

EXTRACTS AND COMMENTS

J.O.C. INTERNATIONAL. Before these lines appear in print, one of the most important events in the history of contemporary Catholicism will have taken place—the First International Congress of Christian Working Youth (*Jeunesse Ouvrière Chrétienne*). Of this Congress the Holy Father has prophesied that it “should be the beginning of a new expansion of the J.O.C. throughout the world”; that it should make manifest to all “the prodigious results of a movement which seems to have been specially marked out by Providence. . . . Not only will the triumphant power of the J.O.C. itself be shown forth, but the never ceasing renewal of the Church’s own youthfulness will be displayed in resplendent beauty.” The programme for the Congress will be found in *LA REVUE DES JEUNES* (July-August). It will open on August 25 with a Mass “for the young workers of the world” in the Park of Laeken, Brussels. An immense procession of over 100,000 workers from the eighteen countries in which the J.O.C. is established will make its way at midday to the colossal stadium of Heysel. “More than a hundred thousand will experience something hitherto unknown; a hundred thousand will live together the Jocist ideal. A chorus of a size never before attained will give expression to the Jocist epic: the struggle, the suffering, the joy, the triumph of the J.O.C.” A Jocist will cry:

C’est du sang des martyrs
 que sont nées les premières légions chrétiennes. . . .
 Sur la patène vous avez mis
 votre sacrifice.
 Ce que vous faites pour nous
 nous ne l’oublierons jamais.

And the vast crowd will take up the response: *Non, jamais!* For the J.O.C. is neither a political organization nor yet, in any accepted sense, a pious confraternity aiming solely to promote the devotion of the individual member. It seeks to revolutionize society, and that by what is, in the last analysis, the only effective means, without which social, political and economic reform is valueless. It seeks its end by promoting heroic sanctity—the sanctity which makes, not *dévots*, but *martyrs*. Nothing short of this is demanded

of the young worker of to-day, not only if he is to christianize his environment, but often even if he is to live his own Christian life. Quietly the J.O.C. is reviving the simple, strong piety and holiness of the primitive Church, and that, not merely for the personal sanctification of its members, but for the revolutionizing of society. Little wonder that the Vicar of Christ has called it the model type of Catholic Action. Humbly, the Jocist will revolutionize society by revolutionizing himself; the interior revolution of the members of society is the *sine qua non* of the revolutionizing of external society. Canon Cardyn, founder of the J.O.C., has recently said: "We have ever maintained that we do not *make* the Revolution; we *are* the Revolution. We are the seed of the New Society. Our Lord said to His apostles: 'Fear not, little flock . . .'" When we began the J.O.C. with four or five *gosses* we said: We are going to conquer the world. And if there are twelve Jocists who *incarnate* the Truth, and if they are ready to give their lives for it, there is the seed of a revolution which will transform modern society."

LOVE ON THE DOLE. This spirit of a faith that moves mountains animates every enterprise of the J.O.C. It realizes fully the necessity for propaganda, demonstrations, processions, community singing. It fully understands the need for external political, social and economic reform. But as Canon Cardyn says:

It is not enough to have a social and economic programme; to give, for instance, to each family a nice house or flat of four or five rooms. Will that give the courage needed to have children? Environment is not enough; one must have the right *spirit*. A family wage? But it must be spent *for* the family. Certainly there must be a political, social, economic programme. There must be propaganda by the press, by posters, by demonstrations. But verbal propaganda is not enough. There must be propaganda that is both *living* and *lived*. There is only one way to attain our end: our doctrine must become *incarnate*.

Readers of *Les Jocistes face au mariage* in LA VIE SPIRITUELLE (July-August) will see how the J.O.C. is grappling with what is, perhaps, the greatest practical problem of our time. The difficulties, humanly speaking almost insurmountable, in the way of the young worker's living the life demanded of him by Christian precepts and natural law are

set out by vivid concrete examples. It is related how Jocists are sustaining this martyrdom of our time in a spirit of faith, prayer and heroism; how "the miracle of the primitive Church is being renewed in our own day"; "how little Jocist servant girls have converted their rich employers as the early Christian slaves converted the patricians"; how the Jocist "services" are assisting young industrial workers and the unemployed to live lives of heroic chastity under circumstances that seem to make chastity impossible. "No new doctrine is proclaimed; but how new is the spirit of Jocism! Truly it is a return to our origins, a renewal of the methods which enabled the apostles to conquer the world."

