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Christmas 1969

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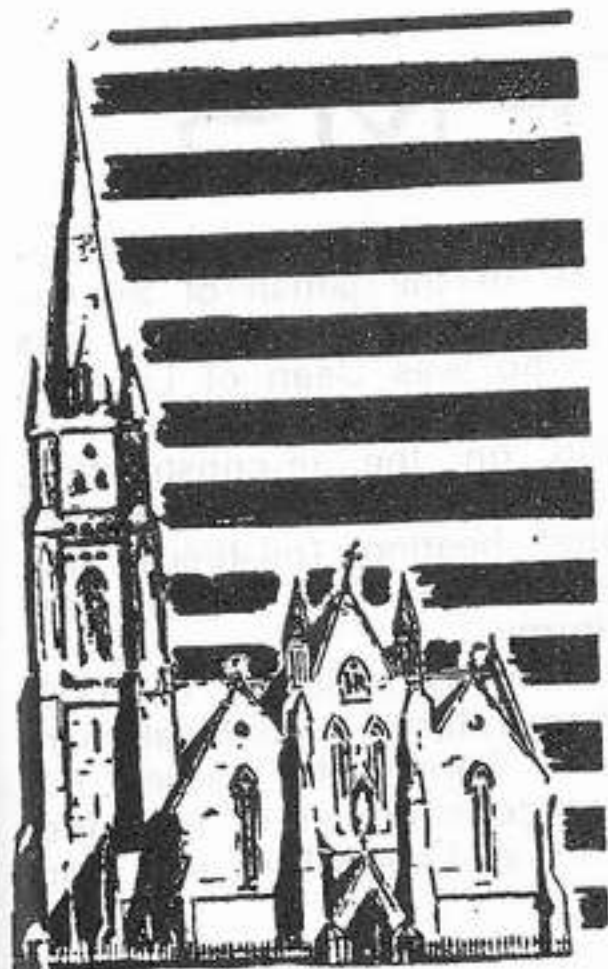
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OUR CATHOLIC LIFE

A Quarterly Magazine of the Diocese of Limerick, under the Patronage of His Lordship, Most Rev. Henry Murphy, D.D.

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The Travelling People

At this time of the year we recall once again the Child who was born without a roof over His head.

Now at last the conscience of the Christian people of Ireland has become alive to the children who are born on our roadsides or who, if they are now born in hospitals, spend their lives without a roof over their heads. All credit to Gay Byrne who, in the Late, Late Show, introduced the travellers to those who did not know them before. This programme sharpened our awareness of their plight, especially in winter time. It showed us their courage, humour and independence. It also reminded us that they are our own kith and kin who, when they were evicted from their patches of land, took to the road instead of emigrating.

Another recent TV programme showed us how the people of Castleisland and other parts of Kerry have made the travelling people their own and integrated them into their communities. The Limerick Settlement Committee, which is one of the initiatives of the Social Service Centre in Henry Street, has done much over the past three years for the twenty-five families who make Limerick their winter home, including providing fourteen caravans for those who were living in tents. Now the Corporation is setting up serviced camping sites near the city where the travellers will have at least minimal facilities, grazing for their horses and the opportunity of regular schooling for their children. There are going to be problems and some of them may not be easy of solution. *But everything is going to depend on your attitude and your approach.*

We are confident that the people of Limerick, when they recall the Child born in the stable, and His words during His public life, "Come ye blessed of my Father . . . for I was a stranger and you took me in," will not be found wanting in solving the problems involved in caring for the twenty-five families who seek shelter among us each winter.

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DIOCESAN ITEMS

NEW PARISH OF THE HOLY FAMILY

The Bishop has constituted a part of Our Lady, Queen of Peace, parish, Limerick, as a new parish with the title of The Holy Family. The boundary of the new parish will be a line drawn on the city side of Krups factory and the new industrial estate, and it will extend to the former boundary between our Lady, Queen of Peace, parish and Donoghmore.

The reason for the setting up of the new parish is the extensive house-building which has taken place in the area over the past three years. Limerick Corporation has built two estates in the area: Keyes' Park (175 houses) and Kincora Park (133 houses), all the houses of which have been occupied for some time. At present a six-hundred house estate in being built (O'Malley Park) and already 200 of these houses are occupied. The new parish now has more than five hundred homes and in a little over a year it will have over nine hundred — and the plans are drawn up to build another estate of about 250 houses within the parish area, immediately after the completion of O'Malley Park.

The first parish priest of Holy Family parish is Fr. Joseph Shinnors, who has been curate at St. Mary's, Limerick, for the past eight years and who before that was Army chaplain, Sarsfield Barracks, during which time he served with the army in the Congo. Fr. Shinnors lives at 334 O'Malley Park and has already discovered that, because of his years with the army and in St. Mary's, many of his new parishioners are old friends of his.

Sites for a church and a boys' school have been acquired. Fr. Shinnors' first task will be to provide a place of worship for his people, which will be a focal point for the new Christian community which he will lead them in creating over the next few years.

Fr. Shinnors wishes to pay tribute to the Corporation for the location and general layout of the new estates. The variety in design of houses, the road systems, and the spaces left vacant for greens and shrub-planting in the near future — all these will make it possible, he thinks, through co-operation between the Corporation and the people, to make Holy Family parish one of the most pleasant residential areas in the city.

BALLYHAHILL CHURCH RE-CONSTRUCTION

The inscription on the present church at Ballyhahill records that the church was built in

1829, the year of Catholic Emancipation. Ballyhahill was then part of the parish of Shanagolden and the parish priest at the time was Fr. P. McNamara, who was Dean of Limerick diocese.

Work has begun on the re-construction. There will be a new roof, new floor, recessed confessionals, central heating (oil-fired) and, most important of all, an altar and sanctuary-area suited to the new liturgy.

The cost of the re-construction is £17,000. The contract has been placed with local man, Mr. Paddy Hynes of Curra, who carried out such an excellent re-construction of the other church in the parish at Loughill in the years 1959/'61.

DIOCESAN APPOINTMENTS

Rev. J. Shinnors to be P.P. of the new parish of the Holy Family, South Hill area of Limerick; Rev. M. Walshe to be C.C., St. Mary's, Limerick; Rev. D. McNamee to be C.C., St. Munchin's, Limerick; Rev. A. O'Keeffe to be C.C., Bruree; Rev. O. Plunkett to be Religious Instructor, City Vocational Schools; Rev. J. Leonard to be C.C., Mungret; Rev. T. Crawford to be C.C., Kildimo; Rev. Donal Cunningham to be Assistant, Croom; Rev. David Mulcahy, S.M.A., to be C.C., Bulgaden.

NEW LIMERICK INSTITUTION FOR THE MENTALLY HANDICAPPED

Limerick Health Authority, with the assistance of the Bishop, will shortly provide the Limerick area with the badly-needed institution for male mentally handicapped adolescents and adults. The Health Authority has provided a sixty-acre site between South Hill and the Limerick-Kilmallock road, and building will begin during 1970. The institution will be staffed, at the invitation of the Bishop, by the Brothers of Charity, who conduct a similar institution at Lota, near Cork.

Among the advantages of the site are that it will be near the new industrial estate at South Hill, which will have sheltered workshops, and that it will be near a new school-complex projected for this area.

At the outset, the institution will cater for two hundred, which will meet the needs of the Limerick area.

Should Parents Answer Their Children's Questions About Sex?

Parents are worried because their teenagers don't discuss with them or ask them questions about life and behaviour. They can see for themselves, in TV and books, the teenager behaving in a manner that is a long way from the accepted standards in which they themselves were brought up.

Parents who really care have taken the trouble to study these changes and understand them, so that they can be a help to their children at the final stage of their development to maturity. But even they find that their teenagers will not discuss with them their anxieties and doubts about behaviour. They give the impression that it's too painful for them to listen, let alone talk to their parents about their problems.

BREAKDOWN IN COMMUNICATION

Why is this? Because there is a breakdown in communication between parents and children.

When did this breakdown occur? At what age did the children decide that their parents "were not worth listening to" in matters of behaviour and attitude? When did they decide that their parents could not understand them, because they are square and not with it?

ANSWERING SMALL CHILDREN

It all began when the young adult of today was only 4 or 5 years old. On the arrival of a new baby in his own or a friend's house, the 4 or 5-year-old is likely to ask: "Who makes babies?," or "Who made me?"

Before this question comes, some young mothers worry unnecessarily about being asked it. But what is more natural than to answer your child: "God made you because he loves you." The child will be quite satisfied with this answer. The next question, as likely as not, will be: "What's for tea?"

ANSWERING THE SIX TO TEN-YEAR-OLDS

Later on, maybe the 6 to 8 stage (earlier or later with some children), a child may ask: "How did God make me?" This question is easy to answer truthfully, when it is answered in a loving and happy way. "God made you in a special place in Mummy's body near her

heart. You grew in there until you were strong enough to live in a cot or pram."

Some parents here like to remind their child of that part of the Hail Mary — "Blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus." Children of this age know about the birth of Jesus at Christmas. This will help them see that the special place for babies in mother's body is called the womb.

Weeks afterwards while playing the child may suddenly come back and ask the exact same question again. This is quite normal and natural. Again the parents answer in a happy and loving way.

At a later stage the child may ask: "How did God make the baby start to grow in Mummy's body?" "The baby grew from a little seed planted there by God," is an adequate answer. The child does not want to know any details. Such questions will be repeated as the child grows from 8 to 10.

TALKING TO GIRLS AGED 10 TO 12

Coming up to the age of 11 it is important for girls to have the monthly period explained to them in a healthy and loving way. It is generally agreed that it is better to tell girls about this a year too early than a day too late. It can be a frightening experience for a girl to get her period for the first time and not know anything at all about it.

WHAT NOT TO DO

Parents are often embarrassed by these questions. They don't know how to phrase the answer. They take the easy way out. They give the child a smack and say: "Never ask such questions again."

Such parents turn their back on their own children when they are in need of loving help to cope with the normal curiosity of their years. They refuse to help them in their education about their own body, which was made by God. They refuse to give them information which they need to develop into healthy and responsible adults.

Can such parents complain if their children decide not to ask them any more questions? If they discuss their problems elsewhere?

Woman's Page

Happy Christmas . . . Time and again the familiar phrase rings out as the festive season closes in. Happy Christmas — friends meet and part with the greeting. It is a cheerful, heart-warming phrase, bearing with it the wish that the abundance of joy which the birth of the Christ-child ensured for all men of goodwill should gladden the hearts of its recipients. Happy Christmas to most people means a time for family celebrations, exchanging presents, the enjoyment of plenty of good food and drink too . . . the warmth of a roaring fire — or the comfort of central heating. It means the excitement of stacks of Christmas cards — and the last-minute panic when one arrives from a friend temporarily forgotten. It means problems for the head of the household as to how he can further stretch an already over-taxed budget, but sure God is good, and if January is long and lean at self, we'll enjoy ourselves at Christmas. The housewife takes the extra hustle and bustle in her stride, declares to all and sundry that it is never worth all the fuss, but is finally rewarded by the sight of her contented brood on Christmas Day. Children spend hours compiling long lists of gifts they expect to get from the first Space Man. Yes, Christmas is a good time for the family.

FOR EVERYONE?

Happy Christmas — but is it, for everyone? The thought of what happened in Bethlehem two thousand years ago is brought sharply into focus by the sight of an itinerant family pulled in to the side of a lonely road. The shelter of a wet ditch is hardly the ideal setting for a happy Christmas. Father, mother and a knot of small children huddle together over an unwilling fire and try to keep themselves warm. Hunger and want have etched sharp lines into small faces that looked old the day they were born. No shouts of joy ring out here at the postman's arrival. The only shouts that greet them are those uttered by angry residents armed with wattles, who harry and hurry the travelling people — the people of God — on to some other resting place, far from their tidy, comfortable, well-appointed houses. Happy Christmas in your leaking caravans and rain-soaked tent.

There are many others — too many — for whom the message of Christmas will be lost in a flood of sad or bitter memories. The old man or woman trying to exist in one small room on a miserable pension, will draw little comfort from the thought that the sons and daughters for whom they sacrificed so much are too en-

grossed in their own affairs to remember a lonely parent.

