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The WITNESS

MARCH 11, 1965

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FOR CHRIST AND HIS CHURCH

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Story of the Week

Wide Range of Pressing Issues Come Before NCC General Board

★ In five days of crowded business sessions in Portland, Oregon, the general board of the National Council of Churches reviewed a wide spectrum of pressing issues before churches and the nation - taking official policy action on narcotics addiction, immigration code revision, federal aid to peace corps, education, the emergency relief to Africa and the crisis in Vietnam.

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The top legislative body of the nation's largest religious organization heard addresses on Christianity's crucial task of reconciling and evangelizing a world threatened by disorder and destruction; examined false charges against the council and effective means of countering them; studied reports on nationwide anti-poverty action by the churches; and learned details of civil rights projects planned for northern cities this summer.

In session February 22-26 for its regular winter business meeting, the board issued a major policy statement urging churches and law enforcement agencies to accept drug addicts as "ill persons and not as criminals."

Acknowledging "some" recent progress in the treatment of addicts, the statement nonetheless deplored public policy which "continues to be ambivalent on whether the addict is to be considered criminal, ill or an outcast."

It also deplored the fact that "public and private sources for dealing with the problem of addiction are severely limited," noting that addiction has become a serious problem among young people.

This problem "calls not only for application of all the helping disciplines — medicine, psychiatry, social work, education, guidance, and so on — but also for the disciplines of faith that deal with purpose, meaning and commitment in human living," the statement declared.

It asked churchmen to help sponsor appropriate laws and treatment for those afflicted.

Immigration Law Revisions

In a resolution, the board went on record as being in general agreement with the provisions of President Johnson's proposed immigration legislation.

Reaffirming a previous policy position on immigration procedures, it asserted that present policy "raises inequitable racial and national barriers, unfairly restricts the movement of peoples into our country on the basis of place of birth, and unjustly discriminates against refugees and naturalized citizens."

Revised legislation, the resolu-

tion said, "will be more in accord with Christian and humanitarian principles recognizing the inherent worth of the individual — a concept upon which this country was founded and to which it is dedicated." It will also "promote the national interest as well as the welfare of the individuals who may benefit by migration."

For these reasons, the policy-makers urged member churches "to promote study and encourage action which will lead to legislation to improve the immigration status of the United States."

Federal Aid To Education

Another resolution—on federal aid to education — called for "certain safeguards" in any aid program that would make benefits available to children in non-public schools.

The board reiterated its earlier position that aid should be given to public schools throughout the nation, and that children attending private and parochial schools should also benefit "to the extent compatible with the religion clauses of the first amendment and the sound principle of public control of public funds."

The new safeguards are based on the general principle that children, rather than schools, should receive federal aid. The board outlined four provisions which stipulate that benefits should be administered directly by public agencies, that they should "not be conveyed in

such a way that religious institutions acquire property or the services of personnel thereby," that they should "not be used directly or indirectly for the inculcation of religion or the teaching of sectarian doctrine," and that there should be "no discrimination by race, religion, class or national origin" in their distribution.

These safeguards were written into the present version of President Johnson's bill after testimony was presented to House and Senate committees by the NCC last month. They are reportedly acceptable to Roman Catholic as well as Protestant leadership.

The resolution further cited "dual school enrollment" — a system by which pupils divide their school day between public and private school facilities — as a "more acceptable mode of benefiting all children than arrangements under which payments from public funds would be made directly to private and parochial schools or parents."

In an official message the board congratulated the peace corps on its fourth anniversary, calling the young federal agency a "great humanitarian effort," and declaring its "support and admiration for the work of the 10,000 volunteers who are serving around the world, and for the increasing thousands who have successfully completed their service."

Africa Program Endorsed

The Board also officially endorsed "urgent and maximum" U.S. church support for the World Council of Churches' \$10 million, five-year ecomenical program for emergency action in Africa.

The endorsement was given on recommendation of the WCC's central committee, which approved the program in January at a meeting in Enugu, Nigeria. Cost of the general aid program for Africa's developing nations will be shared by churches in the United States, Britain, West Germany and other nations.

The program calls for more than 350 trained personnel and will concentrate on refugee resettlement, building up Africa's indigenous leadership, training youth to become "useful citizens of their nations and not wreckers of their new-found independence," and development of rural and agricultural areas.

"We are asking the churches to emphasize this program in the next five years to answer the call of Africa," Leslie Cooke of Geneva, Switzerland, associate general secretary of WCC, told board members.

"Unless we support this program," he warned, "the work of the churches during the past 150 years may be undone."

Settlement in Vietnam

In another resolution the board urged the Johnson administration to "engage in persistent efforts to negotiate a cease fire" in South Vietnam. It requested the U.S. government to "utilize United Nations assistance in achieving a solution and in seeking to reduce the area of conflict by effective border control and internal policing."

Our government should "give bold and creative leadership to a broad international development program for the Mekong region, and continue full scale U.S. economic and technical assistance where necessary." the resolution declared. It was sent to President Johnson and other appropriate government officials as well as the council's member churches.

Niemoeller Cites "Last Hope"

The Rev. Martin Niemoeller of Wiesbaden, Germany, told the board in an address to its opening session that Christianity provides the "last hope for a peaceful rapprochment" between the white and the nonwhite peoples of the world.

Niemoeller, a living symbol of Christian resistance to Nazi totalitarianism during world war two, said the white man's colonial rule has met with "definite rejection and aroused...bad feelings, whereas church representatives are still regarded as respectable and even distinguished" by non-white peoples.

Pointing to the eagerness of African churches for membership in the WCC as an indication that the WCC may become a decisive agency for peace, the wartime prisoner of Hitler's regime said "Red China is using all its chances, all its means and all its strength in order to extend its influence in the world of the non-white man and to broaden and deepen the gap" between the races.

Bishop Gerald Kennedy of the Southern California — Arizona conference of the Methodist Church, said at a special luncheon that the world's only hope for survival is a common faith in the philosophy of Jesus Christ.

Bishop Kennedy emphasized that neither business nor science can unite the world. He said divided Protestant churches are discovering there is "much more to hold us together than there is to separate us," defining the historic function of Christians as "holding the world together."

He analyzed political, social and cultural differences in to-day's world physically diminished by technology, and told board members — that men must now either perish or finally learn that "we kill what we love when we fight our brothers."

