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7887 Walmsley Avenue
New Orleans 25, Louisiana

The Catholic Church, the Negro, and the South

FOR MEN OF GOOD WILL

By Robert Guste

A Publication of the Catholic Council on Human Relations of the Archdiocese of New Orleans
Dedicated to

My Dad and Mother

and to

the countless other Southern parents and educators who sincerely try to instill in their children and their students—a love for all men and a respect for the dignity and worth of every man.
Introduction

“If segregation is wrong, why didn’t the Archbishop say something about it before the Supreme Court decision?” “Why are there separate churches for the Negroes and the whites?” “Isn’t there a moral danger or health hazard involved in mixing the children in our schools?” “If God wants colored and white together, why did he make them different?” “Why does the Catholic Church have to be the one sticking its neck out on this thing?”

These, and many similar questions, are asked time and time again. And the persons who ask them are not all of bad will. Many of them are sincerely good persons who intend to remain loyal to their Church and their Bishop, but who honestly have great difficulty in seeing the reasons for integration. Many are good Catholic parents who hold no hatred for any race but who have real fear of the effects they judge integration might bring to our Catholic schools. Many others are persons just confused about the whole thing.

The following pages have been written for these persons. They are addressed to men of good will. They have been written for those Catholics who sincerely want to see the truth, but who are having a difficult time in seeing it.

As a priest, and as someone who has lived in the deep South all of his life, I sympathize with them. I know the way they feel. I know their fears and their questions. They are my fellow Catholics, my fellow Southerners. Some of them are members of the parish in which I live and work; some of them are friends or acquaintances of life-long standing; some are relatives.
I cannot help but treat these persons with respect and understanding and kindness. They deserve an answer. The pages that follow are an attempt to help them.

This is not a scholarly work nor a technical study. Others more capable have produced such books already, and it is hoped that more will follow. This is simply the effort of a Southern priest—assisted in the task by several whose aid he sought—to give an honest and sympathetic answer to questions his fellow Catholics are asking or being asked by others. The answers are based on some church history, on a few scientific facts, on common sense, and on the teachings of Christ and His Church.

There have been several persons who have helped with valuable information, criticisms, and suggestions. There have been others who have offered their time in typing and correcting the manuscript, their encouragement in the project, and their prayers for its success. To all of them I want to express deep appreciation.

Above all, to Our Lady of Prompt Succor, Patroness of our City and State, to whom this work was entrusted almost from the outset, and to Blessed Martin de Porres, Patron of Social Justice, who was invoked many times in the writing—I give public thanks. May they intercede for all those into whose hands this little booklet might fall, so that, in spite of its unworthiness, it might be of some service in increasing understanding and love among men.

Feast of St. Louis, King of France
Patron of the Archdiocese
Aug. 25, 1957

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God did not create a human family made up of segregated, dissociated, mutually independent members. No; He would have them all united by the bond of total love of Him and consequent self-dedication to assisting each other to maintain that bond intact. How better could you show your love for your neighbor than by striving to procure for him what is his greatest boon, love of His Lord and Creator.

Pope Pius XII
Sept. 7, 1956

†

If there is one thing clear in the Church's doctrine, it is that there can be no distinction of color, no distinction of race or nationality.

Cardinal Stritch
Oct., 1955

†

The Church is one general, immense brotherhood, and should know no distinction between its members . . . Mother Church accepts them all as Her common children, because everyone stands on an equal footing before the judgment seat of God.

Archbishop Janssens
of New Orleans
May 19, 1895*

*The sources of these statements, together with the other references, are given in the back of this booklet.
Before turning back the pages of history, let us pause for a moment to consider a few present day facts and figures; they are important in the light of what is to follow.

In the United States today, approximately one out of every five persons is a Catholic. Breaking this down according to race, one out of every four whites is a Catholic, and one out of every thirty-four Negroes is a Catholic.

In the State of Louisiana, there are more Catholics than in any other Southern state. More than half of the Catholics of the South live in Louisiana. Whereas most Southern states have a Catholic population of about one per cent, the Louisiana Catholic population is thirty-four per cent.

**The Archdiocese**

The extreme southeastern portion of the State of Louisiana is the territory of the Archdiocese of New Orleans. On a map this section covers the toe of the Louisiana boot. On the north and east the Archdiocese is bounded by the Louisiana - Mississippi state line, on the west by the Atchafalaya River, and to the South by the Gulf of Mexico.* About forty-one per cent of the people of this area are Catholic. More than half of the white population is Catholic; sixteen per cent of the colored population is Catholic.

In the City of New Orleans (Orleans parish), the seat of the Archdiocese — about fifty-five per cent of the white population, and twenty-five per cent of the colored population, is Catholic.

In New Orleans, as well as in the entire State of Louisiana, Negroes comprise about thirty per cent of the total population.\(^1\)

**Compared with the Past**

The figures for the Archdiocese just quoted show that there is a striking difference between the number of Catholics in the white population and the number of Catholics in the Negro population. Things were not this way, however, a hundred and fifty years ago. Strange as it might sound, the proportion of

*The northwestern portion of what was formerly the Archdiocese of New Orleans now constitutes the Diocese of Baton Rouge.
Catholic Negroes per Negro population of Louisiana, was much higher in 1800 than it is today.

Roger Baudier, official historian for the Archdiocese of New Orleans, estimates that at the dawn of the eighteen hundreds as many as 90 per cent of the Louisiana Negroes were Catholic. And this was at a time when Negroes, the large majority of their slaves eventually came into the Catholic Church.

Whether he be slave or free, however, no adult can become a Catholic unless he is first instructed in the Faith and then desires to embrace it of his own free will. This instructing of the Negroes was no easy task for the priests of those days. The Negroes themselves seem to have been eager for instruction, but the missionaries were few in number, and they had to contend not only with the illiteracy and lack of education of the slaves but also with an indifferent attitude on the part of many of the masters.

**Early Missionary Period**

In the early days, during the French rule of Louisiana, 1682 to 1769, the principal missionaries were the Jesuit and Capuchin Fathers. The Jesuits, concentrating their attention chiefly on the Indian villages, lived among the Indians and sometimes moved from place to place with the tribe. The Capuchins worked with the French settlers and their slaves and established the first churches.

These Capuchin Missionaries did a great work among both white and black. Speaking of their labors in behalf of the Negroes, Roger Baudier writes in his history, *The Catholic Church in Louisiana*:

As to the Negroes, the Capuchins from the very start gave them every attention, missing no opportunity to instruct them, baptize them and marry them. Throughout the years that the Capuchins labored in Louisiana, both the French and the Spanish Friars labored assiduously to bring them into the fold of the Faith, and the registers of the various parishes dating back to Colonial days, fairly teem with entries of baptisms of Negroes, eloquent testimony of their labors in this direction. In all of the Capuchin parishes, baptism of large groups of Negroes was held regularly, twice each year—on Holy Saturday and on the Vigil of Pentecost. In New Orleans, one of the assistants to the St. Louis Parish Church gave his time to this work. Whatever faults may be ascribed to the Friars during their labors in Louisiana, they certainly cannot be charged with neglect of their work among the Negroes.

**The Fruit of Toil**

The labors of the Capuchins were continued by the other men and women of God who followed them. (Worthy of particular mention are the Ursuline Nuns who devoted themselves to the religious instruction of Negroes from the earliest days, holding some classes for them in their first school of 1727. This is the oldest school in Louisiana. These labors were so effective that by the time the Louisiana Territory was purchased by the United States in 1803, about 90 per cent of the Negro population, in the present area of the State, was Catholic. Even though there was some decrease in this figure, due to Protestant influence after this time, the percentage of Negro Catholics, especially in South Louisiana, remained very high until the Civil War.

The clergy insisted that the baptized slaves be given the same rights in the Church as any other Catholics, chiefly the rights of Christian marriage and Christian burial, and the opportunity of Sunday Mass and Sunday rest. In order to uphold these rights and privileges of the Catholic slaves, the priests often had to oppose the masters who were reluctant to grant them.

An interesting example of this, dating back to 1738, is the case of Father Matthias, the Superior of the Capuchins in Louisiana, who instituted court proceedings against a prominent New Orleans official, the Treasurer-General, who had one of his slaves buried in his garden without religious ceremony. Father Matthias prevailed upon the court to demand that the body be disinterred and reburied in the cemetery with the rites of the Church. He also had the offender cited before the Court, which imposed a fine upon him.
The "Black Code"

The neglect of the spiritual welfare of the slaves by their masters became so widespread during the Spanish rule of Louisiana (1769-1803) that the clergy of the State petitioned the Spanish King to intervene. As a consequence the King issued, in 1789, the famous "Black Code" in which he insisted on Sunday rest for the slaves and on separate quarters for men and women to be provided by the owners. The Code also made other demands, among which was that the slaves be given the opportunity to receive Christian marriage.

Most of the masters protested this legislation and did very little, if anything, about it. They particularly objected to the demand that they provide separate quarters for men and women slaves and that they give them an opportunity to marry. The fact of widespread concubinage among the slaves, for which the masters were indirectly responsible, does not seem to have concerned them. They complained that separate quarters would interfere with the work of the plantations. And the chief reason for their energetic opposition to marriage for the slaves was that this would make it difficult to buy single slaves, since husband and wife would have to be bought together.5

Continued Zeal

In spite of all this, the Bishop and his clergy continued, and even intensified, their efforts in behalf of the slaves; and the registers of this period show an increase in the number of baptisms and even of marriages.

