



NOVEMBER 1971

Vol. XVI

No. 11

'And take unto you the helmet of salvation and

The Sword of the Spirit

(which is the word of God') (Eph. VI. 1.)

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No. 11

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Wm. L. D'Mello
Vicar Capitular
Bangalore
Dated 16-10-1971

Editorial

The world is full of strife today and disaster looms on the horizon. In men's hearts there is hatred, fear and suspicion, which cloud their vision. The freedom and security of our country is threatened by our immediate neighbour, once bound to us by the closest ties of affection and esteem. We are now thinking in terms of war with Pakistan, which may soon escalate into a major world war. No man, however wants war, except those who can make profit out of it. It is rather difficult to say anything with certainty, yet the prospect of war is so bad and the consequences of war very bad indeed. But if war comes, it comes. To a great extent today it has to be provided for, and all the consequences of war have to be accepted. Our Government, our economy and our education should keep pace with modern standards of economy and efficiency.

It is consoling however to go back in retrospect and find that no matter what our private differences were, when we were faced with a crisis, the nation rose as one man to face it. Private and personal interests were never permitted to prevail over national welfare.

We always settled international disputes in a spirit of peace and fellowship, though we were obliged to resist aggression when it occurred. While non-violence does not mean surrender to evil, it also requires that we should be ready to negotiate for an honourable settlement, if and when an opportunity offers itself.

We are convinced of the irrationality of war. We know that it does not settle disputes, but when our security is imperilled, when justice is violated, when the dignity of man is in question, when men are treated like beasts, we are obliged to use force for defence purposes and to oppose the champion of cruelty and injustice. Peace can only come when nations are free and also when human beings everywhere have freedom, security and opportunity.

It is good now to remind ourselves of what President J. F. Kennedy said in his inaugural speech :

“Let every nation know, whether it wishes us well or ill, that we shall pay any price, bear any burden, meet any hardship,.....to assure the survival and the success of liberty.

Let both sides unite to heed in all corners of the earth the command of Isaiah—to ‘undo the heavy burdens.....(and) let the oppressed go free’.”

Abandon war and usher in peace and harmony.

Contemplative Religious

Their Relevance Today

One would have thought that the place of contemplatives in the Church, was once and for all defended and taught by Christ, in those memorable words at Bethany, "Mary has chosen the better part" — not that "actives" (the word has been coined by the writer) cannot rise to contemplative heights, as seen in the lives of the great saints, St. Paul, St. Thomas Apostle, St. Francis of Assisi, or St. Francis Xavier, all of them reflections of Christ's life on earth. However, we would restrict ourselves in this discussion, to the use of the term to denote those physically withdrawn, almost entirely from the main-stream of our mundane life, in a spirit of total renunciation, to devote themselves to a life of prayer, silence and penance. The aim of their life is close union with God, not for their pleasure or satisfaction but to attain the true end of their creation, union with the Creator and to pray for their fellow-men to attain this union, in the varying degrees of God's designs. They are not above praying, too, for the temporal needs of men—peace, happiness, success—in the measure of God's will, they will warn you! All in all, contemplatives are, among the Church's workers, chiefly necessary for her fruitfulness.

The contemplative then, is no introvert. He or she is as much an extrovert, as any worker in the vine-yard of Christ. Indeed, the contemplative life has full meaning only in the ecclesial sense, in the sense of the Apostolic Roman Catholic Church, groaning and travailling for man's salvation, that he might be saved by the redemptive power of Christ's sufferings and the sufferings of the members of His mystical Body, which is the Church. "The Way of Perfection" of St. Teresa of Jesus, "shows that Teresa founded the nuns for an apostolic purpose. They were to live for the good of the Church and not just for personal perfection. Since their life was to be one of prayer and penance, these prayers and penances were to be applied to the needs of the Church." (Fr. M. Griffin, O.C.D., "Spiritual Life",

Winter number, U.S.A. 1970). The author continues "Teresa did not think of the spiritual life just in terms of her own pleasure and satisfaction. Hers was not an egocentric spirituality. She did not care, she said, how much grief and suffering it cost her as long as God was glorified and the souls of men gained for Christ. Unfortunately the modern world must often think of contemplative nuns as living a life in which they pursue their own spiritual pleasures and interests. They forget that those who are closest to God and who enjoy His intimacy most are the very ones who suffer most: they suffer because others do not enjoy this same intimacy with God and do not glorify Him.

Women have always been outstanding in their appreciation of and their generosity in administering the corporal works of mercy to others. As important as these corporal works may be, today there is danger that many are not equally interested in the spiritual works of mercy towards others. Both are necessary, but if the spiritual works are forgotten there will only be a greater increase of problems for this affluent society of ours. The importance of both but the primacy of the spiritual would be the motto of Teresa."