The Rev. Colin Williams, Australian-born evangelist and executive director of the department of parish and community life, told a general session that Christian conversion without Christian social and political commitment can constitute "false witness."

Williams declared that churches which stress "conversion" and "spiritual life" to the exclusion of "such major crises as race, poverty, changed patterns of family life and urban decision-making" represent a "religious escape from Christ's demands."

He said it is "easy for us to forget that the evangelism with which most of us are familiar is itself the outcome of a quite drastic revolution" dating from the 18th and 19th centuries, when the missionary movements began. Today's churchmen should fashion a new evangelistic revolution geared to today's needs, he urged.

Churches must harness their former missionary zeal to the new task of shaping a society "where men are no longer associated on the basis of tribe, ethnic group or national difference," Williams said.

Program Interpretation

A seven-member panel of staff leaders moderated by Fletcher Coates, executive director of the council's department of information, fielded questions from a sampling of 10,000 critical letters reaching this department each year. Coates said the letters come primarily from "anxious, concerned people," and that only a few are "hate" letters "despite the efforts of some groups to promote hatred."

Why doesn't the council "haul into court" those who charge it with being communist? — "The same people who charge us with being commies have charged the courts with it too," said the Rev. Samuel D. Proctor, associate general secretary for communication. "We don't want to win in the courts; we

want to win in the hearts of the people."

Why does the National Council take an active role in social and economic affairs?—Because it believes in "a God of compassion and justice," the Rev. Cameron P. Hall, director of the commission on church and economic life, said.

Church War on Poverty

In a separate presentation Hall announced that coordinated church action against poverty is beginning to take shape in local communities across the nation.

Whereas former generations of Christians have aimed at the "mitigation of poverty," this generation will not rest until it has "eliminated" it, Hall declared. "This is now the primary moral issue of our day. Though it may never reach the dramatic heights of the civil rights revolution, it has far greater implications for social change, because it involves more people."

Noting that denominations and local church agencies have shown a "strong trend to set up full-time coordinators of community anti-poverty programs," he announced that beginning in March the council's anti-poverty committee will have a full-time executive coordinator—the Rev. Shirley E. Greene of New York City, since 1958 secretary for town and country church of the United Church of Christ's board for homeland ministries.

Northern Civil Rights Projects

The director of the council's commission on religion and race, the Rev. Robert W. Spike, told board members that America's Negro youth will remain in "permanent rebellion" unless the churches help them find effective and responsible ways of protesting their real grievances as citizens.

Hailing the contributions of

students volunteers who worked in the south last summer, Spike called on them to volunteer again this year for voter registration and citizenship work in cities of the north.

Spike said the commission on religion and race is already "deeply involved" in a pilot project in Cleveland, Ohio, helping local citizens set up a program of citizenship education. "We stand ready" to assist churchmen and community groups in developing similar projects elsewhere, he added.

In the general secretary's report to the board, R. H. Edwin Espy, chief executive of the council, described his recent trip to Africa, where he attended WCC's central committee meeting and visited with indigenous church leaders in eleven countries.

He said there "probably never has been such massive change, affecting so many millions of the world's population in so basic a way and in so brief a span of time as is the case in Africa today." In one generation, entire nations have moved from "sorcery to computer machines," from "colonial status to political independence." Africa "must be a very high priority in the grand strategy of the church," he said. This continent is "on the agenda of the world — insistently, hourly, inescapably."

Dr. Espy arrived February 20 immediately on returning from Africa for the week-long board meeting. The main body of his winter report was given by the Rev. David R. Hunter, deputy general secretary.

Hunter stressed work in such areas as civil rights, Cuban refugee resettlement, poverty, urban renewal and religious broadcasting as indicative of significant trends in the council's program during the past year. He hailed the council's

leadership in helping to shape a "national consensus" for passage of the civil rights act as a major example of the "prophetic ministry" of America's churches.

A March 5 meeting in Jackson, Miss., of council representatives with state and local denominational leaders in Mississippi was held for intensive discussion of the council's new Delta Ministry, Hunter announced — pointing out that this program of relief, education and community action for persons trapped in pockets of poverty and deprivation in Mississippi has thus far been

hampered by a "lack of working relationship with local white church leaders."

Before adjourning, the policy-making body decided to lay special emphasis on world hunger and U. S. foreign aid at its next meeting. Vernon L. Ferwerda, head of the Washington, D.C. office, told members that our government's foreign aid program will totally disappear within the next five years unless the nation's churches press for increased aid to the world's hungry.

The board, will reconvene June 3-4 at the Riverside Church in New York City.

Great Society of World Proposed As Solution to Human Ills

★ The convocation to examine the requirements for peace. sponsored by the Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions, brought together over 2,000 people from 20 countries. More than 70 distinguished persons read papers or took part in panel discussions. Things discussed included nuclear war, the German situation, national sovereignty and its relation to a future world state, the rule of law in international life, economic aid to developing countries, the terms of coexistence, wars presently being waged, the mechanics of social and political change.

Father Edward Duff, S. J. in his overall story of the four-day meeting, says: "Stalin's disdainful question as to the number of divisions the Pope could command received a partial answer when these people gathered in New York to scrutinize the implications of the encyclical of Pope John, Pacem in Terris. — The meeting was a massive demonstration of a will for peace in all countries and an avowal of the inadequacies of present

day mechanisms to insure it. The chief significance of the convocation, then, was that it occurred."

The Witness gave large space to the meeting last week, reporting a number of significant addresses. We pick it up from there.

Arnold Toynbee

Arnold Toynbee, historian, said that the prophet of the atomic age is Gandhi since he demonstrated that radical political changes can be brought about without resort to violence.

He saw modern technology as being an element for reconciling the rivalry between the so-called capitalist and communist nations. Technology, he said, is "turning our lives upside down" but the result is that "socialist and capitalist countries are becoming more like each other every day."

Dr. Toynbee, incidentally, while here gave a telephone interview from the University of the South over a Nashville radio station. He said; "You can't win in Vietnam. The

Asiatics are determined to drive out all traces remaining of the western interference from which they suffered so much in the last century."

The noted author went on to say; "You Americans had a very good record in your relations with Asia during the last century. You did not take advantage of her when my country and other European countries did. It's a pity that now you are inheriting the mantle of our mistakes."

Toynbee said, "The Vietnamese have a lot of determination and a lot of guts and they simply will not give up. Most Vietnamese care nothing for ideologies but they do care about freedom from intervention by either China or the west. I am sorry to be so rude, but that is what I think about it."

