

The **+** WITNESS

DECEMBER 15, 1966

10¢

Editorial

The Babe of Bethlehem

Articles

The Scarred Face Glowed

Paul Moore Jr.

Christmas at Collins' Canteen

Hugh McCandless

Three Symbols of Christmas

Benjamin Minifie

Remember These Things

Hamilton Kellogg

NEWS: --- NCC Tackles the Big Questions at
General Assembly. Christmas Truce in
Vietnam May Offer Chance for Negotiation

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Story of the Week

National Council Has Come of Age Bishop Mueller Tells Assembly

★ A new maturity has been achieved by the National Council of Churches which allows it to accommodate both liberals and conservatives, continue contributions on such issues as civil rights and make new thrusts in both world peace and evangelistic programs, the retiring president said at Miami Beach.

Bishop Reuben H. Mueller, in a report to the 868 voting delegates from 30 denominations represented at the NCC's seventh triennial General Assembly, declared that the Council has "grown up" in the last three years.

"The image of the Council has changed from one of suspicion on the part of the general public and the press to one of understanding," he said.

Within the Council itself, observed the churchman "we've learned how to debate and respect each other's opinion even though we don't agree."

There still is need, however, for greater participation by the delegates, who "have an obligation to the denominations they represent to speak out," he said.

And, perhaps more importantly, Bishop Mueller added, "we've shown that we're not all out in left field. We've come to recognize that you have to have people out in advance experimenting, and you have to

have those dragging behind out of loyalty to history.

"The Council's job has been to keep the tension between the two extremes so we have a balance and don't let any eager beavers run away with it . . . The happy thing about the Council is that we can all benefit from what the others are doing."

Despite continuing attacks by "muckrakers," the bishop said, the Council has "attained a position of respect among responsible people. For this we thank God and take heart."

Charges of Communist infiltration "that have been refuted time and time again" continue to be presented to Church members through "cheaply printed literature and bombastic radio broadcasts," he noted, commenting that unscrupulous operators have found that attacking the NCC is a good way to "squeeze dollars" out of gullible individuals.

Bishop Mueller said he is satisfied that the Council, under his leadership, has carried out the commission given to him three years ago — to accomplish something in the area of race relations.

"The job isn't finished," he acknowledged, "but we alerted the country to the fact that there is a Christian position on this issue, and we worked with

the Roman Catholics and Jews to provide the influence which brought about the enactment of our present civil rights legislation."

He also discussed the Council program for the next three years, especially the efforts toward achievement of world peace.

"If anybody is for peace in the world, it ought to be the Christian Church," declared the NCC president. "And we ought never to make an apology for stating this as a general position. We ought to be in the front ranks on this."

The immediate future of the Council includes a new day of evangelism, the bishop said, commenting that "without surrendering the basic need to have changed lives through the power of God" the Church must also "get out into the world and let it be known that Christ died for the world."

But the more distant future, Bishop Mueller went on, includes the coming into the Council of many of the more conservative evangelical denominations — such as the Southern Baptist Convention and the Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod, and finally the participation of the Roman Catholic Church.

Earlier, at a worship service attended by delegates and more than 2,000 visitors, Bishop Mueller called on churchmen to "push beyond the parish" in order to "bear our witness in a secular age."

"It is Christ's purpose," he said, "that the world should come to believe and to know that he is the way to God and the complete and full and liberated life."

The General Assembly — described as a kind of national "town meeting of churches" — convened this year under the theme, "That the World May Know."

President Flemming

Arthur S. Flemming, president of the University of Oregon, was elected president of NCC. As reported here November 24, it is the regular procedure of the nominating committee to present but one person for the office. He is the second layman to hold it, J. Irwin Miller of Indiana having served from 1960-63.

Prior to going to Oregon Flemming was secretary of health, education and welfare in the Eisenhower administration.

Evangelism

The Rev. Billy Graham addressed the delegates at a luncheon meeting and told them that Christians should place less emphasis on "intellectual argument" and "to get more excited about the gospel of Jesus Christ."

He has never before addressed an Assembly and many interpreted the invitation as an effort on the part of NCC officials to win evangelical groups who have been the most vocal critics of the organization.

R. H. Edwin Espy, general secretary, said that Graham's appearance reflected a new willingness on the part of the council to "consider a variety of responses to the serious spiritual vacuum of our day."

"It would be a shame," he said, "if the ecumenical movement became identified with liberal theology and liberal social attitudes."

Reports to Board

An "explosion of new relationships" between Protestant and Roman Catholic groups has been loosed by the Vatican Council, Cynthia C. Wedel, associate general secretary for Christian unity, pointed out to the policy-making general board.

Her remarks shortly preceded a declaration by the board that the Catholic Church is "in agreement" with the preamble to the constitution of the NCC and eligible to send non-voting fraternal delegates to the Assembly and place staff members on Council boards and committees.

Other leaders of major program divisions addressing the board included Jon L. Regier, head of the division of Christian life and mission. He said key division concerns include human values in a technological society, equal economic opportunity and ministries to American Indians and seasonal farm workers.

David M. Stowe, head of the division of overseas ministries, told board members that the "capacities of the worldwide Christian fellowship" in the future must be channeled more effectively into ministries of international understanding, reconciliation and peace.

"It is a sad fact," he said, "that the fantastic resources represented in the global network of personal relationships and international partnerships, which we call world missions and world service, have been all too ineffectively mobilized for this life and death issue of our time: peace."

Gerald E. Knopf told of the streamlining for greater "efficiency and clarity" of function which the division of Christian education, which he heads, has undergone in the past two years.

Delta Ministry

A new financial stability is in prospect for the Delta Ministry.

The Rev. Norman J. Baugher, chairman of its division of Christian life and mission, told the board that the Mississippi program of relief, rehabilitation and education for impoverished Negroes and whites has taken steps to meet the board's demand last June to live within its budget.

The ministry, Baugher said, "has now achieved financial stability, and we expect no recurrence of past financial problems."

An intensive study report on the project, which has stimulated criticism from white Southerners for its activist civil rights activities, called particularly for tightening-up in the program's fiscal procedures.

In 1965, it was noted, the ministry went \$160,000 over its \$360,000 income.

Baugher reported that special fund-raising efforts are expected to meet this year's budget of \$405,165 and also retire about \$50,000 of last year's over-expenditure.

The board set a budget of \$300,000 for 1967 — a total which Baugher said seems assured.

The financial cutback, Baugher said, made it necessary to reduce the working staff from 32 to 26 persons. Also, he added, a "general freeze" has been put on voter registration and community organization projects.

Aid for Migrants

Churches on the local, regional and national levels were urged to "press vigorously" for new legislation designed to ease the plight of migrant farm workers.

In an extensive policy statement the general board declared that while the needs of

seasonal agricultural workers have been brought to national attention sporadically, steps to provide lasting improvements for them have been "deplorably inadequate."