The records of the old parish churches in Plaquemine, Houma, Paimcourtville, Baton Rouge, Edgard, Convent, New Orleans, and other places throughout the State, reveal striking numbers of Negro baptisms, funerals, and some marriages. These figures show a steady increase up to the time of the Civil War, giving us an idea of the extent of the Church's work among the colored in Louisiana during the pre-war days.

The Negro population of Louisiana comprised not only the slaves but also many free Negroes who were known as the "free people of color." Some of these were former slaves who had paid for their freedom or had gained it in some other manner. The others, and the large majority, were immigrants from the Island of Santo Domingo in the West Indies, who came into the State in the early eighteen hundreds. These latter were all Catholics, and their number was large. This served to swell considerably the ranks of the Catholic Negroes in Louisiana.

A United Worship

In these pre-Civil War days, there were no distinct churches for the Negroes, for the whites, for the slaves, and for the free. In the parish churches and in the plantation chapels, all worshipped under the same roof. There were separate seating arrangements for the two races, but in any church or chapel, all men, regardless of rank or race, could attend services and could receive all the sacraments and sacramentals.

A good description of conditions at this time is given by Roger Baudier, when he writes about the old St. Louis Parish Church, from the time it was erected until 1788. This was the first church in New Orleans, and it stood on the same spot as the present St. Louis Cathedral.

Within the walls of this first St. Louis Parish Church, dedicated in 1727, worshipped the French Governors Perier, Bienville, de Vaudreuil, Kerlerec and D'Abadie... Here too were married those of high estate and the lowly colonist, the orphan girl from the Ursuline Convent espoused to some up-river planter, the sailor, the soldier, the laborer and the slave. Here also were baptized the children of aristocratic families, of poor families, and the 'Negritte' and the 'Negrillion' (as the registers designate the slave children), likewise the groups of adult Negro slaves on Holy Saturday and the Vigil of Pentecost, when men of high standing and women of the best families stood as godparents. Here, also, were brought the last mortal remains of the great and the near great, the lowly and the slave, all borne before the sanctuary for the last prayers of Holy Mother the Church...6
Chapter II

Post Civil War Era

When the War Between the States came to an end in 1865, and the slaves were suddenly freed, feelings were running high in the South. Mixed emotions of fear and prejudice and hatred towards the Negro were mounting. The events of the Reconstruction Period intensified ill feelings immeasurably. As a result, even though emancipation had been proclaimed, the former slaves were not accepted as fellow citizens; and segregation of the races was enforced in most phases of life. The Negro had been segregated in the days of slavery; but now, as a free man, the practice was much more galling to him.

Even in the Catholic churches, which had practically been the only churches in Louisiana for generations, the whites insisted upon maintaining segregation, sometimes with signs, often leaving the Negroes only a last few pews. In many churches, when the Negro attended Mass or approached the Sacraments, he received a cold, or even hostile, reception by the congregation. Sometimes no pews at all were made available to him.

**The Great Falling Away**

Feeling unwanted and despised by their Catholic brethren, large numbers of Negroes fell away from the practice of their Faith. With the passing of time, many of these, desiring some form of religious worship and solace, turned to the Protestant sects.

Protestants had begun coming into the State in 1803, following the Louisiana Purchase; and some Catholic Negroes, who had been taken over by Protestant masters, had already been drawn away from Catholicism.

It was chiefly, however, during this period following the Civil War that the Protestants made a concerted drive for the Negroes in Louisiana. The time was ripe for it. The Negro, as any man, wanted religion. He felt a particular need for the consolation it afforded him in the face of his sad lot in this world. He loved to think of future life as a liberation from the trials here below. The famous Negro spirituals are expressive of his religious sentiment.

The Protestants began setting up, in the Negro neighborhoods and districts, many small churches for the colored. In these, the Negroes, who had experienced ill treatment from their fellow Catholics, found that they could worship unmolested, in companionship and in peace.

The Bishops and priests were not unaware or unconcerned about what was happening. They saw their Negro Catholics steadily drifting away and many congregations becoming almost exclusively white. They knew that something had to be done to save them. This was by no means a universal situation. Many Negroes, even when rejected, clung to their Catholic Religion. And there were still many churches, especially where the congregations were French, in which the Negroes were rather well received and ministered to. But in many other churches, conditions were just the opposite.

**Archbishop Janssens**

When Archbishop Francis Janssens took over the administration of the Archdiocese in 1888, he immediately began giving thought to the welfare of the 75,000 colored Catholics who came under his spiritual care. Greatly concerned about their mistreatment and neglect in many places and the number of Negroes who had drifted and were still drifting from Catholicism, the Archbishop, after much deliberation, decided to carry out the idea of erecting a church exclusively for the use of the Negroes.

This idea had been considered prior to his time, but had been abandoned because of sentiment against it, on the part of both the clergy and the Negroes themselves. Now, however, the Archbishop considered that there was real need for it, and he began making plans accordingly.

When this became publicly known, an immediate storm of protest was aroused, especially among the Catholic Negroes of the City. Delegation after delegation, letter upon letter, poured into the Archbishop's office. The Negroes were of the mind that the designating of a special church for them would be drawing the color line and would divide the Catholic body which had hitherto worshipped together.

The Archbishop assured them that it was not his intention to enforce a separation between Negro and white Catholics nor to exclude colored Catholics from
attending the churches they had always attended. He attempted to make it clear that he was setting up this new church simply for those who wanted to use it because of not having found welcome in their regular parish churches.

A reporter who visited the Archbishop to get his mind on the subject ran an account of his interview in the newspapers. The clipping is on file in the archives of the Archdiocesan Chancery.

... The move is merely experimental, and if it does not prove successful, it will, of course, be abandoned. The colored people seem to be imbued with the idea that it is an attempt to invade their rights. This the Archbishop has endeavored to assure them is not so, for he declares most emphatically, that if it were to compromise them in any way, socially or politically, he would at once give up the project. He is actuated solely by a desire for their religious betterment and advancement, and for that reason is making this tentative move. The Archbishop desires to have it expressly understood that there will be no compulsion to make any of the colored people give up the churches which they now attend to become members of the new one that is to be set apart for them exclusively ... 2

First Church for Negroses

In spite of the misunderstanding and the opposition, Archbishop Janssens was convinced that something must be done and went ahead with his plan. He decided upon turning the old St. Joseph Church (across from the present Charity Hospital) into a church for the colored Catholics of New Orleans. He made extensive renovations in the church, which had been abandoned for some years, and changed its name to St. Katherine (after Mother Katherine Drexel, who generously donated money for this project). The Archbishop appointed Father Charles Remillion, C.M., the first pastor, with the right and jurisdiction to minister to all the Negro Catholics in New Orleans.

A few days before its dedication, the newspapers carried this story, under the caption, "St. Katherine Church":

On Sunday next, May 19, at 10:30 A.M., the church will be opened with a solemn Mass ... Nearly two years ago, when it became known that the Archbishop had determined on opening a separate church for the colored Catholics, a storm of opposition was raised against it among the more influential colored element of all religions and of no religion. Delegation after delegation harassed the Archbishop, but his Grace was immovable and went right on preparing to form the new congregation he had in mind. When the Archbishop's intentions became better appreciated, many who had opposed the new church, ceased their agitation and determined to wait and see how things would turn out.

What the colored people feared was that the founding of the new church for them would result in their being excluded from the other churches of the City. They were afraid of the color line being drawn on them, and while losing the distinction they had always enjoyed in the Catholic churches, they would be forced, for the future, to worship God by themselves, and not as heretofore, by the side of their white brethren.

But Archbishop Janssens never intended to force the colored Catholics to attend any church, nor to deprive them of any privileges they have heretofore enjoyed. He held that the colored people were falling away from the Faith because, no matter what consideration is given them in the other churches, many of them had frequent grievances and complaints of discrimination against them. Hence, he decided to open a church for them, which they might attend, if they chose, but there was to be no obligation on them to do so ... 2

Dedication Sermon

On May 19, 1895, the Archbishop formally opened the new church. In his sermon of dedication he, again, made his intentions clear and stated that the church is "for all the colored Catholics of New Orleans, but none of them are compelled to come here. If they prefer to remain in their own parish they are at liberty to do so ...

His complete sermon of dedication is given in an old newspaper clipping of the day following the dedication:

My dear brethren, I have come here today and you are assembled here, for the purpose of assisting at the opening of this beautiful renovated church and to witness the first service inaugurated for the welfare of the colored people of New Orleans.

The Archbishop then paid a tribute of gratitude to Mother Katherine Drexel and exhorted all to imitate her charitable example and the example of St. Katherine after whom the church was named. He then continued:

The Church is one general, immense brotherhood, and should not know any distinction between its members. It is not intended in opening and dedicating this church to convey the idea that there is a religion for the white people and one for the
colored people. Mother Church accepts them all as her common children, because everyone stands on the same footing before the judgment seat of God. Yet, on account of the peculiar conditions that exist in the South, it is almost impossible for white and black to mingle together and freely assist at religious services in the same edifice.