For the newly-widowed mother of a young family, still bewildered by the cruel blow that deprived her of her partner and the father of her children, the prospect of her first Christmas without her husband is a bleak one indeed.

Every County Home or Geriatric Hospital has its quota of senior citizens, all of whose relatives have gone to their eternal reward. It must be a lonely feeling to be the last surviving member of a once-large, happy family. Christmas is but another milestone towards the end of life's weary road.

THINK ABOUT IT

It takes no great effort on anyone's part to call to mind many people of our own acquaintance in similar or even worse circumstances. While there is still time, why not decide to put Christ back into Christmas in a really big way this year. To use a popular term, let us stand up and be counted as Christians, not ashamed, but proud of the title.

Itinerants are people — human beings, fathers and mothers, sisters and brothers, sons and daughters — a fact that is sometimes forgotten. That they are denied so many of the privileges of the society we live in, is a sad and serious reflection on the rest of us. They have been described by an eminent Irish poet as God's Gentry, especially dear to Him. Instead of heaping abuse and threats on them, would it not be nice if a group of people got together at Christmas and cooked a nourishing meal for a family or two.

A visit to an old person living alone, bringing some of the fare which they could not possibly afford themselves, would compensate for the coldness of neglected relatives.

To open one's home to a family facing their first Christmas without a dearly-loved parent would go a long way towards easing their sense of loss.

The gift of a few cigarettes or sweets, or a nip of the bottle, would warm the heart of many an old person lying in a bed of pain in hospital.

There are countless ways in which we can truly put Christ back into Christmas. All that is needed is a little thought and extra effort. Our lives will be richer and we will find a new and deeper meaning to the phrase, Happy Christmas, and that is my wish for each and everyone of you. —BAIRBRE



by FR. RALPH LAWLESS, O.F.M.

Sumer, the Mesopotamian city where man's recorded history began. An archaeologist pieced the conversation together after painstaking work with museum fragments.

The incident indicates that the "generation gap" — the difficulty of communication between the older and younger generation — is not a new problem. Teens were teens 4,000 years ago. Parents worried 4,000 years ago. And somehow we seem to have survived the centuries.

The problem is, however, more acute today. Every parent in our society must experience a profound shock at least once while his offspring struggle along the path to maturity. The shock comes on that day when the parent recognises that the child he knew for so long has vanished, never to return. His place has been taken by a mysterious, uncommunicative, questioning and critical half-adult, influenced by and influencing others of his age and class. What does this stranger think? What does he want out of life? What does he do when one of his parents is not present to watch him? What advice can I

The man was angry with his son. "Where did you go?" he asked the boy. "I did not go anywhere," replied the boy. Actually he had been trying to sneak home late at night. "Come now," replied the father. "Don't stand about in the public square or wander about the street all night . . . Go to school . . . Night and day I am tortured because of you. Night and day you waste in pleasures."

The dialogue sounds modern. It was actually written on clay tablets 4,000 years ago in

give him? How can I make him listen to advice? These are the questions that must torment us all in a culture which has made adolescence such a difficult transitional period.

FRANCISCAN YOUTH CENTRE

The Franciscan Youth Centre (F.Y.C.) and the effort involved are an attempt to answer these questions and help today's emerging adult reach full maturity. Its aim is three-fold: to **understand**, to **guide** and to **encourage** tomorrow's people.

On Friday and Sunday evenings, teenagers flock to the centre to listen and dance to "their kind of music." "How can you stand that deafening and senseless music?" How often have I been asked that question on a Sunday night as the curious passerby, attracted by the strange sound of beat, steps into the hall to see what is happening. Why cater for their strange tastes in music? Why run these teenage dances?

Firstly, it must surely be the duty of the older generation to provide young people with the opportunity to meet one another and enjoy themselves in a proper atmosphere, under supervision and at an hour that will enable them to obtain their full night's sleep.

Secondly, that well-known phrase of Don Bosco — "Like the things that they like and they will like the things that you like" — is still true. This was proved last Easter when the young people of the city, many of them members of the F.Y.C., were invited to attend a mission in the church nearby, a mission in which an effort was made — clumsy and imperfect though it was — to present religion in a manner that would appeal to them. A local beat group, *Reform*, supplied the music. Hymns were set to modern accompaniment. The attendance of the young in such large numbers, their devotion at Mass each evening, their enthusiasm to join in the hymn-singing proved that for them religion is still something vital and important, that they were interested. But would they have been so interested, had interest not already been shown in them?

THEIR MUSIC

Thirdly, to understand and appreciate young people's music is to understand and appreciate them. Today's adolescent has been described, analyzed and criticised by psychologists, psychiatrists and anyone and everyone intrigued, baffled or disturbed by his behaviour. But it remains within the province of recording artistes like the Beatles, Simon and Garfunkel, Donovan,

the Rolling Stones to interpret the hope, the aspirations and the disenchantment intermingled in his heart. Record sales indicate the profound soul communication between young people and these recording artistes. It is surely folly for those of us who have the interests and the future of these young people at heart to stay perched on the fence of time waiting for this phase in their lives to pass. Understand their music, and you get an insight into their lives, their hopes and fears for the future. Talk to them about "their kind of music" in an atmosphere where they feel at home and relaxed and you will soon have them talking to you about vital and more fundamental issues in their lives.

Not only do young people get the opportunity to enjoy themselves at the F.Y.C., they also get an opportunity to express themselves. Debates and formal discussions on religious and other topics are held from time to time. More attention, however, is given to serious discussion and conversation in informal and comfortable surroundings, over a bottle of coke, after a game of table tennis, chess or table soccer.

It is here that Christian attitudes to home, school, work, leisure, Church and State can be developed by the young people themselves. In such an atmosphere, young people are willing to listen and to learn the right approach to drinking, driving, smoking, reading, the cinema and television, the use of free time, the use of money. It is here that a priest can have a deep influence for good in the life of an emerging adult.

LEADERSHIP

The tragedy in Ireland today is that so many young people with a tremendous potential for positive leadership are not aware of the God-given talent within them. In autumn a leadership course was commenced at the F.Y.C. at the request of some of the members, who felt that there was a need for good leadership among youth to counteract the influencing forces of left wing youth movements. Fourteen attend the course twice a week. It helps them to be vocal and articulate, to show initiative, imagination and enterprise in putting into action their sound convictions. With the help of a little training, these young people can take the first few but most important steps in learning to (a) think and speak on their feet, (b) ask and answer pertinent questions, (c) chair a meeting, (d) familiarise themselves with a variety of practical ways to influence for good such spheres as government, education, labour relations.



At a Leadership Course at the Franciscan Youth Centre.

COMMITMENT

There can be no progress towards maturity without commitment. Any youth centre must create the situation where boys and girls can freely commit themselves. Here in the F.Y.C. there is commitment. First of all, commitment to the centre itself. The members provide and improve the facilities available. They run the canteen and cloakroom. Last June a group established a Camera Club. Funds were raised. A dark room was furnished and equipped. Slide shows and lectures were arranged. At the moment an exhibition of work is being arranged. Other groups run an "art school," a table tennis club. Through these activities young people express themselves, develop their talents, develop a sense of responsibility, learn to live and work with one another.

Secondly, there is commitment to other people. Young people are capable of great generosity. But it has to be spontaneous and not ordered from above, otherwise young people will suspect that they are being used. In September, two members at the centre were shocked when they discovered that two of their colleagues were unable to read or write. They offered to

teach them. The idea caught on. Now a group of secondary school students devote two nights each week to teaching their less fortunate colleagues. Other members devote much of their time to raising funds and making arrangements to provide old folk with a Christmas party and entertainment. In activities such as these, the first to profit are the members of the youth centre themselves. They are made aware that social inequalities do exist in our society, that selfishness in life leads to nowhere, that it is not so much what they can get from society, but what they can give to it, that is important. What a better way to pass into manhood and womanhood!

To understand young people, to put into their lives a sense of significance and mission, to stir up in them idealism, vigorous commitment and generous involvement, to tell them that they are worthwhile, that they are capable of living up to the talents and vision they have is the purpose of the Franciscan Youth Centre. Perhaps we are not pleasing everybody. Perhaps we have not done as much as we would like to do. Perhaps we have made mistakes. Our only claim is that in the last two years we have tried to help tomorrow's people.

Interview with Cormac O'Connor

Q.—When did you first get interested in education?

A.—I can remember as a university student being very dissatisfied with my teachers. They seemed not even to know my name. I was aware then of something very lacking in our universities (although they are doing great things in many ways). But they are digressing from the true ideals of education.

I also have been uneasy in my mind since the early 'fifties when the movement for a university in Limerick was gathering momentum. I have always felt we should be doing as well as asking.

Q.—But why did you get involved in the action area?

A.—There comes a time when a man, unless he takes action on his ideals, will become frustrated and disillusioned. In action we develop our lives and enjoy them more fully. I took action because I had to.

Q.—You seem to be speaking from a personal conviction concerning education. Can you describe some of those convictions?

A.—That's a difficult question. One can have many views of many things. Perhaps a particularly personal experience is due to my childhood and family background. I was fortunate to be born into an unusually 'artistic' family. Art and poetry and music were all around me in my childhood and youth. As well as that I had a deep interest in and a certain aptitude for science. I pursued an academic career in theoretical physics. This 'dual' experience in art and science was for me a single experience. I could never see a division between science and the so-called humanities. They are all humanities for me, motivated by the transcendent beauty of reality. The scientific academicians, now lured away into the expertises of science and technology, have lost sight of this simple unity in the human heart. The result — or one of the results — is young people's dissatisfaction with mere technology. A unifying philosophy is needed in all education. People want to know about themselves, discover the meaning of life.

Another feeling I have is that the universities in their honourable concern with knowledge for

its own sake have neglected the knowledge of ideas in action. Enterprise and creativity cannot be left to chance. Too many knowledgeable people expect others to create their employment — often these others will be men who have scarcely been to secondary school. There is a need to show young people the way to personal creativity, first through art or physics or business, later through increasing their awareness of society and relationships. We must do more than give skills. We must draw out the personal creativity of students. This is why I like our students in the Limerick Adult Education Institute. (We have about 150 now.) They already are earning a living and appreciate what we are trying to do. They want to make a fuller contribution to their society. We like to encourage this effort to create. Hence our slogan "Cultivate to Create to Contribute."

Q.—How did the idea of an adult school come about?

A.—Fortuitously really. My first student was a post leaving certificate student waiting to find a post. I took him through a course of statistical mathematics for a year. He was an excellent student. We taught each other many things. He learned something about statistics and I learned that if I could do this for a year then others could. I gathered some qualified people whom I knew to be kindred spirits to make a start through their own subjects. (Incidentally, this first student has since had a successful career in industry.) At the same time I thought it would not be fair to leaving cert. graduates to offer a professional training when we were only an embryonic school. Instead we began with adults. The result was good.

Q.—And who are your teachers?

A.—Very early on — before anything had started — I met John Noonan. His understanding of the philosophy of the creative spirit appealed to me. He saw the same defects in modern education, which is 'knowledge-packed' at the expense of genuine experience. He readily took on a programme in English literature. We also had Fr. Gervaise Cronin, O.F.M., who made a success of a Theology programme; Jack Hogan with Philosophy; Fr. Sean Casey, S.J., with Psychology; Fr. Andrew Kennedy with Socio-

logy; and others have done great work since. We have some sixteen or seventeen lecturers now.

Q.—Where did you set up your school?

A.—Wherever we got space. People were very helpful. The Jesuits, the Christian Brothers, the Presentation Convent, the Savoy, the Trades' Council, the School of Commerce — all willingly offered us free space. We are a kind of modern hedge-school. This also helps to get more people involved, and this is good. It is important to realise that buildings are not the first thing. The first thing is the spirit — if that is right the rest will follow.

Q.—Are there fees?

A.—Yes. We believe that reward for work and a price for goods received is a basic principle. We have always adhered to this. We pay a small fee to our lecturers after we have spent some money organising seminars and special lecturers for the school.

Q.—Have you got any financial aid?