The policy-makers, meeting in advance of the General Assembly, called for inclusion of farm workers under provisions of the national labor relations act and

the protection of the national labor relations board.

Also advocated were improvements for migrant workers in the areas of minimum wage levels, unemployment compensation, and federal and state financial assistance for education of migrant children, day care services, sanitation facilities, housing and welfare services.

salary of priests will be paid by the state though some Catholics would not want this, just as they do not want it now from Franco."

"Marxism and Christianity must work together in the pursuit of authentic liberty. This begins at the economic level. In capitalism, the worker does not play a creative part in society," he said.

Conceding that grave errors have been committed in the establishment of Marxist policies and governments, Garaudy said that "liberty is that which gives the fullest possibility for a man to develop himself completely."

He was asked if he thought the encyclicals, *Quadragesimo Anno* and *Rerum Novarum*, didn't provide a good basis for the economic and cultural freedom of the worker based on Christian principles?

He replied: "No, because as both Christians and Marxists now realize these two encyclicals are far outdated. Leo XIII discusses only the excesses of capitalism, not its principles. Thus, as many Catholic groups in France have said, they do not form a sufficient basis for the Christian worker and his place in society."

In calling for the Marxist-Christian dialogue, Garaudy said: "If someone thinks he has all the truth, there can be no dialogue, only a teacher imposing his views on a poor, benighted student. When both the Communist and the Christian can admit that he has something to learn from the other, only then can there be dialogue."

The French professor maintained that there have been two significant changes which now make such a dialogue possible. For the Communist the change came in 1956 when the 20th congress of the Soviet Communist Party denounced the ex-

Jesuit and Marxist Scholars Outline Plans for Dialogue

★ A primary requirement for any Christian-Marxist dialogue is intelligent people to begin it and "in the United States you have no Marxist thinker or Communist of any stature," said Roger Garaudy, the French Marxist philosopher.

Garaudy made his comments at a press conference at the John LaFarge Institute in N. Y.. He was invited to the institute by its director, Fr. John Courtney Murray, S.J., a member of the Vatican secretariat for non-believers.

At the invitation of Harvey Cox of the Harvard Divinity School, Garaudy will speak at Harvard. The French Marxist, who is a former senator and vice-president of the French National Assembly, will also appear at Temple University in Philadelphia, Union Theological Seminary in New York, St. Louis University, New York University and Fairleigh Dickinson University in New Jersey.

When asked about a Christian-Marxist dialogue behind the iron curtain, Garaudy said that dialogue will begin shortly in the east at Prague, with the agreement of Poland and Hungary. He will give the same paper in Prague which he delivered at the Catholic University of Louvain in Belgium.

Garaudy said that Christians

and Marxists have been holding discussions for several years in Europe, especially in Germany, France and Italy.

A German-speaking association of Catholic scholars called the Paulus Society has sponsored such discussions at annual conferences in Munich, Cologne, Salzburg and Herrenchiemsee, West Germany.

Garaudy said that Spain "is most exemplary in leading the way in this dialogue."

Explaining that the bishop of Madrid first suggested a dialogue between Christians and Marxists, Garaudy noted that his book, *From Anathema to Dialogue*, is scheduled to be published by a Jesuit press in Barcelona.

"In the Basque and Castile regions of Spain," Garaudy said, "the Marxists are often invited to meet in the sacristies by the local parish priests. This is because the Marxists and many Christians are both fighting the Franco regime."

Calling Spain an example of the Holy Alliance rejected by Marx, the French professor said: "Both Christians and Marxists in Spain realize that cooperation is necessary and that a separation of Church and state is vital. Should the Marxists come to power in Spain it is already agreed that the

cesses of the Stalinist era. The Vatican Council produced a change for the Catholic Church, he said, when it called for dialogue and cooperation with non-Catholics.

Garaudy reasoned that dialogue is possible today because "some on both sides are willing to reject dogmatism and the belief that his side possesses all the truth."

Fr. Murray called the growing Christian-Marxist dialogue "a very tricky, but very necessary thing."

"We have to listen to the Marxist critique of religion.

We can learn much about our faith," the Jesuit priest said.

Comparing such a dialogue with the Marxists with the earlier development of Protestant-Catholic dialogues, Fr. Murray said: "You don't inquire at the outset how it will turn out. Rather, you commit yourself to a learning process with the knowledge that you may wind up against a wall."

He insisted that such discussions were in keeping with the "openness" of the Vatican Council and its assertion that "dialogue is a contemporary way of presenting the gospel."

Official Sees Christmas Truce Chance to Test Negotiation

★ A Christmas truce in Vietnam long enough to serve "as a cooling off period and as an opportunity for testing possibilities of negotiation" was urged in a statement issued by the top international affairs official of the World Council of Churches.

The statement by O. Frederick Nolde, director of the international affairs commission, was issued as it was announced by the South Vietnamese government in Saigon that its troops and those of its allies would observe brief cease-fires at Christmas and during the western and Asian New Year's holidays.

Earlier, the National Liberation Front, political arm of the Viet Cong, had proposed a truce during the holiday season.

In Austin, where President Johnson continued to recuperate from his operations, there was no special White House truce statement. George Christian, assistant press secretary, simply read the Saigon announcement, which he said the President had a part in preparing.

Other allied governments — Australia, New Zealand, South Korea and the Philippines — reportedly also were consulted by Saigon.

Nolde said in his statement that "it is recognized that peace cannot be made by any single party to the conflict. However, the urgency of the situation places upon each one a responsibility to continue the search for imaginative solutions with a readiness to take reasonable risks."

The statement was directed to Secretary of State Dean Rusk, foreign ministers of the Soviet Union and United Kingdom — continuing co-chairmen of the Geneva Conference of 1954 — foreign ministers of India, Canada and Poland — members of the International Control Commission established in 1964 — foreign ministers of South and North Vietnam, U.N. Secretary General U Thant and the president of the U. N. General Assembly.

Nolde called attention to the February 1966 action of the World Council's central commit-

tee which urged another cease-fire, peace negotiations and enlargement of the international control commission "to ensure that cease-fire commitments are honored."

The Christmas truce last year resulted in much confusion, without precisely the same cease-fire periods observed by the Allied and Viet Cong forces. Later, the South Vietnamese charged that the Viet Cong had violated the Christmas and New Year truces 199 times.

Pope Paul has not repeated publicly his 1965 plea for a truce, but it was expected that he would.

In anticipation of the papal plea, the national conference of Catholic Bishops in the U. S. declared in a statement on Vietnam: "We ask every person of goodwill to support with prayer the Holy Father's plea for a Christmas cease-fire. May it open the way to a lasting peace."

E.T.S. TO STUDY FUTURE NEEDS

★ Episcopal Theological School will hold three major conferences on "Frontiers for Theological Education" as part of its centennial year observance.

Dean John B. Coburn said the conferences will explore new approaches in theological education to strengthen for future generations the ministry to the moral and social problems in contemporary life.

