through school days. Such a course in the quiet of her spiritual training might fill a real gap for her. On the other hand there would be those brought up as Catholics, reared in the 18th and 19th century piety, which was not as liturgical as it might have been, who would welcome courses on the Liturgy and its relationship to the Apostolate. Brief courses could also be given on foreign missions, Eastern rites, the history of different schisms and heresies and so on. Doctors, nurses and allied workers such as almoners, chemists, masseuses and radiologists, might have a course on medical ethics. The specifically Catholic and spiritual approach to psychology, well handled, could be of immense value to all.

To come down to the practicality of the whole idea, it might well be argued by some that for the most people it would be economically impossible. Whilst it is true that for nearly all it would need careful planning, and saving, it should not necessarily rule it out. From the elementary school-girl who becomes a wage-earner in the West at

(Continued on Inner Page.)

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Mr. and Mrs. Albert A. Nicholas of the Oriental Bank of Malaya Ltd., Kuala Lumpur, presently of the 'Bankhouse', Chapel Street, Jaffna, cordially thank all those who attended their wedding, sent them presents and congratulatory messages. Owing to early departure to Malaya they regret their inability to thank every one individually.
"Bank House,"
Chapel Street, Jaffna. 14-1-47.

Church Calendar

JANUARY 1947

- FRI. ...17 S. Antony Ab.
- SAT. ...18 S. Peter's Ch.
- SUN. ...19 2 Ep.—S. Marius.
- MON. ...20 S. Sebastian.
- TUES. ...21 S. Agnes.
- WED. ...22 S. Vincent.
- THURS. ...23 S. Raymond.
- FRI. ...24 S. Timothy.

The Catholic Guardian

JANUARY 17TH 1947

THE FRANCISCAN LEGACY

Deeply moving tributes have been paid to the memory and work of our late Editor, Very Revd. Fr. P. M. Francis, O.M.I. More tributes would have been published did not the exigencies of space preclude the possibility of anything like an equitable selection. May we therefore appeal for the forbearance of the authors concerned.

It is too early in the day to assess the contribution of Father Francis to the religious, political and social life and development of the country. Ours is the more pedestrian job of trying to select the salient features of his editorship and to pay our humble tribute to his memory by vowing ourselves to the cherishing of his ideals and the maintenance of his standards.

Taking things by and large one was struck by his fundamental sanity, his balance, his reluctance to be rushed off his feet. One had at times to wait for his opinion, as for his editorials, but then they were worth waiting for. Tribute, well-merited tribute, has been paid to his encyclopaedic knowledge but it was not always realised how encyclopaedic was his knowledge of local affairs and how much he had been at pains to get at the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth.

Here and now we consecrate ourselves to his ideal of getting at the truth in the news and not merely that but at the truth behind the news. It was always a thrill to get him to expatiate on the significance of the news.

It had been said of Fr. Francis's Master that His voice would not be heard in the streets. Few of Fr. Francis's readers had met him personally; he eschewed the lime-light and he never raised his voice, even in print. Instinctively he expressed himself in under-statement which is so much more effective than any stridency. It meant that he had at times to suffer fools patiently if not gladly, that he disdained to take unfair advantage of a blustering opponent but it also meant that when a vital principle was at stake he could be persistently itself.

As we go over his whole *Guardian* record we see how admirably he fitted in and not least in

what has been a *Guardian* characteristic from the beginning viz., standing up for the under-dog. We have still too many under-dogs in our social system. Our pen and our services will be as unflinching at their command as in the past. That shall be the acid test of the sincerity of our protestations. We are happy to abide by it.

WELCOME NEWS

The Knighthood conferred on our Acting Chief Justice and the appointment of Revd. Bro. Luke as Visitor of the Brothers of the Christian Schools have caused general joy and satisfaction.

Sir Francis J. Soertsz, K.C., has never looked back since his name was entered on the register of St. Joseph's College, Colombo. His was the first name entered: Sir Francis is proud of the fact as we are sure is St. Joseph's.