CHRISTIAN REVOLUTION. Something of this spirit of Jocism has been captured by Fr. J. F. T. Prince in a review-article in THE IRISH ROSARY (August):

It is more comfortable to be told of "causative factors" [of social disorders] outside ourselves, than the single toxin deep within. . . . The invitation to asceticism, where it is not altogether declined, is interpreted in divers ways; for many it is translated in terms of saccharine pietism, for others it means a hundred-and-one kinds of picturesque flight from reality. For few, indeed, does it mean that drastic revision of the human outlook which Jesus Christ came amongst us, and still dwells amongst us, to effect. Thus in our parishes we know dozens of "good Catholics" and intelligent Catholics who, while they are quick to condemn the myopic vision of Socialists which sees ultimate in economic values, yet allow good business to remain the paramount consideration of their lives. . . . Though we be ever ready to admit that we have not here an abiding city, we are slow to submit to the implications of our belief. Anthropocentric man and sociocentric society are bidden by us to look beyond themselves; yet we ourselves, with eyes fixed impressively on the Eternal Hills, make little attempt to travel light in *hac lacrimarum valle*. We point to the absolute, the eternal value, and preach scornfully against the relative, the transient. Indeed, so heartily do we condemn this world's trash, that we find it an easy matter to console them that lack it. Yet, how careful are we to restrain our own acquisitive fingers? It was Saint John Bosco, great reformer that he was, who said that a single genuine sacrifice was worth all the reform programmes in the world; for whereas history teaches us that the less said about the latter the better, it would be impossible, merely speaking humanly, to set a limit to the dynamic influence of sacrificial generosity. We shall be better able, then, to preach spiritual reorientation when we have un-

hampered ourselves. The salt, so to speak, will have regained its savour. . . . When God became man He showed His estimate of the value of prosperity by lacking it. "How hardly shall a rich man enter into the Kingdom."

THE ROLE OF HUMILITY. Not only poverty and detachment but humility is the condition of the Christian Revolution. Fr. Prince continues:

For what is humility but the unhampered perception of reality, unhampered by the business of this world? Christ was the personified principles of humility, for us the superlative example of heavenly nonchalance in a world congested then as now with ponderous unrealities. And what is Catholicism, still the Rejected Kingdom, but the historical manifestation of that principle? . . . Whence, in the social and political world, does she derive her power? Less from ecclesiastical statesmanship, less from her purely cultural strongholds, less from any tangible and material source of influence than from the virtue "whose vision perceives and appraises man through the eyes of the Creator and the Creator through the lowly eyes of creation." Upon what indeed can the world depend for a certain and permanent appreciation of humanity but the virtue of that great Christocentric Corporation called the Church—Catholic Humility? For in the final issues humility is synonymous with truth, so that no faith nor organization of life can enjoy the vigour of sincerity unless there be omnipresent this cardinal quality of the church. But if truth (or humility) is the touchstone of Catholicism, and honesty an obligation imposed upon the faithful, then the degree to which we correspond in our lives with the apprehension of truth (and the degree to which we frankly acknowledge failure) is alone the measure of our real Catholicity.

"How can the world be cured of its sickness," asked Father Bede Jarrett, "but by Catholicism? And how shall Catholicism save the world but by a widespread outburst of asceticism among Catholics? . . . faith put into practice; piety, yes, and sacrifice, *humility*, the cheerful willingness to submit and to save". . . Spiritual revival alone (if you like, Christian revolution) can and must conduce to world-recovery. God does not follow necessarily in the wake of National Leaders and Saviours, the Cromwells, Hitlers and Mussolinis, nor even of the economic organizers. It is then above all the duty of the Catholic to insist that our ultimate benefit is not to be regarded as correlative with the material means to hand. . . .

In **HUMILITY** we have a working theory of life, comprehensible to the simplest mind. And even as it can be made his own by every man, his own challenge to the selfialism and materialism of

the world, his own sure passage to reality, irrespective of corporate action, so it lays upon him its obligations and enlists him to the Foolishness of the Cross. . . . Our willingness to suffer and submit is the measure of our power to help the fallen world.