Rev. Fr. Eliseus, O. C. D., in his excellent article in the July issue of "In Christo", "Apostolate of the Interior Life" — which, by the way, stresses the fact that the interior life is "a must", to speak colloquially, for all, whether contemplative or active—quotes Pope John XXIII and Vatican II, in defence of the Contemplative Religious Orders. These statements should be remembered when one is confronted by curious 'modern' opinions held by even theologians and other learned persons, such as that the Trappist monk leads an indolent life and therefore, "distils wine for occupation" or, that the contemplative nun is a "neurotic, frustrated woman"!! Pope John XXIII, in an Apostolic letter, declared "several times we have exposed the fruitfulness of the hidden religious life. Looking to St. Teresa of Avila it behoves us to assert that although the Church makes much of the works of the external apostolate so much needed in these times, however, she attaches the greatest value to the life consecrated to God and dedicated to contemplation in this very

age in which human activities are too much esteemed. Apostolate indeed, which is true and veritable, consists in this, that one participates in the salutary work of Christ, which cannot be done unless by prayer and dedication of oneself, just as our Saviour redeemed human-kind bound and oppressed by sins chiefly through self-sacrifice and prayer to His Father. Therefore, one who tries to follow this intimate way of the salvation work of Christ, exercises apostolate *par excellence* although he abstains from external work". Vatican II stated, when speaking of Religious who were totally dedicated to contemplation in a life of solitude, silence, prayer and penance "no matter how urgent may be the needs of the active apostolate, such communities will always have a distinguished part to play in Christ's Mystical Body, where 'all the members have not the same function'. For they offer to God a choice sacrifice of praise. They brighten God's people with the richest splendours of sanctity. By their example they motivate this people; by imparting a hidden, apostolic fruitfulness, they make this people grow. Thus they are the glory of the Church and an overflowing fountain of heavenly graces". It enjoins that Religious dedicated exclusively to the contemplative life, should be left free and unmolested, even when there are urgent needs of active apostolate ("Perfectae Caritatis", norm 7). "Hands lifted up", says Bossuet "destroy more battalions than hands that strike" and a bishop of Cochinchina said to the Governor of Saigon "Ten Carmelite nuns in prayer will be a greater help than twenty missionaries preaching".

Saint Therese of the Child Jesus defended her choice of the contemplative Religious State, in her charming manner. She was confident of the role of cloistered Carmel, in the Church. She knew the challenges of that hard life and her heroic love of Christ and of the Church attracted her to it. She wrote to her own Sister Celine, on the eve of the latter's entrance to Carmel "I am very glad Celine, that you do not feel any natural attraction for Carmel now that you are about to enter; this is a delicate attention on the part of Our Lord who is enabling you to make Him a gift. He knows that it is more blessed to give than to receive. How blessed also to suffer reproach for the sake of Him who loves us and to pass for fools in

the eyes of the world !.....The only crime of which Herod accused Our Lord was madness-----and in a sense he was right.....why come down on earth to make sinners His intimate friends? We could never go to such lengths of folly to repay our Bridegroom ; compared with His, our actions are quite reasonable. Let the world then leave us in peace.....knowing nothing of all Jesus has done and suffered to save it from perdition ”.

The remarks of Fr. Eliseus, O.C.D., are very pertinent to the point—the primacy of the spiritual over the temporal needs of man and the primacy of the spiritual life over other aspects of man's life on earth. “Death to self is just the opposite of self-love”. “Manual work is more easy than intellectual work and intellectual work than works of the spiritual or interior life. Is not this the reason that people betake themselves more readily to works of the first two kinds than to the exercise of virtues and to the practice of prayer for acquiring union of love with God in which the interior life consists?” The contemplative, by the way, performs much manual work as well, in a spirit of penance and community support, though not with solicitude for material gain. In this sense too they follow the Gospel injunction not to eat their bread in idleness (and what bread !)

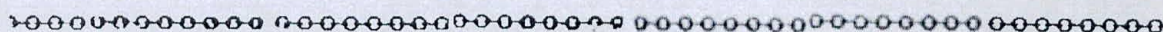
One feels that the whole subject of the relative values of the contemplative and active life, could be viewed in these perspectives—Jesus praying alone on the mountain tops for a greater part of the night — Jesus in the desert fasting and praying for the souls of men—Jesus surrounded by the multitude and “going about doing good”, yet all the while communing with his Father, working for His glory alone and drawing strength from Him. The two first scenes would be closely related to the life of the Contemplative and the third would suggest the life of the Active worker. In Jesus we have the perfection of the Christian life, uninterrupted contemplation, united with action and *vice-versa*, but it is a level beyond man's attainment, *except at lesser heights*.

The cloistered Order of Carmel and other cloistered Orders of men and women in this sad world, are like oases in the desert. To

use another image, they link together earth and heaven and attract God's continual protection of our small globe — His creation. Happy the city, town or village which holds a monastery or convent of contemplatives, known or unknown to it!

L'Osservatore Romano recently reported an interesting and lively incident, also pertinent to our discussion. Pope Paul was visiting the Cloistered Convent of Franciscan Poor Clares, near the Pope's Summer residence. His Holiness described the visit as "a reply to the tacit objection which views cloistered nuns as 'emigrants' from the life reality and experience of our times and as persons and institutions out of date and pass'e. To the Pope's question "Do you believe this objection?" There was an emphatic and spontaneous 'no' from the "normally silent nuns"! confirming their relevance to the lives of their fellow-men, today, as yesterday and for all time.

SISTER M. ANTOINETTE T.C.



STILL BETTER TODAY

General Tyre (Retreaders)

31 32 J. C. W. Road

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Phone: 29022

Retreading of Giant Tyres



YOUTH PROBLEMS

Part II

(Continued from October issue)

Such tendencies therefore must necessarily bring in disappointments and failures, with the result that disillusion is common. In order that this may not happen, it must be realised that the Church is a bulwark, caring for us, from cradle to the grave, and can therefore be a centre, round which all souls of good-will should gather and learn the ways of success in life.