He was in Sewanee, prior to the convocation in New York, to deliver two lectures and during the four days he was on the campus he gave many informal interviews to faculty and students.

Secretary General U Thant

UN Secretary General U
Thant, a Buddhist who speaks
plainly, said the aims and needs
of the times require a new
"state of mind," a decided
"change of heart."

Speaking of his own bailiwick, Mr. Thant said that some parts of the UN charter are out of date. For one thing, the section that deals with breaches of the peace stems from the experience of the Hitler era, he said, "a kind of situation which is unlikely to recur in our world of super-powers armed with hydrogen bombs" amid a large number of smaller independent countries.

The writers of the charter 20 years ago, with an eye on the potential re-emergence of the Germans and the Japanese as

(Continued on Page Sixteen)

EDITORIAL

Churches on Vietnam

THE FEDERAL CONSTITUTION provides that the Congress is the agency of government which declares war, though the general management of foreign policy is vested in the presidency. Yet in all the crises which have led to United States military actions since Pearl Harbor the Congress has invariably been presented by an accomplished fact by the executive. It was left with no choice but to endorse the executive action, short of putting itself in the politically uncomfortable position of appearing to be treasonous.

In the present situation of the escalation of U. S. intervention in Indo-China open discussion of the entire matter is virtually non-existent so far as responsible authorities go. The Senators in the Congress who are known to favor a negotiated withdrawal from South Vietnam are reluctant to state their case, in part because President Johnson treats any questioning of his actions, or their ultimate outcome, as a sign of personal disloyalty.

The state department issues a white paper which attempts to bolster its position with a rehash of old stories and bits and pieces of evidence which determine nothing not already known. No pretense is made to give the wider setting for an understanding as to why Europeans are superimposing a civil war of their own on top of a native Oriental civil war; what place the people of the areas involved have in the ultimate outcome, aside from slogans about "freedom"; what the risk of war with mainland China involves without help from "allies", if it becomes more than a risk; what precisely at best can be gained by the United States taking over one side in the Vietnamese civil war unless it be the neutralization of the area.

Freedom is as good at home as it is abroad. It is to be hoped that all who can see events in perspective, all who are not driven by an uncontrolable phobia — and there are indeed many — will continue to share their wisdom before any debate on the questions is forclosed.

The general board of the National Council of the Church of Christ, meeting in Portland, Ore., gave this matter consideration and on February 25 adopted a resolution which affirmed the action previously taken by the president, Bishop Reuben Mueller. It represents the kind of reflection which all should be encouraged to make:

"Recognizing the concern of the United States for the freedom and independence of all peoples;

Acknowledging our responsibility to the people of South Vietnam who have been depending upon our aid;

Expressing our distress at the continued violence, war, and loss of life of all the peoples involved;

Believing that mankind must learn to settle its disputes around the conference table rather than on the battlefield;

Welcoming the initiative taken by the Secretary General of the United Nations in the present crisis and sharing his conviction that, 'only political and diplomatic methods of negotiation and discussion may find a peaceful solution' to the problem;

Conscious that there are many difficulties and dilemmas facing our country in negotiations for political settlement, but mindful also of the seriousness of prolonged military conflict, the danger of escalation of hostilities, and the possibility of a third world war.

The general board of the National Council of Churches urges the United States government:

To engage in persistent efforts to negotiate a cease fire and a settlement of the war which will attempt to achieve the independence, freedom and self-determination of the people of South Vietnam;

To utilize United Nations assistance in achieving a solution and in seeking to reduce the area of conflict by effective border control and internal policing; and

To give bold and creative leadership to a broad international development program for the Mekong region and to continue full scale U. S. economic and technical assistance where necessary.

The general board pledges support and cooperation in the urgent tasks of reconciliation and reconstruction in Vietnam."

Mystics of 14th Century

THERE HAVE BEEN two golden ages of English spirituality: one in the fourteenth century, the other in the seventeenth. Both were centuries of controversy within the Church: in the four-

teenth, Wyclif and his Lollards put the ecclesiastical institution in an uproar, and in the seventeenth the Church was riven by the controversy spearheaded by the Puritans. Both were centuries of worldliness and of disregard for spiritual things: the earthiness set forth in Chaucer's Canterbury Tales and the bawdiness appearing in Shakespeare's plays depict neither the fourteenth or seventeenth centuries as ages distinguished for widespread piety.

Nevertheless, both centuries produced people who shone as lights of the world in their own

generations and who, by their writings, have provided spiritual enrichment for subsequent ages. Some of these — such as the authors of The Cloud of Unknowing and The Little Book of Contemplation — remain anonymous. Others are relatively well known; and the fourteenth century has given us four — Richard Rolle, Julian of Norwich, Walter Hilton, and Margery Kempe — who serve as subjects for these studies by the Rev. William S. Hill, the rector of St. Paul's, Lansing, Michigan. We offer them for reading and contemplation in Lent.

ANGLICAN MYSTICS OF THE 14TH CENTURY

By William S. Hill

Rector of St. Paul's, Lansing, Michigan

RICHARD ROLLE OF HAMPOLE

1300? — 1349

EVELYN UNDERHILL has called him "The most vital and individual of the English mystics." One of his contemporaries claimed that his teaching had led unlearned men to a superstitious veneration of the physical phenomena of mysticism and had "destroyed as many men as it had saved". Walter Hilton and the author of The Cloud of Unknowing, each in his own way, revealed that they found him immature and his influence in some respects harmful. Charles Whiston has said, "All who are hungry to learn of and practice the spiritual life will gain much from keeping company with (him)."

The subject of this strange assortment of remarks is Richard Rolle, of Hampole, England.

His Exterior Chronicle

THE CISTERCIAN NUNS at Hampole confidently expected their beloved spiritual director to be officially declared a saint; accordingly, for the York breviary they prepared a Legenda, a series of nine lessons intended to be read in services of public worship following his canonization. The canonization never took place — very likely because some of the candidate's writings were approvingly quoted by the Lollards — but the

Legenda, which fortunately has been preserved, is the principal source of information concerning the fourteenth century English mystic and poet, Richard Rolle.

