"THERE LIVES AT THIS TIME IN JUDEA . . ."

" . . . a man of singular virtue whose name is Jesus Christ, whom the barbarians esteem as a prophet, but whose followers love and adore as the offspring of the immortal God. He calls back the dead from the grave, and heals all sorts of diseases with a word, or a touch.

"He is a tall man, well shaped, of an amiable and reverent aspect; and his hair is of a color that can hardly be matched, falling in graceful curls, waving about and very agreeably couching upon his shoulders, parted on the crown of his head, running as a stream to the front, fashioned after the Nazarites.

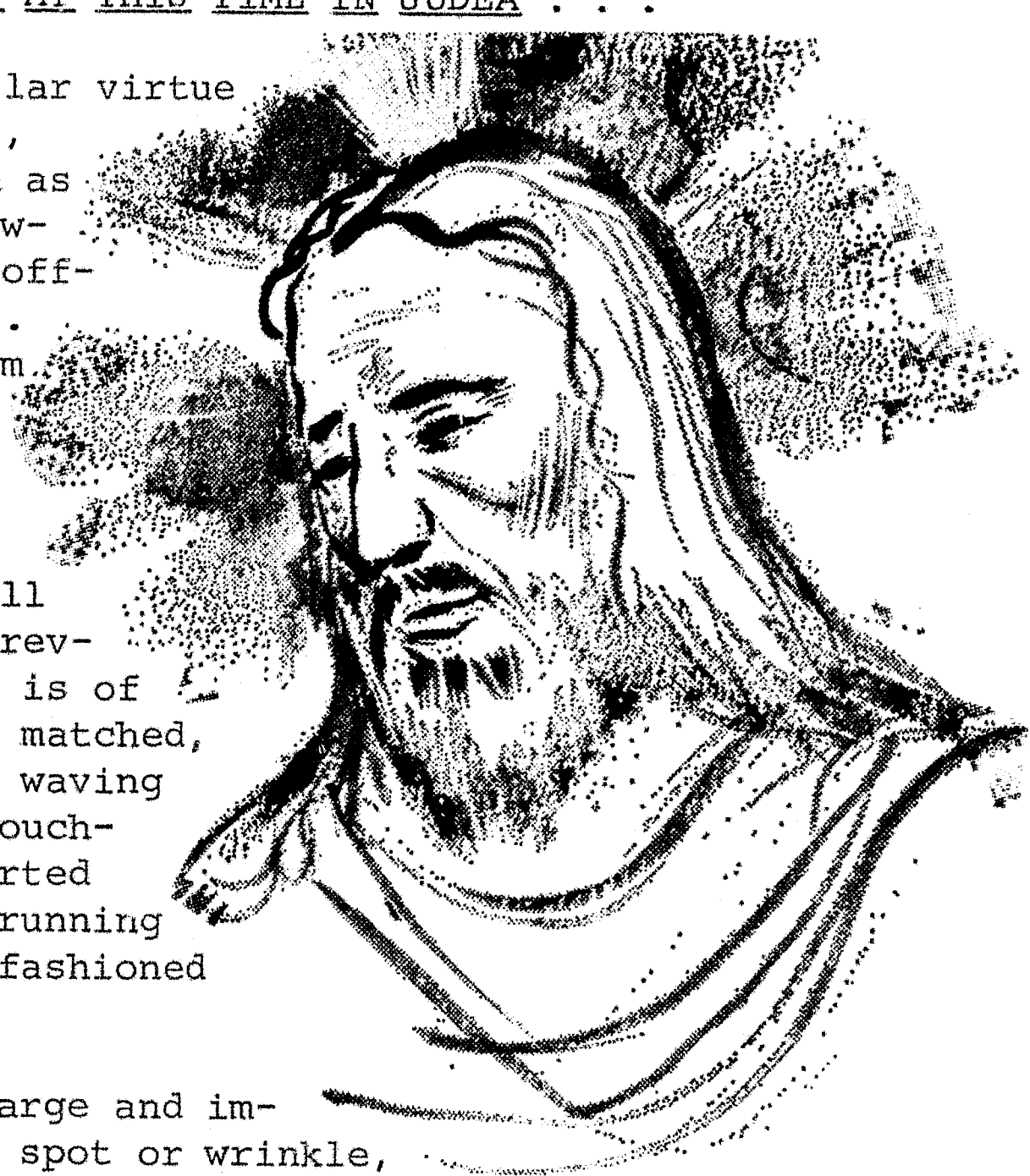
"His forehead high, large and imposing; his cheeks without spot or wrinkle, and beautiful with a lovely red; his nose and mouth formed with exquisite symmetry; his beard of a color suitable to his hair, reaching below his chin and parted in the middle like a fork.