Instead, strange children of passing whims, modern youth is eager to chase the tinted baubles of this world, and without considering that the Church is our good Mother, who is in a position to laden our hands with the gold of eternity, and help us to be

“jealous for the better gifts,”

they even run away from the Church, perhaps not like the prodigal child, certainly to the detriment of themselves. Where then is the meaning of blaming the Church for being “Centrifugal,” when it is possible to rally round this our good Holy Mother the Church and her ministers, who are ever on the alert to do good, to inspire and direct and make use of this dynamic element of youthful personalities to bring them to “new pastures” to quench their thirst and enable them to follow the lines of progress, and imbue these souls with principles and ideals that will lead them to a progressive success in their life.

Without Christ and His Church life is bound to be a failure. To have laboured as best as in us lay, to have played out our strength to the last notch of endurance, to have schemed and planned with our eye on Yesterday and on tomorrow, and

then to find that our life is strewn in ashes, spells the deepest discouragement. Hence it is that one must turn to where there is hope, even sometimes against hope, and fill up our lives with those little incidents, and efforts which can bring us untold blessings through the charity of Christ.

A little act of self repression or sacrifice through will power and the grace of God, a passing deed that brings back a bit of joy to saddened hearts, the lifting of our own and other eyes to catch a clearer view of the farther shore, all these quite simple acts will leave us richer than we were. We will thus be in a position to undertake greater tasks, and casting aside witlessness, learn at length to make my work, my recreation, my prayer, my every act bring me nearer to Our Lord with hands full of graces, to rise up above the ordinary and make myself an instrument in His hands to look forward to a fuller life of contentment, happiness and success.

S. B. C.

[illegible]

With compliments from:

"Kelagur Teas"

[illegible]

Love from a Stranger

India, India,
You never thought a stranger could love you ;
Could serve you,
Could live for you, could die for you ;
India, India,
You never thought a stranger could love you.

India, India,
You never thought a stranger could love you.
So you had no room for me anywhere,
Neither in your big cities nor in your villages.
There was not even a stable in which to lay my head.
Yet my heart, though poor, is swept free
Of everything except its love for you.
India, India,
You never thought a stranger could love you.

India, India,
You never thought a stranger could love you.
Yet brown-eyed children in me weep at night
Because they will never see the light of day.
India, India,
I could have born them to serve you ;
To live for you, to die for you ;
India, India,
You never thought a stranger could love you.

India, India,
You never thought a stranger could love you.
Yet my love for you has veiled for me the beauty of the
whole world.

I am an "outcaste" among my people ;
I am a woman without a name,
A woman without shame, shameless only in my love for you.
India, India,
You never thought a stranger could love you.

FRANCES YASAS,
Dec. 11, 1967.

Extract from, "Pageant of the Popes"

(Continued)

Fabian proved himself to be a capable executive directing the Church, through times that were turbulent for all during Roman rule. Murder seems to be the usual instrument of accession as emperor and it is by this unchristian method that Philip, sometimes known as the first Christian emperor, became emperor. For the first time official tolerance was accorded to christians and to Pope Fabian was granted the right for ecclesiastical authorities to possess properties. His successor, Decius again prescribed death penalty to christians, by an edict. Fabian answered this challenge with his life in 250. Decius tried to prevent a new election. For a year he was successful, but the administration of the church went on uninterruptedly in the persons of a Council of Presbyters, who in defiance of the Emperor met and dwelt secretly in Rome. The Emperor was summoned to the Danube by the invasion of the Goths. His absence enabled the election of a new Pope.

Cornelius, a Roman of aristocratic antecedents was elected Pope. Navatius a priest fell into schism declaring that Cornelius was in error in permitting penitent apostates to be granted forgiveness. Cornelius called upon a council of 60 bishops in 251 and the propaganda of Novatius was condemned and he and his followers were excommunicated. Cornelius was banished and put to death in 253.

Lucius, his successor was also sent to exile but at the command of a new emperor, Valerian he was ordered back to Rome. There appeared to be some tolerance and conciliation. Twelve month after his election, Lucius passed away peacefully, a death rare in the history of earlier Popes (254).

His successor Stephen apparently anxious that the persecution should start again, cautioned the clergy not wear ecclesiastical vestments except inside the churches. A long argument with the Bishop of Carthage concerning the validity of baptism by heretics engaged his attention. Stephen made public throughout the church that such baptisms were valid. For the

first time in history, the emperor became suspicious and anxious for the church's material wealth. An edict came requiring the clergy under pain of death or exile, to render sacrifice to pagan gods. The Pope perished in exile in 257.

Sixtus II accepted the papal honour and soon after was beheaded upon his own throne (257-258).

For Dionysius, an invasion of the empire caused a cessation of the persecution. Valerian was defeated and his successor, his son Gallienus was tolerant towards the christians. Full privileges of citizenship were granted and Church property was restored. There was a happy relationship between the church and state. Dionysius passed away in 268.

His successors were Felix (269-274), Eutychian (275-283) and Caius (283-296). These Popes successfully carried on the tradition of good administration. Faith was spreading rapidly. Heresies were abundant but met with the discipline, and orthodoxy was protected. Metropolitans were appointed. The church emerged as a recognised and united Society. This aroused jealousy among the people and anti-christian opinions were formed.