Here in this church the colored people will be at home. It is a church for their own special benefit and occupation. It is for all the colored people of New Orleans, but none of them are compelled to come here. If they prefer to remain in their own parish they are at liberty to do so, but I want to say that St. Katherine's is for them at all times.

Archbishop Blenk and After

St. Katherine remained the only church for the colored in South Louisiana until the administration of Archbishop Hubert Blenk, S.M., in 1906. Archbishop Blenk invited the Holy Ghost Fathers and the Josephite Fathers (whose Society in America was dedicated exclusively to Negro work) to open up new parishes in the area. During his episcopacy, the Josephites organized three parishes in New Orleans and the Holy Ghost Congregation, one. The latter group also organized a parish in Lafayette, St. Paul's, and another, St. Edward's, at New Iberia.

Since then, several other churches for the colored have been erected in the City and throughout the Archdiocese of New Orleans, manned almost entirely by the Josephites. They number now in the City of New Orleans fourteen out of a total of sixty-two churches, and in the Archdiocese as a whole, twenty-seven out of one hundred eighty-eight.*

The work of these parishes for the colored, and of the Josephite, Holy Ghost, and Vincentian priests who have served in them, has been a glorious one. They have brought back to the Faith countless numbers who had drifted, and they have held back many others who might have gone over to Protestantism or entirely given up affiliation with any religion. They have made many converts to the Church. Theirs is a work worthy of great respect and praise.

Not half of the Negroes, however, who should be Catholic, either because of Catholic baptism or because of Catholics in their ancestry, have as yet come back to the Faith of their fathers.

*Some of these churches are now in the Baton Rouge Diocese.
Chapter I

The Parish

The rectory telephone rang again. This time it was a sick call. An elderly Negro man down the street, just two blocks from the church, was dying. The man belonged to one of the few Catholic Negro families who lived in this otherwise “white” parish.

In a short time the priest was at the bedside of the dying man. He heard his confession and then returned to give him Viaticum and Extreme Unction.

As the old man lingered on for a few weeks, the priest had opportunity to bring him Holy Communion once or twice, again, before he died. On one of these visits, when it looked as if death was imminent, the family broached the subject as to where the funeral would take place. They said that the old man wanted it in the parish church, but they hesitated about this. They knew that they were Negroes living in a “white” parish and that there had not been a funeral for a Negro in the parish church for many a year.

The priest assured the family that there was no need for concern and that the man would be buried as any other parishioner.

And so he was. The old man was buried with the usual funeral rites and with a High Mass in the parish church.

To the priests of the parish this seemed like the only way things should be. This had been the man’s request before he died, and it should be respected. He had lived for many years just a stone’s throw from the parish church and two miles from the church for the colored. In fact, he had been married in this same parish.

A Misunderstanding

As the word of this funeral got around, however, some parishioners were up in arms. “Why don’t they go to their own church?” “Why do we have churches for the colored if they are going to bring them to the white churches?” “We’ve never done this before, why start it now?”
These questions cannot just be brushed off as expressions of intolerance. They indicate more misunderstanding than bitterness.

Ever since the day that Archbishop Janssens set up the first church for Negroes, we have more and more forgotten his original intention. To a great extent we have lost sight of the Church's concept of the territorial parish and of the status of the Negro Catholics who live within it.

This misunderstanding is at the root of much of the present day Catholic opposition to integration.

**The Territorial Parish**

What, then, is a territorial parish?

The territorial parish is the fundamental unit of the organization of the Church all over the world. Each Bishop's diocese is divided up like a checker board into territorial parts; each of these parts has its own church and its own pastor and assistant priests.

This is the age-old system of the Church. It is required by the universal law of the Church found in the Code of Canon Law: "The territory of each diocese is to be divided into distinct territorial parts, to each part is to be assigned its own church with a definite part of the population, and its own rector as the proper pastor of that territory is to be put in charge for the necessary care of souls."

According to this system, the pastor is entrusted with the spiritual care of every baptized person who resides in that territory over which he has been appointed by the Bishop. He is the father of that family, the shepherd of that flock.

All within the parish limits are his concern, even the non-Catholics. Whether they be French or Spanish, German or Italian, Mexican or Chinese, Negro or white—they are all his children, his sheep.

The decrees of the Archdiocesan Synod, which are law for all the priests of the Archdiocese, make this point clear, in regard to the Negroes living in our parishes. The Synod states:

Since God is no respecter of persons, all who have the care of souls should know that they will be held inexcusable before God if they have little or no solicitude for the salvation of the Negroes, at least the Catholic Negroes, who live in their parishes. They could do well to take example from those men of other sects who spare no labors that they might turn away from the Catholic Faith those Negroes, especially the young, who have been baptized into the bosom of the Church.

Churches For Negroes

It is true that we have set up some special churches in the Archdiocese for Negroes. How these churches came into existence was discussed in the previous chapter. They arose in the bitter days after the Civil War because of the hostility or coldness often shown to Negroes when they attended Mass in their regular parish churches or tried to participate in parochial activities.

Never was it the intention, however, in setting up these churches, to give the impression that the Negroes could not attend church or participate in parish life in the territorial parishes in which they reside.

As was already mentioned, Archbishop Janssens made it clear in 1895, when he opened the first church for Negroes, that it was not necessary for all Negroes to use it. He left them completely free to go to this church or to their territorial parish church. Ever since Archbishop Janssens' day, this has been the mind of all the Bishops and Archbishops of New Orleans, and it is the mind of the present Archbishop.

Similar To National Parishes

We have a similar situation in the case of the national churches that still exist in the Archdiocese. In former years there were many such national churches. Now, there are only two that remain, both of them in New Orleans: St. Mary's, for Italians, and Holy Trinity, for Germans.

These churches came into existence because of the language difficulty that German and Italian immigrants experienced many years ago, and they continue to exist because of the attachments so many parishioners have developed for them.

Any Italian or any German can go to these churches, receive the Sacraments there and participate in the parish activities. But no one considers them obliged to go there. No one considers them out of place if they choose rather to attend the parish church in whose territory they live.

In the same way we should understand that the Negro is not restricted to attend only those churches which have been erected for him. The special churches for the colored exist for the convenience of those families who live close to them or who feel more at home in them. They
are not meant, however, to lend weight to the false notion that the Catholic church, the Mystical Body of Christ, is divided (as Bishop Waters of North Carolina puts it).* Nor are they meant to give the impression that the Negro cannot be a member of that particular territorial parish in which he lives.

No White Parishes

It is correct to say, then, that in the Archdiocese there are churches that have been designated to serve the needs of German and Italian speaking persons. There are also churches that serve the Negroes. There are, however, no churches that have been officially designated just for the service of whites. We have no white parishes.

The parishes that we call "white" are actually territorial parishes of which every Catholic who resides in the territory has the right to be a member.

*We include here a part of a pastoral letter of Bishop Vincent Waters of North Carolina, dated June 12, 1953, which was read in all the churches of his diocese. This whole letter is worth reading, but we quote here those particular paragraphs that touch on the subject discussed in the foregoing chapter. His thoughts are expressed so clearly and so forcefully that they are worth quoting:

In North Carolina, until a few years ago, there were no special churches for our colored people and all Catholics worshipped God together, irrespective of race. In order to give a special impetus to the missionary work among the colored people, former Bishops of Raleigh contracted with various religious communities of men and women for specialized work among these people and for the establishment of special churches and schools in some sections of the Diocese for them. Did this mean that the Church was abandoning her century old teaching of "one fold and one shepherd" or that Negroes were thereby forbidden to worship in any Catholic church in the Diocese except those for colored. By no means. It meant that there was no division but merely that special attention was given to a few, and all Catholics still had the rights and privileges of worshipping God together, as everywhere in the Catholic church.

To be assured that this was understood entirely by all Catholics and enforced by all pastors, we wrote a letter clearly defining this teaching two years and a half ago, on January 29, 1951. It was read in all the churches of the Diocese and printed in the North Carolina Catholic. The same teaching has been reiterated in our letters of February 9th and May 18 of the present year.

Therefore, so that in the future there can be no misunderstanding on the part of anyone, let me state here, as emphatically as I can: There is no segregation of races to be tolerated in any Catholic church in the Diocese of Raleigh. The pastors are charged with the carrying out of this teaching and shall tolerate nothing to the contrary. Otherwise, all special churches for Negroes will be abolished immediately as lending weight to the false notion that the Catholic Church, the Mystical Body of Christ, is divided. Equal rights are accorded, therefore, to every race and every nationality as is proper in any Catholic church and within the church building itself everyone is given the privilege to sit or kneel wherever he desires and to approach the Sacraments without any regard to race or nationality. This doctrine is to be fully explained to each convert who enters the church from henceforth in the Diocese of Raleigh.
Chapter II

The Parochial School

The parochial school is an integral part of any parish. It is under the care of the pastor who usually considers it, after the church building, the most important part of his parish.

The primary function of the school is to be the instrument of the pastor for imparting Christian doctrine to the little ones of the parish and for forming them according to the example of Christ. What was expressed in the previous chapter about the parish should apply logically to the parish school. The parish priests, the parish church, and the parish organizations are for all parishioners. So should it be with the parish school. Every Catholic child of the parish—regardless of nationality or race—should be afforded the opportunity of a Catholic education in the parish school.