The spirit and spirituality which Catholic Action in general and Jocism in particular is spreading could perhaps be hardly more happily expressed. "There is a passive resistance of the Catholic body to anything like a new idea," Bishop Dey has recently had the courage to say (itself however a welcome sign that our mutual admiration and "Top-Church" bombast is giving way to corporate humility). The hard sayings of Fr. Prince and the Jocist leaders may not receive an enthusiastic reception among us for many a day. But, to quote the former again:

The life of Jesus Christ was the rehabilitation of humility, His death its permanent victory and the permanent endowment of mankind, operating through the apostles, operating through Catholicism in every subsequent condition of human existence. This is a thesis with which we are all, no doubt, entirely familiar—with a familiarity it might almost be supposed that has bred contempt. Let it at least be an invitation to us to examine our consciences.

ABYSSINIA. LA CITE CHRETIENNE takes a strong line, in refreshing contrast to the deplorable cynicism of our isolationist English press:

Next autumn Italy is going to attack Abyssinia. There will be no declaration of war. "A measure of legitimate self-defence." The example of Japan has been profitably meditated at Rome. Public opinion in France and Belgium, so ready to denounce the bellicosity of Germany, will react hardly at all to this cynical manifestation of Latin barbarity. Yet Abyssinia is a member of the League on the same footing with Italy. . . .

But Mussolini, at the first intervention of the League, will make a Great Speech on National Honour and will retire with dignity from Geneva.

The public opinion of all countries should be mobilized immediately against this new international scandal. While politicians and diplomats discuss the application of sanctions we must try to create, not only economic difficulties, but an "atmosphere" of isolation and reprobation against the Italian Government. In spite of its grandiloquent proclamations and proclamations of independence, would Italy hold out for long against the pressure of the public opinion of the world?

For us Catholics the business has a particularly regrettable aspect. There can be no doubt that we are witnessing preparations for a war which is emphatically unjust. Legitimate Italian ambitions of colonial expansion do not justify war against an independent nation which, for all its faults, has played too glorious a part in the history of African Christianity to allow that a European power, itself charged with crimes and errors, should force Western culture upon it. And even though the majority of Italian Catholics should be in good faith and deceive themselves that their cause is just, can they be ignorant of the fact that no war is just until all means of conciliation have been tried? Is there anything else we can do, except pray with the Pope: *Dissipate gentes quae bella volunt?*

CONTEMPORANEA. CITE CHRETIENNE (July 5-20): *Une Vie de Saint Dominique* by Paul Louis. An appreciation of Fr. Bede Jarrett's *Life of St. Dominic* and of the work being done by the Dominican Order which contains the startling observation: "Les anglais ont sur nous un avantage. Ils vivent dans un pays où le public supporte la vérité. . . . Si j'écrivais la moitié de ce qu'écrit le R. P. Jarrett, on me refuserait l'imprimatur. Heureux sont les anglais qui peuvent écrire sur les choses saintes sans perdre un visage et un langage compassés!"

CLERGY REVIEW (August): *Non-infallible Decisions*. Dr. E. C. Messenger clarifies a much misunderstood point: the character, purpose and force of non-dogmatic doctrinal or quasi-doctrinal pronouncements of Roman Congregations, etc.

MONTH (August): *A Doorway out of Time* by Fr. Conrad Pepler, O.P. How art, religion and supremely the Mass, in their several ways, annihilate time and enable us to communicate with eternity.

ORATE FRATRES (July 27): *Lapsed Catholics and the Liturgical Spirit* by Dom B. Rebstock; how congregational worship stops leakage. *Liturgical Briefs* tell of a Jesuit who, to enable the people to follow his daily Mass, "turns to the congregation before the introductory prayers and announces the Mass of the day, the commemorations, the Preface, Gloria, Credo, last Gospel, and also the intention for which the Mass is being offered"—an example which might well be widely imitated.

VIE INTELLECTUELLE (July 25): A superb and courageous article by Fr. Congar, O.P. examines from a theologian's standpoint the causes—both outside and within the Church—of contemporary unbelief and leakage.

VIE SPIRITUELLE (July-August): contains several valuable articles on Christian marriage and family life.

PENGUIN.