
Let Your Banners Fly.

No papal pronouncement in modern times - perhaps since the revolt of the sixteenth century, - has found such an audience as the recent encyclical on marriage. Loyal Catholics rejoice in the moral support it has given to their position, weak-kneed Catholics are driven by it to drop their attempt to compromise, decent non-Catholics are discovering that the Church is the only outstanding champion of their tradition of chaste wedlock, and the champions of lust are hailing the encyclical as a declaration of war. John Haynes Holmes, pastor of the Community Church of New York, says:

"With the moral purpose of the Pope there can be no quarrel. He sees the corruption of the times, the indecencies and paxities which pollute contemporary society, and would end them. But how would he end them? By remedies which ignore every advance of knowledge, all progress in science and religion, during the last 1000 years. Here is a tenth-century mind at work on twentieth-century problems. We are never going to get anywhere with marriage or with anything else by going back to St. Augustine. The Pope's interpretation of marriage is pure mythology; his denial of divorce is superstition; his denunciation of birth control is bigotry. If the morals of humanity depend on this kind of teaching, God help the race!"

So be it! The "mythology" Dr. Holmes speaks of is the Bible. The "superstition" he scorns is the dictum of Christ, "What God hath joined together let no man put asunder." The "bigotry" we borrow from God, Who slew Onan "because he did a detestable thing." It is not a tenth-century mind at work on human problems: it is the Mind of God, speaking through the Vicar of Christ on earth; the Mind of God, Who is Truth, is not limited by centuries.

Let your banners fly! The enemy has planted its standards; we must show our own. "If any man will come after Me, let him take up his cross daily and follow Me." In these words our Leader taught us the self-denial that must mark all who enroll under the standard of the Cross.

What have we on our side? First of all, we have the strength that comes of mortification, which subjects the emotions to the will (while our enemy makes the will an easy prey to every passing whim). Secondly, we have the order that comes of obedience to authority (while our enemy makes every man his own authority in morals). In the third place, we have the spirit that comes of charity, of the unselfishness that makes a man and woman take up the burden of co-creators with Almighty God (while our enemy makes a god of selfishness and destroys all loyalty to a cause). Finally, we have on our side, as our glorious Leader, the Christ Who said that against His Church the gates of hell should not prevail.

That there are traitors within our ranks we may be sure. Christ spoke of tares among the wheat, of fishes good and bad, of virgins wise and foolish, of the scandal that needs must come. If the encyclical drives them out, so much the better for the Church, but so much the worse for them.

The good soldier needs food, he needs training, he needs arms and ammunition. All of us are soldiers for this fight; each has his post to keep. Strengthen your souls with the Food of Life; train your minds with sound instruction; discipline your wills by voluntary self-denial. Cowards will sell out to the enemy, but the ranks will be swelled with honest recruits from without the walls. The Church will prevail -- no fear -- but the record of each soldier will be kept for the final reckoning.

PRAYERS: Carl Waltsman, a member of the class of 1931, who was forced to leave school on account of illness a few years ago, died last Friday in California. Leonard Cacciatore's father died Monday. Deceased relatives of Henry Asman and Ed Herold. Peter McElligott, an alumnus, continues very ill. Five special intentions.