An Exception

In years gone by, the parochial schools in the Archdiocese of New Orleans have followed a policy of welcoming all parishioners—French, Spanish, Mexican, Indian, Filipinos, Chinese. They have made an exception, however, in regard to the Negro.

Not all the Catholic Schools of the Archdiocese have made this exception. St. Joseph Seminary, a high school and junior college in Covington, Notre Dame Seminary in New Orleans, and some departments of Loyola University of the South have been accepting Negro students for several years—before the time of the Supreme Court decision.

What was expressed in the previous chapter about the parish should apply logically to the parish school. The parish priests, the parish church, and the parish organizations are for all parishioners. So should it be with the parish school. Every Catholic child of the parish—regardless of nationality or race—should be afforded the opportunity of a Catholic education in the parish school.

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The Example of Others

First of all, it might be helpful for Catholic parents to take a look at those many Catholic schools—a large number of them in the South—where integration has been in existence for years now, without notable ill effects.

Some of the Southern and border states that have had Catholic school integration for several years are: Arkansas, Delaware, Kentucky, Maryland, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, West Virginia, and the District of Columbia.

This list is taken from a news story sent out in September of 1954 by the National Catholic Welfare Conference News Service. This News Service had conducted a survey of all the Southern states to find out the extent of Catholic school integration. Since the time of this survey, more schools and more states would be included.

Not all the Catholic schools in all these states were integrated at the time of this report. Nor can it be said that objections to integration had not been raised by some Catholics or that diffi-
cultivies had not been experienced. In all these states, nevertheless, the Church had faced the problem squarely and was taking steps to work it out. In most of these states (by September, 1954) the public schools had not yet opened their doors to Negroes.

It is true that there have been some unfortunate experiences with public school integration in a few parts of the country. The daily press has made us well aware of this.

What has not been brought to public attention, however, is the fact that in the Southern states mentioned above, Catholic school integration came about usually in a peaceful manner and has been in effect without any considerable negative results. The moral influence of the Catholic Church and the comparatively small number of Catholic Negroes are factors that have contributed to this success.

**Not By Force**

It might be well to point out, too, that there is no intention of bringing integration about by force. The Archbishop will not command Negro parents to send their children to the Parish School.

He will direct those in charge of the schools to accept those who apply for admission. Negro children will then be free to attend either the Parish School or the school connected with the closest church for the colored. These latter schools will certainly continue in operation and probably with a capacity attendance. It is unrealistic to think that all Catholic Negroes, if given the opportunity, would immediately abandon their schools and rush to the Parish Schools.

**Corruption of Morals**

Let us turn now to some of the particular fears that are plaguing parents. A calm and frank consideration of them is in order.

To begin somewhere, we might consider the fear that the morals of the white children will be corrupted by the presence of Negro children in the schools.

To approach this, we should ask ourselves: Exactly who will be these Negro children admitted to the Parish Schools? Will they be from families completely devoid of previous religious influence or of any moral code? Will they come from distant neighborhoods and be completely unknown to the parishioners or to the priests of the parish?

The children admitted to the Catholic schools will be Catholic children from Catholic families. The parents of these children will share the same faith and worship, the same sacraments and moral code, as other Catholic parents. And the fact that they would want to send their children to a Catholic school would indicate a sincere interest in their Catholic religion.

Besides this, it should be remembered that the parochial school is opened, as a rule, only to those who live within the area of the parish. The Negro families, then, who apply for admission for their children will not only be Catholic but will be members of the same Catholic parish.

For this reason, they should not be complete strangers, at least for long, to the white parishioners or to the parish priests.

If it does happen that there are undesirable features in some of the home backgrounds, this could be investigated and efforts could be made to remedy the situation. This will be no new task for parish priests who in the past have often found a need to look into the home conditions of some of the children in their parochial schools.

Not all of the Negro children admitted to the schools will be of exemplary character. In any group of children there are good and bad. This is true of Negro as well as white children. But there is just as much chance that some of the white children might influence some of the Negro children as that some of the Negroes might influence the whites.

**Disease**

In regard to the fear of contagious diseases—we might recall, again, that the children admitted to the schools will come from Catholic families and from homes where the parents usually take an interest in the physical as well as the spiritual health of their children.

Besides this, the fact is that no child, white or colored, who has a communicable or contagious disease of any sort is allowed in the schools right now.

Health examinations are standard procedure in both parochial and public schools. A child found with a health defect is sent to the family doctor or to some school physician. Children with diseases that could affect others are required to stay home until the trouble is remedied.

The existence of these precautions should dispel the fears of parents in regard to communicable or contagious diseases in the schools.

**Venereal Disease**

(In the cause of truth, a few things should be clarified in regard to venereal disease,
which was so much discussed in connection with school integration.

1. Venereal disease has not been a health problem among the school children of the Archdiocese, white or colored.

2. For all practical purposes, it can be stated that venereal disease is not transmitted by inanimate objects, such as towels, toilet facilities, eating utensils, swimming pools, etc. In more than 80,000 investigated cases there was not one instance of such transmission. In almost all cases venereal disease is contracted by direct contact with the sexual organs.

3. It is true that it is possible for a child to be born with congenital syphilis acquired from affected parents. With the advance of prenatal care in both our public and private hospitals, however, this should rarely happen in modern times. If it does, proper treatment could cure it.

Even without treatment, the disease would be contagious for only a short period of the child's life. By the time such a child would be ready for school there would be no danger of infection for others. An authoritative medical study on venereal disease has this to say: "Since congenital syphilis is not communicable after the first year or two of life, this form of the disease may be promptly dismissed as a factor in the possible spread of syphilis in school or at any occupation. The exclusion of congenitally syphilitic children from school, except for reasons affecting their own health, is unnecessary and cruel."

These are medical facts substantiated by experts in the field of venereal disease.

In Fairness

There is something else that, in fairness, must be considered under this question of disease.

For centuries now, the Negro has been intimately associated with the life of the community. For example how many Negroes are cooks and waiters and dishwashers in our restaurants and cafes! Many are maids or nurses or nurses' aides in our private homes and hotels, hospitals and clinics. Many are given the care of white children entrusted to them sometimes for much of the day or for an evening. The fear of disease has not hindered us from asking or accepting their services in these things.

Actually, the Negro has been in our midst for over six generations and there is no record of an epidemic of disease arising because of this.

The Educational Standard

That integration will lower the educational standard is another fear of parents.

This fear is easily understandable. Because of extremely overcrowded conditions, the platoon system, and other handicaps, the Negro schools have not been able to give the same education to their pupils as the white schools give to theirs. If the students from these Negro schools entered the parish schools, some of them would find difficulty in keeping up with the other pupils. This problem would not present itself in the case of Negro children entering the first grade. Those seeking admission to other grades could be placed according to the level of their achievement, an accurate estimate of which can be gained through a standardized test.

In either case, therefore, the children would be placed on an almost equal level, and as they go up the ladder of education together they would have almost equal chances of success.

Different Backgrounds

We say "almost equal" chances and not completely equal because of the usual difference in background between Negro and white students. In the past, Negroes, as a whole, have not received the same education as the whites. This is not only because of the inferior education which many Negro schools are forced to offer but also because many Negroes have had to leave school at an earlier age to help support their families. For this reason, it is likely that the Negro child coming to the schools will be from a home where his parents are not on the same educational level as most white parents and from a neighborhood where most of the persons he meets contribute little to his learning, or to his ability to speak good English. Even the physical conditions of his home will often be so inadequate and the small house so crowded that study is difficult for him.

These are factors with which we must contend. They are nothing new for teachers. Teachers in the white schools know that children who come from families in the very low income bracket usually present problems in learning.
The answer to this, however, is not to reject such children from the schools. To do this would simply be to perpetuate the lower educational background of the Negro group. Nor is the answer simply to admit the children and do nothing else.

There must be a total approach to the problem. There has to be a recognition of the Negro’s right, not only to the same educational advantages as the whites, but also his right to better jobs and fair wages and working conditions. There must be afforded him the chance to purchase adequate and more suitable houses, and the opportunities for spiritual, cultural and intellectual advancement that are had by the other members of the community.

No Inferior Race

Above all else, nevertheless, we must face the fact that there is no such thing as the Negro child being inferior in intelligence to the white child—just because he is a Negro. There is a great difference in the education and background of white and black in the South but the color of skin has nothing to do with the basic intelligence with which men are born. We will discuss this again in the next part of this booklet.

It is true that most of the Negroes whom we meet in our every day life are not well educated and hold inferior and menial jobs. We usually come in contact with them as maids or waiters or plantation workers or common laborers. This is the only type of job commonly open to them in this area. Because of this, the conclusion is sometimes drawn that the Negro is not capable of anything better.

The Facts Deny It

The facts, however, deny this. There are Negroes who have attained a high degree of learning and who hold positions that require much responsibility and intelligence. We could mention men like Booker T. Washington, the educator, and George Washington Carver, the scientist, or the late Dr. Rivers Fredericks, a civic leader in New Orleans, or the United Nations official, Ralph Bunche. Besides them, there are in our very midst Negro doctors, lawyers, social workers, writers, editors, insurance executives, scientists, and priests.

In New Orleans there are the two Universities of Dillard and Xavier. These schools are crowded with young intelligent Negroes eager for an education and pursuing it often at the cost of much sacrifice on their part or the part of their parents.