A.—No. This, we hope, will come in due course when it is better known that we are making a valuable contribution to society. We have insisted on remaining free — free from ties which 'money' rightly expects when given. It is important to preserve our ideals. Freedom is very important. We must not be compromised. Yet we will welcome the right kind of patronage.

Q.—Are you allied to a university?

A.—No. Again we are trying to make an unique contribution. The universities cannot break away from their terms of reference. To be under their wing might embarrass them and us. We hope they understand this. We would like them to look at what we do as experiments in education. There is room for all.

Q.—You say "experiments in education." Could you elucidate?

A.—Yes. Take, for example, our tourism group. We gathered a group of people of the managerial level in tourism to consider a philosophy of the industry. Its effects were profound. We are now about to publish "Tourism — an industry for people," and to go on to develop tourism education in depth. Another example is our publication of Fr. McHenry's book, "The University Dilemma." Fr. McHenry, O.S.B., one

of our group, contributes a good deal to our thought. We also have a few other publications in mind.

Then there is our new experiment in industrial relations. We have gathered an excellent group of people from all levels of the "business-industrial" world to consider industrial relations and its psychology in depth. Fr. Sean Casey, experienced in this field, is doing a very original experiment with this group. They are concerned to find out why relations break down, to identify the weaknesses.

There are other examples. Our history group began this year with Ulster! Our Irish literature lecturer is beginning a very interesting two years course, called "Literature in Irish." John Harty is already underway with a new group in civics. There are many possibilities so long as you remain free. We are only beginning.

Q.—What do you hope to achieve through your school?

A.—A 'six-mark' question; but if we succeeded in bringing this city and region to a higher level of thought and action, would we not be doing a great thing?

A.—What do you need?

A.—We need people who are not involved in their community to become involved. We need people to make a contribution to society and by so doing to learn the deepest joy of living. We need the confidence of the society, we need to be used, we need more enlightened men from all walks of life to come forward and lead groups, we need the Church to help us find groups, and teachers, we need comfortable rooms to conduct our activities, we need healthy publicity . . . In a word we need the goodwill of those with whom we wish to share an educational experience and that means everyone. We need what we are trying to engender, a spirit of creative community.

LECTURERS IN THE LIMERICK ADULT EDUCATION INSTITUTE

Theology: Fr. Gervaise Cronin, O.F.M., Fr. Senan Timoney, S.J.

Philosophy: Mr. J. Hogan, Mr. B. Mooney, Fr. Sean Casey, S.J.

(contd. page 28)

Bishop Casey



Bishop Eamonn Casey with his people after his ordination at Killarney.

Bishop Eamonn Casey went to great trouble to ensure that there were representatives from every parish in the Diocese of Kerry present at his ordination, and that each parish group included at least two teenagers. After meeting the adult guests on Sunday evening, Bishop Casey (in the words of the *Kerryman*) "then went to Aras Phadraig where a reception for the young people, who had attended the ordination ceremonies, was in progress. A few words of greeting to the boys and girls and then, in response to requests from the crowd, the Bishop launched into a spirited rendering of 'The Merry Ploughboy'."

In an interview in the same number of the *Kerryman*, Bishop Casey said that he hopes to gain a lot of strength in his episcopal work from the youth of the diocese. "Their presence always leads to action," he said. "Youth is the hope of the future. I hope we can harness youth in the Kerry diocese. This is something which we must do." He emphasised that in highlighting youth he was not, by implication, saying that other groups in the community would not contribute every bit as much.

"You get the kind of commitment I laud in groups, but you get it at its greatest, its



highest, in youth," he said. "I believe they have a sense of idealism and commitment which, if properly harnessed, can make a tremendous impact on life, on the problems we have in our area."

The parish of Templeglantine has taken a very important initiative in the renewal of the Church in the diocese of Limerick.

Mass In The Kitchen

by REV. OLIVER PLUNKETT

There may be piseogs in West Limerick, but if so, their days are numbered, at least in the parish of Templeglantine. The fact is that the sagart there is possessed by the idea of community spirit. The importance of community consciousness was being hammered home from Carraig An Easpaig, without any need for encouragement from Carraig Na hEaglaise. One consequence of this foresightedness is the Mass in the kitchens of Templeglantine.

The parish is divided into eight neighbourhoods. This is not the result of any survey carried out by expert planners; these neighbourhoods have a natural geographical basis. A neighbourhood and a townland are not coterminous; rather the neighbourhood very often includes many townlands. The parish priest gives one very vivid description of the area of a neighbourhood: "If the husband and wife are having a row in the yard on a cold night, as far away as the exchange can be heard, that is the extent of the neighbourhood." As the people can be so easily divided into groups, the idea of the neighbourhood Mass seemed very suitable. The people of a neighbourhood assemble in one of their own houses. This calls for a spacious kitchen, even if there is to be just a representative from each house. A family may make its house available for this occasion, if there is a sizeable kitchen in it.

THE STATION MASS

There is a strong tradition of the Station Mass in many parts of rural Ireland since the penal days. As the laws against the Catholic religion became less severe, people managed to have Mass said once again. But as churches were very scarce, it was necessary to have recourse to the houses of the people. This, of course, was the tradition in the early Church, when Christians assembled in their houses for "the breaking of bread." Even when the churches had been built throughout the country, in many places the custom survived. Even previous to Vatican II the Irish Church saw the value in preserving this tradition. R.T.E. has added to the growth in popularity of this setting in recent months in its coverage of religious services on

Sunday mornings. However, though there may be many similarities, the Station Mass, as commonly understood, is not the same as the neighbourhood Mass. In the former case, it is merely the family itself or the families of the townland that are involved. There is no question of the parish clergy acquiring revenue through the neighbourhood Mass. And, at least in Templeglantine, the householders are not allowed to go to any expense by providing a large meal or drinks. Simplicity is the keynote throughout the occasion.

THE NEIGHBOURHOOD MASS

The purpose of the neighbourhood Mass is to create a true community spirit among the people at worship, with the hope that this will extend beyond the eucharistic celebration into their daily life as Christians. It is becoming increasingly difficult to foster this spirit in our parish churches. In the neighbourhood arrangement, people are at home with the Mass; it becomes a very intimate and touching experience. Or to put it in modern terminology, they as a group encounter Christ at grassroots level. Of course, this setting also presents a magnificent opportunity for discussing and implementing many of the most recent recommendations about the liturgy and parish organisation.

AT GLEANN DARACH

At 7.30 on a Friday night, the parish priest of Templeglantine, accompanied by an assistant priest, arrived at Bill Quille's farmhouse, where the people of the neighbourhood of Gleann Darach had already assembled. All eyes turned on the kitchen table as it was quickly being made into an altar. The people watched slides depicting the Passion of Our Lord, as they prayed the Rosary. Meanwhile, the assisting priest was available for confessions in the next room. As he prepared for Mass, the celebrant used the opportunity to explain the significance of the altar stone, the sacred vessels and the vestments. Red vestments were being worn, as it was the feast of a martyr, St. Josaphat. Pat Quille walked up with remarkable confidence to



Reading the Epistle at one of the Masses.

read the epistle. After the gospel, the assisting priest preached a short homily. There was plenty of variety in the prayers of the faithful, as some stood up to pray for their own intentions. Throughout the Mass, the celebrant made occasional comments, when some explanation was considered necessary. After the Mass, the people, about 40 in all, said thanksgiving prayers in common and joined in a very simple hymn, "Soul of My Saviour." Then the kettle was quickly boiled and without any delay all were chatting over a cup of tea and biscuits.

AT DEVON ROAD

On the Tuesday night following, the people of the Devon Road neighbourhood were assembled in Donal Sheehan's kitchen at Mount Courtenay. In this historic house, the neighbourhood Mass took place once again this year. When confessions had been heard and the Rosary-cum-slides completed, the parish priest made some introductory remarks on the feast of the day.

Fear a 'Ti himself bravely read the epistle. Once again the homily and prayers of the faithful formed part of the liturgy of the Word. At the Agnus Dei, nobody paid any attention to the alarm clock as it rang out at a distance. The people had no difficulty in moving up for Communion, though there were 37 assembled in the kitchen. After Mass, the priest and the people discussed the suitability of a parish council, and the possibility of introducing the new liturgical changes to the parish Mass, by the people of each neighbourhood meeting regularly to organise themselves. Meanwhile some of the ladies helped to sustain the discussion with tea and cakes.

The neighbourhood Mass in Templeglantine can be improved upon and, in fact, this is happening as time goes on. It is a very difficult task for any one priest, even with the co-operation of such a willing people. But Templeglantine has taken the initiative and is setting a splendid example for the entire diocese of Limerick. Rath De'ar a gcuid oibre.

A SHORT STORY . . .

The Christmas Present

by JAMES KELLY

Shawney had just got his Christmas holidays. He was not as happy as he thought he would be. Most of the other fellows had come running out of school waving the presents they had got from the teacher. They seemed to be very pleased with their motor cars and boats and Christmas stockings. He would have liked the red motor car; and what did he get but "an old book"! Imagine giving any fellow "an old book" for Christmas! Sure you would not give a thing like that to your worst enemy. He felt like throwing it away, but he thought that he had better keep it until he was well away from the school in case the teacher saw him disposing of it.

It was not that he thought it might hurt the teacher's feelings. He did not really think that any teacher who would give a book of Fairy Tales to a young fellow at Christmas could have any feelings to hurt. He found it hard enough to read his school books, and reading gave him no pleasure at all. Now, if Mickey got the book there would be some sense in that because he was able to read anything and he was always boasting about all the books he had. But Mickey got the red car and Shawney got the book.

AN UNFEELING WOMAN

Teachers had a very queer way of doing things to be sure. Surely to God, she must have known that his only chance of getting anything to play with at Christmas was to get it at the school party. She had ruined his Christmas. She was a most unfeeling woman. She must have known that she had given him the wrong present when all the lads laughed when they saw what she was handing him. But she only smiled and said the book would give him great pleasure as he sat by the fire reading it. The laugh that greeted this should have told her how wrong she was, but these teachers seem to have no brains at all in spite of all their learning.

Even if the book was about Pirates or Wars, and if it had lovely coloured pictures that a fellow could look at and enjoy, it would have been bad enough; but Fairy Tales, with only a couple of squiggly lines for pictures! It was nothing short of a scandal, and there should be a law against it. If he knew any decent curses,

he would have used them. But as words failed him, he simply kicked stones before him in disgust. "Rumpel-Stilts-Kin," how are you, Grimm indeed! It was enough to make a fellow sick in his stomach. "The Spinning Fairies" and "The Elves and the Shoemaker." What kind of reading was that for the best fighter in the school! It was a pure disgrace, that's what it was.

When Shawney arrived home to his tenement room, there was no one there before him. He thanked God for this as it gave him the chance of hiding the offending book at the bottom of a tea-chest where he usually kept his school books under a collection of old clothes. His mother, he knew, would be too busy doing her rounds begging food for herself and his baby sister and himself to ask about his Christmas present. As his father would not be out of gaol for six months yet, he would not be around to make a laugh of the "poor scholar," as he called him in his sober moments. He was nearly always drunk and that is what got him into trouble with the Guards. It must be terrible to be in gaol, but at least he was sure of his Christmas dinner.

His mother had promised him a nice quiet Christmas and said she would have something nice for them to eat on Christmas Day. He had been looking forward to all this, and now this stupid teacher had ruined everything. He thought of Mickey, who lived in the flat downstairs, and how much pleasure he must be getting from that little red car. It was then that the evil thought struck him. Not that he thought it evil. Far from it! He thought it was the most clever thing that had ever come into his mind. A cunning smile stole over his face. He felt that it was not going to be a bad Christmas after all.

A PLAN

For the following three days, Shawney laid his plans carefully. He told himself that he would have to be very careful if his plan was to succeed. On his way home from confession on Christmas Eve, he called into Casey's shop and the friendly girl behind the counter gave him a sheet of brown paper and a piece of white string. He rushed up to the room and took the book from

its hiding place. With his pencil he wrote in his large, shaky writing: "A Happy Christmas to Mickey from his best pal, Shawney." Then he carefully wrapped and tied the parcel. On the stroke of six o'clock, he left the room and went down the stairs.

Mickey's mother answered his timid knock.