After a brilliant scholastic career at St. Joseph's where he laid the foundation of that abiding interest in and love of the classics that has always characterised him, and at the Law College, he quickly made his mark at the Bar. His elevation to the Bench, his appointment as Acting Chief Justice, and his Knighthood are official recognition of his judicial capacity, legal acumen and proved integrity.

We like to think of Sir Francis as one of the trio of Catholics so honoured within living memory. We may note in him as in Sir Thomas de Sampayo and Sir Thomas Garvin the inspiring example of Christian humanism at its best, the same edifying grasp and practice of the Catholic religion, the same wit, lambent or astringent to suit the occasion and the same ability to cap any situation with a quotation, a reference or an allusion sometimes recondite but always apt. Qualities such as these make comparison with the great luminaries of the English Bench not inept and may make one wonder whether there was much wrong with the educational system that produced them.

It is not our intention to risk the impertinence of telling our readers who Brother Luke is or of his work. He comes of a family that has deserved well of the Church: one of his brothers is the Vicar-General of the diocese of Jaffna, another brother is Rector of St. Joseph's College, Colombo.

Brother Luke is, as far as we know, the first Asiatic to be so appointed. A better or a saner appointment it would be hard to make. Brother Luke's intimate knowledge of the educational system in Ceylon, his profound sympathy, his horse-sense and his equanimity will get full scope in his new appointment. His tenure will coincide, inevitably, with the extension of his Society's influence and sphere of work. No fitter organisation for popular education exists in the world and no man fitter than Brother Luke could have been appointed.

We send him and his brothers in religion our sincerest best wishes.

Vitamins to the Rescue

Hundreds of thousands of men, women and children in the war-stricken areas of Europe and Asia are now receiving small supplementary tablets through one of the most practical food distribution plans in history. These pills, known technically as "The Sperti Multi-Vitamin Tablets," are manufactured under the supervision of the Institutum Divi Thomae at Cincinnati, Ohio, under the direction of the famous scientist, Dr. George Sperti.

Fortunately the Sperti-Food Supplement Tablets had already been developed before tragedy overtook Europe. A chance remark made by a missionary to a medical scientist led to the most effective and unique concentrated food distribution projects ever inaugurated. At first attention was focussed on the inadequacy of Oriental people in the mission territories. But as the war in Europe advanced, as country after country was occupied and suffered confiscation of its food, making mass starvation imminent the program was developed by a newly formed group known as "The Famine Relief Committee."

It is a conceded fact that adverse living conditions in the Orient are detrimental to good health. They are generally attributed to the lack of sanitation and bad housing. However, the missionaries who labour among the people have long suspected that there was a deeper, underlying cause for the general debilitation of the native populations. They suspected it was the absence of food with proper nutritional values that caused the trouble. In conversation with medical authorities on the subject a missionary priest suggested that the administration of minute quantities of vitamins and mineral compounds necessary for the assimilation of food and for the conversion of those foods into body tissue, might do a great deal to help correct the health situation.

With that idea in mind an exhaustive study was begun by the staff of the Institutum Divi Thomae of the diseases prevalent in the mission countries. They learned that a lack of Vitamin A caused eye infection in children and night blindness in adults, and nerve diseases were attributable to the absence of Vitamin B, while the missing Vitamin D in Northern Europe and in fact in all large cities was the chief cause of rickets.

Years of experimental research followed. Then to the delight of the staff of the Institutum a deficiency food correction tablet to war against all these diseases was developed.

The Institutum Divi Thomae plan is non-profit and funds are solicited from the laity through efforts of the Famine Relief Committee.

Fortunately the Mission Tablets were ready for the mission of saving lives when Field Marshal von Rundstedt of the German High Command flung his challenge to the civilized world by his brutal declaration: "We Germans must number at least three times the population of our neighbours. Therefore we shall be compelled to destroy at least one-third of the population of all adjacent territories. We can best achieve this through systematic malnutrition—in the end far superior to machine guns. Starvation works more effectively, especially among the young."

In China the situation was even worse. There hunger-mad mobs roamed the streets like starving dogs searching for food. Mobs attacked any carts carrying food and stormed restaurants. When arrested many of them hanged themselves in mass suicide protest.

