

St. Dunstan's Red and White

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Editorials

THE ARMED FORCES

As the war enters a more critical stage, our thoughts are turned more often to the armed forces and we realize more fully what these brave sons of Canada are doing for us and for their country. From all parts of the globe and especially from Europe come stories of sacrifice and bravery on the part of those who have accepted the call to battle so that Canada may be protected; so that those they love at home may enjoy peace and freedom.

It is with these thoughts in mind that we dedicate this issue of *Red and White* to the members of the armed forces and especially to the sons of St. Dunstan's who have taken their stand in the various parts of the world in defence of the ideals which they and we hold so dear. We would like also to pay special tribute to those former students who have made the supreme sacrifice. For them the war is over. May they rest in peace.

We have not sufficient knowledge to paint lucid pictures of what the men of the armed forces are undergoing in this fight for freedom; indeed, the most grim details will never come to light, but in another section of *Red and White* we are publishing a letter from a former student who is now Overseas. It gives a clear-cut description of some of the real dangers which they all have to face.

Our idea, then, is to bring to the minds of our readers some thoughts concerning our soldiers Overseas. They are far from home and loved ones, and many have been away for several years with no idea as to when they may return to their ordinary way of life. They need your encouragement; they need letters from home and friends; and, above all, they need your prayers. So please pray for them daily and keep the letters going so that in some small measure you may help to lighten their task.

—RECTOR RECEIVES LITT. D.—

Red and White is pleased to record that Laval University has conferred the degree of Doctor of Letter (*honoris causa*) on the Rector, Very Rev. R. V. MacKenzie, who, as professor and librarian for the past twenty years, has given distinguished service in the department of English.

Red and White extends heartiest congratulations to Very Rev. Dr. MacKenzie on the high and deserved academic honor conferred upon him.

—THE MYSTICAL BODY OF CHRIST—

The Holy Father has once again come forth with a message of instruction to Christians throughout the world.

This latest encyclical letter, *Mystici Corporis Christi*, given several months ago, has been completely published in our country only recently. The aim of Pope Pius seems to have been to enlighten those under his care upon one of the most sublime doctrines of the Catholic Church, that of the Mystical Body of Christ. He must also have desired to correct some of the false notions concerning this doctrine which are becoming current at the present time.

This central doctrine of Christianity has been kept before the minds of the faithful since earliest times. St. Paul seldom addressed his disciples without in some manner referring to the Church as a living organism, with Christ as Head and mankind as members. But as the present Pontiff looked out upon a chaotic world, he saw this as an especially appropriate time for enlightenment upon this great mystery. As he says, "The surpassing magnificence of the argument attracts Us; the circumstances of the present hour urge Us on." Thus, we find that the Holy Father has preceded the exposition of the doctrine itself with a number of reasons for the issuing of such a lesson at this time. With great care then, he has proceeded to place before us the significance of this profound and beautiful doctrine. For many, also, a greater knowledge of the relation which the Mystical Body bears to the sacraments will surely be a source of edification.

As always, the Holy Father speaks primarily for the glory and honor of God; but in doing so he does not neglect conditions peculiar to our own times. As head of a universal organization, he most clearly witnesses the world-wide sufferings and afflictions of men. These, he is confident, will in the end naturally raise the souls of human beings above wordliness to a contemplation of spiritual things. In recent times love of the world has far surpassed that of any former age, but the futility of this wordly scramble to solve man's problems has been demonstrated clearly enough. In extreme tribulation man has always called and will again call upon the Author of mysteries to make a cosmos out of chaos.

These problems are common to all men; their solution, which is found in the doctrine outlined by the encyclical, lies within the powers of all. For this reason, the words of the Holy Father are applicable to men of all creeds,

and not only to those of the household of the faith. It is to be hoped that those outside the fold will hearken to his words so that discord, envy, and hatred may give way to the unity for which Christ called upon His heavenly Father. Again, the universal Father of souls proclaims his love of all men of whatever race or nationality, solicitous for all, favouring none. Truth, justice, and charity are the basis of his judgments. The lack of these qualities in men blinds them to the reasonableness of the Pope's entire impartiality.

Uppermost in the mind of our loving Father is his desire for the sanctification of souls. A growing interest in the liturgy and a conviction of the manifold graces arising from corporate worship and communal prayer could find no greater impulse than a re-awakening of men to their privileges as members of the Mystical Body of Christ.

The explanation of the Holy Father has been set forth in a manner comprehensible by all. The analogy of the Mystical Body falls within the mental powers of all normal human beings; it is beyond the ability of critics to destroy the analogy. It was with untold fruitfulness that the Apostle of the Gentiles spoke continually of the Head and members, of the Vine and the branches. The Church is the body of Christ because Christ is its Founder. The Head, the Saviour, the Support. Its foundation took place on the day of Christ's crucifixion. The Church, however, was manifested to man on the coming of the Holy Ghost upon the Apostles. The Body of Christ has been built up in the Sacrament of Baptism. It has been strengthened and revived by the graces purchased on Calvary's Cross. Each single member is vitalized by the streams of divine grace flowing to him through the sacraments. Hence, St. Paul says, "It is no longer I that live, it is Christ that liveth in me." The Body of Christ, then, will be strong or weak depending upon the sanctity of its members.

The term, Mystical, has a store of meaning in the name, Mystical Body of Christ, "By this term," as Pope Pius says, "we may distinguish between the Body of the Church which is society whose Head and Ruler is Christ from His physical Body, born of the Blessed Virgin Mary,

now hidden under the Eucharistic veil."

Much labour will have been in vain if we fail to heed the exhortation for more frequent partaking of the Sacraments and for sincere participation in the Sacrifice of the Mass. The Body formed by the ingrafting of men in Christ by Baptism is nourished at the Communion table. "Unless you eat the Flesh of the Son of Man and drink His Blood you shall not have life in you," says Christ. He has also told us that there is no greater means of sanctification of souls than the commemoration of Christ's death on the Cross. Let all, then, taking advantage of their place in the Mystical Body of Christ, offer themselves with Christ on the altar for the greater sanctity of their own souls and of those of their brethren.

Famous Pontiffs, such as Leo XIII and Pius XI, have addressed messages of a more exhortative and admonishing tone to the world. These were great social encyclicals whose effects, if a view of the world were now given to their authors, would bring some disappointment as well as some satisfaction. But the latest is also a great social encyclical. Its appeal is directed equally to all Christians everywhere, for by no other doctrine are the social relations of Christians to one another and to non-Christians so forcefully set down. The layman's privilege and responsibility as a member of the Mystical Body is in no way determined by his occupation, social position, or nationality.

May Christians of strong faith look upon the Holy Father's message as something of the most vital concern to them and worthy of their study. Only a false profession of Christianity and a rending of the Mystical Body can make place for such philosophies as racial and social superiority.

Where unity reigns, discord ceases to exist. The one principle which the Creator intended to be the unifying force in men has been denied or neglected by too many. The heirs to a new and better world will be strong members, either actual or potential, of the Mystical Body of Christ. It is ours to hasten the day when that world will be a real world.