"This is the day," Dean Coburn observed, "when ministers, if they are to serve God and their parishioners, must be able to relate the God of history to the living experiences of men and women and nations in the mid-20th century."

The first of the three conferences — Jan. 27-29 — will be concerned with "Theological Education as Professional Education."

EDITORIAL

The Babe of Bethlehem

THE CHURCH which is the body of Christ was born in a stable, planned in a carpenter shop, preached by the wayside, organized in an upper room. There was no pomp or ceremony in the birth of him who was to be the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, and yet there was a quiet dignity in the prelude to the drama. Some simple shepherds heard a choir of angels singing, "Glory to God and on earth peace, good will to men." There were Magi from the east bearing symbolic gifts. There was a radiant star casting its light upon the cradle. Surely God is an artist as well as a mechanic; a dramatist as well as a mathematician.

The event has been the inspiration of art and music and poetry; of worship and fellowship and benevolence. It has found a response in the merriment of children, the joy of parents, the carols of innumerable choirs. Because of its simplicity it has been within the comprehension of young and old in all nations. The test of time is the witness to truth. That which satisfies a human need in all places and at all times needs no logic to demonstrate its value, no argument to prove its worth.

If the spirit of Christmas could be the atmosphere in which men lived throughout the year the Christian gospel would demonstrate itself. But there are certain factors in the problem which need to be considered.

First there is God's gift of the Christ to a world which was eager to be healed of its diseases without desiring to overcome its sins. But God's gifts are dependent upon man's co-operating with the conditions involved in their bestowal. God did not give man education but merely the capacity for it. Unless and until man developed the capacity he could not possess the treasure. God does not give man righteousness but merely the capacity for it, and unless and until man develops the capacity, so likewise he cannot possess the treasure.

Today the world demands equality, fraternity and liberty by a short cut. Instead of developing the capacity within he seeks to impose these qualities upon men from without. In such a program these words are like the claims of a

high pressure salesman. They are slogans which conceal the facts.

You may have equality of privilege in a household where love prevails but not in a corporation where only ability counts. You may have fraternity in a group where men give and forgive, but not in a world of racial and class prejudices. You may have liberty where men are virtuous but not where they are brutal and vindictive.

There is no greater hypocrisy than that of using slogans which are stolen from the gospel and proclaimed by Barabbas. "Not this man but Barabbas."

Why do so many disciples of Christ look to such sources for relief. It is, they say, because the Church has failed. Failed to do what? To come down from the cross and save a wicked world by legislative enactment.

Of course the greatest failure of all time seemed to be that of Christ himself. Instead of correcting the political and economic injustice of the Roman Empire he allowed himself to be crucified. No wonder the disciples forsook him and fled. It needed a resurrection to gather again the scattered forces.

We want Christmas without Advent; Easter without Good Friday. And we want these things because our deeds are evil. Christmas has become a house of merchandise; Easter a parade of fashion. We wonder why the world is rejecting Christ when Christians celebrate Christmas without Christ's Mass as the one adequate observance of the day.

Many Christians are filled with discontent. It is a divine discontent when we are discontented with ourselves; a worldly discontent when we are discontented with others; a diabolical discontent when we are discontented with God.

We agree that the world is very sick but that does not mean that it will be cured by any other prescription than that which the great Physician gave — in which he assured us that in the world we should have much tribulation, but bade us to be of good cheer for he had overcome the world. No! Not yet but in his own good time.

So in spite of the world's tribulation let us adore the Babe of Bethlehem in full confidence that he will bring peace and good will into God's creation in his own good time.

THE SCARRED FACE GLOWED

By Paul Moore Jr.

Suffragan Bishop of Washington

FAITH IS FOUNDED IN A SIMPLE SERIES OF EVENTS WHICH ARE OPEN- ENDED TO ALMOST ANY PHILOSOPHY

THE BUS STATION in downtown Washington was positively un-American — unaffluent, unclean; unshiny; nor did the couple sitting on a bench fit in with the American image of Christmas. But the piped in music was American Christmas: Red Nosed Reindeer, Bing Crosby and the rest.

The couple came from South Carolina, figuring Christmas would be a good time to travel. The ticket cost too much for them, so they were in the bus station with no place to go. Joe sat Mamie down and, timid, asked somebody else in overalls what to do. The guy kept walking.

This confused Joe awhile, but finally he tried someone else, tugging his coat for attention. The man turned around, slow, put both hands on Joe's shoulders and said, "Son, you are in bad shape in a bad town. Your wife's pregnant, huh? Well, I got a garage; that's all I got; it's not far from here. You wanna go there, go ahead. Five blocks up and two blocks over."

Joe made his wife fairly comfortable on the work bench in the garage, and that night the baby came. It wasn't a very pretty business. Mamie groaned and grunted, and her eyes grew larger and larger in wonder at the incredible pain. Only when Joe showed her the baby did her eyes soften in a smile amid tears. Joe put the baby on an oil drum and wrapped him in rags.

The light bulb at the end of the garage was on all night and attracted kids off the street. They came in and stood around. One big mean-looking boy with a scar across his mouth looked down close at the baby for a long while. Then his face glowed with a glorious smile.

The First Christmas

I DON'T THINK the first Christmas was much different. Where has all the dirt gone? Where has all the smell gone? Where has all the pain gone? Where has all the poverty gone? And why is it that people search for its spirit in

rich parties and beautiful churchly buildings and listen for it in Christmas songs, when it wasn't a party, and it wasn't pretty, and the only sounds you could hear that night were the cries of a poor girl with her first baby?

And why is it that wise and sensitive men, looking back on such a scene from the perspective of a lynched body hanging outside the city, and an empty grave, should declare the birth the mark of time, should declare it merry, should declare it the great event and should say that man's deepest understanding of reality began that way?

The Foundation Stone

THE BABY WHO was born in the garage grew up and was able to uncover the forces of love which, whenever called upon in the intervening years, have been able to center men down into knowing themselves and have enabled them to deal with each other and with the blows of existence.

This love regarded every baby born worth more than a city and could make the scarred and ugly mouth of any man change to a smile of unnerving glory.

Further, the event became the foundation stone of a way of thinking about the interpenetration of the physical with the spiritual, giving ultimate value to the one and reality to the other. It has colored the life not only of those who believed it all, but also of those who have run from it, afraid to deal with the belief that creation springs from what is called love. For this belief implies that our love, or lack of it, has cosmic significance.

Hard facts of history and personal experience have tended to bear out the accepted meaning of the birth of that child, of what he later said, the manner of his death and the mystery of all that followed. However, the naked body of its truth was offensive to many, and thus the nakedness has been made to masquerade,

Rouault-like, as Clown or Fool in Christmas tinsel.

We who make the costumes are the clowns and fools. Our world is a world of disorder within and without. Not long ago people were either believers, agnostics or atheists. The agnostics had a clear idea of what they did not know, and the atheists a clear idea of the God they did not believe in. These terms are not used much now because even the departments of unbelief are blurred for it seems no intellectual certainly is possible in our existential age.

