

As so often happens in these Congresses, there were too many papers and little time for discussion, which latter is of the utmost importance. But a good start was made and we may look forward to similar gatherings in other English-speaking countries.

Meanwhile the same Congregation summoned a Congress of Superiors of Religious Sisters in Rome in the middle of September. At its conclusion the Holy Father spoke to them all:

As you know, the Orders of women are going through a serious crisis. We refer to the drop in the number of vocations. The crisis has not yet in fact affected every country; and even where it is felt it is not felt with equal intensity everywhere. But now in several European countries it is already disquieting. . . . We wish today only to speak to those—priests or laity, preachers, lecturers or writers—who no longer have a word of approval or praise for virginity vowed to Christ, who for some years, in spite of the Church's warning and contrary to her mind, give preference on principle to marriage over virginity, who present marriage as the only means capable of granting natural development and perfection to human personality.

The Holy Father regarded this reaction from religious to married life as the principal cause of the lack of vocations and the consequent abandonment of many great works of long standing in the matter of hospitals and schools. But he went on to speak of the necessity of adapting the life of sisters to modern standards in such matters as the religious habit, and of perfecting a more motherly spirit towards the sisters, who must also be properly trained for the work they are to undertake.

'Sad saints are no saints at all.'—Fr McAuliffe, S.J., in *Sponsa Regis* (August).

'The one natural life of man is supernaturalised, not by an external veneer, as it were, of grace but by an inward strengthening. The change may be regarded as a consecration, in so far as everything in man's nature is made sacred, as every part of the iron is made to glow with the fire in which it is plunged, or every part of the air is suffused with light.'

—Fr McNicholl, O.P., in *Doctrine and Life* (October).

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