Marcellinus became Pope in 296. Emperor Diocletian set out to reorganise the government of the empire partitioning the vast territories into two portions, East and West, each to be governed separately by an Emperor who in turn to be assisted by a sub ruler. The East he chose for his own jurisdiction and chose for his lieutenant, Gallius, a barbarian of pagan standards and with hatred for christians. This resulted in promulgating an edict against Christians. Marcellinus perished during the outrages perpetrated by his rule in 304.

Four years after, Marcellus was elected the new Pope. With courageous defiance he set out to provide new places of worship for the church-less faithful. He died in 309, one year after he took office.

(To be continued)

“LIFE EVERLASTING. AMEN.”

I feel them draw more near — the living dead —
They seem to await me, thronging at the
Port of heaven : I will not feel alone then,
I will not feel alone when I have viewed
Again my dear dead, seen again their welcoming
Smile, heard again their voices as on earth.
Above all else shall Life begin for me —
The life with God for all eternity.
I may not much nor long be missed on earth.
'Tis nothing, if death gives me heav'nly birth.
I shall in turn await the coming there
Of those I loved on earth, my bliss to share.
This I believe, dear Lord, with all my power —
That faith will merge with vision in death's hour.

October 1971

SISTER M. ANTOINETTE

Thoughts of Wise Men

THE COLD WITHIN

Six humans trapped by circumstance
In bleak and bitter cold
Each one possessed a stick of wood
Or so the story's told.

Their dying fire in need of logs
The first man held his back
For of the faces round the fire.
He noticed one was black.

The next man looking a cross the way
Saw one, not of his church
And couldn't bring himself to give
The fire, his stick of birch.

The third one sat in tattered clothes
He gave his coat a hitch
Why should his log be put to use
To warm the idle rich?

The rich man just sat back and thought
Of the wealth he had in store
And how to keep what he had earned
From the lazy, shiftless poor.

The black man's face bespoke revenge,
As the fire passed from his sight,
For all he saw in his stick of wood
Was a chance to spite the white.

The last man of the forlorn group
Did nought except for gain
Giving only to those who gave
Was how he played the game.

Their logs held tight in death's still hands,
Was proof of human sin.
They didn't die from the cold withou,
They died from the cold within.

— JAMES PATRICK KINNEY

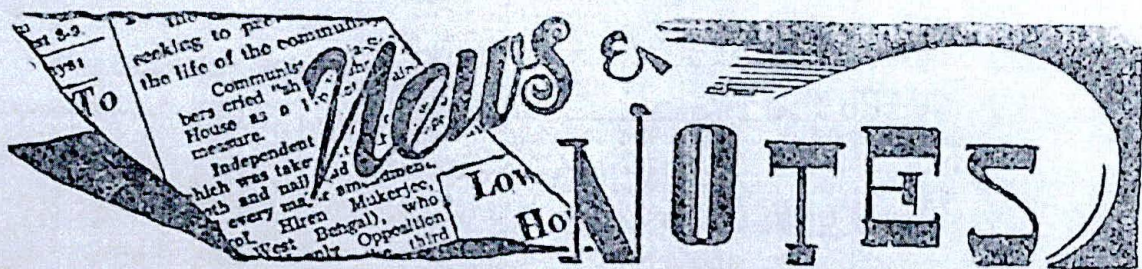
Nearly all men can stand adversity ; but to test a man's
character give him power.

A LINCOLN

EXAMPLE COUNTS: Young people do not assimilate the
values of their group by learning the words (truth, justice etc.)
and their definitions. They learn attitudes, habits and ways of
judging. They learn these in intensely personal transactions with
their immediate family or associates. They do not learn ethical
principles ; they emulate ethical (or unethical) people. They do
not analyze or list the attributes they wish to develop ; they
identify with people who seem to them to have these attributes.
That is why young people need models, both in their imaginative
life and in their environment, models of what man at his best
can be.

— JOHN GARDENER

Contribued by "Chicko"



DEAR READERS,

We in St. John's Medical College have sent four medical teams to the refugee camps in West Bengal and we thought it would be nice to share our experiences with you. The following account consists of extracts from our letters to the Staff and students of St. Johns.

I. "Work at Neelganj":

Extracts from letters of DR. RAM NARAYAN

12th July:— Neelganj Refugee camp is situated about 20—25 miles from Calcutta on the main trunk road between the towns of Barasat and Barrackpore in the 24 Paraganas district of West Bengal. The camp has about 5000 inhabitants, mostly children, women and old men. They are living in very unhygienic conditions — squalor, dirt and disease are rampant. The government and many other voluntary agencies are pouring in supplies, but the needs and numbers are gigantic. The land in and around the camp is low lying clay soil and with the monsoons having started, the area is becoming very slushy. The most urgent need in the camp is the starting of a Dispensary.

13th July:— We started our dispensary yesterday. A small thatched hut in the centre of the camp has a small unostentatious banner which reads 'CARITAS'. This is our dispensary. We work here from 8 A.M. to 6-30 P.M. with a short lunch break. After 6-30 it gets too dark to continue our work here and we have no light facilities. An old Ford brings us back and forth from Morning Star College where we have been put up. Our team consists of the three of us, Mr. Carreter our Pathology Technician and two Sisters — Sr. Bridget of the Medical Mission and Sr. Paul of the Jesus and Mary Congregations.

children have pneumonias or worm infestations. Malnutrition is the rule and almost every child suffers from it. An epidemic of infective hepatitis and polio have also broken out.

