

CHATS WITH YOUNG MEN

MARY IN ITALY

This is indeed the blessed Mary's land, Virgin and Mother of our dear Redeemer! All hearts are touched and softened at her name; Alike the bandit with the bloody hand, The priest, the prince, the scholar, and the peasant, The man of deeds, the visionary dreamer, Pay homage to her as one ever present. And even as children, who have much offended, A too indulgent father, in great shame, Penitent, and yet not daring unattended, To go into his presence, at the gate Speak with his sister, and confiding wait. Till she goes in before and intercedes; So men, repenting of their evil deeds, And yet not venturing rashly to draw near With their requests an angry father's ear, Offer to her their prayers and their confession, And she for them in heaven makes intercession. And if our Faith had given us nothing more, Than this example of all womanhood, So mild, so merciful, so strong, so good, So patient, peaceful, loyal, loving, pure, This were enough to prove it higher and truer Than all the creeds the world had known before.

MAY DEVOTIONS

These are the days of the May devotions, when opportunity is offered for all of us to come as children to the feet of the Mother who understands.

This is the great fact that should make us anxious publicly to pay our tribute to Mary in this her month of May—she is the one who understands, and understanding, turns our weak supplications to her into the strong pleadings for us of one who is never denied.

When we consider how, day by day, we make use of her powerful pleading; that in privacy we appeal confidently for her powerful prayers for every immediate need and for assistance in our final hour, we should welcome the chance that is given us to join the public recognition of her power and the public tribute of gratitude.

"Refuge of Sinners" we hail her. In May each year a testimonial is presented to this one who is our constant refuge; the one who understands why we stumble and have to seek a refuge from our sinful selves. When we contemplate how often we have sought this refuge and what calm and peace it has given us, it is inconceivable that we should not desire to have a part in this public testimonial.

"Health of the Sick" we salute her. How eagerly we hear testimony to friends and to strangers of the skill of the physician who has cured us of bodily ills. We should regard ourselves as ingrates if we missed an opportunity to have part in any manifestation of public respect for him. It is not possible, therefore, that recognizing in Mary the one who has brought health to our sick souls, not merely once, but countless times, we should miss the opportunity that the Church gives us, publicly to proclaim her praises.

"Queen of Peace" we call her. In days when all the world cries peace and there is no peace, what wonder that we gather publicly to raise our voices in recognition of the majesty of one who can keep us in interior peace while all around is strife and confusion.

"Seat of Wisdom" is a title we give her. Surely these are times in which we desire publicly to testify to the love and maternal care of the one who guides us in wisdom when we are surrounded by folly and the futility of those who have yet to discover that the beginnings of wisdom are in the fear of the Lord.

"Mirror of Justice" is another of the names by which we know her. The one need of mankind today is a proper appreciation and application of justice. To us has been given as Mother and Guide the very reflection of Eternal Justice. It is not sufficient that we should acknowledge this great gift; we must seize upon the opportunity to show how greatly we esteem it by indicating in a public manner that we recognize our obligation of gratitude.

Our participation in the May Devotions will bring us many graces. But it is not for this reason alone, worthy as it may be, that we should make a resolution to share in the special services of this season. The occasion permits us to make spontaneous offering of love.

We love the Blessed Mother because we know that she understands. If she understands so well, what will she think of those who, acknowledging their many obligations created in a long year of life, fail to join in the public acclaim of her unfailing maternal solicitude.

—True Voice.

OUR BOYS AND GIRLS

THE MONTH OF MARY

Green are the leaves, and sweet the flowers, And rich the hues of May; We see them in the gardens round, And market panners gay; And e'en among our streets and lanes, And alleys, we descry, By fifti gleams, the fair sunshine, The blue transparent sky.

Green is the grass, but wait awhile, 'Twill grow, and then will wither; The flowerets, brightly as they smile, Shall perish altogether: The merry sun, you sure would say, It ne'er could set in gloom; But earth's best joys have all an end, And sin, a heavy doom.

The green, green grass, the glittering grove, The heaven's majestic dome, They image forth a tender bower, A more refulgent home; They tell us of that Paradise Of everlasting rest, And that high Tree, all flowers and fruit, The sweetest and the best.