Merry Love

REJOICE, THEN, that faith is founded in a simple series of events which are open-ended to almost any philosophy, or lack of it, and in

which, therefore, an age of traumatic change can find a key to certainty. The so-called "Death of God" theology is saying this: that even the elimination of all traditional God-structures does not eliminate the Christ.

You Christians who know and believe, rejoice in all the rich glory of Christmas. You Christians who stand on the edge of faith, doubting be reassured once more. You who are not Christians, investigate again the meaning of what happened that night. Ask why a belief in cosmic power is tied into the birth of a child in poverty. You may find in the answer, at the very last, a place to steady yourselves as the waves of change sweep by.

Enjoy, then, whoever you are, the merry love of Christmas.

CHRISTMAS AT COLLINS' CANTEEN

By Hugh McCandless

STORY TOLD AT THE CHURCH OF
THE EPIPHANY AT THE FAMILY
SERVICE ON CHRISTMAS DAY, 1965

MY FRIEND, Squadron O'Toole, is a modern young man, and has laughed at many a joke about sibling rivalry. But philosophy is no match for fate; and sometimes he feels that fate had him marked for tragedy when it gave him a little sister like Flotilla. He used to tell me what a handicap she was, and that she was probably even the most tiresome girl in the world. He said she was apparently training herself to be either a company spy or a gossip columnist, and she had taken to reporting him every time he deviated in the slightest degree from the family's official party line. I asked for more details, in the hope of being a peacemaker, but he said it was no use; no one could really understand how awful she was unless he had to be her brother.

I am very sorry to say that hostilities were about at their worst last Christmas, of all times. Mr. and Mrs. O'Toole tried to keep them separate—but equal—during the holidays. One difficulty was that the parents felt obliged to go out for Christmas brunch at Toots and Sonny Wombat's. The Wombats were having three or

four hundred intimate friends in for corned beef hash and champagne, and they definitely did not want any of their intimate friends' children. So the O'Tooles were quite relieved when Mr. Kolinsky, who was coming to their house for dinner that night, invited Squadron to Collins' Canteen for Christmas lunch. They said that Flotilla could have a nice peanut butter sandwich at home with her baby brother Feemus. This made a lot of sense to Squadron, and he helpfully reminded Flotilla that she loved peanut butter sandwiches.

Both children were greatly impressed with Mr. Kolinsky. Mr. Ossip Kolinsky, as you probably know, is the sculptor who does such large statues that they have to go in gardens, not houses. It was not his art that impressed them so much as the ease with which he moved a block of marble around when he wanted to bang away at it from another side. He also had an interesting perspective on things. For example, he believed firmly in angels. Once when Squadron said he wished that Christmas would come tomorrow, Mr. Kolinsky groaned that that was

wishing his life away, and that life was a gift from God.

Private Preserve

SQUADRON was thrilled to enter Collins' Canteen, which is the very private preserve of our local truckmen. Even Mr. O'Toole, when he went in once, felt like such an intruder that he merely asked what time it was. But Mr. Kolinsky was even bigger, and often more roughly dressed, than the other customers, and they all found him extremely entertaining and uplifting. He even insisted on having a special lunch of sausage patties and boiled potatoes on Christmas Day, because they reminded him of his mother. Squadron was always a little confused about this, and wondered which delicacy Mr. Kolinsky's mother resembled; she certainly could not have looked like both. And Mr. Collins always thought it was a great nuisance, to have a special order when he was so busy with the two dollar turkey special.

But Mr. Kolinsky's sentiments were as strong as steel, and anyway the other customers looked forward every year to hearing one of his good Russian stories and watching him have a good Russian cry.

Squadron and his host sat in a booth, but Mr. Kolinsky picked up another chair with his little finger and put it at the end of the table. "Old Russian custom," he said. "Every Christmas, set an extra place. Maybe the Lord will come and sup with you." Everyone knew a story was coming on. Mr. Collins took the pan off the fire so he would not absent-mindedly burn the sausage.

"There is a story by Nikolai Semenovitch Leskov about this," said Mr. Kolinsky to the whole room. "A beautiful story," he said with a catch in his voice.

The Rich Exile

"YEARS AGO, there was a young farmer in Siberia. He was an exile, but he was pretty rich. He was there because when he was only seventeen years, his wicked uncle had stolen a terrible lot of money from him by slandering his dead father in the courts. That uncle! He needed a good kick. When he found out, he went to his uncle and cried 'Shame!' but the uncle denied and denied and then he even laughed, 'Hahaha.' He was a bad fellow. The young man picked up a pistol and shot it off at him, but only hit him in the hand. So they took the young man to the judge, but the judge

said, 'Why this is in effect still only a boy,' so he did not hang him but sent him to Siberia.

"In Siberia this good young man prospered. He had a blessed farm, wheat and roses, wheat and roses. Every year he invited all the poor exiles in the village to Christmas dinner. And he was a good Christian, besides. Every Christmas he set an extra place for the Lord, if He would care to come and eat. In fact, year after year after year, he even prayed the Lord to come.

"One Christmas was black and snowy, and there was a mean, angry wind. There was a knock on the door just before dinner. Everybody was frightened, for no one comes out on a night like that just to sing church songs. Then the door was blown in by the wind. And there stood a dirty, sick, old, raggedy man. He was crying. He raised his hand, and it was crippled. There was a beautiful, mysterious light shining around him. He said, 'Nephew, I have come to beg your forgiveness.'

"The young man jumped up. 'Uncle,' he said. 'I receive you in the name of the Lord.' I am not worthy that He should come under my roof.' He led the old man to the empty place and set him down in the extra chair. Then he cried, 'Let us rejoice, for Christ Himself has come among us!' And all the guests said, 'Amen.'"

Mr. Kolinsky blew his nose and Squadron blew his nose. Mr. Collins hid his face by looking into the boiling potatoes and letting his salt tears drip into them, although they were watery enough already.

Then Mr. Kolinsky called out, "Another order of sausage and potatoes!" Squadron looked up. There, sitting in the extra seat at the end of the table, was Flotilla. She had hidden in the back of Mr. Kolinsky's truck before he started off. She looked at Squadron. Mr. K. looked at Squadron. Squadron heard himself speaking, but it was as if it were someone else's voice. "Let us rejoice," he heard himself saying. "Merry Christmas, Flotilla. You can have all the sausage you want, Mr. Kolinsky says."

Well, you don't have to believe this; just ask Mr. Kolinsky what happened then. He told me on his word of honor that roses began to bloom on the thorn tree outside Collins' Canteen, and then six bluebirds flew into the tree and began to sing, and several angels were seen dancing for joy in the parking lot. All I know is that fourteen enormous working men began waiting

hand and foot on one of the very few ladies who have ever entered Collins' Canteen, and she began to talk baby talk and roll her eyes, and Squadron for once wasn't annoyed by all this, and that is miracle enough for me.