To put it simply. Take an equal number of Negro and white children from the earliest years. Separate them from their parents and their neighborhoods and let them grow up together in the same environment and with the same education. The whites might surpass the Negroes or the Negroes might surpass the whites. The chances are just as good either way. Actually, there would probably be some bright and some dull, some fast learners and some slow learners in both groups.
CHAPTER III

The Archbishop's Statements

"Well, if segregation is wrong, why haven't we heard more about it before now? Why did the Archbishop wait for the Supreme Court decision before he said anything about it? That's just 'getting on the band wagon'! That's politics, not religion."

* * *

Is it true that Archbishop Rummel waited until the Supreme Court decision before he said anything about segregation? Was his statement on the morality of segregation, issued in February of 1956, the first time he spoke on the subject? Let's turn back a few pages of history and see ... By ordering the removal of segregation signs from churches that had them, the Archbishop showed, long years ago, his attitude on segregation. Besides this and many other actions, that have spoken louder than words, the Archbishop has issued several clear statements on the subject, throughout the years.

The Synod

In October of 1949, the Archbishop issued a body of laws to all his priests. These laws had been voted upon and approved by the pastors of the Archdiocese called together by the Archbishop for an official meeting known as a Synod, the Seventh Synod of the Archdiocese. The laws of this Synod are still in force. Among them is the following:

It is our general intention that there be removed in our churches the burdensome distinction between the faithful of different races, and that the designation of part of the church or the pews for the use of one or other race, or their separation when present at the Eucharistic table—be prohibited. Those men who have the care of keeping order in church (ushers) should be effectively instructed with regard to this norm.

Among other things on this general subject of race relations, the Synod states, in a paragraph immediately following the above, that priests should exhort the faithful, especially the members of the Holy Name Society and the Blessed Virgin Sodality, to initiate meetings "to study ways by which discord between peoples of different races could be done away with".

A Pastoral Letter

For twenty years the Archbishop has included in his annual appeal for aid to the Negro and Indian Missions, exhortations to exercise the principles of Christian justice and charity in regard to racial relations. In one of these letters, the one of February 1951, read in all the churches of the Archdiocese, he stated that justice and charity should prompt us to work towards an elimination of the practices of segregation in daily life.

These same principles of Christian charity and justice should prompt us to cooperate in breaking down painful lines of segregation in the ordinary relations of human life and in the fields of education, industry and opportunity ... there should be a constant endeavor towards breaking down customs of segregation which contribute so much to the embarrassment, the unhappiness and the discontent of our Negro fellow citizens.

He points out that the first place where this must be done is in those things that fall under the supervision of the Church.

Certainly is our church life we should extend to Negroes, non-Catholics as well as Catholics, the charity which is truly after the Heart of Christ, Who is the Savior of all men regardless of race or color. The lines of segregation must disappear in our churches, not only physically but in the true spirit of Christian brotherhood, in the seating accommodations, at the confessional, in the Communion rail and in general in the reception of the Sacraments and sacramentals of the Church. All should be made to feel that the charity of Christ animates our hearts and that the spirit of Christ dominates our conduct towards our fellow Catholics, who share membership with us in the Mystical Body of Christ.

"Blessed Are the Peacemakers"

In the beginning of 1953, in the letter, "Blessed Are the Peacemakers", the Archbishop repeated his appeal. (This, too, is still prior to the time of the Supreme Court decision.)

In this letter he noted in reference to the segregation issue:

Public laws, customs of long standing, regulations and agreements of institutions and between business interests are obstacles not easy to overcome, but we can do much to aid this cause
of justice and charity by making segregation disappear in our Catholic church life. We have already made notable progress by the removal of offensive signs that limited the use of certain pews and by the aggregation of Colored units with the Metropolitan, Deanery and Diocesan Unions of the Holy Name Society, the Sodality and the Councils of Catholic Men and Women. But there still persists in some churches the practice of expecting the Colored to occupy a certain section of pews and to wait at the end of the line for Holy Communion. There may be other practices that cause humiliation and embarrassment, which should be foreign to our religious life and considered unworthy of a true spiritual understanding of our Catholic faith.

Explaining the close union that exists between all Catholics regardless of race he continued:... let there be no further discrimination or segregation in the pews, at the Communion rail, at the confessional and in parish meetings, just as there will be no segregation in the kingdom of heaven.

He made it clear that he was not encouraging all Negroes to discontinue their attendance at the churches for the colored. "Our colored Catholics are encouraged and urged to retain their loyalty and membership in their special congregations". He goes on to show, however, that Negro Catholics are acting within their rights and should be greeted with no unkindness "when they attend services in any parish church or mission, or when they apply for membership in parish organizations".

Segregation is Sinful

It was three years after this letter, in February of 1956, that there appeared the letter on the morality of racial segregation. It is true that, up to the time of this letter of '56, the Archbishop had not used the exact expression that segregation is "sinful". It had not been his wish to make it a matter of conscience that might disturb those who would not understand. His appeal had been, rather, to the good in his people.

He had said, however, that segregation was unjust, uncharitable, a source of much "humiliation" and "embarrassment" to the Negro, a cause of "unhappiness" and "discontent" for him, and something "painful" to him. Of course, all of these things mean that it is sinful. To be unjust is a sin; to be unkind is a sin; to humiliate or embarrass another is a sin; to cause him pain and unhappiness is a sin. To do this to one man is a sin.

To do it to hundreds and thousands of men is a sin.²

Some persons, nevertheless, had challenged the Archbishop's right to speak or act on this question at all. They claimed that it was a purely secular or political issue. It was this that was chiefly responsible for prompting the Archbishop to make the clear statement that "racial segregation is immoral and sinful". He considered it important to call the attention of everyone to the fact that there is a moral question involved in the segregation issue. Up to this point, it had been his method to try to persuade and lead his flock without insisting very much on the matter of sin.

An Archbishop's Role

Even now, to have "to force this thing down people's throats" is not the desire of the Archbishop of New Orleans. His passionate desire is to convince the minds and win the hearts of his people. He has asked us to think about this thing, to discuss it calmly, and to pray about it. He knows, as he said in his talk at Notre Dame University, in the summer of 1956, that the mere removal of segregation restrictions will not answer the problem, for there will be needed a "sympathetic understanding and encouragement, which are the fruits of genuine Christian charity and justice."³

His role is not the role of a monarch handing down cold legislation. His role is that of the father of the family of Catholics. In that family he sees both white and colored children whom he must treat equally. And, as their father, he must teach them all to regard one another with respect and to get along in mutual harmony."⁴
Some Questions and Answers

Doesn't the fact that God gave people different colors of skin show that He wants them separated?

The fact of the different skin colors among men certainly does not mean that there has to be a separation between them, any more than the different eye colors or hair colors or the differences in shapes of heads or statures of body call for a separation.

Actually, we are all different from one another. In any school or factory or entire city it is difficult to find two persons who are exactly alike. In fact, even the shades of skin among white men are different. It is not common for two persons to have identically the same shade. The differences in color between some members of the white race are greater than between some Negroes and whites.

Even among inanimate things there is a great variety. Those who have examined flakes of snow under a microscope tell us that every single flake of snow is different. Each one of billions, of trillions, has its own shape, its own characteristics.

No Separation

Certainly, God does not want us to separate every different thing from every other different thing. Nor does He want us to separate things merely because of color. If we began to do that, we would have to separate the ducks in the park—the white ones from the black, the cows out in the field—the browns from the black and whites, and the roses in the vase—the reds from the yellows. We would have to separate persons with blue eyes from those with brown eyes and those with black hair from those with blonde hair, and so on.

There is no intention to treat lightly the question asked. The only intention is to show that we cannot use God as our authority for segregating people. Just because there are different colors in God's creation is no reason why His creatures should be separated.

Why, then, did He make us different?

God made things different not for the purpose of separation but for our enjoyment and happiness. It would be an awfully dull world if all people looked alike, if all flowers were daisies, if all animals were red, or if the only food were bananas. God made a
great variety in things out of love for us. There is also a deeper reason.

Everything in the world is a reflection of God. Every artist or painter or designer first has an image in his mind before he puts it on the paper or the canvas. What he sketches or paints is an imitation of the idea or image that he already has in his mind.

That's the way God created the world. The eternal idea that God conceived is His own perfect being, and everything He created is an imitation of that perfection.

Since God is infinite, one type of created thing alone would not be good enough to represent Him. Therefore, God created a great variety of things—all different sizes, shapes, dispositions, and colors. All these put together, like one great symphony, give a better idea, though a small one, of the magnificence of God.

BUT YOU NEVER SEE A CROW MATING WITH A CANARY, DO YOU?

As a rule, the different types or species of animals do not mate and cannot produce offspring. In the cases where they do, as for example, the mating of horses and donkeys, the offspring, the mule, cannot reproduce.

In this way, God preserves the various species. He maintains the variety among the different types of animals.

God has made no such provision, however, for maintaining differences between the races of men. Any normal member of the human race can mate with any other normal member and have children. These children, in turn, can reproduce.

God clearly wants to preserve the different species among the animals. But dark skinned and white skinned human beings are not members of different species. They are all human beings, all members of the same human race. The difference between them is not like the difference between a crow and a canary or the difference between a pig and a cow. The difference between them is like the difference between a blue canary and a yellow one or a brown cow and a speckled one.