"A happy Christmas, Mrs. Maloney," he said. "I have a present for Mickey."

"And a happy Christmas to yourself, Shawney," she replied, wondering who would send her little boy a present for Christmas. "And who might be sending Mickey a present, might I ask?"

"'Tis from me," he told her, thrusting the parcel into her hand, and running back up the stairs to his room.

"Well, aren't you the good little boy," he heard her say as she closed the door.

He sat near the fireplace and began to await the outcome of his scheme.

Now that the die was cast, he was amazed at how clever he was. All the shops were now shut, and even if Mickey's mother had the money to buy him something, which he was sure she had not as she was nearly as poor as themselves, she could not get anything at this late hour. He knew she was a decent woman and that she was sure to look around her room in the hope of finding something that Mickey could send to his "best pal" for Christmas. And Shawney was certain that there was only one thing that she would find, and that was a certain little red car. She could not let her son be outdone in generosity and thoughtfulness by a poor little boy whose father was in gaol for Christmas. At least that was how Shawney imagined that a decent woman would think in the touching circumstances. He felt very near to tears himself, so really touching did the whole episode appear even to him.

THE PLAN WORKS

After what appeared an age, there was a knock at the door of the room. Filled with expectancy, and no little elation, he rushed to the door. Outside was Mickey's sister with a parcel.

"Me mother said to tell ye that Mickey sent ye that for a Christmas present," she said, with a look that Shawney thought was most inappropriate, not only to the occasion but to the Holy Season that was in it. Without even waiting for his words of thanks, she ran down the stairs. Before the door of the room below closed with a bang, he thought he heard Mickey bawling. Shawney considered this a most ungrateful way to behave. After all, they could

have been nice about it and kept him quiet until the door was closed. Did they think he had no feeling at all? He did not ask them for the car; they gave it to him.

That thought consoled him. He tore the wrapping from the car and began to wind it up. It ran across the floor and all the joy of Christmas was his. He was still playing with it when his mother came home with his little sister.

"Oh, I see you got your Christmas present," she said. "Look, Nancy, at what Shawney got from the teacher for Christmas. Isn't it lovely?"

"'Tis a grand car, for sure," was Shawney's only comment.

He was reluctant to tell her that he had got it from Mickey, because she would then be sure to ask him what he had got from the teacher. And then, without rhyme or reason, he suddenly lost interest in the car. He went to where he had thrown the wrapping paper on the floor and picked it up. He saw that it was the same piece in which he had wrapped the book, and there was nothing written on it to indicate that the car was from his "best pal."

But it was only when his mother asked him if he had been to confession that he began to have real remorse for what he had done to Mickey. With all the excitement of his clever planning, it had not dawned on him that what he was really doing was making plans for a robbery, or so it seemed to him now. But now that the dirty deed was done, his conscience began to trouble him. The more he tried to put the thoughts of his crime from him, the more they troubled him and the more enormous became the crime. His conscience insisted that with a crime like that on his soul he could not receive Holy Communion at Mass in the morning. And what would his mother say to that? He would be the talk of the whole street if he were the only one out of the entire congregation who remained in his seat instead of going to the altar-rails like everyone else on Christmas morning.

He was in a right fix, and he knew it. He knew he had to get the car back to Mickey, but he also knew that he would have to get it back without telling a pack of lies while doing it. A fellow would be damned if he went to Communion after telling lies. It was only the mercy of God, he thought, that it had not dawned on him, while he was telling his sins to the priest, that he was planning a robbery. So, all he had to do was to return the car and he would be right before God and man.

He slipped the car into his pocket. He would have to take it back, no matter how hard it would be to part with it. He told his mother that he was going downstairs to see Mickey. On his

way down, he decided that he would say as little as possible in case he would have to lie. He knocked at the door and when it opened, Mickey's tear-stained face appeared.

"I brought back your car," said Shawney. "Sure it would be wrong for me to keep it."

THE NEIGHBOURS

He had no intention of telling Mickey why it would be wrong. Mickey's face lit up and he shouted back into the room, "Shawney brought back me car." The door was opened wide and Shawney saw that the room was nearly full of neighbours who were busily wrapping things in brown paper. Mickey's mother detached herself from the crowd and came over to him.

"You are a very good little boy, Shawney," she said, "but Mickey wanted you to have the car. Didn't you, Mickey?"

"I didn't," said Mickey, "you made me give it to him." Shawney was not in the least surprised at this honest answer because Mickey



had been to confession that afternoon too, and as they had the same catechism teacher, they had a similar approach to all things moral and religious.

Instead of pursuing the matter further, Mickey's mother addressed the group of women around the table. "Are ye finished parcelling up in there?" she enquired. On being told that everything was in readiness, she turned to Shawney and said: "Come on in and play with Mickey for a while. We have a job to do that won't take us long, so wait here 'till I come back."

Shawney entered and began to play with Mickey, pushing the little red car between them across the floor of the room. With the sin off his soul, he enjoyed their game and he was pleased to notice that the temporary loss of the car seemed to add to Mickey's pleasure now that he had it back again. Immediately the women left the room with their bundle of parcels, Mickey said: "I bet you that you don't know where they're going?"

"I don't," was the disinterested reply.

"They're going up to your mother," volunteered Mickey.

"And what would they be going up to her for?" Shawney was now wondering what it was all about.

"Because your father is in gaol and they are bringing her presents. And I know the present you are getting, too."

"Me! A present?" he was all excitement now. "What is it, Mickey?"

"I can't tell you. I had to promise I wouldn't tell you if I met you." Shawney knew the difficult position Mickey was in, because according to the catechism teacher such a breach of confidence would debar one from going to Holy Communion. At least that is how the two boys understood it. It was an impossible position to be in, but he had to remain where he was or he would be guilty of disobedience, because Mickey's mother had told him to stay and play with Mickey until she came back. Perhaps, however, Mickey might be willing to tell him what it wasn't.

"'Tisn't a book, is it?" he asked.

"No."

"'Tisn't something to wear?" Shawney thought that that would nearly be as bad as getting a book for Christmas.

"No," said Mickey again, "and I'm not going to answer any more questions. I must give you back your book, though."

In spite of the other's protestations, he got the book and erased the pencilled greetings that Shawney had put on it. He handed it to him and said it was not "too bad of a book." Shawney did not think too unkindly of it now that he was sure he was getting something else as well. He thought that the women would never come back and release him from his torment. It was a holy terror to know you had got a present and not know what it was.

When, at last, he was free to go, he bounded up the stairs two at a time. He burst into the room. There were tears in his mother's eyes. He was surprised at this and for a moment forgot his present.

"Why are you crying, Mam?" he asked.

"Because people are so good and so kind," she said as she smiled through her tears. He had never seen anyone cry with joy before, and he could not understand it. It surprised him even more when she put her arms around him and held him close and said: "Shawney, we will have a lovely Christmas in spite of everything, thanks to all our good neighbours, God bless them."

He pressed his face into her lap because he was amazed to find that he was weeping, and for no other reason than that he was happy, too!



Priest and people at Sunday Mass in the new church at Effin.

The Parish Church of Effin

In these days of renewal in the Church, let it be placed on record that the priests and people of Effin parish have not been dragging their heels. This is surely an understatement, when one considers the reconstruction work that has been carried out in Garrienderk Church in recent years and in particular the almost total rebuilding of St. Mary's Church, which has just been completed.

And so Sunday, October 12th, 1969, is a date to be remembered in the annals of the parish — the day the Bishop of Limerick, Most Rev. Henry Murphy, blessed and dedicated the parish church at Effin under its new title of Our Lady Queen of Peace.

Joy and gladness seemed to radiate on every face on this unique occasion. The smiling, happy Bishop in the midst of his people. Gentle and simple, from Garrouse Bridge to the Mountain, they came to meet him and to greet him — the neighbour's son from nearby Ardpatrik. It was a happy, blessed day for Fr. O'Dea and Fr. Murphy, who step by step led their people to

this proud achievement. It was a happy day, too, for the nine priests, all native of the parish, who concelebrated holy Mass with the Bishop and Fr. O'Dea, and for the many visiting priests present in the church.

THE NUNS

But, most of all, it was a great day for the nuns. Car loads of them came, in every conceivable shape and size. For some of them it was their first visit home for years. God be praised that these good sisters could join in the celebration with their own kith and kin around the same altar from which they so often received the Body of the Lord and heard of His Word.

Not indeed that any one of us was likely to forget these things. Not after listening to the eloquent, evocative "few words" spoken by Fr. Jack McCarthy, P.P., Tournafulla, who, in the course of his sermon, lovingly recalled for us scenes of Effin long ago; priests and people that we knew and loved; memories we all

cherished. And we thank Fr. Jack especially for reminding us of the wonderful sermons preached by the late Canon Bob Fitzgerald when we were young.

But Fr. McCarthy very rightly told us that we must not go on living in the past. He invited us to look around and see the many structural changes which had been made in the church to meet the new liturgical requirements of this post-conciliar age. We rejoiced with him that the original altar remained, but now Mass could be celebrated facing the people. The altar rails are gone in accordance with the new liturgical practice. The centre gallery has been removed and while the side galleries remain, they have been reconstructed with neatly built-in spiral staircases. In all, the church seems to have more light and space than ever before. As a matter of interest, I am told that there is now ample seating accommodation for 400 people. The main porch has been enlarged and extended to include a new baptistry and mortuary. To my mind, however, one of the most unique features of the work is the portable baptismal font, which makes due provision for the day when the sacrament of baptism will take place during Mass in the same way as confirmation, holy orders and matrimony takes place at Mass today.

Nowadays, no work of this kind is complete without making provision for parking space. Nor indeed has this been overlooked. As Fr. O'Dea told me, John Carroll was very generous and Limerick Co. Council were most co-operative.

In recent weeks many visitors have come to Effin to experience for themselves the atmosphere of peace and prayer. Among them were Most Rev. Dr. Aherne, Bishop of Cloyne, and Fr. O'Dea's friend and class-mate, the Archbishop of Tuam, Most Rev. Dr. Cunnane.

As I drove back to Charleville that evening I passed the Canon Hayes Memorial Hall. There on the gable wall I saw once more the familiar Cross and the Plough and the motto of Muintir na Tire: *Fidelitas germinabit ex terra*. These words of the Psalmist, "Faithfulness shall spring forth from the soil," now seemed to cry out to me. They seem to sum up fittingly what has just been accomplished in the parish of Effin.

Say what you like about the shortcomings of this generation. We have seen in Effin what the priests and people in a relatively small community have done because of their love of God and their commitment to their Christian faith. Because of their "fidelitas," they have not and they will not count the cost until the debt is paid off.

"Faithfulness shall spring forth from the soil." And because this is so, the priests and people of Effin who gathered around their bishop on October 12th, 1969, can proudly call themselves a generation of church builders. They have kept faith with their ancestors who first built this church in lean and difficult times in the year 1835.

"O Lord God, in the simplicity of my heart I have joyfully offered all these things; and I have seen with joy your people here present: O God of Israel, keep this Will."—1 Chronicles, 29. (Quotation from the Mass of the Dedication of a church.)

—REV. T. CULHANE.

MICHAEL O'BRIEN

R. I. P.

Very Rev. T. Culhane, now parish priest of Parteen, and former Diocesan Organiser, pays the following tribute to the late Michael O'Brien (R.I.P.), of Kilmallock:—

On Tuesday, November 11th, 1969, Michael O'Brien died at his home at Emmett Street, Kilmallock. With his passing, the diocese of Limerick has lost one of the most remarkable personalities who came to the forefront during the fund-raising campaign for the New College. For almost 20 years this unassuming, courteous man, of the cheery word and the gentle smile, went on his weekly rounds to the homes of towns and villages around his native Kilmallock. His 2,000 customers were his 2,000 friends. To have known him was a privilege, to have worked with him is a cherished memory.

Months and weeks of sickness may have sapped his energy, but the great, gay heart and spirit of Michael O'Brien remained unimpaired. Up to the very last, he still worked on with the same boyish enthusiasm. He seemed to draw new strength and faith and courage from his love of the Mass and the Eucharist and his devotion to Our Lady of Lourdes.

