

Please remember: Tues.
Thurs. Evening Mass in
Dillon for those only who
can't come at any other time.

Prayers requested for
President Ramon Magsaysay
by students from the
Phillipine Islands.

A Christian Meets Adversity

Early in World War I the Holy Father, St. Pius X, died. Shortly afterwards Cardinals from the warring nations met under great strain in Rome to elect the new Holy Father. Among them was Cardinal Mercier of Belgium.

After one morning session, that of August 27, 1914, Cardinal Vico took Mercier by the arm and they walked together in the Raphael Gallery. When they were alone, Cardinal Vico held up a newspaper: "The news is bad, Cardinal Mercier." Mercier braced himself for the shock. "Louvain University is burning. Your palace and your cathedral are under bombardment by the Germans."

Cardinal Mercier stared at the newspaper -- his palace destroyed; the nave of his cathedral a heap of debris; the precious library with its rare collections entirely wiped away; the Palais de Justice and the National Theatre torn by shells; one-sixth of his beloved city of Louvain in ruins!

"Why all this sorrow, Lord? Why hast Thou forsaken us?" Then he glanced at his crucifix and the complaint died on his lips. Throwing back his head in a gesture of new-found courage that made Cardinal Vico marvel, the great Mercier said: "The disciple is not above his Master; nor the servant greater than his Lord."

The Sense Of It

There you have the true Christian attitude towards misfortune. Christ, the Founder of Christianity, died on the cross at the hands of His enemies as an apparent failure. Mary, His mother, is the outstanding martyr to sorrow and grief. Every saint without exception in the whole history of the Church has suffered notably for Christ.

What is the meaning of all this suffering? Well, Christ laid it down as the inevitable lot of the true Christian: "If you will come after Me, take up your cross daily and follow Me."

The peculiar thing about it all is this: if we don't voluntarily mortify ourselves, mortification comes in spite of ourselves and we are not ready to stand it.

"Dispose and order all things according as thou wilt," says the Imitation of Christ. "and thou shalt find something to suffer, either willingly or unwillingly ... Sometimes thou shalt be deserted by God; at other times thou shalt be afflicted by thy neighbor; and what is more thou shalt often be a trouble to thyself."

"If thou carry the cross willingly, it will carry thee, and bring thee to thy desired end, namely, to that place where there will be an end of suffering."

"And the more the flesh is brought down by affliction, the more is the spirit strengthened by interior grace."

As a good Christian, you took up a cross of self-denial on Ash Wednesday, and resolved to carry it resolutely until Easter. A third of Lent has now passed. How's your courage? If you slipped, did you pick yourself up? Remember: Our Lord picked Himself up three times on the road to Calvary! Tonight, the Bishop asks you to come to hear Father Doll preach at the Lenten Series. It's an invitation to put some Lent into your life. If you missed last week, get over there tonight at 6:45 -- it will be a triumph over laziness and indifference -- two big failings in the lives of so many young collegians. Remember: this is the season to educate and strengthen the will, thus making it an asset instead of a liability.