BUT ISN'T IT TRUE THAT GOD CURSED SOMEONE IN THE OLD TESTAMENT AND MADE HIM BLACK AND THAT THIS WAS THE BEGINNING OF THE COLORED RACE?

This is certainly not true. There is no present day Biblical scholar who would hold such a theory.

There is an incident in the first book of the Bible where God cursed Cain after he killed his brother. Because of his crime and condemnation by God, Cain was afraid that some of his other brothers might kill him in revenge, so he asked God to protect him. The Bible tells us that God answered his prayer and "put a mark on him so that if anyone would find him he would not kill him," or in the Confraternity translation, "the Lord gave Cain a token so that no one finding him should kill him."1

For thousands of years nobody ever dreamed that this meant that God had made him black. There is nothing in the Bible to support this. Actually, he could have been of a dark shade of skin already from birth. And there is absolutely no reason in the world to think that the mark put on Cain was passed on to his children. Whatever this mysterious mark was, it was a sign of God's loving protection. The mark was no curse.

WHERE DID THE DIFFERENT RACES COME FROM?

All men in the world, regardless of any differences between them, come from an original pair. We are one human race, one family. We know this from God's word.

The findings of science are in line with this. The sciences of history and anthropology, in particular, point to the essential unity of the human race. A famous statement on race, issued in 1952, by a large group of scientists — anthropologists and geneticists — meeting under the auspices of UNESCO (the United
Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization), contains the following statement: "Scientists are generally agreed that all men living today belong to a single species, 'Homo Sapiens' — and are derived from a common stock."

God is more specific, however, than science. He tells us clearly in the first book of Genesis, and in other parts of the Bible, that all men are the children of Adam and Eve. All of us, white, black, yellow and red, are their descendants. We are one family, not a mixture of many different families.

BUT CERTAINLY, ADAM WAS WHITE, WASN'T HE?

What color Adam and Eve and their immediate children were, we do not know with any certainty. Neither science nor the Bible says anything definite about this. They could have been white, black, brown, yellow or red. This is just one of those things science does not know and God has not revealed.

Some scientists think that the color of early man's skin was "neither white nor black but darkish."

WHY THEN DO WE HAVE DIFFERENT COLORS OF SKIN? HOW DID THIS COME ABOUT?

The different colors of skin developed over the course of ages through natural causes. Exactly how this came about is a scientific question. It falls in the same class with the question as to how the different colors of eyes and hair developed. Those who are interested in studying it further could turn to some of the standard high school or college books of Biology or Anthropology, or they could read the section on this question in the UNESCO booklet, "What is Race?"

BUT THERE ARE MORE WHITE PEOPLE IN THE WORLD THAN NON-WHITES,AREN'T THERE?

The white race constitutes roughly one-third of the world's population. The other two-thirds are yellow, red, black and brown. There are more non-whites in the world than whites.

BUT AREN'T SOME RACES REALLY SUPERIOR TO OTHERS?

We discussed this question already at the end of the chapter on the parochial school. For a fuller answer to it the reader could refer back to this chapter.

Sometimes those who say that whites are superior to Negroes simply mean that most whites have a better education, better jobs, better homes, better neighborhoods, etc., than most Negroes. If this is what is meant by superiority, then, certainly, it is true.

If, however, the theory of racial superiority means that the average child of any race does not have as much chance of advancement as the average child of any other race, if given the same opportunities and environment, it is a pure and simple myth.

This was the theory of Adolph Hitler. His was the idea of a "master race." Pius XI, who was Pope at the time, condemned this theory. In his encyclical letter, "Mit Brennender Sorge"—on the condition of the Church in Germany, issued on March 13, 1937, Pius XI speaks of the "myth of blood and race." Science contradicts this myth. Every tradition of Americanism cries out against it. Our very Declaration of Independence begins with a statement of the essential equality of all men.

BUT WHAT ABOUT RACIAL BLOOD? ISN'T THERE A DIFFERENCE BETWEEN "WHITE" BLOOD AND NEGRO BLOOD?

Any blood bank or any doctor would tell us that there are only four principal types of human blood: "A", "B", "AB" and "O", and that these types are found among peoples of all races and nationalities. Any person with a type of blood that is compatible with another type can give a transfusion. Only the health of the donor matters, not the race. If some local hospitals separate the blood of Negro donors from that of white donors, it is not because of scientific reasons but because of public demand to do so.

During the war, in which the lives of so many American boys were saved by blood transfusions, the Armed Forces made no distinction between the blood from Negro, white or Chinese Americans. And the men who needed it did not bother to ask where it came from.

BUT IF WE HAVE INTERGRATION, WON'T WE HAVE INTERMARRIAGE?

In those Northern communities that have had integration for many generations, there are very few cases of intermarriage. Southerners who have traveled in the North and many North-
it was only then

bid marriage between persons

persons of different religions

necessities. Catholicism does not forswear marriage, but does not encourage it as a universal law, does not forswear marriage, but does not encourage it as a universal law, does not forswear marriage, but does not encourage it as a universal law, does not forswear marriage, but does not encourage it as a universal law. The Church, however, in her previous written at length that I have found no evidence of this in the establishment of friendly, just and charitable relations between the Negro and white groups encourages any notable tendency to intermarriage. Indications seemed to point in the contrary direction: that in proportion as the pressure of fear and insecurity is removed from the minority group and its status raised by education and improved welfare, spiritual and temporal, the better opportunity is offered to its youth to find suitable life partners with its own numbers.

In point of fact, marriage with those of another race does not appear to be a matter of predominant interest to the vast majority of Negroes. 9

WHAT IS THE ATTITUDE OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH ON INTEGRA
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There is no institution in the world that guards the sanctity and permanency of marriage as carefully as the Catholic Church. There is no institution in the world that guards the sanctity and permanency of marriage as carefully as the Catholic Church. The Church, however, in her universal laws, does not forbid marriage between persons of different races or nationalities. Catholics of any country can marry Catholics of any other country. Marriages with persons of different religions she does forbid and grants a dispensation from this law only for serious reasons.

The Church discourages, nevertheless, any marriages in which there would be serious danger of separation or divorce. Such would often be the case for Negro-white marriages. A great difference in the background and the environment of the parties to any marriage, whether they are of the same race or of different races, is a cause for concern about the success of the marriage.

The main reason, however, for discouraging Negro-white marriages is the attitude of society towards them. The couple would be the victim of continual criticism, and they and their children would be shunned by others. All this would not only cause unhappiness and discontentment, but would seriously tempt them to discontinue their lives together.

It is for these reasons that the practice of local priests and Catholic teachers would be to discourage persons from such marriages. The Archbishop himself has expressed similar views when addressing his clergy on this matter.

DON'T YOU THINK THAT THIS INTEGRATION BUSINESS IS JUST A COMMUNIST MOVE?

The Communists might be the last persons in the world who would want to see the Church or the United States successfully accomplish integration between its Negro and white members.

All over the world they tell people, especially people of non-white nations, "Look at America—look at what they do to the Negro, and they speak of equality! They are hypocrites. It is only Communism that gives real equality."

The Communists might have a real part in this. But their part would be to create division in the country by setting people against their government, or to create division in the Church by setting Catholics against their Bishop.

One of the greatest blows Communism could receive in our times would be for it to be known before the world that the Catholic Church, in the deep South, had solved a problem that Communism boasts of being alone able to solve.

WELL, I GUESS WE'RE JUST BORN WITH PREJUDICE AND CAN'T DO ANYTHING ABOUT IT.

No one is born with prejudice. Children normally are "color blind" about race. Many white Southerners can remember the days when, as children, they played with Negro children from around the corner or down the block, without giving it a second thought.

It was only when some adult told them—"This is not the thing to do", or when they heard the word "nigger" for the first time, or when they asked their parent—"Why Mommie, does Isabell have to sit in the back of the bus?"—it was only then that they began to think that there was something wrong about a boy or girl being black.
BUT IT'S VERY DIFFICULT TO OVERCOME. I GUESS I'LL ALWAYS FEEL THE SAME NO MATTER WHAT ANYBODY SAYS.

To overcome prejudices learned in early childhood, especially the ones drilled in by parents, is a very, very difficult job. Maybe all of our lives some of us will "feel" the same. But no one's life should be based on feelings or guided by them. Even if we go through life with the vague "feeling" that every Negro is an inferior being or with the "feeling" that every Negro is a menace to society, we can still admit to ourselves that we know better, and we can still act contrary to our feelings.
Chapter I

Christ Teaches About Race

"Well, if all this is so important, why didn't Christ say anything about it? He taught us to love our neighbor—I know that. But He never bothered about the race question or about segregation."

* * *

By Actions

In Our Lord's day there were sharp distinctions between various groups of persons, one group often despising and belittling the other. This was the way it was with the rich who exalted themselves above the poor, the Pharisees above the Publicans, the Jews above the Samaritans.

Christ deliberately acted contrary to all this. He chose to be poor and to mingle with the poor. He shocked the Pharisees by eating at the houses of Publicans and by selecting a Publican for an Apostle. He surprised the Samaritan women at the well by striking up a conversation with her (even though Jews did not associate with Samaritans) and he preached in Samaritan towns.