Father Charles Meeus, who served for many years as a missionary in the Orient, provided Monsignor Miller, Dean of the Institutum Divi Thomae, with a graphic account of the need for vitamin pills in the Orient among the missionaries themselves and their missionary students, many of whom died before ordination because of diet deficiencies. Others went blind and contracted various diseases. A Red Cross official in Chungking confirms the fact that 88% of the students entering the National Central University are affected with first degree tuberculosis. If a missionary cuts himself it takes three weeks for the scratch to heal. The cause—the lack of necessary vitamins in his diet.

It was one thing to know the cause of so much distress in the world but quite another to remedy it even after the food supplement tablets were developed and found effective. Getting the pills to those who needed them called for ingenuity of the highest order in a war torn world with transportation facilities bombed almost out of existence.

The most favourable factor in the whole matter was that the concentrated food tablets could be sent into strategic areas with greater ease than carloads of food.

With the tablets available and the need so great a project was developed by the Famine Relief Committee and Institutum Divi Thomae for a "direct feeding plan," to the war-stricken areas of Europe. Relief authorities say it was and is one of the most practical plans devised for American participation in the European feeding programme.

Salient features of the plan are threefold: 1—Low cost of distribution. 2—The tablets are sent to only those areas actually in need of relief. 3—The elimination of all red tape for quick action in providing relief.

Children and mothers are the first consideration. All those in need regardless of religious affiliation are taken care of under the plan.

It has given Dr. Sperti, Monsignor Miller and the staff of the Institutum Divi Thomae keen satisfaction and encouragement to have relief authorities assert that perhaps twice the amount of relief is being accomplished at a given time and cost because of the integrity of the plan which they devised. Sponsors of the plan have been generously supported by contributions large and small. The tablets are made at cost price and are packaged by missionary students who volunteer their services gratis.

The emergency for Europe and Asia is not over. Starvation and malnutrition still exist. The Institutum is working to full capacity to continue the flow of life supporting tablets in endless quantities.

Why Not a "Novitiate" for the Lay Apostolate?

(Continued from Page 1)

14-15, to the doctor or lawyer who achieves independence only in her early twenties, all find it difficult to make a break once they have begun. Especially is this so if others are dependent upon them. But that it is not insurmountable is shown by the numbers who manage somehow to take additional "trainings" in early middle life, factory and shop-girls who go to "colleges for working-women" for further education, civil servants who get released for a sabbatical year for educational travel, and so on, up to the person who returns to a University at a much later date to take a post-graduate course of some kind. Quite often, of course, these trainings do enhance the earning power of those who take them, but this is by no means always the case. If people are able to make these sacrifices for what are broadly speaking temporal ends, surely those who are sincere in this matter of "vocation" would make them to increase their spiritual usefulness. The sacrifice made would further enhance the training of those who made it.

The scheme could, and should of course, be worked on a communal basis, very much as a convent is. Living would be simple, and those few who either possessed a private income over and above their needs, or those whose earning capacity was higher and who therefore had saved more should be asked in charity to contribute it, *in toto*, thus forming a "pool" which would level out and help to maintain those whose means were less and for those who had persons dependent upon them. When well established and accepted, scholarships and bursaries might be started for spiritual training. One of the nuns in the convent concerned would deal with this matter.

There would be no question of persons who had taken the training being under an obligation to take vows of any kind, or to join a society such as the "Filles de Marie" or the "Grail." Nor should there be any pressure upon them

to become Tertiaries or Oblates, unless as individuals they wished to. They might, however, whenever possible if remaining in the same part of the world, try and arrange to make their annual retreat at their Spiritual Training College, thus renewing contact with individuals and surroundings that had helped in their formation.

In the further development of this scheme there lies enormous scope for an enterprising religious community, with, of course, the whole-hearted co-operation of the first aspirants. And its fulfilment would mean the transformation of a cross-section of the laity into "other Christs" living His life in His world while remaining detached from it in the true sense of the word.—*Examiner.*

JAFFNA C.W.M.