The nuns' chronicle suffers from some serious omissions — as an illustration, it does not make clear whether or not Rolle was in holy orders — and it contains accounts of alleged healing miracles performed by him which would arouse skepticism in the most credulous; nevertheless, the Legenda gives the present-day biographer a certainty in dealing with the chronology of Rolle's career that of necessity he lacks in trying to reconstruct the life-story of most fourteenth-century religious figures. The external life of Richard Rolle, then, may be summarized as follows:

Richard Rolle was born at Thornton-le-Dole, near Pickering, Yorkshire, between 1290 and 1300. While of a distinguished family — a kinsman became Archbishop of York — Rolle's parents were themselves poor, and he went to Oxford on a scholarship obtained for him by a member of the wealthy and influential De Dalton family.

Oxford was at its zenith during Rolle's student-days; the friars were at the peak of their influence in education; the scholastic debate was at its height; men of the stamp of Bacon and Ockham were setting the intellectual world aflame. But this atmosphere was not congenial to Rolle's temperament. "His desire," as one biographer puts it, "was always to know God rather than to know about God," and at the age of 19, without taking his degree, he left Oxford and returned home. His home, however, proved to be no more agreeable than the university, and it was not long before he left his family to become a hermit.

He might easily have joined the Augustinian canons or hermits at nearby Kirkham — the clothing he wore had been made to resemble their habits — but either his own feelings of independence or a sense of being driven by the Spirit to be alone in the wilderness prevented him from entering into association with others; in any case Rolle began his life as a hermit in a small cottage made available to him by the John de Dalton family in a remote section of their estate. He remained there four years; then for reasons that remain obscure, he left.

For the next fifteen years or so — roughly, the years from 1325-1340 - he lived as a wandering mendicant hermit in Yorkshire, sleeping where he could find lodging and eating whatever food was offered him. A trait one commentator has called his "uncompromising disagreeableness" made him a person who quickly wore out a welcome, and this doubtless prevented him from staying very long in any one place. Perhaps he mellowed with the passage of time; perhaps his reputation as a teacher and spiritual guide caused people to overlook his uncouth manners; perhaps his manifest possession of the gift of healing was looked upon as evidence of sanctity; in any event the time came when the prioress of the Cistercian convent at Hampole invited him to occupy a cell near the priory and to serve as confessor and spiritual director of the nuns. He remained at Hampole until, in 1349, he died while ministering to victims of the Black Death.

Throughout Rolle's adult life, wherever he lived and however much he prayed, he wrote. Indeed, it is not too much to say that the writings of Rolle helped to prepare the way for the flowering of the Middle English language which took place in the works of Langland and Chaucer. The dawning of the fourteenth century showed the beginnings of a definite trend toward the vernacular. Prayer books and spiritual treatises in

Latin and French were translated into English, and English itself began to be used for original work. Some of the first poems in the vernacular came from Rolle's pen; moreover in the words of one biographer, "he was the first English mystic to make use of his own language for a series of works communicating his own experience, and later mystics of the fourteenth century, however little they may have thought of his doctrine and his influence, were his followers in the use of their native tongue for literary purposes."

In the prefaces to their books, many contemporary authors gratefully acknowledge the grant from some foundation or trust-fund which freed them from other responsibilities while they were engaged in literary activity. What they are in effect saying is that while they wrote, they lived as hermits; thus they pay unwitting tribute to Richard Rolle, the first man of English letters, who, as a hermit, was able to find the leisure to write.

His Interior Pilgrimage

THE WRITINGS of Richard Rolle are numerous and it has proved difficult to arrange them in the probable order of their composition. Accordingly, one cannot outline with certainty the paths he followed in his own spiritual development. It appears, however, that with the passage of the years he mellowed and became increasingly willing to have his own thoughts moulded by the insights of spiritual teachers who had lived in generations previous to his own. There can be no question, however, that, as one student of Rolle has remarked, "he received the grace of some high degree of prayer."

One grace which Rolle received was an openness to the guidance of God. Various biographers have been prone to speculate on the motivations which prompted him to take certain steps why, for example, he withdrew from Oxford, why he left home to become a hermit, or why he abandoned his cell on the de Dalton estate. To all these, and similar, questions John Harrell gives what is doubtless the correct answer: Rolle was guided by God. "Somehow," says Harrell, "we have a pathetic picture of this figure, this lonely hermit - exiled, homeless, and misunderstood. Yet, for Richard it was all an occasion of rejoicing for God was directing his life, even his exile and wandering, conforming his life to that of his Son, who had no place to lay his head."

Another grace granted to Rolle — although he

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Richard Rolle

(Continued from Page Nine)

"actualized" this grace by stalwart and diligent effort on his part — was detachment from the pleasures and preoccupations of the world. Frequent note has been taken of his asceticism; but to him, asceticism was simply the means to detach oneself from earthly pursuits and worldly values. Various austerities and acts of mortification were adopted by him to fulfil the aspiration expressed in one of his own poems:

Thee I covet,
This world not;
And from it I flee;
Thou are what I sought,
Thy face when may I see?

Rolle, believed that, as he said, "It is a perfect spiritual life to despise the world and to desire the joy of heaven; to destroy through the grace of God all the wicked desires of the flesh; to forget the solace and the love of your family, and only to love in God." While in order to achieve this he adopted rigorous measures for himself, to others he counselled moderation. He approvingly quotes the words of St. Bernard: "When done with discretion, fastings and vigils aid in spiritual progress; without discretion, they are vices." In any event, Rolle presented a living example of one who in all honesty could echo St. Paul's words: "The world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world."

The grace which Rolle considered the most compelling evidence of divine favor - but which more sophisticated mystics have either mistrusted or considered of no importance — was what he described as calor, dulcor, and canor, that is, heat, sweetness, and song. These are, of course, the physical and psychical phenomena associated with the "rapture" or "ectsasy" of the mystics; and, as Gerard Sitwell has pointed out, the intemperate emphasis he gave to them showed "he lacked precisely the training which the cenobitic life so despised was designed to give." This is not to deny Rolle's sincerity nor the reality of his experience of God; it is merely to point out that he is far from having the last word as concerns the life of prayer.

The grace vouchsafed to Rolle which has left subsequent generations most deeply indebted to him is, as one would expect, his talent as a writer. His aptitude as an author of lyrics was, he believed, a gift from God; and who is to gainsay

him? Eric Colledge sums up his literary artistry in these words: "In one respect Rolle had neither rival nor successor: the ease and sponteneity with which he passes in the English treatises from prose to verse, and his mastery of traditional verse-forms, requiring, in their use of alliteration and internal as well as end-rhyme, a high degree of skill . . ."