By Parables

To break down these distinctions, He told three memorable parables: the parable of the rich man and Lazarus the beggar, the parable of the Pharisee and the Publican, and the parable of the Jew and the Good Samaritan.

Then, to sum them all up, He told the parable of those who took the first places at supper and advised all of us to take the last place instead, lest when the Master comes, He might say to us, "Make room for this man," and we "begin with shame to take the last place." For, He said, "Everyone who exalts himself shall be humbled, and he who humbles himself shall be exalted."

By His Whole Life

After a life spent in complete dedication to the love of His Father and His fellowmen, on the night before He died, He issued the solemn command: "A new command I give you that you love one another; that, as I have loved you, you also love one another. By this will all men know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."

The next day, hanging between heaven and earth, on the cross of Calvary, He bridged the great separation which had existed for thousands of years. He united mankind once again with God. His whole life was spent in breaking down the barriers that separate man from man and man from God.

The Greatest Commandment

Of all the things that Our Lord said that apply to our present day race problem there is one, in particular, that stands out. It was on the occasion that a certain lawyer came to Him and asked: "Master, what must I do to gain eternal life?" Our Lord told him: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, and with thy whole soul and with thy whole mind, and with thy whole neighbor as thyself."

Who Is My Neighbor?

This answer was too simple, however, for the lawyer.

So he asked a further question. "And who is my neighbor?" the lawyer asked.

Christ answered by telling him a story:

"A certain man (a Jew) was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and he fell in with robbers, who after both stripping him and beating him went their way, leaving him half dead. But, as it happened, a certain priest was going down the same way, and when he saw him, he passed by. And, likewise, a Levite, also, when he was near the place and saw him, passed by. But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed came upon him, and seeing him, was moved with compassion. And he went up to him and bound up his wounds,
Our colonists from different eastern countries. The Samaritans, consequently, became a mixed race, part Jew and part foreign. For this reason the other Jews rejected them and refused to recognize them as rightful members of the Jewish nation or religion. There was real segregation between the Jews and the Samaritans. In St. John's Gospel he gives testimony to this when he says: "For Jews do not associate with Saramitans." 

In answer, therefore, to the Jew's question "who is my neighbor" — Our Lord pointed out the Samaritan, the last person a Jew would ever consider his neighbor. In this way, Our Lord brought home to us that every man is our neighbor and that the command "love your neighbor as yourself" means to love everyone as yourself.

**As Yourself**

"Love your neighbor as yourself" . . . As I turn over these words in my mind I begin to realize what they mean. To love my neighbor as I love myself — that means to wish for him what I wish for myself, to do for him what I would want him to do for me, to act towards him in the way I would want him to act towards me. This is a large order! But it is what Our Lord has told me to do.

Can I honestly say I am doing this? To answer that question I would have to imagine myself changing places with my neighbor — especially the one I seldom consider my neighbor—and then ask myself exactly how I would want him to act towards me.

**A Story That Does This**

Many years ago, Father James Hyland, a priest of the Holy Ghost Congregation, who had spent fifteen years of his life working among the Negroes of the Southland, wrote a highly imaginative but thought-provoking novel called *The Dove Flies South.* It is the story of a young politician, who harbored bitter prejudice against the Negroes (with a secret fear of his own Negro ancestry becoming known) and yet, who prided himself on knowing very well the Negro's sentiments and mentality. In an attempt to appeal to the popular vote in the Southern community where he lived, he based his campaign for office on a segregation platform which he claimed was really what the Negro wanted and what would best serve the interests of both the Negroes and the whites.

In the midst of his campaign, a most unusual thing took place. As an effect of a powerful drug administered to him, his skin color was suddenly changed to black. When the realization of what had happened dawned on him, he fled from his home in fear and panic.

The novel tells of his experiences, his reactions, his thoughts and his feelings in the months and years that followed. In those years of his new life as a Negro, he experienced the mental and physical sufferings that are the lot of so many members of the race. He had to fall in with all the requirements of a segregated system, sitting in the back of public vehicles, being shunned in many places, being excluded from many others. He experienced the difficulty of finding work befitting his education, the constant feeling of being looked down upon, the continual rejection by the whites.

With it all, there took place in his heart and mind, without him even realizing it, a complete and radical change of his whole attitude on the race question and segregation.
Chapter II

Louder Than Words

In the midst of the fears and hesitancies and criticisms about integration that surround us, we might picture to ourselves the following scene. It is an ordination day at Notre Dame Seminary, in New Orleans. The date is September 29, 1956. Today, some of the minor orders and the major order of Deacon are to be conferred by the Bishop on those students who have advanced sufficiently to receive them.

We go over together and take our place with the student body and the families of those to be ordained. It is early morning. The City outside is just beginning to stir from slumber. In the quiet dignity of the seminary chapel, only the Bishop’s voice is audible, as he proceeds with the solemn ceremony. All eyes are turned to the altar, in reverent attention.

After the minor orders have been conferred, we come to the main part of today’s ceremony—the ordination of the Deacons. This is the last order that a man receives, as he advances up the ladder of orders leading to the Priesthood. Within a few months, the Deacons will be ordained Priests.

A Striking Scene

Those to be ordained Deacons this morning, are summoned to the altar—each of them called by name. Three step forward. One is a Negro. In their white robes and with candles burning in their hands—they present a striking scene. One’s mind races back over the centuries to three other men from the East who once brought gifts to their infant Lord. The gifts of these men this morning, however, are not material ones. They have come to give themselves to God. According to the ritual of ordination, the three young men kneel and then lie flat on their faces before the altar, as the choir intones the Litany of the Saints, and the congregation joins in praying it—calling upon all the saints of heaven to help and strengthen these men in the work that lies before them.

Then they arise, and the Bishop, imposing his right hand on the head of each, gives to them the office and rights of Deacons of the Catholic Church.

Another Scene

The scene takes us back to another, some three years before. It is June 5, 1953. This time it is an ordination to the Sacred Priesthood, in the historic St. Louis Cathedral. The church is filled to capacity. The families of those to be ordained occupy the first pews, which have been reserved for them. In one of these pews is a Negro father and mother, surrounded by six of their sons and daughters. Today, their son, a lad from New Orleans, a former graduate of local Xavier High, is to be ordained a Priest—the first Negro secular priest of the Archdiocese . . .

The years have rolled by since that historic event, and in those years this young priest carried on his work quietly and effectively, in companionship with a fellow priest of the white race in a rural community near Baton Rouge. Both his colored and white parishioners looked to him, as they looked to any other priest, as a representative of Jesus Christ.

The presence of Negroes at Notre Dame Seminary goes back to 1949. Almost all of the diocesan priests of Louisiana, who have been ordained since that time have gone through their training with Negro students. With them, as members of the one student body, they have shared their classes, their recreation, their meals, and their prayers.

Negro Bishops

It is the practice of the Catholic Church that any Catholic who proves himself worthy is eligible for the Priesthood, or even the Bishopric, regardless of race or national origin.

In the United States today (August, 1961) there are 112 Negro priests, and throughout the world 42 Negro Bishops of the Catholic Church. One of these was consecrated a Bishop, on April 22, 1953, in the little church of Our Lady of the Gulf, in Bay St. Louis, Mississippi. Cardinal Spellman of New York, together with several other Bishops and dignitaries, came for the occasion. The procession that made its way to the church along the streets, was saluted by hundreds and thousands of the townsfolk of the Bay, who turned out for the occasion. The church overflowed with people,
Negro and white Catholics, seated side by side, all proud to have an invitation.

Those who attended recall the dramatic moment at the conclusion of the ceremony when the new Bishop turned to the congregation, his Bishop’s staff in hand, to give his first episcopal blessing. His black face stood out under the white mitre, and on either side of him were the two Bishops — Bishop Nossor of Africa and Bishop Gerow of Mississippi — who had consecrated him. The organ pealed out that such actions show the real attitude of the Catholic Church on race, an attitude that should be shared by all Catholics. Such actions show this attitude better than documents or sermons; they speak louder than words. Concerning the consecration of these twelve Bishops, the Pope said:

... In the midst of the disruptive contrasts which divide the human family, may this solemn act proclaim to all our sons, scattered over the world, that the spirit, the teachings and the work of the Church can never be other than that which the Apostle of the Gentiles preached: “Putting on the new (man), him who is renewed unto knowledge, according to the image of Him that created him. Where there is neither Gentile nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian nor Sythian, bond nor free. But Christ is all, and in all.” ... (Col. 111, 10-11)

Three Negro Popes

The Church makes no distinction of race or nationality even in the selection of her Popes. Even though most of the Popes, especially in modern times, have been Italian, many other nations and countries have given men to the throne of Peter. There have been Popes who were French, Spanish, Portuguese, Dutch, Greek and English. Two of the early Popes were born in Africa. These were St. Victor and St. Melchiades. Another, St. Gelasius, who ruled the Church from 492 to 496, was born in Rome of a family from Africa.

North Africa, in these early days, had a high civilization and was the second seat of Catholicism. Many Roman or Italian families lived there, and for that reason, it is possible that the three Popes could have been born of one of these families. However, they certainly could have been Negroes. (Some popular booklets, for example, “Stories of the Great Saints”, from the Paulist Press, New York City, list them as such, without any question.)