10th August:— Today Senator Edward Kennedy visited our camp. He visited our hospital and asked us about the health problems of the camp. He was listening most of the time and was appalled at the magnitude of the camp and its problems. Our Salt Lake City camp is probably one of the biggest refugee camps in the world.

The refugees here are definitely better off than the average Indian slum dweller. Already many people in Calcutta are grumbling about the privileges that they are getting — the refugees are also not always grateful and accept everything as their right. In Pakistan they were starving — here they get everything free without lifting a finger to help themselves. The Government even has to pay them to build their own houses.

When we came we used to have 20 — 25 deaths/day in our wards. But now conditions have improved and the death rate has fallen to 2—3/day — mainly old people and small children.

12th September:— The Salt Lake Camp has now a total strength of about a lakh and 70 thousand refugees. The hospital also has increased its bed-strength to 250 and the out patient attendance ranges from 700 — 1000 patients a day. There are hardly any facilities for laboratory investigations here and hence we have to rely mainly on our clinical acumen to diagnose and treat the cases. The working conditions are not too bad. The work is enjoyable but it is the stifling heat which saps one of all energy and concentration.

28th September:— At the camp there are a lot of clashes taking place between the refugees and the government volunteers who come to distribute rations here. People feel that these incidents are politically motivated. The injured are usually brought to our dispensary for treatment. Once the jeep in which we were travelling was gheraced by government volunteers who claimed that adequate treatment was not given by us for one of the injured of their side. They tore off the canvas from the sides and started brandishing their fists at us. Luckily they weren't armed and if it wasn't for the timely intervention of some home guards anything could have happened. Though security measures were taken after this, the authorities did not seem very much perturbed since for people in Calcutta this is an everyday affair. We have not had any trouble after that.

..... And so the story continues. The story of young doctors and their contribution to what Senator Kennedy has described as "the greatest disaster of mankind".

Mother's Day Celebrations, C.W.L., Bangalore

On Saturday, 10th October 1971, a fine function, part of the Mother's Day Celebrations of the Catholic Women's League was held at the Catholic Club, Bangalore.

At 5-00 p.m. tea and refreshments were on sale, and embroidered kerchief's were sold for presentation to Mothers.

Mrs. Yvonne Ferris, President of the Catholic Women's League opened the service stating that the Catholic Women's League, Bangalore had been celebrating Mother's Day for years, around the 11th October, Feast of the Maternity of Our Lady. Catholic Women had regularly collected money and clothes, new and old for annual distribution in all parishes to the poor.

In recent years an Essay contest on 'Mother' for school-children has been successfully conducted.

Rev. Father Stanley Arango, next exhorted Catholic Mothers to take their responsibilities seriously. The duty of a mother was to help a child to grow, develop and absorb all that was best in the home. This called some to divest themselves of their own wishes and adjust to the temperament not only of the husband but of each individual child. Each child had its own personality. The Blessed Virgin worked in her home at Nazareth with joy and cheerfulness. The Catholic Mother too must dedicate herself generously, enthusiastically, and lovingly to the children given by God.

Our Lady also extended her motherhood to all mankind. The Catholic mother must think of those children suffering, neglected, and forgotten. There were not only the 'haves' and 'Have-nots' in India, but thousands of 'Have-nothings'.

A beautiful Bible Service with hymns, prayers and reflections followed Father Arango's stirring address. Especially apt in this Abortion Age was the verse quoted below:

All: We ask this Lord, through Mary, our Mother, that all women respect motherhood and not fall a prey to vicious teachings that encourage the destruction of life, which is the gift of God.

After the Bible Service, Mrs. Marie Therese Castellino read out winning excerpts from the essays written for 'Mother's Day' Competition. Prizes were distributed to Primary, Middle and High School winning students.

Games followed for the over 125 women present. A "Lucky Mother" Competition too was awarded a prize. Entertainment was provided by Mrs. Dora Gonsalves—she is a well-known comedian in the Catholic world. The gathering dispersed, happy and content.

Tribute to St. JOHN'S Doctors for Refugee Relief Work

BANGALORE (CNI): The first batch of doctors from St. John's Medical College, Bangalore, who had volunteered to help in the refugee relief work in north-east India have completed their assignment and have returned after making noteworthy contribution to succour the refugees. Rev. Alen de Lastic, Rector, Morning Star College, Sewli-Telenipara, via Barrackpore, 24-Parganas district, in a letter dated August 28, 1971 addressed to Dr. L. Monteiro, Dean of St. John's Medical College, Bangalore, says:

"Please accept my heartfelt thanks for sending the medical teams to help out in the refugee camps nearby. Doctors Vikram, Ravi and Gouri were the pioneers in this work. But for their kind service the camp at Nilganj, two miles from here, would have remained neglected, and many would probably not be alive today. Their efficient and regular medical attention is responsible for the health of the entire camp. I do not think there is a healthier camp than that of Nilganj, and the credit must surely go to them The medical students also did outstanding work in the big camp at Salt Lake, Sector Five, close to the city. The entire medical staff, students and intern-doctors showed unstinting dedication in their service to the suffering victims from across the border. St. John's Medical College, which assumes the responsibility for their training, can well be proud of them. May God grant you His blessings for this great service to the Nation and to the afflicted members of our human race."