QUESTION BOX

This is one of the features announced in my programme of the Jaffna Catholic Writers' Movement. The Questions should be about the Catholic Faith and related matters. Full names and addresses must be given as a sign of good faith; but neither names nor addresses will be printed except with the writers' consent. Anonymous letters will not be considered. For my being able to begin this feature in the "Guardian" I am indebted to the young lady who sent me the following Question:

(1) What do you mean by Hell? Is it a place by which God satisfies His anger by sending there all those who die without repenting for offending Him seriously? (2) So please let me know if there is such a place called Hell? (3) And if so what it is for? (4) If God loves us immensely He will never dare to inflict upon us so cruel a punishment even if we try to rob Him of His power for He knows what we are and what we are capable of. You might say that He is loving as well as just. (5) Well, if this be so why did He come down and suffer for us? He came to redeem not you and me alone but all without exception. So where does the benefit of His sufferings lies if even one soul is to be lost for ever?—BABS.

Answer: (1) By Hell I mean the eternal misery that awaits those who die in a state of mortal sin and at enmity with God.

(2) We know that there is such a place called Hell; because Christ Himself has revealed it to us: "Depart from me ye cursed into everlasting fire which was prepared for the devil and his angels" (Mt. xxv. 41).

(3) Hell is for the punishment of the wicked. God has created every one of us for Heaven, and He has given us every help to get there. Among these helps, one of the greatest is His revelation of the eternal torments of Hell. Hence we may say that He did not make Hell to put us into it, but to keep us out of it.

(4) The punishment of Hell is not a cruelty but a necessity. If a man by alcoholism injures his brain and deprives himself permanently of the use of reason, he remains excluded from society for the rest of his life. This exclusion is not a cruelty but a necessity because he is unfit for social life. Similarly a man by mortal sin knowingly and freely chooses some sinful pleasure in preference to God. That act of will becomes immutable at death: if he dies rejecting God, he will lose God for ever. It is just the loss of God that makes Hell what it is. But for this loss of God, he has only himself to blame, since he rejected Him freely. Hence Hell is not a cruelty but a necessity.

(5) Christ redeemed "all without exception" only in the sense that He more than repaid the insult done to God by the sins of all men and that He merited for all men more than sufficient graces for their salvation, but not in the sense that He would save all men against their free will. It is in our liberty we most resemble God. Without liberty we can neither merit nor appreciate any reward. God not only gave us this sublime and god-like gift of liberty, but also respects it with exactitude. If He does otherwise, He will be contradicting Himself. In making man free and saving him against his free will there is as much contradiction as there is in a square-circle.

B. WM. JESU THASAN, O.M.I.,
Director, J.C.W.M.
Karampan, Kayts.

NOTICE TO CONTRIBUTORS

- (1) "If you've got a thought that's happy,
BOIL IT DOWN;
Make it short and crisp and snappy,
BOIL IT DOWN;
When your brain its coin has minted,
Down the page your pen has sprinted,
If you want your effort printed,
BOIL IT DOWN."
- (2) "Sir, you raise your voice when you
should reinforce your argument."
(*Dr. Johnson.*)

LOCAL & GENERAL

Ourselves.—From this issue onwards Revd. Father T. M. F. Long, O.M.I., will edit this paper.

Congress of the Legion of Mary.

—The All-India Congress of the Legion of Mary was held in Madras during December last year. Legionaries from all parts of India and Ceylon attended the session in large numbers. Revd. Frs. Chas. S. Matthews, O.M.I., and A. Rajanayagam, O.M.I., represented the Jaffna Diocese. We are glad to learn that more than seventy-five delegates came from Ceylon and their speeches in the Congress made a lasting impression on the audience.

S.V.P. Jaffna.—The fourth quarterly meeting of the Conferences of St. Vincent de Paul Society, Jaffna, will be held on Sunday 19.1.47 at 5-15 p.m. in St. Charles' School Hall with Mr. R. J. Paul, the president of the Particular Council in the Chair. Revd. Fr. P. T. James, O.M.I., will address the meeting on "Charity." All members and benefactors are requested to be present.