—CARDINAL NEWMAN

OUR LADY'S MONTH

Devotion to Mary, the Mother of God, has always been an outstanding characteristic of practical Catholics. It is fitting, therefore, that May, the most beautiful month of the year, should be dedicated to her honor. Many Catholic men and women cherish tender memories of each recurring May of their childhood days, when the May procession was looked forward to with so much joy, and the old hymns, always new to the little ones, were sung for the first time. And perhaps in looking back there will come a glad cry of thanksgiving for untold blessings and graces received through Mary's intercession; perhaps a tear for the times when the word called loudly to us and when, for the moment, we forgot Mary our Mother in our searching and craving for the joy and gaiety of youth. Yet how sweet it was to come even as a penitent to the feet of Mary; how gentle her smile of pity; how welcome her gift of hope; how strong our protestations of love, and our resolutions of renewed fidelity to her service.

All this was long ago; and again this year we are bringing our own children, or our children's children to Mary. And if we have no child in our family, is there not room in our hearts and in our homes for some little one bereft of parents and home, for whose generous love its Mother and ours is waiting? In these days of affluence and luxury Catholic parents spare neither money nor effort to provide for their children every advantage of modern educational training and every opportunity for amusement and play. Carried to excess, the result has been to dissatisfy childish hearts; to destroy the innocence and sincerity that are the heritage of childhood, and to build up instead a precociousness and sophistication that scorn the artless pleasures of youth. At Mary's side in Nazareth Jesus grew "in wisdom, in age, and in grace," and at Mary's side in this twentieth century will our Catholic children find shelter and protection from the worldliness round about them.

There is a power in the simple recitation of the Rosary, to recall us to the better spirit of those happier days and we can right in that spirit that which has become wrong as we have experienced the hardness of the years. This month our blessed Mother means for every one of us the beautiful gift of peace and happiness, soul-flowers of the Maytime, if we lovingly go for them to the Mother of Jesus and of us.—Catholic Standard and Times.

JEWISH MUSICAL WONDER WHO BECAME A MONK

All of us are not familiar with the story of a Jew who was once an enemy of the Church, says the Milwaukee Citizen. Behold Hermann Cohen as boy-genius, as wonder of the musical world, as pet of George Sand, pupil of Liszt, dandy, and scoffier at marriage and every thing else held sacred by Catholics.

This was the young man who at twenty-six apparently could hope for nothing new to see in life, no new adventure. But actually a whole new life was before him.

One evening, when at Benediction in the Church of St. Valery, he found himself much moved. The sensation of veneration was so strong that the young Jew decided to read something about this great devotion of Catholics to the Blessed Sacrament. He read a book on devotions to the Blessed Sacrament, and the Grace of God took him to Mass the following Sunday, and at the Elevation it entered in and took possession of him so that he burst into tears, and, as he says, "I saw before me all the sins of my past life, hideous, vile, revolting, worthy of the wrath of the Sovereign Judge. And yet I felt also a miraculous calm. God in His mercy forgiving me these sins and accepting my firm resolution to love Him henceforth above all things."

He determined to become a Catholic and a monk. In novels the latter is an easy matter, but it was anything but easy for Hermann Cohen, whose over-coming of obsta-

cles surpasses in human interest and story interest the adventures of any hero in fiction. There was much to be done before he could even make application. To the young Jewish spendthrift debts had meant nothing, but to the Christian convert they meant obligations that must be met to the last cent—and he owed 80,000 francs in gambling debts alone.

For two years he worked, supplementing concerts with what to him was the supreme drudgery of teaching, until the last obligation had been discharged. While he worked he prayed, and he had reason to, for now instead of being petted and entertained, he found himself despised and mocked.

At last he was free to apply for admittance to the Carmelites. But now he was met by the announcement that one born a Jew must obtain a dispensation from Rome before he could be admitted.

Rome, knowing his past, refused the dispensation. But he had not merely desired to be a monk; he had determined to be one; therefore he betook himself to Rome to plead his cause in person. He won his cause and Hermann Cohen became Brother Augustino Marie of the Most Blessed Sacrament, and on Easter Sunday, 1851, when thirty years old, he said his first Mass as Father Hermann.

Twenty years later, while ministering to the war prisoners in a German fortress, among whom smallpox was raging, he contracted the disease.

"Can you sing the Salve Regina?" he asked the Sister who nursed him in his last hours.

"Yes," she replied.

"Then let us sing it together," he said, and, singing, passed to the land of eternal song.

UNITED PLEAS FOR BETTER FEELING

GREAT MEETING HELD WITH VIEW TO END BIGOTRY

Youngstown, O.—Residents of this city of Jewish, Catholic and Protestant faiths met in mass meeting here a few days ago and put under way a movement that had for its purpose creation of a better feeling among the entire population.