Remember These Things

By Hamilton Kellogg

The Bishop of Minnesota

EACH YEAR, Christmas comes to me with a slightly different emphasis. This year, it comes to me with an emphasis in the form of a reminder. The reminder is that there are certain imperative and meaningful things which we ought to remember at Christmas about Christmas.

First, let us remember what God has given us. He has given us our lives with all our faculties — our desires, our minds, our five senses— hearing, sight, smell, taste and touch. He also has given us our spirits and our wills. He has given us life with all its opportunities and potentialities, its human relationships, and all the things that are possible for human beings to be and to do.

He has given us the world in which we live. It may not be exactly the kind of world we should like, because it is far from an easy place in which to live. Indeed, the world in which we live always is a mixture of danger and of delight. However, God has given us the capacity to live in the world as it is. He has given us the capacity to meet life's dangers, and not simply to be engulfed and submerged by them. He has given us the capacity to enjoy the delights of the world in which we live; not only to hear and to see, but to be thrilled by the sights which we see, and the sounds which we hear.

But above all, he has given us himself in the life of Jesus of Nazareth. In Jesus, he has given us a life to live by, a life to live for, a life to live with, and a life to save us from our foibles and follies, and, when we do make mistakes, to bring us back, and put us once again on the track.

On Christmas, let us remember what God has given us!

Second, in spite of anything and everything to the contrary, the world in which we live is God's world. It is the world into which Christ

came. Whatever still needs to be explained, one thing is sure — no explanation can be adequate which leaves out Christmas.

At Christmas, let us remember that this is God's world!

Third, "If the Manger is empty, the Cross is bare." The first Christmas and each succeeding Christmas points the way,—The New Way! Through the baby hands that clutched at a mother's breast, God chose to initiate the process by which he would bring salvation to all men.

At Christmas, let us remember how closely, inevitably and necessarily our salvation is intertwined both with the Cross and the Manger!

Fourth, let us remember that, if we are to keep Christmas as Christians, and not as pagans, we must make its high point our coming to the altar, and receiving the body and blood of Jesus, the Child of the Manger, who became the Christ of the Cross! Will you do this, or will you be so occupied with the pleasures and pressures of the world that on his birthday you will be absent from his house?

A Christmas Story

By George L. Cadigan

The Bishop of Missouri

SOMEWHERE and some years ago, a sensitive friend told this story which comes from the Alpine country in Germany:

Two small children turn homeward through a mountain pass after a wonderful visit with their grandparents. The boy is eight years of age and his little sister has just turned six. Of course, it is Christmas Eve, and quite suddenly they are caught in a furious blizzard. Blinded by the driving snow, they stumble and lose their way. Then black night comes and darkness is all around. The girl holds firmly to her brother's hand as he leads her he knows not where. The great ice sheets cracking and the fury of the gale compound their fears.

Quite by chance, they stumble upon a little hut used by shepherds in the summer months. Huddled close for warmth, they understand that, should they sleep, they will not waken. The boy struggles to keep his sister roused. They open all the grandparents' gifts. They sing the familiar carols. They do everything

they can to remain awake, for their lives are at stake.

Finally, during the night, the storm ceases, the stars come out and then, as if by miracle, all the northern lights begin to play. All the shades of the rainbow — yellows and blues and pinks and violets — make a spectacle which the children had never seen before. So intrigued are they by this demonstration of the heavens that the children remain involuntarily awake.

Then morning comes and the brother and

sister are rescued by climbers from their village. They are caught up in the arms of their parents and, with the villagers following, they enter the church for the Christmas service. Leaning against his mother, the boy whispered, "Last night we saw the Christ Child!"

And I remember the teller of the story making this comment: "When a person makes an effort to survive, something in the universe lends him a hand."

THREE SYMBOLS OF CHRISTMAS

By Benjamin Minifie

Rector of Grace Church, New York

**THEY SHOULD HAVE REAL MEANING
SINCE THEY REMIND US OF JESUS
WHO WAS BORN AT THIS TIME**

ON CHRISTMAS DAY I never fail to have the sense that the wondrous meaning and significance of the event we celebrate is best expressed in the liturgy and music of the Church. Yes, in the ancient service wherein is to be found the whole gospel of Christ, the holy communion or eucharist in which we thank God for the coming of the Savior, and remember how he said, greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.

And, of course, in the carols and anthems which come out of many lands and many centuries and sing of God's mighty act, his coming to us in a little child, his caring for us this much, the miracle and mystery and humility and graciousness of the divine action. It seems to me that here, rather than through any sermon, it is all said and opportunity is given to us to respond as we should to the marvelous good news of the gospel, yes, to sing God's praises and to offer ourselves to him who has come to us.

This is one day when the place of the sermon is indeed a lesser one, and yet the Prayer Book itself suggests there shall be a sermon at every celebration of the holy communion, a rubric often broken, I'm afraid, at early services.

I was thinking these recent days of how Christmas has invaded every time and place and comes to us now-a-days laden with all kinds of symbols and customs, pagan as well as Christian, holly, candles, reindeer, mistletoe, Christ-

mas cakes and cookies, mince pies and tinsel and so much more that comes to mind. This, I expect, is one aspect of the universality of Christ, his belonging and appeal to one century after another, to all sorts and conditions of men.

And what I would say as we rejoice on Christmas day and remember him whose birthday it is comes out of thinking about three of these symbols or customs of the season, perhaps the three most familiar ones.

Saint Nicholas

THE FIRST is Santa Claus himself, actually Saint Nicholas, an ancient bishop of the Church who ministered in Asia Minor, and who is believed to have attended the Council of Nicaea in the year 325, the very council which formulated the Nicene creed we repeat so often in the communion service.

It is said that Nicholas endured and survived the cruel persecutions of the Church under the Roman Emperor Diocletian. He kept the faith when times were hard and contrary, but otherwise we don't know very much about him. O, there is such a story as the one about his slipping bars of gold through the window of three penniless young maidens of noble birth so that they would have sufficient dowries to marry the men of their hearts. Back of such a tale there may well be the fact that here was a man remembered for being imaginative and

kindly to people in trouble, a generous, gracious man.

At any rate, thanks to the original Dutch settlers of New York, St. Nicholas became Santa Claus. And, as everyone knows, it was another resident of New York, an Episcopal clergyman, Clement Clark Moore, who wrote the poem which supremely celebrates Santa Claus, the immortal one which begins,

'Twas the night before Christmas when
all through the house, Not a creature
was stirring, not even a mouse . . .

How many paths meet and cross when we turn to even one of these customs of the Christmas season — to this jolly one beloved of children, this one who comes bent over with gifts for others. Christmas is a giving time, a time of charity and magnanimity and good will, all of it traceable to him whose life was wholly for others, the Christ who brought a new life of caring and self-giving into the world.