Rolle, in short, reveals the gifts and graces—and also the limitations—one would expect in an intelligent and dedicated solitary. A willingness to obey what he considered divine guidance regardless of the cost in discomfort or unpopularity, a strict and unremitting detachment from the world, a variety of episodes of ecstatic rapture, and all these combined with an individuality which sets up a resistance against the dissimilar insights and experiences of others, are what shine forth in the life of Richard Rolle.

His Lasting Contribution

ROLLE'S CONTRIBUTIONS as a literary artist are apparent. What contributions does he make as a spiritual guide?

At the outset it must be admitted that, as Colledge points out, "other mediaeval English mystics, and some modern critics, have seen elements in Rolle's writings which are not entirely praiseworthy." Mention has already been made of his "uncompromising disagreeableness" -an all too human lack of kindliness toward those not in complete agreement with him—and this is demonstrated in his Melos Contemplativorum. His life as a hermit evoked criticism, and in return he wrote the Melos as a defense of the way of life he had adopted and as an attack upon his "enemies" and "persecutors," whose eternal torments among the damned he described with a relish that can hardly be considered emotionally healthy, let alone charitable. But perhaps, as some critics are wont to do, the Melos should be dismissed as a literary indiscretion of Rolle's youth.

Some will find their own devotion quickened by Rolle's fervent preoccupation with the Holy Name of Jesus. "If you think of (the Name) Jesus continually and hold it firmly," he says, "it purges your sin and kindles your heart. It makes the soul clean, it removes anger, and does away with slowness . . . It chases the devil and puts out dread. It opens heaven and makes a man contemplative." Others will discover spiritual enrichment in his devotion to the Mother of

Christ, whom he addresses as "mother of mercy, succour of all sorrow, and remedy of all woe." Those to whom such expressions of piety are not particularly congenial will, of course, discard these passages in Rolle as relics of an outgrown mediaevalism and therefore inappropriate to the present age.

Belonging without a doubt to all ages, however, is Rolle's insistence that genuine spiritual achievement is not possible in the clutter and clatter. the frantic hurry and frantic search for pleasure. of the lives of those characterized by what Rolle calls "the covetousness and the liking and the occupations and business of worldly things and of fleshly lust and vain love." In one place he says, "If your heart is led either by worldly dread or worldly solace, you are farthest from the sweetness of Christ's love." On another occasion he remarks, "If we wish to flee from the torments of purgatory, we must perfectly keep ourselves from the desire and the pleasure and all the evil delights and wrongful fears of this world, and there must be no worldly sorrows within us, but we must put our hopes firmly in Jesus Christ." This is a plea for a disciplined asceticism and for a simplicity in daily life which are indispensable prerequisites for growth.

Another timeless concept to which Rolle gave expression is the paramount place of love in man's relationship to God. "Without it," he said, "no man can please God, with it no man sins for if we love God with all our heart, there is nothing in us through which we serve sin." An idea to which Rolle frequently returned is that there are degrees, or stages, in love and that the awakened soul moves from a lower to a higher level. In his treatise. The Form of Perfect Living, he follows Richard of St. Victor in affirming that there is first, love insuperable, found in meditation; second, love inseparable, found in contemplation; and third, love singular, with which there is no equal, found in jubilation, or mystic rapture.

When he composed his I Sleep and My Heart Wakes he had in mind readers less spiritually advanced, and he described the stages of love as: (a) Love expressed in the desire to obey the Ten Commandments and to keep from falling into the Seven Deadly Sins; (b) love as expressed in the willingness to forsake the world and to follow Christ in poverty, chastity, and humility; (c) love as expressed in the contemplation where-

in one begins to "live with the saints and angels in the light of heaven."

Of course, Rolle would be the first to say that love cannot actually be broken up into categories, degrees, or stages; what he was trying to do, however, was to just state that as "the Holy Ghost teaches different men differently" so do people vary in spiritual stature and thus in their expressions of love. His aim was to lead every one to know the love which is as a "burning fire."

Epilogue

ONE STUDENT of Rolle's has observed that "it is hard to imagine the hermit of Hampole as a successful parish priest or member of a religious house." His strong individuality and his fierce intolerance of any deviation from his own views made him unsuited for a group enterprise. But it was his very freedom to find himself and to be himself which enabled him to become a servant of the whole Church.

It would be well if the example of Rolle might call the present-day Church to enlarge its concept of vocation and thus to provide room for people who by temperament and talent are not qualified to occupy a conventional place in the ecclesiastical institution, but who, like the fourteenth century hermit-poet, nevertheless have a wealth of devotion and talent to offer Christendom.

Fresh Bait, Lures And Other Tackle

By Thomas V. Barrett

Professor at Church Divinity School of the Pacific

IN SPITE OF the "counsels of perfection" within the Church and the seemingly absolute principles of the Sermon on the Mount, one is always surprised at the readiness of Christ's forgiveness toward those who fail to achieve perfection, and with the sympathy and understanding of the Church, even in its most rigorous moments, for human frailty.

Looking through a book of ancient Church documents the other day, we discovered some interesting, even slightly whimsical admonitions in the Rule of St. Benedict for the life of the monks.

"... and in view of the weakness of the in-

firm we believe one pint of wine a day is enough for each one . . . but the Prior shall judge if either the nature of the locality, or labor, or the heat of the summer, requires more taking care in all things lest satiety in drunkenness creep in. Indeed we read that wine is not suitable for monks at all. But because, in our day, it is not possible to persuade the monks of this, let us agree at least — that we should not drink to excess, but sparingly."

In another section the Rule orders Lenten reading from some Holy book "from dawn until the third hour" before their work. During this time one or two elders are to go around the monastery to make sure no troublesome brother is "engaged in idleness or gossip instead of reading." And then with charity towards the weak, the Rule says: "If any be so negligent or slothful that he lacks the will or ability to read, let some task within his capacity be given him ... For the weak or delicate brethren some work or craft must be found to keep them from idleness while not overwhelming them with such heavy labor as to drive them away."

And as to Lenten observance: "The life of a monk should be always as if Lent were being kept. But few have virtue enough for this, and so we urge that during Lent he shall purify his life, and wipe out in that holy season, the negligence of other times . . . Let him disciple his body in respect to food, drink, sleep, chatter and mirth; and let him look forward to holy Easter with the joy of spiritual longing."