Solemnity Marks Feast of Our Lady of Health

BANGALORE (CNI) : Solemn grandeur marked the celebration of the feast of Our Lady of Health at St. Mary's Church, Shivajinagar, Bangalore on September 8, when lakhs of Christians and non-Christians prayed, offered gifts at the miraculous Shrine popularly known as the Second Lourdes of the East, next only to the shrine of Our Lady at Velankanni in South India. Masses were offered from 4-30 in the morning culminating in an open-air concelebrated Mass by the Vicar Capitular, Rt. Rev. Msgr. Wm. L. D'Mello and seven other priests. Masses continued in the noon and at 4 and 6 p.m also. Processions bearing statutes and pictures of Our Lady of Health from gaily decorated outside chapels in various parts of Bangalore joined the main procession which began with Mr. Louis, Mysore Inspector-General of Police, pushing the first of 50 floats which went through the streets around the church till early hours of the following morning. The main float of Our Lady was fully bedecked with jasmine flowers, the annual contribution of the Hindu flower Merchants of Russell Market in front of the church. Fr. Paul Kinathukara, pastor of the Parish, to whom all credit goes for the successful organization of this grand celebration in the Archdiocese, blessed the procession.

The shrine of St. Mary's was built about 160 years ago by some Jesuit Fathers in 1760 with the help of the Fathers of the Foreign Mission Society of Paris.

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A good handwriting is the index of a man's character, said Mahatma Gandhi. Let us help our children to develop a good handwriting which is neat, firm and steady, just as their personality develops and helps them to reap the fruits of their destiny.

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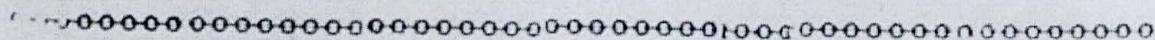
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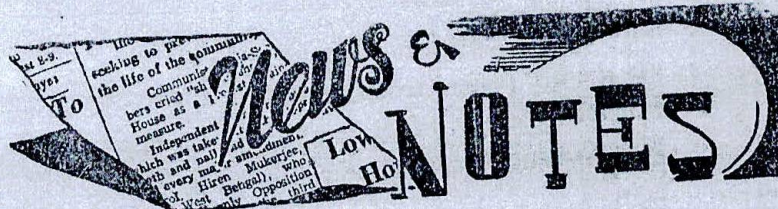
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DEAR READERS,

We in St. John's Medical College have sent four medical teams to the refugee camps in West Bengal and we thought it would be nice to share our experiences with you. The following account consists of extracts from our letters to the Staff and students of St. Johns.

I. "Work at Neelganj":

Extracts from letters of DR. RAM NARAYAN

12th July:— Neelganj Refugee camp is situated about 20—25 miles from Calcutta on the main trunk road between the towns of Barasat and Barrackpore in the 24 Paraganas district of West Bengal. The camp has about 5000 inhabitants, mostly children, women and old men. They are living in very unhygienic conditions — squalor, dirt and disease are rampant. The government and many other voluntary agencies are pouring in supplies, but the needs and numbers are gigantic. The land in and around the camp is low lying clay soil and with the monsoons having started, the area is becoming very slushy. The most urgent need in the camp is the starting of a Dispensary.

13th July:— We started our dispensary yesterday. A small thatched hut in the centre of the camp has a small unostentatious banner which reads 'CARITAS'. This is our dispensary. We work here from 8 A.M. to 6-30 P.M. with a short lunch break. After 6-30 it gets too dark to continue our work here and we have no light facilities. An old Ford brings us back and forth from Morning Star College where we have been put up. Our team consists of the three of us, Mr. Carpenter our Pathology Technician and two Sisters — Sr. Bridget of the Medical Mission and Sr. Paul of the Jesus and Mary Congregations.

23rd July :— Our out-patient section sees about 200 — 250 patients daily. It is manned by Dr. Vikram and Dr. Gouri. The cases are predominantly dysenteries, Pneumonia. Skin diseases and Malnutrition. We have seen no cases of cholera so far. The dressing section, in which Mr. Carpenter and Sr. Paul work, has a large attendance of eye and ear infections and skin diseases. We have two cases of bullet injuries which come regularly for treatment.

All our patients are given medicines for never more than two days in neat little white packets, and injections and mixture are given daily. Sr. Bridget and I visit the huts daily where we see elderly patients and others who are too ill to come to our dispensary. We carry a few important medicines in a basket and occasionally our sojourns take us to the nearby village where some of the refugees are staying. Home visiting is very interesting because we come to know a lot about these people — their customs, food habits and their present living conditions. I will always remember my visit to a small brick hut in the centre of a moat approachable by a foot wide mud-path in which one of our open cases of Tuberculosis was residing with his family. The only available ventilation was a doorway 3 feet by 1½ feet and one had to bend double to enter the place. Not all the visits are however so depressing. One is happy to find that amidst all this suffering people still have moments of laughter and merriment. We often find men gathered together playing cards or listening to the old village musician singing their haunting melodies, children swinging on makeshift swings or cradles and craftsmen busy weaving fishing nets or making split bamboo fish traps.