The Manger Scene

ALMOST as familiar as Santa Claus at Christmas time is the creche, the manger scene with its figures of Mary and Joseph and the Christ-Child, of shepherds, too, and sheep and oxen in the background.

The creche, it is said, goes back to one of the Church's favorite saints, Francis of Assisi in Italy. Francis lived from 1180 to 1226, more than 700 years ago, and yet the memory of him is still very green, this Christ-like man whose life was so creative in its after-effects. He it was according to tradition who set up the first creche in the parish church of his home town. He did it that the local people might be able to see with their eyes what it was like when the Christ-Child was born in a stable in Bethlehem.

Christianity has much to say about the crucial events of our life, events like birth and death, marriage and parenthood, and the like. There is a title page in the middle of the Prayer Book which perfectly illustrates this. It lists the services which follow one after another in order. It begins with baptism and goes right on through confirmation, holy matrimony, the visitation of the sick, to the burial of the dead.

What the Prayer Book is saying here is that from the very beginning of our lives to the end of this mortal life, over and over again the Church of Christ comes to hallow and to bless, and, yes, always to remind us that we come from God, we belong to God, and we go to God.

There is no time, there is no event, past, present, or future, that falls outside his providence and his judgment.

As we look at the creche, and there should be one in every home, let us not be deceived into believing that Christmas is merely about a baby, or that it glorifies motherhood and is just a romantic story of a crowded inn and a little child who had to be born in a stable and laid in a manger.

This can be pretty sentimental, and there was nothing sentimental about Jesus of Nazareth. This is he who came demanding an obedience and loyalty to his own person that none other has ever asked.

He bid men follow him without reservations, to deny themselves and take up the way of the cross and follow in his train. He broke the bread signifying the sacrifice of his death and said, do this in remembrance of me. He commands us, go ye into all the world where ye shall be witnesses unto me. He demanded that his disciples put him first in their devotion before fathers and mothers, wives and children.

This is the one whose coming we celebrate at Christmas, one who comes as a king, as lord and master of men's lives, who comes from God and addresses us in his name. Do we know him as such and accept him and give him the obedience and loyalty of our lives? This is what must be at the very heart of our Christmas, if for us it is truly the day of the coming of the Christ and not just a Roman holiday or a sentimental time.

The Christmas Tree

THERE IS one other custom or symbol of Christmas well-nigh universal we would mention here, and that is the Christmas tree. This, we believe, goes back to the great reformer of the 16th century, Martin Luther, and the story has it that he was abroad one Christmas Eve when his attention was caught by the graceful form of a fir tree on a hillside darkly etched against a snowy background with the stars shining and twinkling above in the crisp winter night. Nothing would do but Luther must bring the tree into the house and light it with candles, and thus began the custom of the tree at Christmas, all lighted and festooned.

This, too, is in honor of this Jesus called Christ, and how appropriate that it should be a tree, for he himself was a carpenter and the son of a carpenter, a working man.

And how appropriate that it should be an evergreen tree, a tree which because its color and leaves or needles do not fade away and perish year by year is a symbol of everlasting life, of the eternal which stands above our ever-changing, our fleeting, passing world. For the Christ, too, remains the same yesterday, today, and forever. In a world where fashions ever change, where time constantly makes ancient good uncouth, his words, his truth, his way are never out of date. Indeed he is our eternal contemporary, and if anything he is far out ahead of us who drag our feet over such matters as insisting on equal justice and equal freedom for those in our midst too long denied them, who go on indulging in our national pride and national hatreds in a day when the world is one as it never was before.

A tree is an appropriate symbol, for again was it not on a tree of wood that he came to die in the end, this one who loved his own even this much?

It is most interesting, perhaps to some it is a paradox, that in this same service in which we rejoice in the birth of Christ, we also commemorate the sacrifice of his death. We sing the carols which celebrate his nativity at the same time we break the bread signifying the breaking, the offering, of his body. For is it not the cross which is the summit and climax of this life we look to for light and truth? It is at the cross that we find the love of God most movingly, most unforgettably revealed. This is the measure of how much God cares.

Light of Christmas

AT A SERMON preached in Geneva after the assassination of President Kennedy, the Rev. Willem Visser 't Hooft spoke of the grief and shock felt round the world, and of the sense of revolt too with which multitudes of people reacted against the malignant power of evil able to destroy the good.

"We will never know," he said, "why his family, his country, and humanity had to lose the man who seemed more indispensable than anyone else. We have a controversy here with God, but in this dialogue he might say to us that it is precisely because we live in a world where such things happen that he has sent his son and that that son died on a cross. The obscurity is not abolished, but in that obscurity there is a light for those who have eyes to see the light of Christmas that shines in the dark."

At the cross we know there is a love that suffers with and for mankind. God is not far removed and inaccessible, detached from the strife and conflict of the world. He has come into the midst of it and borne it, and he is with us in our own trouble and necessity. The good news of Christmas is not that evil and sorrow have been done away, but that God is with us in whatsoever state or condition we find ourselves, God in Christ who walked this way before us and triumphed over it. There is a way of redemption and healing and victory.

It is good that we have the tree at Christmas, for it speaks to us of the deepest meaning of this Jesus who was born as at this time in Bethlehem. May he be born in us today, his spirit, his graciousness, his caring, his faithfulness. In this sense, I wish you all a truly merry and blessed Christmas.

The Divine Surprise

By Gardiner M. Day

Rector Emeritus of Christ Church, Cambridge

TO HAVE HIGH EXPECTATION means that you expect spiritual surprises; you expect things to happen that are totally unpredictable; in a word, you expect miracles. Yet the whole framework of modern thought has made it next to impossible to believe in miracles. The age of science and technology has so accustomed us to a universe governed by unchangeable laws that we almost automatically eliminate the unpredictable. Nevertheless, despite all our knowledge the unpredictable in life is inescapably striking. We must make room in our thinking for what an English writer has called, "the inexhaustible originality of God."

On the first Christmas God came in the person of Jesus Christ to a humble Jewish peasant family in Palestine. It is the divine surprise of it that the world has found hard to believe, and at the same time has never been able to disbelieve nor forget.

So characteristic is this element of surprise in man's discovery of Jesus that most of the legends about the coming of Jesus, from his first appearance to Mary in the garden when she mistook him for the gardener, to modern stories of his coming in the guise of a refugee, portray his coming almost always in an unexpected and un-

premeditated form. He comes in the unexpected yet he comes only to those with eyes to see — to those who open the door of their hearts to him. Paradoxically he comes in the unexpected only to those who expect!

What a difference it would make if the world really expected him! Does not the hope for the future lie in our having this high expectation, for only then will the miracle of healing that our world so desperately needs be possible.

Yet isn't it true that we seldom really expect him? It is so easy to believe that this Christmas will not be particularly different from any other. We know we will sing beautiful hymns and think lovely thoughts, but we don't really believe that he will come to us. What a difference this Christmas can make in our lives if we really expect him; then we will know the meaning of the divine surprise.