The Co-Adjutor Archbishop.—His Grace the Most Revd. Dr. Thomas Cooray, O.M.I., arrived in Jaffna on Monday the 13th inst. on a courtesy visit to His Lordship the Bishop of Jaffna. He is the distinguished guest of the week in Bishop's House.

The Holy Family Convent.—The Holy Family Convent re-opens on the 20th inst. after the Christmas vacation under the extremely auspicious circumstances of having scored a 100 per cent. success at the London B.A. Examination held last year. The successful candidates are Revd. Sr. Mary Josephine (N.G. Tynan) 1st Div., Revd. Sr. Mary Malachy (C. Walsh) 2nd Div., Miss Padmini Wanigasooriar 3rd Div. Miss Wanigasooriar is the eldest daughter of the late Mr. A. S. Wanigasooriar, the popular Advocate and later District Judge.

Revd. Fr. J. B. Antonius, O.M.I. is on study leave in Calcutta. He has had the privilege of meeting the Governor of Bengal Sir Frederick Burrows, a member of the Soulbury Commission for Ceylon. Sir Frederick, we are glad to learn, expressed his continued interest in men and matters connected with Ceylon.

A Pontifical Requiem High Mass for the repose of the soul of the late Chevalier Philip Moses, K.S.G., J.P., and President Moopu, St. Mary's Cathedral will be sung on Monday the 20th inst. at 6-15 a.m. at St. Mary's Cathedral, Jaffna.

Friends and relations are kindly requested to attend.

Bus Strike.—The Motor bus workers on all the four lines radiating from Jaffna struck work on Sunday the 11th inst. Two days later work was resumed, the parties consenting to submit their grievances to the decision of the Controller of Labour.

Personal.—Mr. B. R. Motha B.Sc. (Lond. & Glas.) has resumed duties at St. Patrick's College, Jaffna after a very successful course of study leave in Scotland. He has obtained the degree of Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) of the Glasgow University.

—Mrs. B. P. Nicholas, the wife of the late Mr. B. P. Nicholas, Founder of the Bank of Malaya Ltd., Kuala Lumpur who was in Jaffna for the last three months is leaving for Malaya this week with her eldest daughter, son-in-law and child, and her newly married second son and daughter-in-law. At a farewell lunch given to the party by a member of the staff of St. Patrick's College, Mrs. Nicholas promised her hearty support and co-operation in the work of collecting Funds in Malaya for the College prior

TOURING SERVICE.

We have great pleasure in announcing that we have recently organised a touring motor bus service.

Enquiries and bookings for picnics, pilgrimages, excursions and holiday expeditions by Schools and Colleges, etc., will receive our prompt and careful attention.

ESTY & CO. LTD.,

(Transport Dept.)

27, Chapel Street, Jaffna.

Telegrams:—"Estyco."

Await the Opening of:

WORKS DEPT.,

Theverikulam Road,
JAFFNA.

STORES DEPT.,

Main Street,
JAFFNA.

HOTELS DEPT.,

Main Street,
JAFFNA.

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to the College Centenary Celebrations in 1950.

Rice Allocations.—The International Emergency Food Council has allowed Ceylon 200,000 tons of rice to Ceylon thus giving Ceylon the fourth place in the list of allocations. The world supply position with regard to rice is still fifty per cent short of the normal requirements.

The Commissioner of Local Govt.—Mr. E. W. Kannangara, Commissioner of Local Government was in Jaffna on Saturday the 11th inst. He recorded the evidence of the various bodies interested in the delimitation of the Wards of the Municipality-to-be.

Conference of Village Committees Association.—The Jaffna District Village Committees Association held a conference at the Town Hall, Jaffna in the presence of Mr. E. W. Kannangara, Commissioner of Local Government. Mr. C. Thiagarajah, the President of the Association made a suggestion that voting in V.C. elections should be made compulsory. In the course of his remarks Mr. Kannangara complimenting Mr. C. Coomaraswamy, the retiring G.A., said that Mr. Coomaraswamy was the most outstanding figure in the C.C.S. and hoped that his services would still be available to the public.