24th July :— The brothers from Morning Star College help us in our work as translators. One of them compounds all the mixtures that we prescribe in the dispensary. CARITAS has organised a milk and bread distribution programme which is also carried out by them. We have received donations of biscuits, fruit juices, custard and baby foods which are distributed to needy patients through our dispensary. Soon they will be distributing clothes and even blankets.

25th July :— Yesterday we had quite a busy day in the camp since we opened our new treatment room. This is a small hut with

6 — 7 bamboo beds, where we propose to admit patients for intravenous fluids, deliveries and minor nursing procedures. During the period of admission, the patients receive food from the hospital—biscuits, milk, orange juice, bread, vegetable and meat stews all of which come in neat little tins donated by foreign welfare organisations.

27th July :— The refugees are like our villagers. They have medicines only if they feel ill. When their symptoms settle down, they discontinue treatment and invariably return with a relapse. It is often exasperating but one has to be patient with them. There are others who like our medicines so much that they return daily with imaginary complaints. Here one gets an insight into the difficulties one would face in the practice of medicine in the rural areas.

28th July :— Today a little baby girl was born in our dispensary. Her mother Lokhi Rani had been admitted on the previous day with severe gastro-enteritis precipitating the onset of labour. With our Maternity Kit and a little bit of common sense, our sisters conducted the delivery safely. From our box of old clothes we brought out cute baby dresses for the infant and the mother left the dispensary in the evening, proud of her little one. We shall be visiting them post-natally for a few days and the sisters will be teaching her the basic principles of child care.

29th July :— The Monsoons have set in and daily we have downpours. The patients however continue to come and an interesting feature we noticed was that they have all brought their own umbrellas from East Pakistan. Many of them brought just that and nothing else.

1st August :— A team of ten brothers have arrived from De Nobili College, Poona. They are organising the "caritas" sponsored bread distribution programme in many of the nearby camps. We have nicknamed them the "Bread Brothers".

6th August :— The local government health authorities visit us quite often and use our daily statistics for drawing graphs which

as you know is an important pastime for them. Incidentally we have been pressing them to make arrangements for ambulance facilities for some of our patients who need emergency surgery in a district hospital.

8th August:— Today the youngmen of the camp aged 15 — 35 organised a small folk and film song concert for us at our dispensary. We gathered there after dinner at about 9 p.m. and till 11 p.m., were entertained by them. They had hired a harmonium and a drum for the occasion. It was an attempt by them to express their appreciation of our work and the gesture was very touching. Often they come and offer us rice, dhal or sugar from their rations or invite us to their huts for a meal to reciprocate our work for them.

15th August:— Today after attending the flag-hoisting ceremony on the terrace of the seminary we went to the camp to give all the children a treat on our Independence day. All the children were asked to line up for a glass of freshly prepared protein milk and biscuits. The queue was never ending and many of the little ones kept coming for second and third rounds. I am sure they enjoyed themselves. We have completed a month of work at Neelganj and on retrospect we find that the experience has been very fruitful. Professionally we have had very good experience and we have also felt a sense of fulfilment — we feel we have lived up to our St. John's motto "He lives because of me".

II. The Challenge of Salt Lake:—

Extracts from letters of

DOCTOR WENZEL VAZ, MARIAN KAMATH AND PALANIAPPAN

25th August:— Salt Lake Camp is situated on the outskirts of Calcutta near Dum Dum Airport. Unlike Neelganj it is a very huge camp since it is an attempt by the government to prevent refugees from entering Calcutta. In the camp there is a 60 — 70 bed hospital organised by the Caritas and the Medico International of Germany. Daily there is an exodus into the camp and it has now become the biggest headache for the government.

26th August :— The camp has over 100,000 refugees. There are huts in every direction as far as the eye can see. The huts are very well built. The refugees are given free food, lodging, medical care— everything they need. The Indian government is doing a very good job in the present circumstances. These people are definitely not going to return to Pakistan — they hope to stay on permanently in India which to them is a land of plenty.

Our hospital also consists of tents and thatched huts. The O.P.D. is very busy. We see about 500 — 700 patients per day. We start at 7 a.m. and carry on till 5-30 p.m. At present there are two German doctors, two Indian doctors and three of us students.

28th August :— We take turns in doing night duty. I stayed behind last night with two sisters. What work! We had six deliveries, one abortion due to cholera and three other cholera patients. Most of our time was spent in starting intravenous saline drips. Our only light was a spirit lantern and a torch. The sisters are worth their weight in gold. No one can work like them.

In our wards we only admit the serious cases — mainly cholera, bacillary dysentery and pneumonia. The rest we give medicines and send them home, hoping for the best. Our wards are so full — some times two patients on a mat and there are drips all over the place. Thank God our wards are waterproof.

The Mother Teresa nuns look after our food and the patients, food in the wards. Mother Teresa herself works here. She is a wonderful person. "Caritas" distributes 20,000 loaves of bread here every day — 1 loaf for 5 people.

5th August :— There are so many voluntary organisations helping the people over here. The sanitation is being looked after by some volunteers from Germany and England. The whole system is marvellous — the drainage being carried out with the help of sub-soil water — the area being very swampy. They try to check the flies with lots of sprays and bleaching powder but the flies somehow thrive here and the incidence of dysentery is very high. For the last few days the number of cholera cases are decreasing. Most of the

children have pneumonias or worm infestations. Malnutrition is the rule and almost every child suffers from it. An epidemic of infective hepatitis and polio have also broken out.