Blake Speaks on Immediate Jobs Facing Christians Everywhere

★ Christianity's best hope for making an effective contribution to the search for peace depends on a united approach which will "establish a sense of worldwide Christian community," it was declared in Geneva by Eugene Carson Blake as he assumed the general secretaryship of the World Council of Churches.

On December 1 he succeeded W. A. Visser 't Hooft as the top executive of the international organization.

Visser 't Hooft, stepping out of the WCC position he has held since the Council was formally organized in 1948, will continue as a "consultant to the general secretariat," Blake announced.

"I am not in a position to say what he will do for the organization because in large measure that will be up to him," Blake said. "But in addition to the writing which he intends to do, I am sure his wisdom and experience will remain available to the movement and the Council that have been his life."

As he moved into the office, the American churchman listed three main areas of development facing the organization:

- making the WCC truly ecumenical in its own makeup
- continuing to develop rela-

tionships with the Roman Catholic Church

- stimulating the Church to "get out of itself and into the world."

Elaborating on each of the points, he commented that since 1961 "almost all Orthodox Churches have been members of the Council, but it is still western with a bit of Oriental embroidery."

In regard to the dialogue with Catholicism, he said that "at the world level I would guess there are many things on which we need studies that are totally Christian rather than either WCC or Roman Catholic." The search for peace, he stressed, is the most pressing area for a cooperative approach.

The movement of the Church into the world, he continued, involves the development of a concern for broadened Christian witness among "responsible Church leaders" and new efforts to reach intellectuals and students.

Also involved, he said, is identification with the Churches of Asia, Africa and Latin America.

"North American and European Churches will get a new view of the worldwide Church as they listen to the 'third world,'" Blake said.

The new executive acknowledged that concern has been expressed in some quarters about the appointment of an American to head the Council, especially in view of widespread criticism of U. S. foreign policy.

"Anyone who assumes an international post such as this," he said, "makes a basic shift in his assumptions, from those of whatever country or culture he has been a part of to an attempt to look at things whole, from a world point of view. Such a person of necessity belongs to all the churches."

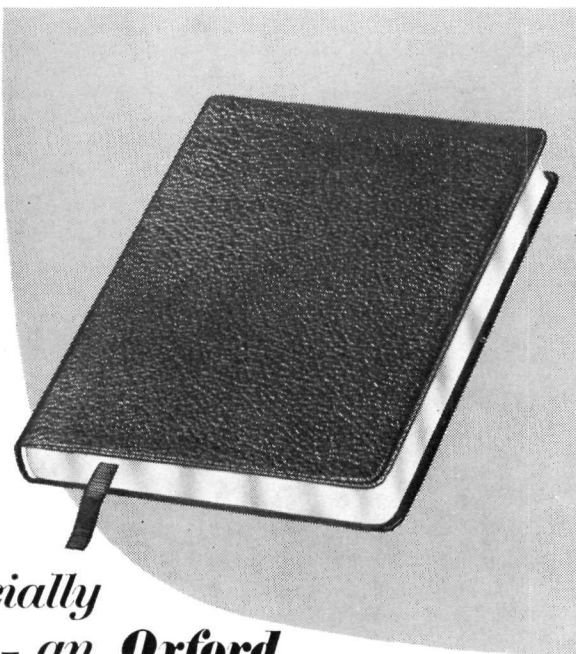
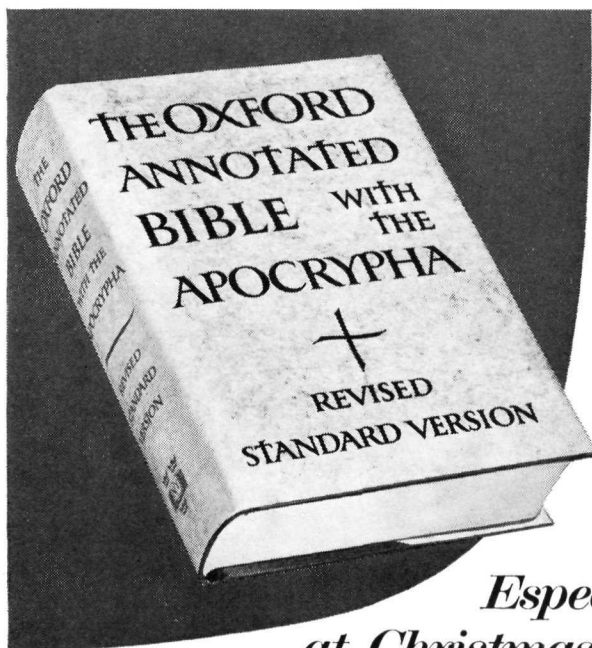
"In one sense it is irrelevant that I, as an American, have been critical of U. S. foreign policy especially in Asia, even though this may be welcome news to many people. Every thoughtful person knows that the problem of peace is the problem of human survival. Now that the weapons for total annihilation are available, world war must become unthinkable in every nation."

He expressed hope that Council member Churches would "press their governments not only to avoid the kinds of actions which could escalate into world war but also to think in a new way about a world community of people."

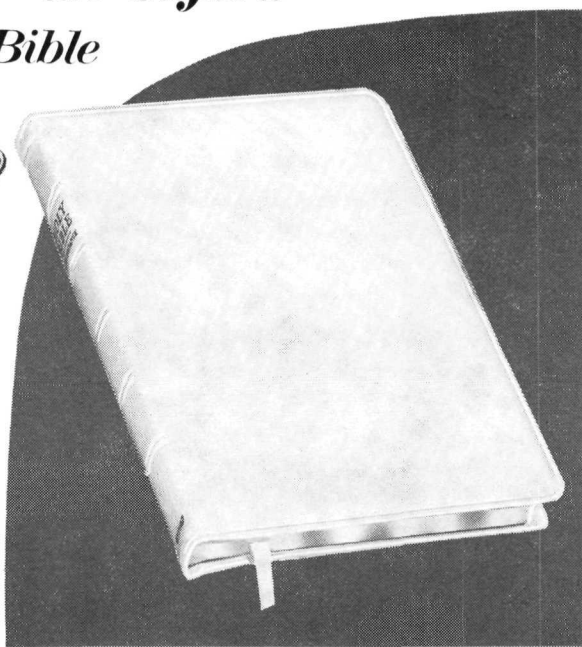
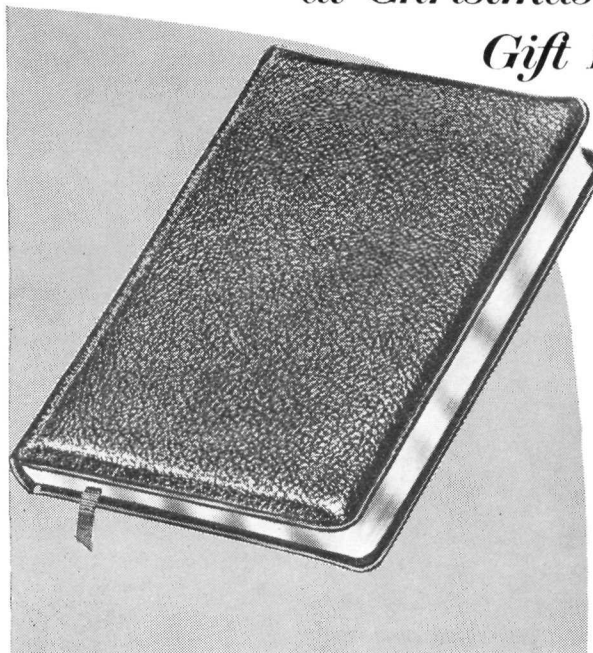
He saw his election to the post, as an American, an indication of "recognition that United States Churches have tried to avoid using their size and re-

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sources to dominate the programs of the Council.