Letters to the Editor

Mrs. Gummidge at Pamunugama

Sir,—Mrs. Gummidge unlike Queen Anne is not dead. This is authentic. Pamunugama has seen and heard her, or rather him *rediviva*, I mean *redivivus*.

Dickens created her for the joy of the world by means of a few phrases which she repeated, repeated, repeated. "I'm a lone, lorn creature and everything goes contrary with me."

Everything goes contrary with our Minister of Education. Judges, priests, newspapers, wealthy parents, cartoonists make him feel increasingly loner and loner and being of authentic Gummidge stock he must keep repeating, repeating, repeating his lornness, his lornness and the contrariety of the world. "They are all out of step except our Johnny."

Even Catholics are ungrateful though he dumps unwanted schools in their midst. "Some say that I do things"—things is good!—"against the Roman Catholics. I have never done anything like that"—like what?—"and will never do so." He's advancing from Gummidge to Niobe status.

Is there no silver lining to his clouds? There would seem to be some. India seems to have honoured him, at the Ceylon rate-payer's expense, on the sound principle that faraway cows have long horns. This is again a Gummidge touch. She went to Australia and developed permanently and decades in advance the Kruschen feeling. There's hope still.

We could do with a good man in Australia. He might even learn cricket there.

Yours etc.,

THAMBY.

The Late Chev. Philip Moses

Sir,—The article in your last issue about the late Chevalier by his own brother Knight has been, I am sure, appreciated by all. Men like Chevalier Moses never die for good. They live in their deeds. I beg therefore that steps be taken to have his biography published as soon as possible. Our generation will greatly benefit by the reading of his life and deeds. May I further suggest that all, who can supply useful particulars about his life, send them immediately to Rev. Bro. E. Groussault, O.M.I., Bishop's House, Jaffna. He will see, I hope, to the rest.

P. SAVERIMUTTU,
Hon. Sec., Lit. Com.

Do You Know Series XII of CATHOLIC DOCTRINE

1. When is the Feast of the Candlemas?
 2. Who is the first Cardinal of the East?
 3. Who is the first Tamil Bishop consecrated in India?
 4. What is the other name of the Apostle St. Jude?
 5. Which Pope reigned for 31 years?
 6. Why is caste distinction entirely abhorrent to the Christian faith?
 7. Name two women martyrs of Carthage?
 8. Who is the Evangelist who was a cousin of St. Barnabas?
 9. What is the nationality of the present Master General of the Dominicans?
 10. What is a tunic?
- (For Answers See Below)

Do You Know Series XII

1. February 2nd.
2. Cardinal Thomas Tien of China.
3. Monsr. Tiburtius Roche.
4. Thaddeus.
5. Pope Pius IX.
6. Because by Baptism we all become children of God.
7. S.S. Perpetua and Felicitas.
8. St. Mark.
9. Spaniard.
10. Outer vestment worn by the sub-deacon at a solemn Mass.

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CHRISTIANITY AND DEMOCRACY

Democracy is a spirit, a way of life and a form of Government. As a spirit it implies a wide spread of obligation towards society in return for rights of individuals. As a way of life it means for all classes a complete equality before the law and in some cases an absence of privilege and any notable distinction between classes; understood in this sense it tends to create an almost classless society; as a political form it involves government through elected representatives of the people, by discussion and not by decree.

In its pure and ideal form democracy would be found in all three ways. But in practice they have not always existed together. Before being united with England in the 18th century, the Scots had, like all Celtic races, a strong sense of equality; but they were governed by a small minority of landowners. By 1850, on the other hand, the English people had achieved a notable degree of democratic government through enlargement of the franchise; but society was still divided into classes and, despite equality before the law, working people did not feel themselves the equals of their old masters. In fact they often used their political rights to elect members of aristocracy to govern them.

Then, too, democracy, like every other human thing, varies greatly with the character of the people who practice it. In England it displays a certain love of the past with its feudal and aristocratic forms; in France it tends to exalt the *bourgeoisie* at the expense both of workers and nobles; in the U.S. a lively concern for the common man exists side by side with a deep respect for the power of wealth; while in Australia and New Zealand there is such a prejudice against great possessions that it is difficult for a very rich man to serve his country in any elected capacity.