"His eyes bright blue, clear and serene, look innocent and dignified, manly and mature. In proportion of body, most perfect and captivating, his hands and arms most delicate to behold.

"He rebukes with a majesty, counsels with mildness, his whole address, whether in a word or deed, being eloquent and grave.

"No man has seen him laugh, yet his manners are exceedingly pleasant; but he has frequently wept in the presence of men.

"He is temperate, modest, and wise; a man for his extraordinary beauty and divine perfection surpassing the children of men in every sense."



THE CASE AGAINST CONTRACEPTION Here are some of the central ideas in Germain Grisez's Contraception and the Natural Law.* 1. If a society or the Christian people within it believes profoundly in chastity and self-control, it will be able to practice them.

2. Today, more and more propaganda is to the effect that self-control is impossible.

3. "The same modern knowledge which some would use to subvert Christian ideals of chastity could be employed even now to help realize them. No child should be left alone to struggle by himself with incomprehensible tension, with anxiety, with guilt. Habits of self-denial and self-control of the impulses can and should be established before they are needed."

4. "The bold proposal to set out to realize the Christian ideal of chastity has not been taken seriously, because we do not genuinely believe it to be possible. Our failure is a real failure of faith."

5. The malice in contraception is "in the will's direct violation of the procreative good as a value in itself, as an ideal which never may be submerged." Take parallel situations. The medical doctor does not have to be saving lives all the time, and never has to save all lives, but when he acts professionally he is obliged to act to save and not to destroy life. The intellect, too, committed to truth, need not seek truth all the time or seek all truth, but when it acts, it should seek nothing else.

6. The notion that man is an incarnate spirit is false and

misleading, and so too are the notions that the act of the will, pro or con, on contraception or anything else, is the act of a quasi angel, and that the act of human reproduction is merely biological.

7. "The marital society is a human good in itself, not only as a means to procreation, and marital relations do have a role in fostering and in expressing this union on its most basic psychosocial level. But the significance of love is not complete in itself and in the unity it establishes. Lovers must have a real value besides love in which to share, a value which transcends their union and for whose attainment they cooperate."

-- Leo R. Ward

"... a calm, dispassionate statement of the philosophical reasoning that leads at least some Catholics to condemn the artificial prevention of conception. This is precisely what Germain Grisez offers in his book. He teaches philosophy at Georgetown University, is not a priest but the Catholic father of four children, and is much addicted to logical thinking. This is a habit that may somewhat limit his audience and influence.

"... his ethical argument has nothing to do with the Bible, or revelation, nor does it rely on the authority of the Catholic Church. Yet his book is written for Catholic readers, to show them why the artificial prevention of conception is an immoral practice for any human being.

"... If Grisez' argument is cogent, and I think it is, then the Catholic Church cannot change its present judgement of contraception...." --Vernon J. Bourke

--in America (Feb. 20, 1965)

DANGER IN PERFECTION

AN OLD ADAGE says that "the best is the enemy of the good." The meaning is that a person who is never content with anything less than perfection may end up by accomplishing little or nothing. A psychologist probably would rephrase the maxim to read, "Perfectionism is the enemy of efficiency."

There is the fable of the sculptor who, having carved a fine statue, was dissatisfied with his work. He made one more cut with his chisel. This necessitated another cut, and this in turn still another. Gradually the statue diminished in size until finally it had disappeared, with nothing left but a pile of stone fragments.