10th August :— Today Senator Edward Kennedy visited our camp. He visited our hospital and asked us about the health problems of the camp. He was listening most of the time and was appalled at the magnitude of the camp and its problems. Our Salt Lake City camp is probably one of the biggest refugee camps in the world.

The refugees here are definitely better off than the average Indian slum dweller. Already many people in Calcutta are grumbling about the privileges that they are getting — the refugees are also not always grateful and accept everything as their right. In Pakistan they were starving — here they get everything free without lifting a finger to help themselves. The Government even has to pay them to build their own houses.

When we came we used to have 20 — 25 deaths/day in our wards. But now conditions have improved and the death rate has fallen to 2—3/day — mainly old people and small children.

12th September :— The Salt Lake Camp has now a total strength of about a lakh and 70 thousand refugees. The hospital also has increased its bed-strength to 250 and the out patient attendance ranges from 700 — 1000 patients a day. There are hardly any facilities for laboratory investigations here and hence we have to rely mainly on our clinical acumen to diagnose and treat the cases. The working conditions are not too bad. The work is enjoyable but it is the stifling heat which saps one of all energy and concentration.

28th September :— At the camp there are a lot of clashes taking place between the refugees and the government volunteers who come to distribute rations here. People feel that these incidents are politically motivated. The injured are usually brought to our dispensary for treatment. Once the jeep in which we were travelling was gheraoed by government volunteers who claimed that adequate treatment was not given by us for one of the injured of their side. They tore off the canvas from the sides and started brandishing their fists at us. Luckily they were not armed and if it was not for the timely intervention of some home guards anything could have happened. Though security measures were taken after this, the authorities did not seem very much perturbed since for people in Calcutta this is an everyday affair. We have not had any trouble after that.

..... And so the story continues. The story of young doctors and their contribution to what Senator Kennedy has described as "the greatest disaster of mankind".

Mother's Day Celebrations, C.W.L., Bangalore

On Saturday, 10th October 1971, a fine function, part of the Mother's Day Celebrations of the Catholic Women's League was held at the Catholic Club, Bangalore.

At 5-00 p.m. tea and refreshments were on sale, and embroidered kerchief's were sold for presentation to Mothers.

Mrs. Yvonne Ferris, President of the Catholic Women's League opened the service stating that the Catholic Women's League, Bangalore had been celebrating Mother's Day for years, around the 11th October, Feast of the Maternity of Our Lady. Catholic Women had regularly collected money and clothes, new and old for annual distribution in all parishes to the poor.

In recent years an Essay contest on 'Mother' for school-children has been successfully conducted.

Rev. Father Stanley Aranjo, next exhorted Catholic Mothers to take their responsibilities seriously. The duty of a mother was to help a child to grow, develop and absorb all that was best in the home. This called some to divest themselves of their own wishes and adjust to the temperament not only of the husband but of each individual child. Each child had its own personality. The Blessed Virgin worked in her home at Nazareth with joy and cheerfulness. The Catholic Mother too must dedicate herself generously, enthusiastically, and lovingly to the children given by God.

Our Lady also extended her motherhood to all mankind. The Catholic mother must think of those children suffering, neglected, and forgotten. There were not only the 'haves' and 'Have-nots' in India, but thousands of 'Have-nothings'.

A beautiful Bible Service with hymns, prayers and reflections followed Father Aranjo's stirring address. Especially apt in this Abortion Age was the verse quoted below:

All: We ask this Lord, through Mary, our Mother, that all women respect motherhood and not fall a prey to vicious teachings that encourage the destruction of life, which is the gift of God.

After the bible Service, Mrs. Marie Therese Castellino read out winning excerpts from the essays written for 'Mother's Day' Competition. Prizes were distributed to Primary, Middle and High School winning students.

Games followed for the over 125 women present. A "Lucky Mother" Competition too was awarded a prize. Entertainment was provided by Mrs. Dora Gonsalves—she is a well-known comedian in the Catholic world. The gathering dispersed, happy and content.

Tribute to St. JOHN'S Doctors for Refugee Relief Work

BANGALORE (CNI): The first batch of doctors from St. John's Medical College, Bangalore, who had volunteered to help in the refugee relief work in north-east India have completed their assignment and have returned after making noteworthy contribution to succour the refugees. Rev. Alen de Lastic, Rector, Morning Star College, Sewli-Telenipara, via Barrackpore, 24-Parganas district, in a letter dated August 28, 1971 addressed to Dr. L. Monteiro, Dean of St. John's Medical College, Bangalore, says:

"Please accept my heartfelt thanks for sending the medical teams to help out in the refugee camps nearby. Doctors Vikram, Ravi and Gouri were the pioneers in this work. But for their kind service the camp at Nilganj, two miles from here, would have remained neglected, and many would probably not be alive today. Their efficient and regular medical attention is responsible for the health of the entire camp. I do not think there is a healthier camp than that of Nilganj, and the credit must surely go to them . . . The medical students also did outstanding work in the big camp at Salt Lake, Sector Five, close to the city. The entire medical staff, students and intern-doctors showed unstinting dedication in their service to the suffering victims from across the border. St. John's Medical College, which assumes the responsibility for their training, can well be proud of them. May God grant you His blessings for this great service to the Nation and to the afflicted members of our human race."

Solemnity Marks Feast of Our Lady of Health

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