This city, the largest in the big iron center of the Mahoning valley, and surrounding smaller cities of Niles, Warren and Girard have had a reputation as breeding places for the Ku Klux Klan.

That reputation is no longer deemed desirable by the great majority of the people and the gathering of members of all religious faiths to the number of nearly 3,000 persons was a striking demonstration of the wish to end the activities of the Klan and its supporters.

Almost as many were unable to get into the hall in which the meeting was held as there were on the inside.

The speakers included Leonard T. Skeggs, general secretary of the Youngstown Young Men's Christian Association, who was also chairman; Rabbi Philo and Rabbi Birnbaum of the two Jewish temples in this city, Rev. Dr. Edward A. Kirby, pastor of Sacred Heart church, and Rev. Dr. W. H. Hudnut, pastor of the First Presbyterian church. Besides these representatives of their faiths as speakers of the evening there were other clergymen of several denominations on the stage.

Y. M. C. A. SPEAKER'S PLEA

As to the purpose of the meeting Mr. Skeggs said in opening:

"It is entirely fitting that we should here meet together to consider as one mind that which every discerning man must covet—a closer bond of sympathy, a growth of mutual understanding, confidence and faith in each other. By this act, a Catholic becomes no less a Catholic, a Jew no less a Jew, a Protestant no less a Protestant. Each of us will go from here loyal to his chosen faith but with a greater degree of sympathy for others."

A brief reference was made by Mr. Skeggs to the influence that leaders in Jewish, Catholic and Protestant bodies can wield in the movement to bring about a more desirable civic condition, whether it be exerted in social, political, or amusement endeavors. Speaking of the patriotic record of Catholics from the establishment of the Republic down to the present time Mr. Skeggs said:

"And I would say to our Catholic friends that as patriotic American citizens we pay them the highest respect that it is possible to acknowledge. Whenever the flag of our country has been threatened, I am told that the number of volunteers of Catholic faith has exceeded the percentage of the Catholic population as a whole."

"I cannot forget that Cecil and Leonard Calvert, the two Lords Baltimore, Catholics, and founders of the colony of Maryland, pronounced as one of their first acts, complete religious freedom in their colony. And I would say, and in perfect good humor, that what we covet most is a desire to know you better. Among your clergy are men of great intellect and scholarly attainments. Most of the misunderstanding that exists, I am sure, is because we do not know well enough your leaders, both lay and clergy."

"As an incentive to a better feeling among our people," Mr. Skeggs continued, "I wish to make this statement: On the public square of Youngstown, there used to stand a cheaply constructed billboard on which were the names of all those who gave their lives in the World War. No man was asked his religious faith before he might give his life for his country. May we not leave this meeting with a prayer on our lips for the better understanding and a more abiding sympathy for our fellow man of whatever race or religion?"

Outstanding thoughts in the addresses of each speaker follow:

JEWISH SPOKESMAN

Dr. Birnbaum: "There can scarcely be a matter of greater importance than the abolition of racial hatred and religious prejudice. The fruits of the spirit of a people remain inarticulate, except in an atmosphere of tolerance and of brotherly love. Deny these to any people, and you help to foster a spirit of clanishness among them. Withhold these from a group and you will stifle the noblest sentiments of that group."

"Practice what is preached," Dr. Philo: "The melting pot of which we have heard much is not for religion. America stands for unity, not for conformity. A perfect Jew, a perfect Catholic, a perfect Protestant are three mighty forces for genuine Americanism. Not toleration but justice is the fundamental concept and precept of our American democracy."

"The forces of religion in America must stand together or contribute to the destruction of the structure our fathers reared. If the forces of religion cannot work together in the interests of our common country, how can we expect the nations of the world whose ambitions and aims are fundamentally at variance one with the other to cooperate in the interests of our common humanity? If the forces of religion do not practice a little of what they preach they would better go into voluntary bankruptcy."

PRESBYTERIAN IDEA OF 100 PER CENT. AMERICANISM

Dr. Hudnut: "In bringing about a better feeling among our people we must not lose sight of the individual. Too many persons are judged as of a group and not as an individual. In the south a colored man is called a 'nigger' regardless of his culture or ability. I am vigorously opposed to that. I do not want any man to lose his individuality."

"Treat the foreigner with respect. Do not call him 'wop,' 'hunky' or the Jew 'sheeny.' Learn to know man as your equal. That is what makes 100% Americanism."

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