To his wife, his family and friends, we offer our sincere sympathy and with them we mourn the death of a warm-hearted friend — of a great Christian man. But "let us not yield to grief like the others who have no hope." Let us rather rejoice that Michael O'Brien's name is forever enshrined in the code-book of heaven.

NEW HOSTEL FOR HOMELESS MEN . . .

Home And Dried

by REV. FRANK MORIARTY, C.F.

Joey is sleeping in the wreck of a motor car under a few slanted sheets of galvanize on a rubbish dump. It is easy to shut your eyes and not see Joey or his kind. They have become part of the scenery. They have no one to care for them and least of all they have no one to love them. They are as incapable of "pulling themselves together" and "holding down a steady job" as a man without arms or legs. We tag them with names: the drifter, the dosser, the reject, the outcast, the drop-out, the down-and-out, the bum, the waster, the scrounger, and the cadger. They are men we just do not want to know. But mis-call them what we will, they are brothers and they are Christ. In them He is rootless, He is homeless, He is unwanted, alone, terribly alone and with nothing to live for. His isolation is piercing to the point of despair. He can only wait for death to relieve Him of what we call the blessing of life. Kindness, sympathy, money are all needed, but we must stick out our necks and become involved in Him to the hilt.

Is it possible for us to say, "I love this man," and by doing so re-kindle in him a sense of dignity and love in himself that he might regain his own self-respect? Love, respect, call it what you will, is the vital spark which is missing from these broken personalities who want shelter. They do not over-advertise their presence but they are awaiting to be released from the torture of living. They are people who have failed to find a proper place in our society and who reject all our standards, perhaps through misfortune and maybe through choice. The majority are afflicted with some difficulty or inadequacy of personality which contributes to their destitution. The only sure answer to their problem is Love. Take away Love and can there be any more life?

ROLLING-STONES AND DRIFTERS

In the past three years 86 men who have no home and no obvious means of support, and no immediate prospects of either, came to the Social Service Centre looking for help. Most of them were between twenty and forty-five years of age. They move from town to town and cold place to cold place, drifting, being

pushed, rolling-stones gathering no friends. Something had to be done.

A group of young people decided that something would be done. They wanted to make a home for the homeless. The City Manager, Mr. T. McDermott, offered them a disused premises, the property of Limerick Corporation. The old building had been unoccupied for a considerable time and was in a sorry state. However, Mr. Anton Wallich-Clifford, founder of the Simon Community in Britain, who visited the place with his wife, described it as Buckingham Palace. A team of twenty teenage boys and girls, who want to be nameless, spent fourteen days of their summer holidays clearing out the accumulated rubble, painting and partitioning, distempering and decorating the house. The premises had been surveyed by an architect and an engineer and a work plan prepared.

The City Manager graciously approved the grant of £700 towards the cost of renovation and also undertook to absorb any rates because of the charitable nature of the venture. To make the place habitable at all, wall gas-heaters were installed in all rooms; the roof was repaired, it was repaired again, and it was repaired again. The rooms were wired for electric lighting, the sanitation facilities were fitted, carpentry and plastering eliminated some major defects, and a shower, cookers, a clothes-washer and a dryer were provided. The telephone and the fire-escape were obvious necessities. The approximate cost of all this will be in the region of £1,200. Some tradesmen in the city generously came forward and offered their services for the work.

UP ALL NIGHT

Meanwhile, under the auspices and encouragement of the Social Service Council, the interest, the enthusiasm, the involvement and dedicated commitment of the young people was growing. Weekly meetings were held in the Social Service Centre, when a social worker, experienced in dealing with homeless men, gave advice and information. Seven teams of five or six were recruited and rostered to staff

(contd. page 20)

SPORTS SPECIAL

by *VERY REV. P. G. RYAN, P.P.*

WELL DONE, LIMERICK!

The All-Ireland finals were over — Kilkenny and Kerry were celebrating — but the summer seemed to linger on right into October. Almost before we knew it, the National Leagues were on, and eight points were divided equally between the hurlers and footballers of Limerick! A dream start, indeed!

Limerick hurlers went to Ennis and defeated Clare by 2-15 to 2-6. Then came a resounding victory over Cork at Pairc na nGael by 3-11 to 1-6.

Meanwhile the footballers had chalked up, or "posted" as the Americans say, two more wins. Roscommon were beaten at Limerick by 5-4 to 0-7; and Carlow were defeated on their own territory by 3-4 to 0-9. A win over Kildare, or even a draw, would have meant that Limerick would almost certainly contest the League semi-finals proper for the first time. It was not to be, as Kildare won 1-8 to 0-4. But all is not lost. Now we face a triple play-off with Kildare and Roscommon. Our victorious hurlers travel to play Dublin in December and Galway come here on Sunday, 1st March, 1970.

COUNTY CHAMPIONS, 1969

Patrickswell won their third senior hurling championship, decisively defeating newcomers, Pallasgreen, by 0-17 to 2-3. Their previous victories were in consecutive years, 1965 and 1966. The second half of the 'sixties thus becomes a historic period for the parish. They are clearly the county's most talented team. They have spirit, speed and stamina and are an exceptionally well-balanced side.

Our champion footballers are Cloughaun, who easily defeated Galbally by 3-12 to 1-4. This was their fourth title. Their other successes were in 1955, 1959 and 1967. Mick Tynan played a major role in all four finals.

JUVENILE HURLING

Also worthy of note is the fact that Ballingarry, after a lapse of a quarter of a century, have again captured a county hurling crown. In a thrilling exhibition of hurling, played in a most sporting manner, they beat Herbertstown in the juvenile hurling final by 1-3 to 0-4.

Within three minutes of the final whistle, full-forward John Cagney shot to the net for the decisive and only goal. Ballingarry also beat Killeedy to win the Western junior championship. And so the glowing headlines proclaim: "Happy days are here again for Ballingarry," to match the heart-warming "Limerick hurlers recapture olden glory."

DR. HARTY CUP

An experiment is being made in this competition by omitting the full-forward and full-back. The teams line out thirteen-a-side. Limerick C.B.S. defeated All-Ireland champions, St. Finbarr's, Farranferris, by 9-9 to 5-6. They qualified to meet St. Colman's, Fermoy, in the semi-final by a convincing win over De La Salle, Waterford, by 6-8 to 0-7.

CAPPAGH HANDBALL CLUB

A magnificent new ball alley was opened at Cappagh, which has a long tradition in the game. This splendid covered handball court, with dressingrooms and showers, is rightly regarded as a national showpiece. It is a wonderful achievement for a small community.

The formal opening was celebrated with a feast of handball. The highlight was the meeting of world champion, Joe Maher of Co. Louth, with our own Pat McGarry. A draw was a fitting and popular result.

SPORT OF KINGS

Ireland's international prestige soared with the story-book performance of Seamus McGrath's "Levmoss" in the Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe. With all the odds against him as regards distance and going, he raced to a brilliant record-breaking victory over the English filly, "Park Top."

In the Washington International, the Earl of Iveagh's Irish-bred, four-year-old "Karabas" gave England her second victory. "Sir Ivor" won for Ireland last year.

On the last day of the season at Punchestown, Ryan Parnell finished one ahead of Johnny Roe to become our new flat race champion jockey.

RUGBY

The Irish Rugby Football Union have broken with tradition in appointing an official coach to the Irish team. No doubt Ronnie Dawson's dedication to the game, combined with his knowledge, skill and astuteness, will command the respect of selectors and players. He is to hold two training sessions with a squad of twenty-five players. The second one on the day after the Final Trial.

And what of the controversial South African tour? No one can be really happy with the way things have gone. It will be a relief to all concerned when it is over.

SOCCER

After a splendid win over Shamrock Rovers with a Joe O'Mahony goal, Limerick simply gave away points to St. Patrick's and Drumcondra. Although these games were played away, Limerick should have won. Worse was to come when they lost their home game to Sligo Rovers. There was some improvement when they beat Shelbourne. Paddy Shortt, a signing from Cork Celtic, is showing splendid form. Two more points were retrieved at Drogheda with a late goal by Eddie Donovan.

1,000th GOAL!

In Rio de Janeiro, the undisputed King of Soccer, Pele, scored his 1,000th goal — an unprecedented accomplishment — when his club Santos played Vasco da Gama at the Maracana Stadium.

HOME AND DRIED—contd.

the hostel from 6 p.m. until 8 a.m. every night of the week. Furniture was begged, beds were borrowed, blankets were brought, cookers were conned, presses were press-ganged, curtains were cajoled and cups were confiscated. Two priests and two nuns also joined the group. Mr. Tom Keane, who had written on his experiences during the six months he spent with the Simon Community in Britain in *Our Catholic Life*, became the accepted leader of the project. A constant supply of food from pies to puddings through bread and butter is guaranteed by generous friends of the hostel. Very Rev. D. Gallagher, Administrator, St. John's, blessed the hostel on Friday, November 21st, 1969. On

Friday, November 28th, the doors opened and the men of no fixed abode were "home and dried."

ALL I WANT IS . . .

The workers in the hostel do not intend to waste time asking questions, but will get on with the job. Their philosophy will be one of almost complete permissiveness and tolerance for the next man. His past means nothing to them. They are interested only in his future. They bend and bow to accept people as they are, not as they were — to forgive everything and to forget all. An institution with too many rules and regulations is no solution for whatever these men have done, or have failed to do. They need a protected environment, with unpressurised, long-term care and individual attention. We must wrap up these forgotten bundles of humanity, and the wrapping is the priceless protection of human warmth, contact, care, and affection. The workers will try to develop an air of belonging and a feeling of participation which will in turn give these men a sense of 'home.' And because they are dealing with failure, with the throw-out and the reject of other organisations, with the impossible cases and the no-hope types, they can never really expect success. To relieve the forlornness, failure and desperation afflicting someone unwanted for years, warmth and understanding and sympathy are as essential as a roof, four walls and a bed. Death for some of these men is not a tragedy, but a relief.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Volunteers are vital — anyone prepared to offer service. If you have adaptability, patience, humour, energy and limitless enthusiasm — so much the better. If you can drive, nurse, make-shift and mend, listen long, cook, and do without sleep or have been through hard times yourself — contact the Social Service Centre.



*We wish
all our Readers
A Holy and Happy
Christmas*

AR DHROICHEAD CHILL DÁLUA

le MAIRTIN O CORRBUI

Seo í aois na mbailéad. Ar an raidió, ar an telefís, i dtithe tábhairne agus ar choirmeacha ceoil cloistear iad ó cheann ceann na bliana. Ach tá rud amháin fíor ar aon nós — is iomaí rud níos measa ná iad a bhíonn le cloisteáil. De ghnáth bíonn scéal éigin le hinsint acu, agus bíonn an fonn a ghabhann leo go ceolmhar taithneamhach. Sin dlúth agus ineach an bhailéid, ar ndóigh — scéal a chur inár láthair ar chuma dheas shimplí, chun go dtuigfimis é agus go mairfeadh sé inár gcuimhne.

Ba mhór é tábhacht na mbailéad i stair na hEireann. Nuair nach raibh slí ar bith eile ag na daoine chun a gcruatain a fhógairt, nó a laocha a mholadh, nó éachta na marbh a bhuanú, bhain siad feidhm as na bailéid agus as lucht a gcanta. Mar sin a choimeádadh bladh na saoirse ar lasadh i gcroíthe na ndaoine, agus ba mhaith a tuigeadh sin dóibh siúd a bhí ag iarraidh an bhladh sin a mhúchadh amach is amach. Ba shárú dlí é, dar leo, bailéid den chineál sin a cheapadh nó a chanadh. I Loch Garman, mar shampla, briseadh múinteoir as a phost toisc "Kelly the Boy from Killann" a mhúineadh dá scoláirí.

1920

Seo an tríochadú lá de Mhí na Samhna agus na focail seo á mbreacadh agam, agus sin an fáth gur bailéid an t-ábhar a tharraing mé chugam. Thug an dáta seo chun mo chuimhne an bailéad breá úd a bhíodh le cloisteáil le linn m'óige ar aonach is ar mhargadh, ach nár chuala mé leis na blianta fada anois. "The Bridge of Killaloe" atá i gceist agam.