Beneath all variations of time and place certain ideas remain as the basis of democracy. The fundamental notion is this—the value and importance of the common man, the rights and dignity of the individual. The roots of the idea are not only religious but Christian; for the idea did not exist before Christ nor was it afterwards effectively spread far beyond the orbit of the Church's influence. The world into which the Church came was founded on slavery. Democracy to the Greeks meant the enlightened rule of free citizens, whose culture derived its material support from an army of slaves absolutely deprived of all social and political rights. Early Christianity rarely launched any direct attack on such a system; but by teaching the doctrine of God made Man; the Church incidentally created a social climate in which slavery declined and died.

The essence of the Christian doctrine is this: in the eyes of God the individual soul is of such tremendous value and importance that He is prepared to come down from heaven to take our human nature upon Himself to save and sanctify it. What God has done for the human race He would do just as willingly for one individual soul had that soul been alone upon the earth. God perceives in the individual man and woman an infinite value and importance. In becoming Man God bestows on man as such, and not on any conquering race or ruling class, an unimaginable dignity which could never have been guessed at had He not told us of it. Moreover, the Incarnation is not an event that happened once for all and then was finished and done with. It is continually renewed in the Church through Baptism and other sacraments in virtue of which the common man is raised to the dignity of a brother of Jesus Christ and a son of God by adoption. It is not only God who stoops down to us but we who are lifted up to Him.

Once this revolutionary idea gained some hold on the pagan world of the Roman empire it was bound to cause a vast if silent change. Since Jesus Christ did not crusade on behalf of social equality neither did the Church He founded. Christ was not a socialist any more than He was a monarchist or republican; He enjoined obedience to Caesar, dined with publicans, and emphasized the duties as well as rights of labour. But Christ in His Church propagated a view of human nature which was not compatible with the injustices

and inequalities of the pagan world; and, since the truth is great and shall prevail, in Christian Europe those anomalies had in the end to disappear.

The change was all the more striking since it affected relations not only between rich and poor, governors and governed, but also between man and woman. For the first time in history it became clear that woman is man's equal. Aristotle, one of the greatest minds of antiquity, was inclined to doubt whether women and slaves were endowed with souls. But the Catholic Church not only proclaimed the equality of women but insisted that the most important of all creatures was a woman. The central fact that God had become Man implied that Christ had a human mother. The Catholic devotion to the Mother of God was to flourish with increasing ardor and deeper love. Without consciousness of deliberate social change it was to lay the foundation of all future rights of women in the Christian civilization of Europe. It is a significant symptom that this equality of the sexes has never been found outside the orbit of the Church's influence; and that when the Christian culture goes under for a while, as in Nazi Germany, the first victim of anti-Christian hatred, along with liberty and truth, is the dignity of woman. The same phenomena will be observed in the instance of Russia and her satellites.

This tendency towards freedom and some sort of rough equality found in any Christian civilisation is simply a by-product of Christ's teachings. Provided a substantial decency and justice obtain, the Church is indifferent whether she pursues her life under a monarchy or a republic, within the framework of an agricultural or commercial community, under government that are authoritarian or of the people. One thing she cannot tolerate: the theory and practice of the totalitarian state in which all the energies and loyalties of the individual are totally subordinated to the demands of the state as expressed by the arbitrary whims of a ruling clique. Since the one thing to which she cannot accommodate herself is a spiritual despotism, it would seem that her peculiar atmosphere is one of spiritual freedom.

