

## EXTRACTS

**PENANCE AND PEACE.** In their letter condemning the use of war-weapons that killed non-combattants the Cardinal and Archbishops of France concluded with directives as to the Christian's bestway of fostering peace.

The final resolution runs:

Do not forget for a single instant that you are children of the Omnipotent God without whose help, according to the Psalmist, it is in vain that men build. Pray and do penance. Purify your hearts. Forgive your enemies.

This reminds us that the message of our Lady at such places as Lourdes and Fatima, where she has shown herself specially concerned with the peace of the world, has always insisted on the necessity of penance and purification as well as of prayer. Little has been done on any large scale in this respect. But many have desired with increasing urgency to discover some method of joint action in this matter—in short some 'League of Penance' to follow the leading of our Lady in the way of peace. The definition of the Assumption with its tremendous message of peace will certainly foster some renewal of penance and purification. But can it not become a joint action so that the sufferings of the world may become positive instruments of peace. Already, for several years, a league of this kind has existed for the purpose of fostering the missions—centred at Mill Hill.

**THE LEAGUE OF SUFFERINGS FOR THE MISSIONS:**

*Primary Object:* the oblation in a special manner of the prayers, sufferings both corporal and mental of those in pain for

- i. The Sanctification of all missionaries.
- ii. The increase of their numbers.
- iii. The conversion of the pagan world.

*Secondary Object:* to give to souls in pain a supernatural outlook on life, a lofty ideal and to place before their minds oppressed by grief a crown of glory, a consoling conviction that will elevate them from their earth-bound view of pain and lead them gently on to their personal sanctification.

*Membership:* All the sick, all the disabled, all hearts crushed by mental or moral sufferings that feel drawn to this apostolate.

There are certain prayers to be said and meditation on the Passion is recommended; the members are kept together by a Circular Letter. Another Apostolate of suffering in union with the Sacred Heart has existed for an even longer period. These leagues are of course to a certain extent limited in scope, but they show an excellent example for a league built upon the bequest of our Lady's and inspired by the urgency of the

evils in which the world is rapidly being consumed—a league of Penance for Peace.

\* \* \*

A RULE OF LIFE under Cistercian inspiration for a man of means who does not have to earn his living comes from a correspondent. It has proved effective for many years and though it can hardly be copied it shows what can be done in this respect. Here is the summary of the rule:

*General Characteristics:* Practice of the Presence of God at all times; the *Opus Dei—Lectio Divina—Opus Manuum*.

No visiting except of the sick and the aged; no theatres, cinemas or restaurants. Meals with friends occasionally only, on feast days, but never to go out before or after the evening meal except in cases of urgent charity. Two separate weeks away every year, staying if possible not with friends or relatives. And three other week-ends of holiday at home.

The whole Divine Office said in the Oratory at home, with all the liturgical actions attending it; this is preceded by the little office at each 'hour'; and the Office of the Dead is recited on Ferias. Half-hour's spiritual reading; half-hour's mental prayer in the morning; daily Mass; two-and-a-half to three hours manual or secretarial work. Some more mental prayer in the evening.

*Detailed Horary:*

7.00 Prime, Pretiosa, etc.

7.20 Mental Prayer.

8.00 Mass in Church, followed by breakfast.

9.45 Terce and Sext.

10.00 Work.

12.50 None, Examen, Dinner and Recreation.

2.30 Vespers (Office of the Dead).

Work, visit Blessed Sacrament, visit sick, etc.

7.15 Spiritual Reading and Compline.

Interval.

Matins and Lauds. Supper, Spiritual Reading.

11.00 Bed.

Readers may object that this is too 'special' to be of use to the ordinary man-in-the-street. But it should be remembered that every man is a 'special' Christian with his own peculiar circumstances and possibilities. And it may well be that some items from this rule which approximates to that of a modern eremitic life will be of inspiration to some who are looking for a way of 'regularising' their lives.

\* \* \*

ANOTHER RULE, this time for a modern monastic institute, is quoted by a correspondent to *Supplement, Vie Spirituelle* (15, August 1950). The

community consists of four priests and sixteen brothers. The lay brothers have learnt the chant and come to most of the Office in Choir, though most of them do not attend the Vigil. Their horary:—

- 3.45 Vigil followed by Matins and Lauds, Low Mass and breakfast.
- 6.15 Prime and work.
- 8.00 Terce and High Mass.
- 11.15 Conference in the Novitiate.
- 11.45 Sext. Dinner, followed by fifteen minutes recreation, Siesta.
- 2.00 None: Chant Lesson, Conference.
- 3.00 Work.
- 5.00 Vespers, supper, optional recreation.
- 6.30 Compline.
- 7.00 Bed.

The brothers manage five hours manual work a day. Those who have to study do three hours. The brothers help the fathers by catechising children and converts and those who come to the monastery for spiritual help. Their poverty makes them beloved of the people around and attracts vocations.

In the same issue of the *Supplement* Père Bonduelle discusses the modern lay-religious movement from the point of view of *Provid Mater Ecclesia* and Secular Institutes.

\* \* \*

THE DOMINICAN SISTERS OF BETHANY were founded by Père Lataste, a young Dominican, in the 1860's to provide a true religious vocation for women leaving prison. It was a courageous undertaking and has met with great success as the most perfect form of 'rehabilitation' yet conceived; for the women who may have been gaoled for any crime mix without distinction among those who have come directly from good homes to dedicate their lives to God. It has so far been impossible to make a foundation in England but the way is being prepared. Recently a circle of 'Friends of Bethany' has been founded to forward the work in this country. One or two small brochures have been issued to encourage the work, and a circular letter informs the reader that a project for a home for rehabilitating delinquent girls is in active preparation. This is to be run on the lines of the Dutch section of the congregation who have undertaken many cognate 'works' as an extension of the principal one of granting the opportunity of a full religious contemplative life to the 'fallen'. Offers of financial help should be sent to the Hon. Treasurer, 'Friends of Bethany', 16 Glenmore Road, N.W.3.