Baile beag deas é Cill Dálua agus tarraingt mhór cuairteoirí air gach samhradh. Gabhann na céadta díobh thar an droichead ann, ach ní stadann ach corr-dhuine chun an leacht ina lár a iniúchadh. Agus is fánach duine a mbíonn a fhios aige cérbh iad an ceathrar a ainmnítear uirthi nó cén chaoi ar maraíodh iad.

Tá an scéal go léir sa bhailéad, áfach — scéal na n-ógfhear a caitheadh ansiúd ar an tríochadú lá de mhí na Samhna, 1920. Bhí triúr díobh in Arm Phoblacht na hEireann a bhí i ngleic leis na Dúchrónaigh agus fórsaí eile na Breataine ag an am sin. Bhí siad ar a gcoimeád dála alán eile dá gcompánaigh, ach — más fíor an scéal — rinneadh feall orthu agus insíodh don namhaid

go mbeidís i dteach Uí Aogáin i Williamstown Co. na Gaillimhe, an oíche áirithe seo.

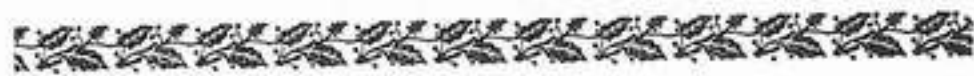
Thriall na Dúchrónaigh ar an teach. Bhí an triúr ina gcodladh agus ceistíodh fear an tí ina dtaobh. Shéan sé go raibh siad ann ach caith-eadh ar leataobh é agus gabhadh na hóglaigh sula raibh deis acu dada a dhóanamh. Tar éis an-íde a thabhairt dóibh cuireadh ceangal na gcúig caol orthu — agus ar an Aogánach chomh maith — agus tugadh i mbád iad go dtí Cill Dálua. Gan fiú ligean dóibh faoistin a dhéanamh lámhachadh ar an droichead iad, agus tugadh a gcoirp chun siúil i leoraí lena bhfágáil i gclós na beairice.

In ainneoin gach iarratais dar deineadh níor ligeadh d'éinne dul in aice leo, fiú amháin a dtuismitheoirí féin. Ar an triú lá tar éis a maraithe fuarthas cead iad a thabhairt go dtí séipéal na Scairbhe, agus d'imigh dhá oíche eile agus lá thart sular ligeadh dá muintir iad a chur.

MALLACHT

Bhí slua ollmhór ar an tsocraid, agus na scórtha sagart ina measc. Cuireadh an ceathrar san aon uaigh amháin, agus inti a fhanann siad le stoc an Ardaingil a chloisteáil.

Ag críochnú an bhailéid don chumadóir — pé arbh é féin — guíonn sé mallacht ar an té a rinne feall orthu. Go dtite gach mí-ádh air, deir sé; go lobha an fheoil ar a chnámha; go gcaille sé radharc na súl. Agus mar fhocal scoir tuarann sé go mbeidh a ainm fós ar eolas ag cách — ainm an duine ba chúis le bás an cheathrar ógánach: Mac Ruairí, Mac Mathúna, Mac Giolla Dé — agus O hAogáin a rinne a dhícheall iad a chosaint ar ghunnaí Gall.



BEANNACHTAÍ na nOLLAG GO RAIBH AG ÁR LEITHEÓIRÍ



YUGOSLAVIA

by J. F. SADLIER

James F. Sadlier is a young Limerickman who has been a ship's radio officer for a number of years. He describes himself as "a globe-trotting Irishman."

Yugoslavia is such a varied country in scenery, culture and antiquities that it is difficult to choose what to describe. There is really something for everybody. Politically, Yugoslavia is a Socialist state of a federative type, composed of six constituent republics: Serbia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Slovenia, Macedonia and Montenegro. It is less than 50 years ago that the regions of Yugoslavia united into a single state and it is now described as the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. This appellation is jealously guarded by Yugoslavs old and young. I learned this one evening when, discussing the political set-up of the country with a student, I tried to equate communism and socialism. He painstakingly explained the essential differences to me and stressed that most of his people were not in agreement with the U.S.S.R. system. During my stay there I could not help but notice a picture of President Tito in every shop, cafe, hotel and home throughout my journey. I asked my student friend why so and he promptly said it was an acknowledgment of the esteem in which the President is held among the people. As a matter of fact all that seemed to concern him about politics was who would replace or be competent to replace Tito when he goes. I also gathered from him that the political scene there is still very ephemeral and is likely to change even more than in most countries over the next 10 to 15 years.

ADRIATIC COAST

My travels were on the Adriatic coast and it is this part of the country I shall endeavour to describe. It is a countryside of extremes, mountainous and hilly or almost dead flat, fertile or barren, covered with forest or bare. Much of it has yet to be subdued to the needs of man. The absence of hedges and bushes, lack of livestock, green fields and singing birds give it a strange lifelessness and provoked mixed reactions in a globe-trotting Irishman. Looking across the countryside one becomes aware of the scattered farm dwellings, with their tiled,

biscuit-coloured roofs or some roofless and abandoned houses whose owners left for a better life in the city. You see little patches of fertility, scarred with stones, on which, by the grace of God and the heat of the sun, the grapes ripen, olives swell to maturity and figs became pregnant and mild. These little patches of agrarian worth are walled off by squat, stone walls which are broken occasionally by rows or single tall cypress trees. I saw farming folk clear stones and replace them with earth until they had laboriously contrived terraces and patches of soil which they irrigated by water carts and cans of water borne by donkeys. In its entirety it looked like a scene of the West of Ireland.

My trip was from Zadar to Dubrovnik, visiting Split, Hvar, Korcula, Miljet Island, Kotor, Dubrovnik before eventually returning to Zadar and from there home. If I were to describe any of these places in any detail I could easily fill many pages not at my disposal. Therefore, I will treat them generally.

Each place had numerous monuments of great antiquity, towers, churches, forts and fortifications and some were whole walled cities dating from the middle ages. Split is the biggest city in Dalmatia and the old city is situated in the palace of the Roman Emperor Diocletian (4th century, A.D.). Crowded into this palace, in a remarkable state of preservation, are 300 houses and several thousand people. Only two hours by boat from Split is Hvar, where people have been living for 3,000 years. It has a reputation for its wonderful climate, which is perennially benign. If there is rain for more than three hours between 7 a.m. and 5 p.m., guests are entitled to a price reduction of 50% in hotels, and free board if it should snow! A further boat trip down the Korculanski Canal brought me to the pleasant town of Korcula, situated on the Adriatic island bearing the same name. This town is so rich in monuments and historic remnants that it almost appears to be one big museum. In this town there still exists a house which is claimed to have been the one in which the famous explorer Marco Polo was born. I visited the island of Miljet which was intended to be the summer retreat of President Tito but, when he did not take up residence there, it was converted to a national park. If ever I happen

to be marooned on an island, I will be very pleased if it even resembles Miljet.

DUBROVNIK

After three days on the island of Korcula, I set off once again by boat for Dubrovnik, which could be described as the holiday showpiece of Yugoslavia. In 1931 George Bernard Shaw wrote: "Those who seek earthly paradise should come and see Dubrovnik," and now I humbly reiterate this famous scribe's words. For once the brochure photographs have not exaggerated. Dubrovnik is deserving of the many superlative adjectives used to describe its beauty. It is a walled city that abounds in the remains of centuries which passed to each other the beauty of architecture. There are antiquities from several different civilisations and enough variety of art to satisfy the most catholic of tastes. My stay in Dubrovnik was for six days, during which I visited many islands, towns and townlands all possessing their own individual characteristics. Before I finish this description of places visited, I must make mention of my visit to the Gulf of Kotar. This is one of the most remarkable natural phenomena in Europe. It is surrounded on three sides by towering bare mountains, of which Mount Lovcen soars almost sheer for 6,000 feet, and forms a magnificent fiord with the Bay of Kotar. It penetrates deeply into the mainland and is an awe-inspiring sight of scenic splendour. Situated at the head of the fiord is the town of Kotar on the Albanian border.

THE PEOPLE

However, a country is its people. Meeting the inhabitants of a country has always been my pleasure and, certainly, meeting the Yugoslav people was a most enjoyable experience. The Yugoslavs are a proud people; proud of their past, have a high opinion of their present and are hopeful for the future. They are courteous, tolerant and good-natured. They are friendly and welcoming to a degree one would not expect. Both male and female are exceptionally good-looking. They know how to enjoy the good and simple things of life — each other's company, water, wine, and just walking about exchanging gossip. But there is nothing simple about them, for they are independent, industrious and self-sufficient. Many of the older generation peasant folk proudly wear their national costume, but the young people are

well-dressed in the latest "with-it" fashions, which show a predominant Italian influence. The guslari (beggar-musicians) playing the gusla, a one-stringed bowed instrument, are often seen trying to compete with the blare of the latest hit song emanating from a teenager's transistor. Western influences are evident in the young in their dress, in their talk and in their general behaviour. The people, young and old, seem to be happy with their way of life. Many misconceived ideas that I had of Yugoslavia being a police-suppressed, communist, hammer and sickle ruled country have certainly been allayed. There was no obvious police interference and I was allowed take photographs of everything and anything, except military installations.

There are three main religions, Orthodox, Catholic and Moslem, and as far as I observed there was no restriction of practice. However, the congregation at the Masses was mostly composed of old people or the very young. The young people did not show very much interest in religion. There is a Yugoslav saying: "First let a man be a man; then he can be a Catholic or Communist or whatever he wishes." This could well be the dictum by which the young generation of Yugoslavs shape their lives.

A HOLIDAY COUNTRY

Yugoslavia is a hybrid of many cultural forces; European and Oriental, with the Slavonic element a predominant factor. The two cross-currents of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes on the one hand, and that of Western Europe and the Orient on the other, have produced a cultural pattern that is now characteristic of present-day Yugoslavia. It is a country on the move, with a new wave of prosperity beginning to permeate the society. They are aware of the benefits of tourism and already many soulless, self-sufficient hotel complexes have been set-up to accommodate the ever-increasing number of visitors. These hotels are swish and very dear and are typical of those one finds in Italian resorts. I was told that the cost of living in Yugoslavia has increased in the last few years. Nevertheless, this is a country worth a visit. If you want a holiday that is different, this is the country to visit. However, my restricted journey was mainly down the Dalmatian coast except for a few forays inland and it gives a very incomplete idea of the country as a whole. The real Yugoslavia lies inland; a primitive terrain of great beauty which shelters some of man's most remarkable achievements in the process of civilizing himself.

Stained Glass and Other Christmasses

by SEAMUS O CINNEIDE

Anyone, wishing to get the real spirit of Christmas, should have their drop-out spots, as the modern version of the festival merry-go-rounds them. Reminding messages of truth can come from the most surprising quarters. Like the snatch of a pop-song heard in my own listening post a few years ago as the 'get ready for Christmas rush' was getting into full speed. Some trans-Atlantic singer epitomised the new souped-up festive thing from the transistor:—

"Angels we have heard on high,
Telling us to out and buy!"

A fair capsule opinion — and, let me recite, my own view is not completely anti-the-new-style instant-buy Christmas. If anyone remembers, there was my own mini-lampoon, which people with no sense of humour ferociously resented:—

"Jingle tills,
Jingle tills,
Jingle all the day,
O, hurrah for Santy Claus,
Hurrah for £ s. d.!"

MIDNIGHT MASS FOR EUROPE

Which leads me to drop-out spots, or a mini-anthology of stained-glass Christmas experiences. Some of them have been vicarious, like listening to the radio to that moving Midnight Mass from Provence (in France) during which the shepherds brought in their traditional gift of sheep. Hearing a description of country pipers (very like their Irish equivalents) who invade Rome, a little after Advent every year, and stay for the days that intervene between it and Christmas Eve. One was grateful to the Italian radio for letting listeners in the far sea-edges of Europe hear the pipers. Or, to just sit alone in a house, from which everyone else has left for the crowded local Midnight Mass, and twirl the radio knob in search of another collector's piece Midnight Mass from anywhere across Europe and this offshore island.

