

From the Editor's Desk

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From The Editor's Desk

ALTHOUGH THE RED MASS has been celebrated in many cities this fall, national attention was focused on the Mass of the Holy Spirit sponsored by the St. Thomas More Society of Philadelphia in conjunction with the opening of the 68th Annual Convention of the American Bar Association on Sunday, August 21, 1955.

While regular members of the parish attended Mass in an adjoining chapel, the Cathedral of Sts. Peter and Paul was filled with representatives of the bench and bar from every section of the country. During the Pontifical High Mass which was celebrated by Most Reverend J. Carroll McCormick, the Most Reverend John F. O'Hara, C.S.C., Archbishop of Philadelphia and former President of the University of Notre Dame, preached on the need which America has for objective Truth. The Archbishop said in part:

“Anyone who has followed the revolt against reason that has marked American education in the past three or four decades, anyone who has watched the substitution of emotion for intellect in the judicial process, the substitution of sociology for theology in judicial findings, the wasting away of the judicial instinct for the preservation of rights, of judicial zeal for the triumph of fundamental justice, may well fear for our salvation as a nation.

“The anti-intellectualism of American education has left us bankrupt of a philosophy. If Communism takes over in the United States in the next few years — as well it may — it will be because the great mass of Americans have lost the anchor of truth — objective truth.

“But there is hope. The great heart of America is generous. It lifts up the vanquished as a generous victor. It feeds the hungry in lavish measure. Heedless of tomorrow, it piles billions of debt upon billions to relieve distress the world over. And despite its education away from reason, it still has a fundamental Christian tradition that corrects at least some of its aberrations.

“We who have the truth have an ever more grave obligation to share it with those who have been led by false teachers into the darkness that came when Jesus was crucified. When pagan China proposed at San Francisco and Christian America rejected the proposal that the natural law be the basis of the United Nations, we laid the groundwork for ten years of hot and cold war. If we failed to shout from the housetops, then, we can begin now. If we went along with the United Nations because we felt that it was the best we could get, we can begin now, at home, as well as in international relations, to demand that the eternal law, written in the heart of every man, be once more raised to the stature it had when it gave stability to civilization.”

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Another Red Mass of more than purely local importance was the Mass sponsored by the Guild of Catholic Lawyers of New York in conjunction with the celebration by Fordham University of the Golden Jubilee of its School of Law. During the Mass which was celebrated in the presence of His Eminence Francis Cardinal Spellman, Very Reverend Lawrence J. McGinley, S.J., President of Fordham University preached on the relation of freedom and authority in the relations between citizens and their government. In the course of his remarks during which he outlined the threefold role of authority, 1. to protect freedom, 2. to determine precisely in practical affairs what is the common good and how can it best be attained, and 3. to train individuals to channel their diverse talents in cooperative endeavor for the common good, Father McGinley pointed out:

“Any well ordered human society is a balance of freedom and authority. Without freedom it ceases to be human; without authority its order disappears; by excess of either one, both are destroyed. The undisciplined license of a street mob destroys not only authority but also the freedom of all in its path. The domineering tyranny of a Peron not only despoils men of civic freedom but ultimately finds itself destitute of that moral power through which alone men can be ruled. Authority and freedom are each needed to preserve the other.

“The social institutions of our nation and the other free peoples of the world today — constitutional government, free speech, judicial process — have as their purpose to preserve this balance of freedom and authority. But they presuppose the knowability, the objective truth and the moral obligation of a rational order, a publicly accepted criterion of what is true and

what is false, of what is right and what is wrong. They wither under anarchic and totalitarian regimes alike for in these their presuppositions are denied. In brief, they have been structured on the basis of a natural moral law and they are unworkable without it.”

* * *

September 23, 1955 marked the Fiftieth Anniversary of the ordination to the priesthood of His Excellency Archbishop Amleto G. Cicognani, Apostolic Delegate to the United States. Archbishop Cicognani is a Doctor of Civil and Canon Law and served on the Faculty of the Pontifical University of St. Apollinare, Rome, for ten years. He served as Secretary to the Pontifical Commission for the Codification of Oriental law from 1928 until 1933 and is best known among American legal scholars for his commentary on the first book of the Code of Canon Law.

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Readers of THE CATHOLIC LAWYER will welcome a study in the Natural Law entitled FOUNTAIN OF JUSTICE by John C. Wu, LL.B., J.D., LL.D. Dr. Wu, a former Chief Justice of the Provisional Court of Shanghai, was once the Chinese Ambassador to the Vatican. Now a Professor of Law at Seton Hall University School of Law, he is one of the outstanding Catholic legal scholars in the United States.

Although the book is addressed principally to lawyers, it will also be of interest to laymen with a good general education. In fact, twenty percent of the book is devoted to basic notions which constitute a capsule philosophy of law.

Lawyers will meet old friends who come to life in the pages of the book: Bracton,

Thomas More, Coke, Holt, Mansfield. Americans will read with interest Dr. Wu's description of the growth of the common law in America. Catholics will welcome the chapters included in the section entitled "In the School of Christ," which concludes with a discussion on Nature and Grace in the Law.

FOUNTAIN OF JUSTICE is published by Sheed and Ward, New York, and would make an excellent Christmas gift. The price is \$3.75.

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At the recent Convention of the American Bar Association at Philadelphia, it was announced that the 1957 Convention will be held in New York City and London. Some of the sessions will be held in this country and, at an appropriate time, the meeting will be adjourned to be reconvened in London. Since Catholic lawyers in the United States ought to know something of the places they should visit in England, in addition to the historical spots which undoubtedly will be included in the Cooke and American Express companies' tours, THE

CATHOLIC LAWYER proposes to publish a series of articles to include:

1. The More Chapel in Old Chelsea Church.
2. The Convent on the site of the More household in Chelsea where St. Thomas' mulberry tree still stands.
3. The resting place of the Saint's head at Canterbury with some speculation as to what became of (a) the body; (b) relics from the vertebra from which the only known existing first class relic was taken.
4. The cell in the Tower of London in which St. Thomas was confined and the visitors' room from which he saw the martyrs of the Carthusians going to their death.
5. Lincoln's Inn together with the portrait stained glass window and arms commemorating St. Thomas' association with the Inn.

We would appreciate suggestions from those familiar with England as to items of interest that ought to be included in the articles.

Joseph J. Tinnelly, c.m.

Editor.