

# BLACKFRIARS

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## EDITORIAL

UNITY is the one only safeguard against the Paganism and Atheism which threatens the whole of our Christian civilization at the present day. The urgent need for a united front against a common enemy is felt by all thinking Christians, whatever their professed creed, and the nature of this need and its urgency has been crystallized by the Holy Father in his worldwide call to arms against the battalions of evil, the enemies of God not less than of the human race. The Vicar of Christ has made it clear that this unity is to be attained only by making actual in our individual and corporate lives the present reality of the Incarnation. This does not mean merely that the precepts and counsels of Our Lord and of His Church must be more faithfully adhered to; it means that we must recognize our obligations as actual members of the Mystical Body of Christ, obligations which bear not only upon our relationship with God but also upon our relationship with our fellow members. The Incarnation is, for us, not simply a historic fact nor yet a mere code of conduct; it is our life: the Christian life is Christ's life. This truth is the fundamental principle of that unity which is now so sorely needed, and unless this is recognized there will be no possibility of any unity which can prove effective against the evil in our midst, a very noonday devil; for we must realize that our striving is not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers.

In the interests of present necessities, we have devoted this issue of BLACKFRIARS largely to a consideration of various aspects of the primary question which may, we hope, prove fruitful. In his review-article, Father Conrad Pepler contributes further light upon the primary and fundamental doctrine of the Mystical Body. The article on *Catholicism and Myth* deals with the scientific angle of approach to the universal search for truth, actually to be found only in Catholicism but reflected and to some extent foreshadowed even in pagan cults and superstitions. It is not without its

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application to modern religious and ethical vagaries, which have that grain of truth common to all mythology.

Coming down to the realm of practical politics, Bernard Kelly has provided, in his brief article on *Solidarity*, another valuable morsel of the fruit of his penetrating intelligence, making concrete application of that primary principle of unity to which we have drawn attention. An even more practical contribution is Father Richard Kehoe's timely warning of the danger of pharisaism amongst ourselves: for the smug self-satisfaction which it implies is not merely a danger likely to vitiate the individual lives of apparently good Catholics, but a very effective obstacle to real solidarity. As in Our Lord's physical life His greatest enemies were the Pharisees, outwardly the most observant followers of the Old Law, so may it well be in His mystical life as lived to-day by the true members of His Mystical Body. The Rich Young Man provides another symbol, though a less unpleasant one, of those who seek to escape the real implications of the Christ-life; that young man did not rouse Our Lord to anger, as the Pharisees did, but moved Him to sadness. This symbol is translated into modern terms in the article on *Code Religion*; at best it is a poor substitute, at worst a cowardly escape. Finally, Father Walter Gumbley records something of the Christlike life of some early English Dominicans, who may serve as an inspiration to ourselves.

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We wish to express our profound concern and filial sorrow at the disquieting news of the Holy Father's illness. He has shown himself to be a strong and clear-sighted leader in these days of distress and danger, and one to whom even those not of our faith seem willing to lend an ear. We learn with gratitude, though hardly with surprise, that notwithstanding his sickness he continues to work with unabated zeal for the cause which he values more than his life. May God preserve him to us in our sorry plight, where the immediate need is for just such a leader who is not swayed by any motive other than the real, i.e. the supernatural, good of the world at large. In more than one great European crisis, where he might have been somewhat deflected, and intelligibly so, from a purely objective view of the situation, he has maintained a marvellously balanced and accurate judgment and

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has expressed himself without fear or favour. If even Catholics alone, not to speak of those who do not recognize his catholic fatherhood, would listen to his appeals and make them effective in actual practice, the peace of the world would be assured. But should it please the Divine Wisdom to take him from us, we shall know, upon his own showing, that he has offered life itself in the cause for which he lived.

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We concur very willingly with a request from the Hon. Secretary of the Bishops' Committee for the Relief of Spanish Distress to publish the following appeal: *The plight of the wounded is piteous. Medical supplies are lacking: anaesthetics are desperately needed. We have sent out two fully equipped ambulances; but funds are needed to keep them supplied. Will YOU help us to relieve the sufferings of the wounded? The smallest donations gratefully received by the Hon. Treasurer, Nat. Bank Ltd., 21 Grosvenor Gardens, S.W.1.*

EDITOR.