FROM THE GAELTACHT

It should be a pleasure accompanied by (let the too-pious protest, if they like) sips of wine or whiskey. Last Christmas the collector's piece came from this offshore island. From a little

hillside, sea-facing church in the Gaeltacht of Ring, in Co. Waterford. There was a certain in-feeling while listening to the prayers and hymns in the French-soft Irish of the Deise country. When Nioclás Toibín (whom one heard in pubs beside the summer sea, singing the love and patriotic songs with all the light and shadow of the sea and the mountains) sang the Nativity hymns, it was a reminder of how much we've lost in national, cultural and social personality. It reminded me of the thrilling national accent, describing the Star of the Magi, encountered in an old Irish poem — *bhé réalt na Magi chomh hard le cloigtheach* — as high as a round tower!

GLENSTAL ABBEY

Cribs, in corners of houses, have become ubiquitous — and, no one will object, except for my feeling that they have a mass-produced look. Which makes me think of a crib which was a counterpoint to these types. Three years ago, something inspired two friends and myself, to make an excursion to Glenstal Abbey, during whatever remained of the Twelve Days of Christmas. In the church there we encountered a little crib of eloquent austerity and artistic ingenuity. The cave was suggested by a lath-work of bamboos which surrounded only the Child (properly and appealingly its central figure) and the Virgin and St. Joseph. The star was a cut-out of luminous tinfoil which trembled in the evening dark of the church. This artistic votive offering (created by a Brother of the Benedictine community) and its unmistakable message of the meaning of Christmas, followed us all the way back to the city and intermittently delights us ever since.

GETTING THE HOLLY

There's a sense of discrepancy, too, if inescapable business denies me a chance to keep the do-it myself seasonal forays for decorations — like getting berried holly in a wood, rather than buying it from street vendors. My own interpretation that Christmas was imposed on the old pagan Yule festival (when logs were burned to help the weak sun-god with the winter-dark enemies and cold yelping after him) might get me hauled before an ecclesiastical

court for heresy, but it must be mentioned. Otherwise, my seasonal delight in going into a woodland drive, beside a reputedly haunted old mansion, to collect red-berried holly sprigs, just before Christmas, cannot be understood. There's a sensual joy in it — the drifting mist, the lone green of the holly and the red jewellery of its berries, the chattering flights of starlings and the weakened sun making fitful appearances (if at all) in the cloud-occupied sky.

That's what Christmas is all about (whether you look at it from a Christian or pagan viewpoint) — a sort of figurative reassurance in the depth of dark mid-winter that life and light and greenery and growth will return, if you've good faith.

THE WRAN BOYS

Look at the social jollity of the Wran Boys who go out between dawn and dusk on brief St. Stephen's Day. With songs, accompanied by wheezy melodeons and a dead Wran in a green holly bush, they do the neighbourhood rounds. They (or we) might not know it (or refuse to acknowledge it) but the killing of the Wran and its place in that green holly bush are a continuity of an old Druid faith-in-fertility ritual. Can't the Druids be imaginatively seen, between the stone circles, or in their sacred oak groves, sacrificing a Wran and sprinkling its blood on the holly — the indomitable evergreen? This ritual, in the fearful dark of a young, pre-historic countryside, must have been a great boost to their pastoral laity, who carried the bird and bush the round of the colony to spread the faith that spring would make a soon and infallible return.

West Limerick has a still prevalent and strong tradition of the Wrans on St. Stephen's Day — indeed, during the whole Twelve Days of Christmas. A friend of mine, who has been a long-time participant, recited what they do, their peculiar terms and articles of association. The group itself is called a Band or a Batch. They are versatile commandos of Wrans, musicians, and dancers who call and give on the floor-of-the-house entertainment for eats and drinks and money donation. The monies go for drinks at the Wran Bands and Joiners party later. The Joiners, the Westerner explained, are those who *don't* carry the Wran, sing, play or dance — only *join* in. There's another distinction, he said in comical, intriguing accents, there's whiskey and porter for the Wran Bandits, but only lemonade for the Joiners!

Little Son of God

*Going lonely up and down
Weary searching all the town,
Was there none to let Thee in?
Were hearts' windows dark with sin?
Little Son of God.*

*Hast Thou found no candle bright
Beaming welcome through the night?
Hast Thou met no kindly word —
No soft sigh in pity heard?
Little Son of God.*

*Come, behold my open door,
See I spread my humble store.
Enter in this Christmas night,
Thou shalt be my love, my light,
Little Son of God.*

*Take my treasures, they are Thine,
O Thou little Guest divine.
Rest Thee in my waiting heart
Nevermore shalt Thou depart.
Little Son of God.*



Comhra Le Muire

le MICHEAL LISTON

Tógadh gus na Flaithis tú, a Mhuire,
A shiúl bóithre beaga Gallile,
Is a chuimhnigh nuair a bhí tú óg i Nazarat
Ar an ghealluint a thug lábhé dod' shinnsear.

Is tú ag dul ar neamh, a Mhuire,
Ar dhein tú miongáire ar chuimhneamh duit
Ar a ndúirt fadó leis an aingeal:
'Féach mise cailín an Tiarna.'

Is áthas liom i gcónaí, a Mhuire,
Meabhrú ar an gcailín óg
A dúirt len a bhean gaoil críonna:
'Mórann m'anam an Tiarna.'

Ach anois tá tú ar neamh, a Mhuire,
In éineacht led' mhaicin
A tógadh uait Dé h-Aoine
Is thug dúinn cuireadh na beatha.

Bí tú id' bhanríon agam, a Mhuire,
Is go rabhas im' bhuachaill aimsire agat
Ar bhóithrín aimhreidh an tsaoil-seo
Is ar bhealach mór na síorraíochta.

How Santa Came



A translated chapter from the book, **BRAN**,
by Mairtin O Corrbui

'Twas drawing near Christmas and the children were getting all excited. For three weeks before it they could talk of nothing but the big feast and everything connected with it — Christmas cards and Christmas trees and Christmas candles — the big crib that would be in the chapel and the little crib they would have at home — presents and fun and feasting — and, of course, Santa Claus himself.

But there was one thing which caused them a lot of worry. In previous years the good Santa had no trouble at all. There was a fine wide fireplace and he had no difficulty in getting down the chimney and on to the hearth. But recently a new cooker had been put in, and the mouth of the chimney closed up, so that a mouse couldn't get down, not to mind Santa Claus.

However, the mother had the solution of the problem.

"Don't worry, children," said she. "Santa will visit ye this year the same as always. He's a very clever man, and when he sees how things are, he'll try the doors and the windows. And ye can be sure I won't forget to leave the kitchen door on the latch that night."

They were very happy to have that matter

satisfactorily settled, and all that worried them then was how slowly the days were passing. But when the house cleaning and the Christmas cooking began, the time slipped by unnoticed and the great day was upon them almost before they knew it.

The missus hadn't to say the second word to them when she was putting them to bed on Christmas Eve. Once they heard — "Off with ye now, because Santa Claus won't come till ye're fast asleep" — once they heard that, they cleared away upstairs without a murmur. But the mother had to renew her promise not to forget to leave the kitchen door on the latch. And because they, too, were tired after all the preparations, herself and Michael didn't stay up late either. The cat and myself were shown the door, the kitchen light and the Christmas candle were put out, and off they went.

It was a calm, dark night, and not very cold. I trotted down the road towards Powers', and when I had given a couple of barks, Shep came out to me. We chatted together for quite a long time as we hadn't met for a couple of days, and it must have been midnight when I returned home. I did my rounds in the farmyard

and everything was in order. The cows were lazily chewing the cud. The horses were quiet. The peace of the blessed night was on all things.

I was tired myself, too, by this time. I yawned a couple of times and said to myself that I should head for the haybarn where I have a nice, comfortable bed.

SANTA

I was on my way there when I heard the gate being opened. I pricked up my ears. Yes, indeed, there was someone on his way in without a doubt. Who would be visiting us at this late hour?

"'Tis hardly a thief anyway," I said to myself, "for he wouldn't come in the gate as bold as brass."

All the same I went back quickly and quietly to the yard, and stood watching and waiting at the barn gable. As I said, the night was dark, but even so I could see the person heading for the back door of the kitchen. He appeared to be old as he was well stooped as he moved along. And — was I seeing things — or was that a bag on his back? I moved closer. It was indeed. And a big bag too. And when he straightened up to open the door I could see that he had a long white beard!

"Great herrings above," I exclaimed to myself, "is it he? Is it really Santa Claus himself right before me?"

And I was so excited that I didn't give a single bark, but stood there with the eyes popping out of my head.

Just as she had promised the children, the mother had left the door on the latch that night. Actually it is left like that on every Christmas Eve. That's an old custom of ours so that Holy Mary and her Child can have a night's shelter if they come the way. So in my man went. I heard him stumbling about the kitchen, and I said to myself that 'twas very queer that Santa Claus hadn't a good torch, seeing that he had so much travelling to do in the darkness of night. Then I heard a chair falling — and I heard some language that wasn't very nice from the man inside.

"Och, wisha, the poor fellow," I said, "I suppose his patience wears thin at times too, the same as it does with all of us."

But when I heard the kettle clattering on the floor, and when our visitor began roaring and screeching, I got suspicious. In with me like a flash, and just then the light was switched on, and I saw Michael and he having Santa Claus by the throat.

Ah dear! 'Twas no Santa Claus after all, but an old neighbour making a late return from the village, with a good drop on board and his Christmas shopping on his back. The long beard I had imagined I saw was nothing but his long white scarf. He had promised to bring presents to the children and that was why he had called in. When he was fumbling about the kitchen he knocked the kettle off the cooker and the hot water splashed all over his legs. No wonder he roared.

Michael gave him another drink and set him on his way home again.

But from what I saw and heard on Christmas Day, Santa Claus must have come all the same. Later in the night, I suppose, when I, too, was sound asleep like everybody else.



Household Hint

IF YOU LIKE those outside lights, either at the front or back door, you may very cheaply and simply make one from a one-pound-size glass coffee jar. Unscrew the tin lid and screw this lid to a piece of timber about four inches square by half an inch thick. You can buy a light-fitting that can then be fixed inside the lid. Before fixing this however, do not forget to drill a hole through both the tin and the timber for the flex. Wire up from the nearest junction box to the point at which you require the light, but make sure that you have the right fuse taken out before you do this little chore — otherwise you might not be around to admire your new light! If you have not performed any electrical wiring jobs previously, it would perhaps be advisable to ask someone who knows, just to be on the safe side, and also to ensure that the necessary switch operates correctly. When you have the wiring and fitting completed, insert the bulb, screw the jar into its cover and you are ready to switch on your light. It will add to the appearance of the fitting if you paint the lid, and this will also prevent it from rusting. Now is the time to do this job if you hope to save yourself from tripping over the doorstep during the long winter nights.—J. K.

TWO CHRISTMAS POEMS

ETERNAL DUE

*Virgin fair,
Stable bare,
Christmas morn,
Christ is born,
Joseph mild
Tends the Child,
Angels sing,
Praise their King.*

*Shepherds kneel,
Joy they feel,
Wise men three,
Have come to see,
Gifts they brought,
A King they sought,
They found Him there,
And knelt in prayer.*

*Let us adore,
For evermore —
This Child so tender,
To Him surrender,
All that we have,
Which all He gave,
Both me and you,
For they are His Eternal Due.*

—P. DARCY.

A CHRISTMAS PRAYER

or

A PRAYER BEFORE THE CRIB

by SR. M. L.

*Little Jesus, Thou didst leave
All the joys of heaven above
All the angels bending low
Thou didst leave to win my
love.*

*Little Jesus, Thou didst lie
On the straw one winter's
night
In a stable cold and dark
In my heart Thy love to light.*

*Little Jesus, I will kneel
With the three kings at thy
feet
I have neither gold nor myrrh
Nor frankincense my king to
greet.*

*Little Jesus, I will bring
Myself and all my misery
Little Jesus, Thou art God
Make a worthy gift of me.*

*Little Jesus, Thou didst lie
On a cross of rough-hewn
wood
That my soul Thine own might
be
Thou didst shed Thy Precious
Blood.*

*Bless me, Jesus, as I kneel
With Thy little hands divine
Make me worthy of Thy love
Little Jesus, make me Thine.*

INTERVIEW (contd.)