WHETHER we are carving a statue, writing a book, arranging a business deal or scrubbing a floor, there must come a time when we say, "It is good enough," and get on to something else.

This principle has an application in our spiritual lives. It is true that we never are "good enough" as far as our spiritual growth is concerned. Since Jesus has set for us the ideal to "be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect," we never may establish a lower goal for ourselves. However, we can and must learn to be content to be as good as we can be today.

SANCTITY, like diplomacy, is the art of the possible. A saint is above all a realist. He does not waste valuable time and energy in dreaming of great things which he may do for God tomorrow or next year when circumstances may be more propitious. He concentrates on doing the little things which he can do for God today and under the circumstances in which he presently finds himself.

The late President Kennedy, in one of his speeches, quoted the proverb that a long journey begins with the first step. That is something which we must learn, we who are far from sainthood but who do have good will. A parent may say, for example, "I wish that I had more time for spiritual reading and prayer. I am sure that when my family is raised I can be a much better Christian."

That, of course, is nonsense. The busiest parent (and non-parent, too) can be just as good today, in proportion to his opportunities and circumstances, as he can be when he begins to collect social security. All too often we use the promise of our future imagined goodness to excuse ourselves from present effort.

FIVE MINUTES of daily spiritual reading now will be more pleasing to God than the hoped-for hour twenty years from now. A periodic and fervent, "My God, I love You," during today's hectic rush will mean more to God (and to self) than hypothetical hours of contemplation in later leisure years. One or two less cigarettes or drinks today will be more spiritually profitable than a projected complete abstinence "when I'm not under so much tension."

With some of us it may be a form of perfectionism; with others

it may be simple procrastination - this making of future imagined greatness an excuse for neglecting the lesser but real possibilities of the present. Which ever it is, perfectionism or procrastination, we shall have made a long step towards heaven when we have learned to be content to do what we can for God today - and proceed to do it.

WHATEVER the present circumstances of our life may be, we have not come to those circumstances by accident. Unless we have involved ourselves in an adverse situation by our own say we know that our present state is God's will for us. It cannot be, either from His viewpoint or from the viewpoint of our own ultimate best interests, an unfavorable environment. It is the environment in which we can and must grow in holiness.

We shall do so by making use of whatever small opportunities each day may offer. Above all we shall do so by accepting whatever limitations our state in life, our work and responsibilities may place upon us. God is well aware of all the limitations which surround us. He asks only that we do for Him what we can - today.

--Fr. Leo J. Trese

"THERE LIVES AT THIS TIME..." (continued from the front page)

ascribed to one Publius Lentulus, during the reign of Tiberius Caesar. It was first found in the writings of St. Anselm, Archbishop of Canterbury, during the Eleventh Century. Since there is nothing to substantiate its authenticity, scholars have labeled it apocryphal.

But it's interesting -- even fascinating -- this pen-picture of Our Lord through the eyes of a pagan. Even if it were authentic; and if it were announced that this same Person, with these same characteristics, would arrive in South Bend tomorrow, you'd leave no stone un-turned to be there; up front, too. You'd skip the dining hall, and the Huddle, the game in the gym, the show in Washington Hall, maybe even Rosie's. You'd side-step them all, so that you wouldn't miss a thing. Maybe you'd even come early and stand in line -- just to be sure you were on time!

Maybe we're not sure of this pen-picture. But there's one thing we have no doubt of at all - the Real Presence of Our Lord at our Adoration in the Lady Chapel these days -- and at daily Mass -- and in all our hall chapels all day long. With Faith opening our useless eyes here, we need but change the title slightly to read:

IN YOUR CHARITY please pray for the repose of the soul of Father John J. Hennessey, C.S.C., who died in Holy Cross House last Thursday, March 4, and was buried on Saturday. He was a priest for almost 59 years, 54 of which were spent in the Bengal (Pakistan) missions.

"There lives at this time on our altars..." Now read the pen-picture with confidence. And make the most of it, and the reality it should be in our lives.

--RELIGIOUS BULLETIN

March 21, 1956