Another interesting document is the "Book of Sports," first issued by King James in 1618, and reissued by Charles the 1st in 1633, in which we see the early fervor of the tussle between Anglicans and Puritans over the observance of the Sabbath.

The reasons given for allowing "lawful recreation and exercise" are not illogical.

- 1. To prohibit them would hinder the conversion of many people.
- 2. Such exercise makes the men more able for war.
- 3. When else shall working people exercise if not on Sundays and holy days?

Therefore the King urges attendance at divine service: and after that the people should "be not disturbed, letted or discouraged from lawful recreation such as dancing, either men or women; archery for men, leaping, vaulting, or any other such harmless recreation, nor from having May

games, Whitsun Ales, and Morris dances, and the acting of May poles."

Presumedly these are for Sundays after Lent. It is interesting that bear and bull-baiting, and bowling are not lawful.

However harsh in its demands the Church in almost every age has been sympathetic with those unable to meet the demands, and lenient toward the everlasting childishness of man. We leave it to you to apply St. Benedict's rules for Lent to your own life; and Charles' recommendations for lawful recreation.

The Forgotten Service

By Corwin C. Roach
Director, School of Religion, Fargo, N. D.

MOST MINISTERS will once more dust off the Litany and use it at a few mid-week services in Lent. When the season is happily over they will put it back into its ecclesiastical mothballs and let it gather liturgical dust for another year. It was not always so. In the days of our grandfathers, or perhaps our great grandfathers, the regular Sunday morning service consisted of the full round of Morning Prayer, Litany and Antecommunion.

Today, Time is god and Speed is his prophet and the Litany has wellnigh disappeared. It is a pity, for the Litany is of all the services the one which most closely breathes the spirit of our age. First in the matter of brevity. Here is an order of worship which covers only six pages of broken print in our Prayer Book and can be read aloud in less than fifteen minutes. There is no waste motion, no lost space, no mincing verbiage, no purple rhetoric to cloud the issue. The Litany reads like a telegram. It is an SOS which describes our human plight in terms as terse as those of a radio operator on a disabled aircraft.

But along with its conciseness, there is a comprehensiveness to the Litany. It combines breadth with brevity. There are three elements in the iron rations of the faith, the Creed, the Lord's Prayer and the Decalogue. All three appear in the Litany, the Lord's Prayer in its penitential form, the other two digested and summarized. Worship, belief, conduct, they are all outlined for us.

The Litany gives us the weapons and tools of our Christian warfare. It scouts our enemy

for us. "Plague, pentilence and famine; battle and murder and sudden death." We live our gullible lives and these stark phrases seem remote and unreal. But it is we who are living in the dream world of illusion not the Litany. As civilization tames one beast, it unleashes a hundred in its place. The old evils are still there, transformed and disguised, often blown up into fantastic proportions through the sleight and cunning of man the contriver.

Danger is the common leveller. So it is with the Litany. Status is out. Before the throne of God all men are alike. We are reduced to the least common denominator of our human weakness and our need. The Litany includes all men, it reaches out to every area of life. In early times it was said in procession. The throng of worshippers left the shelter of the church and cathedral to go out into the narrow twisted alleys of the ancient towns, past the gates scarred by the weapons of the enemy, out into the droughtdusty lanes of the countryside. As they went, they carried the assurance of God's presence into every act and sphere of life. In this day, when the Church is beginning to wake up from its long sleep and to see once more its mission to the world outside, we need the dynamic of this ancient service which from earliest Christian times has witnessed to God's concern for the world he made.

The Litany is dialogue prayer. It has its roots in pagan custom. Litanies go back to the early centuries of the Church in Gaul and Rome. As Augustine began his mission to England, he entered Canterbury singing a litany. A thousand years later would see another Archbishop of Canterbury fashion out of the old Latin rites a Litany which would be the first service composed for the subsequent Prayer Book. This oldest English service, steeped in the tradition of bygone centuries, speaks boldly, clearly, relevantly to our day.

The Church can recapture the evangelistic note only if it challenges the laity who are enmeshed in the business and barter of everyday living. But here again the Litany leads the way. It is the service of the people, the laos of God. It is they who pray the prayer. The minister mentions the need in the suffrage but it is the congregation which makes intercession to God, "Have mercy upon us," "Spare us, good Lord", "Good Lord deliver us". The people as the royal priesthood of all believers is interceding on be-

half of others, by word in this service and therefore by act and deed in daily life.

Which points to the climactic note of the Litany. It is directed outwards as well as upwards. We pray for others, knowing our own moral poverty. We are bound together by our common sinful humanity and the Litany drives it home by its hammer blows, "blindness of heart, pride, vainglory, hypocrisy, envy, hatred and malice and all uncharitableness". As we look within, as we see ourselves reflected in the mirror of the world outside we can pinpoint those terms one after another. But we also share the hope that through Christ we can be healed and we can help in the healing of the nations.

We must carry the faith of the Litany out beyond the church buildings and the church services, to kitchen, classroom and council table, to coffee hour and country club. In the busy, headlong rush of modern life, where we accelerate even the tempo of our leisure hours we might well use these brief petitions as we wait in line to pay a bill or for the traffic light to change. They answer to the desires buried deep in the human heart. They are the cement which can bind together a fractured humanity.

We dare not put them back into mothballs after Lent. Let us pray God this Lent to give us the insight and the imagination to keep them ready for use.

An Open Letter to a Friend

About the Holy Communion

By Massey H. Shepherd Jr.

Professor at Church Divinity School of the Pacific

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GREAT WORLD SOCIETY: -

(Continued from Page Six)

threats, envisioned complete agreement among the Security Council's big five — the United States, Britain, France, China and the Soviet Union.

But history took a different turn, and now, said Mr. Thant, "we are witnessing the beginning of the great debate:" Should the big five, which must act in unison to act at all in the Security Council, be exclusively responsible for keeping the peace while the 114-nation General Assembly "functions as a glorified debating society?" Or should an attempt be made "to secure a fair, equitable, and clearly defined distribution of functions of the two principal organs" of the UN?

The long, vexing UN crisis over payments is both depressing and heartening, said Mr. Thant. "Depressing for the damage done to the effectiveness and dignity of the United Nations — heartening for the loyal and unceasing efforts of the member nations to preserve their organization by finding a solution."