Sociology: Fr. Diffily, Miss Mary Griffin, Fr. A. Kennedy.

Aesthetics: Fr. C. Lavelle.

Psychology: Sr. M. Cabrini, Fr. Sean Casey.

History: Fr. Barry, C.Ss.R., Fr. Edward, O.F.M.

Politics: Fr. Edward, O.F.M., Mr. W. Dundon.

Tourism: Mr. C. O'Connor, Fr. Francis McHenry, O.S.B.

Civics: Mr. J. Harty.

English Literature: Mr. J. Noonan, Mr. C. O Ceirin.

Irish Literature: Mr. C. O Ceirin.

Industrial Relations: Fr. Sean Casey.

Operating Committee: C. O'Connor, Fr. S. Casey, Mr. J. Cleary, Mr. F. Garvey, Miss Ruth Lawlor, Miss N. Brosnan.





OUR CHRISTMAS PAGE

CHRISTMAS, 1969

My dear Children,

Once more Christmas is coming round and I hope it will be a happy one for all of us. Christmas is the very special feast of children the world over, but in many places there are children who do not know the spiritual meaning of this holy season. Neither do they experience any of its good things such as gifts, food, clothes, money, etc. They could have a share of these things if there were enough generous people in the rest of the world to give them. You can all help here by giving subscriptions of money to organisations such as UNICEF or GORTA. It is better to give money, because it can be put to so many different uses. You can think of other gifts to give to the needy people in our own country. You will feel happy when you have made others happy.

I was more than pleased with the response to the Autumn Painting Competition. I am, just now, surrounded by an array of delightful colours, curves and texture work. I think these designs have helped you a lot, and given you courage to use strong, bright colours, so I have decided to continue with them. For your Christmas entry I want you to make a design for wrapping paper. I divided the paper into eight spaces with figures in the first two. You are to use these same figures in every second space. Draw them in lightly first, then paint the background of each space, using two different colours alternately. When this is dry, paint your figures. Be sure to use bright Christmassy colours. You may get some help from Mammy, Teacher or even Daddy, with the laying out of the spaces, but you must do the colouring yourself. Now off you go, with my best wishes for a winning entry.

Many thanks for your very good letters, from St. Joseph's, Newcastle West, and Kilfinane. I hope the fish cooks will be successful at the final, and that the essays on Edel Quinn will bring a few more prizes to the West.

You will notice that the Prize List is a little different this time. Because of the high quality of the work, and the unusually high numbers of entries, it was hard to pick out the twelve best so I decided to give Class prizes to schools who sent more than nine entries. Other schools sent smaller numbers and from these a winner was picked for each school. Here I would like to say from myself and from all of you a sincere thanks to these wonderful teachers who have helped you so much with your art, and who have made the Children's Corner of *Catholic Life* a very important place! The list is long, but here it is: Mrs. Fitzgibbon and Miss Nunan, Sister Consolata, Miss King, Miss Shanahan, Mrs. Fitzgerald, Miss Hanrahan, Sister Agatha, Sister Attracta, Mrs. Nestor, Mrs. O'Flynn, Sister Sarto, Sister Colman, Sister Gemma, Sister Veronica, Miss O'Driscoll, Sister Celsus, Miss Godfrey, Miss Enright and Miss Carmody. I hope I have not left out anyone. I would like to thank your parents also who provided you with paints, brushes, books, etc., and encouraged you to enter your work.

Lastly, I want one of your precious Christmas prayers for a special intention. You will all be well remembered in mine. May God bless you and your families with all the things you need, especially His love.

—AUNTIE BRIGID.

MURPHY TWINS

Mary came home from school very excited. "Oh, Mammy," she cried, "I won the prize for the best project on Christmas customs and legends. Look, it's a beautiful crib!" So it was, a very beautiful crib indeed and if you visit Murphy's this Christmas you will find it all lit up with the special red bulb Mammy bought in town last week.

That night when supper was over, and the supper things put away, Mammy called the children around her. They were delighted, because they thought this meant a story. But no, when they were all seated comfortably around the fire Mammy said: "It's Mary's turn now to tell us all the lovely things she learned about Christmas when she was doing her project." Mary got very red and shy at first, but she was proud that Mammy had asked her and she soon began:

"The first thing I looked up was the stories that had to do with birds and animals. One story tells that the robin's breast is red because he fluttered his little wings to fan the dying fire to warm the Christ Child as He lay in the manger. As the fire grew brighter the robin's breast caught the glow of the flames and has remained red ever since. There is the story too that country people have often entered a stable at midnight and found the cattle on their knees in honour of the birth of Christ. In Norway and Sweden a wheat sheaf is placed outside for the birds on Christmas Eve and little clay birds are made and sold as children's playthings. This is in memory of the legend that when Jesus was a little child He and the other children amused themselves making birds of clay and when Jesus clapped His hands

the birds came to life and flew away. Another story tells of a little beetle who had made his home on the top of the stable at Bethlehem and begged one of the angels that he might be allowed to tell the other animals the good news of Christ's birth. The angel placed a tiny golden spark from his own shining hair between the beetle's wings. Animals, birds and insects saw the little light and knew what it meant. Ever since then the beetle has been known as the glow-worm. People sometimes give extra food to all the animals at Christmas time because they remember how the cow and the donkey shared their shelter with Mary and Joseph and the Holy Child on the first Christmas Night.

"I found out too about the custom of giving gifts at Christmas," continued Mary. "This started because people thought we should be very kind and generous to each other at Christmas time, since God was so generous with us as to send His only Son to live among us and to redeem us. And do you know, Mammy, that people did not send Christmas cards to each other long ago? That started in England in 1843.

"I've got a whole copybook of carols but Sr. Aquinas has it, as she wants to look at it and she's putting a lovely cover on it for me. And do you know that in some countries the children find their presents not in their stockings but in their shoes?"

As Mary finished, Mammy looked very pleased indeed and praised her for all the hard work she had done. And now," she said, taking down the New Testament, "I'll read again for you how St. Luke told the story of the first Christmas night when the angels came to tell of Christ's coming." So Mammy read and Mary and Peter and Pauline and Eileen listened again to the beautiful Christmas story.

Result Autumn Painting Competition

SCHOOLS (Cash Prizes):

Ballyorgan National School.
St. Anne's, Rathkeale.
St. Mary's, Limerick.
St. Joseph's, Newcastle West.
Scoil Mhathair De, Limerick.
Ashford, Ballagh, Co. Limerick.

SCHOOL WINNERS (Book Prizes):

Evelyn Hosford, Kilfinane.
Michael Curtin, Lurriga National School.
Christina Wilson, St. Joseph's, Limerick.
Geraldine O'Connor, Carrigerry National School.
Bernadette Reardon, Bruff.
Elaine Walshe, Ballyagran National School.

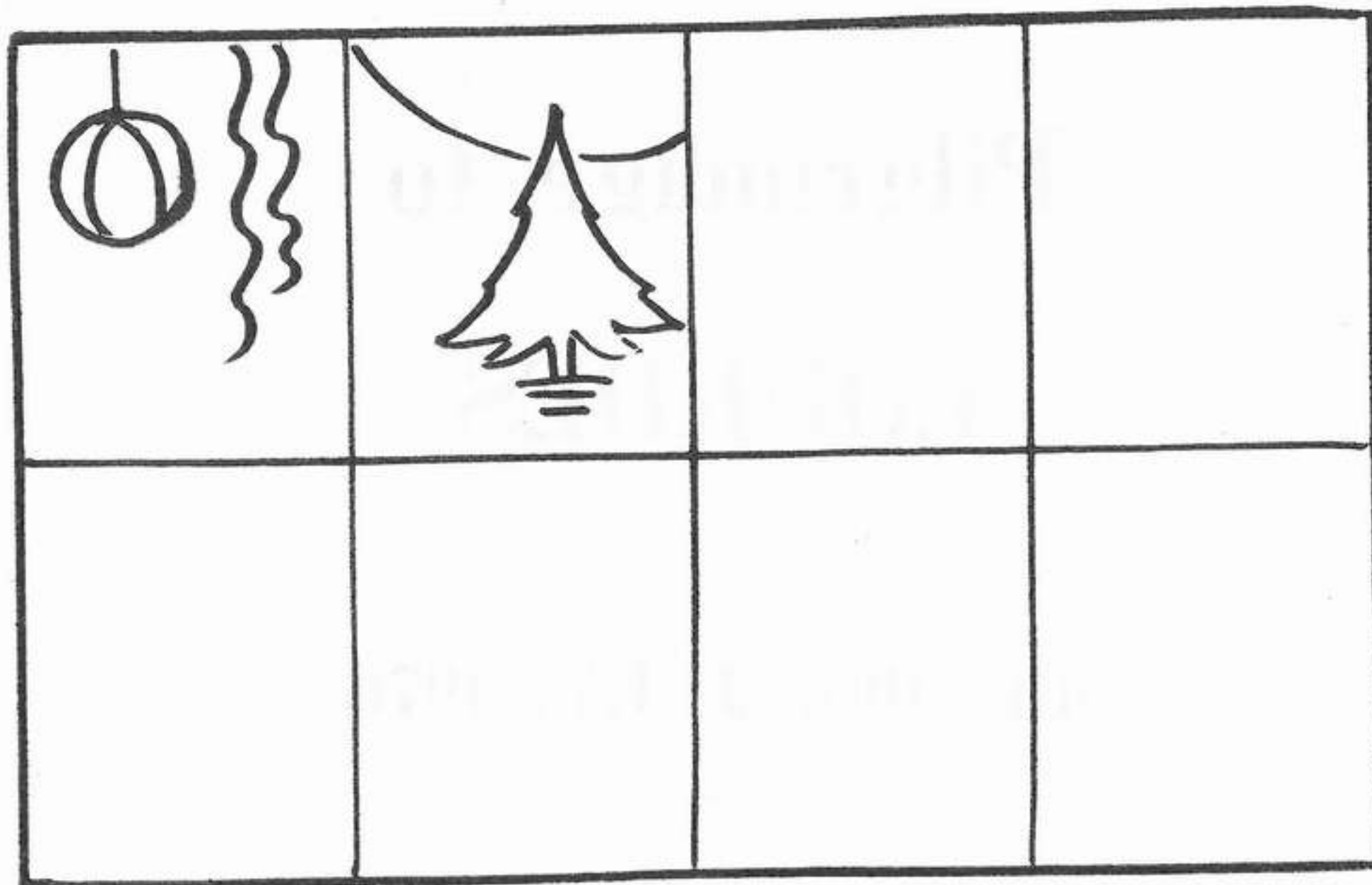
OTHER WINNERS (Book Prizes):

Noel Hough, Ballyshane, Newcastle West.
Deirdre Culligan, 10 Shannonville, Ennis Road, Limerick.
Sheenagh Carey, Arus Antoin, 4 Greenfields, Limerick.
Fidelma Ryan, Kyle, Broadford, Co. Clare.
Patrick Lyons, Kilgobbin, Adare.
Tommy Brouder, Kishikirk, Ballysimon.
Helen Madden, Garryduff, Newcastle West.

Teresa Kerley, 47 Athlunkard Street, Limerick, was the only entrant who put the curved line in the same place as Auntie Bridget.



Christmas Painting Competition



Before commencing be sure to read Auntie Brigid's letter

- | | | | | | | |
|------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|------------------|
| 1. Seniors | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | Four Book Prizes |
| 2. Juniors | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | Four Book Prizes |

NAME

ADDRESS

Age.....

Signed

(Parent, Teacher)

Biodh iarrachtaí istigh roimh 1/2/1970

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2. Fill in the coupon.
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Limerick Diocesan

Pilgrimage to

LOURDES

5th - 10th JULY, 1970

- ★ This will be a big pilgrimage and the Committee is anxious to have it as representative of the Diocese as possible. All organised groups are urged to send some of their members to help with the invalid section. Inquiries to: Pilgrimage Director, 66 O'Connell Street.
- ★ Intending pilgrims may start paying their fares now, if they so wish. For information about this Savings Fund ask your parish clergy or inquire at A/P Office, 66 O'Connell St., Limerick.
- ★ Further details about Fare, Invalid Section, etc., will be published as soon as possible.

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