"In view of America's great economic and political power," he added, "it is even more of a compliment."

Blake went on to suggest that his "obvious handicap of being monocultural may be a blessing in disguise, for I am certain that the dominance of the English language and English and American thought-forms in the Council needs to be radically changed."

Commenting on the ecumenical movement, the churchman said there are two erroneous ideas about it — that either the World Council or the late Pope John started it.

"Actually," he said, "the movement began and continues essentially in the aspirations and faith of people, young and old, who have found that their effective expression of Christianity is hindered and limited by all the ecclesiastical structures."

All Churches, Blake declared, have an opportunity "if they are free and creative enough, to give some direction to the desire of Christian people everywhere to make their faith once more central in the life of man."

The Council is not interested in "unity for the sake of unity" but in a "unity combined with reformation and renewal of the structures and life of the Church, so that Jesus Christ may be presented with power everywhere," he said.

CONFERENCE ON LITURGY

★ Small groups of would-be Cranmers worked late into the night at the Washington liturgical conference Dec. 1-3 to create a liturgy for today.

Utilizing a talk by the Rev. Boone Porter, professor of liturgics at General Seminary, the 122 participants attempted to

ferret the essentials for a eucharist from elements which might or might not be useful.

The nine groups went to different churches in Washington where they spent Friday afternoon discussing issues and concerns of mankind, and Friday night trying to incorporate them into liturgies which they celebrated Saturday morning.

It may have been significant that all groups, save two which were in churches with contemporary altars and one in a traditional setting, used kitchen or parish-hall tables for their liturgies.

The conference opened with a contemporary eucharist Thursday night at the host parish, St. Stephen and the Incarnation, utilizing swinging music provided by Joe Wise and a combo and modern dance performed by a troupe from St. Mark's, Washington.

There were seven concelebrants with Bishop William F. Creighton of Washington, presiding. Thanks to a pre-service practice session, the congregation was able to become thoroughly involved in the celebration.

Bishop Frederick W. Putnam Jr., suffragan of Oklahoma, preached a sermon which challenged the congregation, made up of conferees as well as interested Washingtonians, to become alert to the changes of the times.

Using the text: "It is time for you to wake out of sleep, for deliverance is nearer to us now that it was when we first believed," he said "few Episcopalians in the pews are aware of the thrilling developments" in experimental ministries now being carried out by the home and overseas departments of the National Church.



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TUNKHANNOCK

The WITNESS

PENNSYLVANIA 18657

- BACKFIRE -

Miriam Van Waters

Penologist of Framingham, Mass.

I am a member of St. Andrew's Church, Framingham. With intense interest I have read the editorial and article in the December 1 Witness which is concerned with "The Proper Place of Women in the Church's Ministry."

Shall women become priests?

I recall what a busy housewife told a woman who was campaigning for women suffrage. The mother paused in the midst of her washing to say, "If there is one thing men can do by themselves, let them do it."

Doubtless, the clergy and laity will solve the problem at the next General Convention.

I would like to offer a few suggestions. I have spoken from the pulpit of almost every church and synagogue in Massachusetts. Sometimes my theme was the abolition of capital punishment; sometimes a plea for a more enlightened penology; sometimes for civil rights.

There never was opposition to my presence when my message took the place of the sermon. I think a proper place will be found for women in the Church ministry.

I ask you to consider the Salvation Army. Take the opportunity to attend one of their morning or evening services. You will find a beautiful and complete cooperation between men and women who are officers (ordained ministers).

I am an honorary life member of the Advisory Board of this world-wide international organization. Its service to humanity includes hospitals and prisons and the battlefield and slums and ghettos. There is scope for the gifts of every person.

The men and women share

equally in the labor and changes and blessings of the work. The Salvation Army goes down into the depths of suffering and sin, and rises to the heights of redemption, joy and thanksgiving.

Our beloved Church can do the same.

Mary E. Forbes

Churchwoman of Boston, Mass.

So glad that the Witness has made its story of the week, the "report to Bishops on the place of women in the ministry." It is a problem that calls for immediate attention, but it should not be. Men and women were designed for different roles, and fashioned for them. Throughout nature from the lowest form to the highest, the male is dominant, and this is as it should be for man was made in the image of God.

Women may find it hard at times to concede male supremacy, but nothing can alter the fact that God made man for supremacy, and made him out of himself. Eve had not this honor. She was brought out of Adam, not God, and so is a part of Adam. She belongs to the best part of him certainly, but still she is only a part. God could have made her out of clay, as he did Adam, but then she would have been another individual, which was not part of his plan, so, as someone has written, "He carved up Adam, and made Eve, bone of his bone, and flesh of his flesh."

So we see, that by birth and in every other respect man has a legal right to be dominant. But he has no right to be overbearing and selfish about it. He is required to yield in those cases where women can aid. And she has a right to share, but not to usurp what belongs properly to man. She has proved herself able in many fields once closed to her, and men are learning not to deny what is her due.

Very often her intuition is better than a man's, but women

have to admit that our first venture into the unknown, was not a success. Eve was the first to eye the forbidden fruit, and investigate it. Adam was wiser. He was willing to let well enough alone. He had to be persuaded to eat. It is natural for women to want to run things, because we are aware how well we can do it. Mary, the mother of Jesus was no exception. Jesus had to tell her once to mind her own business.

Edgar Williams

Layman of Baltimore, Md.

What most impressed me in your issue of November 17 was a paragraph in the story of nine Canadian clergymen who spent a week as skid row bums, "learning how the other half lives."

One of them, the Rev. Keith Whitney of Toronto, completed his ordeal on a Sunday morning and climbed into his pulpit that evening and preached a sermon prepared before his enlightenment. He said, "It seemed so irrelevant that I was almost nauseated. I could hardly go on, it seemed so unreal."

I am sure many, many sermons on theological minutiae affect countless visitors to churches in much the same way, discouraging membership. Such sermons may appeal to some of "the saved" but they "save" nobody. Clergy attention.

Holy Matrimony

Hugh McCandless

*Rector of the Church of the Epiphany
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