And amid the dangers of a world much in strife, Mr. Thant pointed to this paradox:

"We are not basically disagreed, whatever our ideological differences, about the kind of world we wish to have."

Senator Fulbright

Sen. J. William Fulbright, D., Ark., who is chairman of the Senate foreign relations committee, gave a philosopher's warning against an excess of zeal.

Men have become "prisoners of their own ideals," he said, and have "fallen victim to the fatuous illusion that they and they alone are in possession of the key to paradise."

The most vital condition of coexistence will come when na-

tions "are more interested in solving problems than in proving theories."

He also put it another way:

"I believe that the vital condition of coexistence will have been fulfilled when the nations that now view each other with such suspicion can approach one another instead in something of the spirit of Pope John's words to Khrushchev's son-in-law: "They tell me you are an atheist. But you will not refuse an old man's blessing for your children."

Lord Caradon

Lord Caradon, Britain's chief UN delegate, criticized those who predicted doom for the world organization, commentators who "instead of rallying support, we find running away." But the UN crisis, he said, may produce a resolution of fundamental problems and transform it into the greatest peace-keeping instrument the world has ever seen.

Developing Countries

There were impassioned speeches when the convocation discussed what could and should be done to aid developing countries.

Chief S. O. Adebo, Nigeria's representative at the UN, found support in Pacem in Terris for his view that all aid must respect the true needs, the real aspirations and the legitimate independence of the country aided.

Robert Buron, president of the O.E.C.D. Development Center and former minister in 11 French cabinets, warned against what he termed "intellectual colonialism." found frequently among the academic elite and international experts. and "social neo-colonialism," determined to impose its way of life on developing countries. For Buron, as presumably for all at the convocation, the ultimate goal is clear. As stated in the encyclical it is: "Public authority, having world-wide power and endowed with the proper means for the efficacious pursuit of its objective, which is the universal common good in concrete form, must be set up by common accord and not imposed by force."

Proposed World Meeting

Several speakers expanded President Johnson's vision of the great society for the United States to world dimensions. The challenge was most strikingly voiced by Abba Eban, deputy prime minister of Israel, who proposed a week-long conference of the heads of all the sovereign states within and outside the United Nations to consider problems not of any nation but of the human nation. His suggested agenda included:

- The prospect opened up by the new technologies—both the danger and the hope.
- The world will very nearly double its population within the next three decades. Is this a problem for our presidents and premiers in comparison with what exercises them now?
- Over 1½ billion people suffer from malnutrition. There was a "campaign against hunger" conference a few years ago, but its participants were not heads of government with a capacity for action and commitment.
- In this golden age of knowledge there are 700 million adults entirely illiterate one-third of the world's adult population and a similar number at a low level of literacy. There is as yet an inadequate flow of scientific and educational skills from the advanced to the developing worlds.

Amongst the 115 sovereign states, ostensibly equal in their rights and status, there is a vast disparity of income and resources. There are groups of states where income is 2,000 per cent higher than that of others. Within a national community such disparities would lead to violent upheavals. Are we sure that the same is not true of the international community? There should be a blue-print of a great society in international terms.

- The fabric of our planet—its soil, water, minerals and air face depletion or pollution or both. Our generation has no special right to hand the planet on to our children in a worse natural condition than in which we found it.
- The future of international organization and especially in the problem of peacekeeping needs long-term planning by those who have knowledge both of the central political realities and of technical developments. Disarmament is a vain discussion unless we devise instruments of security, beyond the national deterrents of sovereign states.

"In proposing that the heads of 115 governments give a week to the survey of these vistas," the minister concluded, "I do not delude myself by the view that a solution will be found. The world was created, according to Biblical reckoning, in six days. It will take longer to repair the damage that we have been doing ever since."

News Notes

John Pairman Brown has been appointed professor of ethics and New Testament at the Church Divinity School of the Pacific. He has been on the faculty at American University, Beirut, Lebanon, since 1958. He was editor of The Witness, 1955-58, and is the author of The Displaced Person's Almanac.

Bishop Montgomery, suffragan of Chicago since 1962, was



He Didn't Wait for "Voices in the Night"

Like most young men searching for a career, he gathered all the facts he could, talked it over, thought it through and made up his mind. But instead of deciding to be a lawyer or an engineer, he decided to be a minister.

He didn't see the "light flash" or hear "voices whisper." Neither have most young men in seminary!

Because the call to the ministry is much like the call to any other profession, it doesn't always bowl you over. Usually it grows on you until you suddenly realize you couldn't be happy doing anything else.

To help you in thinking about the profession, we'd like to send you a free copy of "Live Option for You?" and "Are You a Many-Sided Man?". These practical booklets describe the ministry as a career, help you decide whether it's for you, and tell you what steps to take if it is.

We hope you'll send for the booklets even if you're not considering the ministry as a profession. Reading them will make you a more understanding, better informed layman.

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elected coadjutor at a special convention.

Overseas Dept. of the Executive Council of PEC now has three divisions, each with an executive secretary: Personnel with the Rev. Donald Bitsberger; Special Projects and Programs headed by the Rev. Samuel Van Culin; Overseas Exchange Visitors with the Rev. Claude Pickens Jr. in charge.

Presiding Bishop gave a tough job to three persons at the Feb. meeting of the Executive Council. Bishop William Marmion, the Rev. Birney W. Smith Jr. and Mrs. Harold Sorg constitute the appropriations commit-

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tee for the church and race fund (Witness 3/4).

Christ Church, Cambridge, has a unique title for its program in Lent: Stop the World, We Want to Get On. Cultural Change by Myron Bloy, MIT by ETS's chaplain; Leisure Joseph Fletcher; Poverty in Affluence by Harvey Cox of Andover-Newton: Urbanization by G. H. Woodard Jr. of 815; Industry by Scott Paradise of Detroit Industrial Mission.

Georgia women are now "laypersons" by a narrow vote but they have to win again at the convention next year before they can serve on vestries or be convention delegates.

Bethlehem plans a \$2-million apartment for the elderly in Allentown, President of the nonprofit organization is the Rev. Vernon Searfoss of Birdsboro, Pa. who announced that it will be open to middle income people, regardless of race, creed, national origin. The 208 units require a 19-story building and will be financed by a fifty year loan from the federal community facilities administration. sides the apartments there will interview medical rooms.