It was natural that this feeling for the dignity and liberty of the individual soul should sooner or later express itself in the creation of representative political institutions. Although their aims are purely religious, great world-religions like Buddhism and Christianity have such a vital force in their germinal ideas that they cannot help creating civilizations and even states. Just as in Japan the idea of the centralized state came with introduction from China of Buddhist religion and philosophy, so in Europe the idea of a free society sprang from the theory and example of the Catholic Church. The rule of kings in medieval Christian Europe was hedged about and limited on all sides by the universal acceptance of a common Christian code of morality as well as by the existence of representative institutions, elected on a limited franchise, which could discuss the problems of government and exercise a real control over policy by giving or withholding financial aid. Only at the Renaissance, with growth of pagan ideas and breakdown of effective Christianity in public affairs, did despotism again gain ground. So strong were Christian influences a few centuries before, that some modern historians see in early parliaments a secular imitation of the representative and democratic methods of government long practiced by medieval Religious Orders within the Church.

The advent of Protestantism with its accent on the individual was destined to build two very different structures on such Catholic foundations. Luther, with his deep-seated pessimism about human nature, put religion and politics into two watertight compartments; he rejected the Catholic notion of the Church as a corporate society, placed the individual in direct contact with God, but on the political side subjected him completely to the power of the state. Calvin and his followers, on the other hand, believed passionately that divine authority to rule both Church and state dwelt in the body of believers, the choice of representatives being confirmed by God. To this belief more than any other do

"popular" systems of government owe their form and character today. Among Calvinists, the autocratic rule of the Church by Pope and bishops appeared an odious, human imposition; while king and aristocrat became tolerable only when stripped of all effective political power. In the public life of the Germanies the Catholic Church and the religion of Luther existed side by side, though it was a fateful portent for our times that Prussia should follow Luther and ultimately destroy the Catholic Hapsburgs. English after some wavering exercised their national genius for compromise; but the political and social ideas which would rule the new world of North America and the British dominions were substantially a Calvinistic superstructure on older Catholic foundation.

The true Christian faith is primarily a religion of personal salvation; it is concerned first and foremost with welfare of the soul. But because of the atmosphere of equality which it almost unconsciously generates it tends to create a certain type of civilization and social life in which its spiritual values will be most effectively promoted. The spirit of democracy has been implicit in Christianity from the beginning; in the course of centuries it created as a by-product a democratic way of life which in modern times has been crystalized into a system of government. It seems highly unlikely that those political forces would long survive any widespread denial or decay of the central Christian doctrine of Incarnation; but it is one of the constant characteristics of Christianity that when it appears to be at the point of death it is then most likely to rise again.—*Catholic Digest*.

Order Nisi

IN THE DISTRICT COURT OF MANNAR

In the matter of the Estate of the late Monamaduttalivava Asaneinamarikar of Periyapullaichipotkerni in Musali North.

Deceased.

Testamentary Jurisdiction } No. 492

Meerasaibolevvai Mohamadocassim of Periyapullaichipotkerni in Musali North.

Petitioner.

Va.

1. Asaneinamarikar Mohamadomuttalivava
2. Asaneinamarikar Sekkanimma
3. Asaneinamarikar Ummusalma and
4. Mohamadocassin Mohamadomasthan all of Periyapullaichipotkerni in Musali North.

Respondents.

This matter of the Petition of Meerasaibolevvai Mohamadocassin of Periyapullaichipotkerni in Musali North paying of letters of Administration to the Estate of the abovenamed deceased Mohamadomuttalivava Asaneinamarikar coming on for disposal before V. S. Gunawardana Esquire, District Judge, on the 24th day of October 1946 in the presence of Mr. V. Albert Alegacone, Proctor dated the 14th day of October 1946 having been read, it is declared that the Petitioner is the brother-in-law of the said intestate and is entitled to have Letters of Administration to the estate of the said intestate issued to him unless the Respondent or any other person shall, on or before the 25th day of November 1946 show sufficient cause to the satisfaction of this Court to the contrary.

And it is further Ordered that the 4th Respondent be appointed Guardian-ad-litem of the 1st, 2nd and 3rd Respondents for the purpose of representing them in these proceedings—unless the Respondents abovenamed shall on or before the said date show sufficient cause to the satisfaction of this Court to the contrary.

The 7th day of November, 1946.

Sgd. V. S. GUNAWARDANA.

District Judge.

Time to show cause extended till 18th January 1947.

Intd. V. S. G. D.J.

D. D. T.

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