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small shops, beauty parlor, meeting rooms, arts and crafts centers. Construction will start in September according to present plans.

Aggiornamento has meant big business for, of all people, the opticians of France. They attribute the boom in sales to use of the vernacular French instead of Latin in many parts of the Roman Catholic mass. Since January, they say, their best customers have been priests. Here's the way one optician explains the phenomenon: Priests whose eyesight was "average" for their years didn't wear The longer in the spectacles. priesthood the more likely they were to know the Latin by The old Latin missals heart. were made to order: big print. The new missals, some of them temporary, were rushed into print when the vernacular was approved by Vatican II. Unfortunately most of them were published in fine print or, at best, type sizes smaller than the Latin missals. So more and more priests are turning to eyeglasses.

School Of Theology of Long Island, a memorial to George Mercer Jr., was started in 1955 with a \$3-million gift from his She died in December and left a beguest of \$7.8-million to the school. It will be used for scholarships and main-There are about 50 tenance. students who attend evening and Saturday classes because they work the rest of the time.

THE WITNESS still costs \$4 a year-weekly except for summer when it is every other week.

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- NEW BOOKS -

E. John Mohi Book Editor

ROME AND REUNION, by Frederick C. Grant. Oxford University Press. \$5

One of the great men of the Episcopal Church has written a fascinating book on the theme of Christian reunion. Dr. Frederick C. Grant, professor emeritus of Union Theological Seminary and distinguished New Testament scholar, was an Anglican observer at Vatican Council II from October 1962 to March 1963. It is almost unnecessary to state that all Episcopalians are interested in his findings and will wish to read his vivid and provocative volume.

One must respect this sensitive scholar's sympathetic and creative approach to the ancient institution of the papacy, although perhaps not all will share his kindly enthusiasm. He takes us back through history from Paul VI to the shadowy beginnings of the Church in Rome, and forward again to the nuclear age: and we could not ask for a better guide nor would we be apt to find one with such inexhaustible learning. He traces the ups and downs of the papal institution and finds in balancing the merits and demerits that it has been a pragmatic blessing to mankind.

The history of Roman primacy, in his view, begins in the 5th century when Leo the Great came to embody in his person the forces of Roman civilization as it stood threatened by barbarian inroads from the north. Before this period the papacy is vague, legendary, lost in the mist. A few sporadic, scattered and fragmentary references prove nothing but the fact of its gradual development.

"The apologist," writes Dr. Grant, "will find it easy to leap from one stepping stone to another and pretend a strong bridge is built above them; but we know better." Archaeological and literary evidence, including a thorough misreading of Matthew 16:18, just does not vindicate papal authority; but papacy does find a kind of pragmatic vindication as a powerful, civilizing force in the history of mankind. After Leo the attention of the popes wisely centered upon western and northern Europe and in due time the fiercest

of barbarians were taught at least some kind of civilization in the school of Christ.

As we read these early sections of Dr. Grant's interpretation, we are filled with some of his enthusiasm. but when we emerge from the socalled dark ages the story becomes dreary and tedious. The endless maneuvering of emperor and popethe ecclesiastical cunning which sets king against emperor, and noble against king, and bishop against monk: all for the glory of the centralizing power - shows no clear pattern indicating any good purpose. Sometimes the papacy is on the side which we might favor, sometimes not: but none can deny that its goal always includes the preservation of its own privilege and power, and the aggrandizement of the same.

In the pathetic centuries leading up to the Reformation the record becomes even worse; and in the post-Reformation centuries, whatever may be the shortcomings of the Protestant world as pointed out by the learned author, the record of the Roman Church is neither so brilliant nor so saintly as to move the heart or the mind of the objective observer. Dr. Grant really steps over backwards to say good things about the alleged successors of St. Peter, but upon reflection we are sad to observe that his theory is no more proven than the other once popular theory that the pope always wears a cassock in order to hide his hooves.

Our distinguished author is on solid ground as he moves in the direction of a papacy symbolizing the unity of the universal Church, striking telling blows at the major obstacles of pretended infallibility and universal jurisdiction; but he becomes a little visionary in seeming to expect the pope to save Christian civilization once more. Perhaps he is right in asserting that it happened in the 5th century, although judgements of this type can always be questioned; but it certainly does not follow that it ever happened more than once or that it ever will happen again. Is it really true that "a completely disinterested, devoted, consecrated papacy . . . would be a blessing beyond compare and might indeed bring the whole world 'not far from the Kingdom of God." and that it is "one of the most priceless elements in the Christian herit-

Truly, in the deepest sense, mankind's only hope does lies in the area of religious concern and dedication: but even a reunited Church could not solve all the problems of this

most complicated age in history, and it is ever a danger that the messianic institution be substituted for the true Messiah. If the Archbishop of Canterbury appeals for peace in the cold war, exactly what does this mean? Who will listen? Who will know how to act? Who will believe that he knows anything more about the matter than the bewildered rest of us? If the pope appeals for peace, has anything been added to the plea? Are we not asking too much of our religious institutions and too little of ourselves by such reliance upon ecclesiastical authority?

Moreover, Dr. Grant unfortunately does not touch upon the last session of Vatican II, which has done so much to puncture the balloon of ecumenical expectation. Whether or not we could accept a symbolic pontiff is thoroughly irrelevant - a question we shall not be asked: as seen in De Ecclesia's blunt definition of the Church in terms of hierarchy and monarchy, and its arrogant reassertion of the claim to infallibility in the strongest possible language. Let us not think that just because an institution is as old as the hills that this means divine authorization: all it means is that God permits its existence.

In our much smaller Church we appear to be moving towards ever-increasing centralization of power, the very point of controversy which we find most offensive in Rome; and perhaps Rome and Reunion may be given an interpretation not anticipated by the author to the effect that some institutional tendencies should be strangled at birth before they become so established in canon law as to become irremediable mistakes

The only kind of papacy which anyone of any sort of Protestant background could accept would be strictly limited to symbolic value. After all, this is a venerable institution for good or ill, and it could serve as well as any as a symbol of Christian unity. To expect this to occur, however, is a chasuble of another color.

In any case, Rome and Reunion is an exciting and thought-provoking volume, well worth anyone's study; and our opinions about it will be as diverse as our opinions about Rome. Whatever these opinions it is surely required reading.

- MARION L. MATICS

Dr. Matics is rector of Christ Church Parish, Bay Ridge, New York City.

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