Laymen, Too

It is not only members of the Negro clergy who have been granted high offices and honors by the Church, but also many members of the laity. In recent years, in 1954, in the presence of a huge gathering of Catholics, many of them of prominent Louisiana families, which filled the ancient St. Louis Cathedral, a group of priests and laymen of the Archdiocese received special titles, distinctions, and medals of honor, for outstanding service to the Church. These marks of tribute came from the Holy Father himself, to be conferred by the local Archbishop.

Among the laymen to receive them were two Negroes who were elevated to Knighthood in the Order of St. Gregory. This is one of the highest honors accorded to Catholic laymen the world over. Up to that time there were only twenty-three Knights in the entire Archdiocese of New Orleans.

A few years before this, another Negro layman was one of the recipients of the papal medal of honor, “Pro Ecclesia Et Pontifice.”

Negro Saints

Besides all this, there is an honor which the Church confers, which rises above all other distinctions and titles, an honor to which every man, regardless of education or condition of life, can aspire. This is the honor of official recognition or canonization as a Saint of God. Here, too, it is evident that the Church, throughout her history, has made no distinction of race or color or nationality.

There are a number of Negro Saints and Martyrs. For example, there are the one hundred Negro Catholics who gave up their lives for their faith in Uganda, Africa. In 1920, Pope
Benedict XV officially declared twenty of them, whose names were known, Martyrs of the Catholic Faith.

There is the famous St. Benedict, the Moor, of slave parents, whom Pope Pius VII declared a Saint in 1807. Because of the admiration held for his wisdom and holiness, Benedict had risen from the job of cook in a Franciscan congregation in Italy to the position of Superior of the monastery.

**Blessed Martin**

In our own country there is a great and widespread devotion to Blessed Martin de Porres, the saintly Negro of South America, to whom the Church has given the official title of "Blessed", and whose canonization is looked for in the not too distant future. Many extraordinary favors have been granted through prayers to Blessed Martin, and his popularity is continually on the increase.4

This humble lay brother of the Dominican Order, whose life was filled with a joyous love of God and of his fellowman, has been designated by the president of Peru, his native land, as the Patron of Social Justice.

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**Chapter III**

**We Are Catholics**

The name "Catholic" — from the Greek word "Katholikos" — means universal. It means that the Church is everywhere and is meant to be everywhere. And all over the world this Church is the same in teachings, in sacraments, and in government.

The Church's mission, given us by the Savior, is to embrace all men, to bring all into its fold, a mission that must be carried on until the end of time. "Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; and behold, I am with you all days, even unto the consummation of the world."1

To fulfill this mission of the Church, we send priests and nuns, brothers and laymen to the four corners of the earth. We accompany their labors with prayers and sacrifices offered for them. We follow the accounts of their successes and failures with great interest. We help them financially, at least once a year, in the Mission Sunday collection.

Some of us enjoy even closer contact with them. The missionary might be an old schoolmate or a friend or a relative. Often he is a "boy" or "girl" from our own neighborhood or parish. With him we might correspond, or send him, from time to time, a personal donation.

To the children in our schools, we try to pass on this interest in the missions. In the parochial schools there is the Association of the Holy Childhood, whereby the young ones are given a share in the mission apostolate. In the Catholic high schools, the Catholic Students' Mission Crusade fires the students with a great zeal for the spread of the Church.

**The Great Missionaries**

The stories of the great Catholic missionaries from St. Paul to St. Francis Xavier, and from St. Francis Xavier to modern
times, have become part of our Catholic heritage. They are the stories of men like Damien, the young Belgian priest who volunteered for duty on the dreaded Pacific Island of Molakai, a leper island, to live and work and finally die a leper among those whom he had made “his people” ; of men like Bishop John Ford of our own day, the boy from Brooklyn, who gave his life to work among the people of China and died in a Communist prison cell, starved and worn by torture because he would not abandon his flock; of men like Isaac Jogues, one of the famous Jesuit martyrs of early American history, who escaped from the capture of the Iroquois Indians after they had eaten some of his fingers to the bone, and then returned again, from the security of his home in France, to work among the Iroquois, and finally be murdered by them.

The Catholic Spirit

The missionary knows that the Church is Catholic, is universal, is for all men. It is for this reason that he leaves home and native land, family and friends, and goes to live among a strange people. He talks their language, practices their customs, eats their food, participates in their joys and sorrows. His life is to become one with them, that they might become one with God. The missionary exemplifies for us the true Catholic spirit.

The missionary interest of the Church, however, is not only directed to foreign lands. There is a vast field, yet to be tilled, right here in our own country, and in our own midst. Our duty of bringing the knowledge of Christ to the man down the block or across the tracks is even greater than the duty to the pagan in a distant land.

We have made progress in this regard in the United States. The fact that today almost one out of every five Americans is a Catholic indicates this. There is a great disparity, however, between the number of Negro and white Catholics. Though, approximately, one out of every four white persons is Catholic, only one out of every thirty-four Negroes is Catholic. The fact that so many Negroes, who once were Catholic or whose ancestors were Catholics, are not Catholics today, is a cause of greater concern.

How, then, are we to interest the Negro in the Church? What are the stumbling blocks in his way?

Stumbling Blocks

We might picture to ourselves the following scene. It is not an uncommon one. The seven o'clock Sunday Mass is packed with attendants. Some are standing in the rear. Every pew is filled—all except one. In it is a young Negro mother and her child.

At the beginning of Mass some persons began to enter the pew, hesitated and then decided to move along. One person knelt down without noticing and then got up and chose another pew...

Now it is true that this kind of thing is not usually done with malice. There is no intention of hurting anyone. But the fact is that such actions do hurt and hurt deeply. By them, many Negroes have been driven from Catholicism or discouraged from ever joining the true Church.

We recall the young Negro, an ex G.I., whom we met, together with his wife, on a parish census, several years ago. He showed an interest in the Church, so we invited him over for instructions.

He came willingly and gladly. At the beginning of the first instruction he said: “You know Father I have thought for a long time that the Catholic Church must be the true Church. I’ve read a lot of history—especially while in the service—and from history, alone, I came to that conclusion. But what I could never understand was how the Catholic Church could be the true Church of Christ and yet practice segregation in the way it does.”

His True Sentiments

When a Negro opens his heart and mind, when he says what he really feels and believes, and not just what he thinks the white man wants him to say, he admits that he detests segregation, that he detests it particularly in churches and religious institutions.

It is not necessarily that he wants to attend the “white” churches or schools. He may have no desire to do so. He may prefer, for many reasons, to go to the ones set up for his race. But he does not want to be told, as no man would want to be told—“you can’t come here”—or to know that he is not wanted just because he is a Negro. This is a constant insult to him, as it would be to any man.

It is this, above all, that has been a major obstacle in the way of the conversion of many Negroes.
A Report

That all of this is no exaggeration, is borne out by a report, issued in 1950, on the work of the Church in the United States among the Negroes. This extensive and official report was issued by the Society for the Propagation of the Faith, and was distributed to Catholics all over the world.

The report shows the wonderful work that the Church in the United States has already accomplished and the work that could be accomplished, but it states frankly:

The major obstacle to the conversion of the American Negro is the attitude of white Catholics themselves. As the Negroes have become more educated, they have grown aware of the extreme discrepancy which exists between such an attitude and the real spirit of the Catholic Church.

Concerning the Negro's attitude on compulsory segregation, the report states:

So deep and so universal among the American Negroes is the feeling on this point—one they emerge from a condition of primitive isolation and ignorance—that any thought of a wide, general conversion of the Negroes to the Catholic Church is an illusion, until and unless the attitude of American Catholics, clergy and laity, is completely purged of approval of the segregation policy or of the many deprivations of educational opportunity, of fair employment and of decent housing that arise as a result of it.

The Warmth of Welcome

What is needed, above all then, for the conversion of the Negro, is not money or propaganda, or special techniques, but a change of attitude, an opening of heart and a friendly welcome on the part of all Catholics. The Negro detests being patronized, being looked down upon as a second-class citizen, or a second-rate Catholic, or a mere child, or an inferior. To interest the Negro in the Church, we must approach him in the way that Christ intended that we approach him, as an equal before God, as a person destined for fellow membership in the same Mystical Body of Christ.

That is the way Our Holy Father pointed out to us when he said in his first encyclical letter, Summi Pontificatus:

"Those who enter the Church, whatever be their origin or their speech, must know that they have equal rights as children in the House of the Lord, where the law of Christ and the peace of Christ prevail."
Jesus. For all you who have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek; there is neither slave nor free man; there is neither male nor female. For you are all one in Christ Jesus." And in another Epistle he repeats: "Here there is not 'Gentile and Jew'—'circumcised and uncircumcised'—'Barbarian and Scythian'—'slave and free man'—but Christ is all things and in all." Addressing himself to the Gentile converts, he says: "But now in Christ Jesus you, who were once afar off, have been brought near through the blood of Christ. For He Himself is our peace. He it is who has made both one, and has broken down the intervening wall of the enclosure that of the two He might create in Himself one new man, and make peace and reconcile both in one body to God..."  

The Mystical Body  

Seeking to find an image which would express the close union that exists between all the members of the Church with one another and with Christ, Paul struck on the idea of comparing the Church to a human body. Just like a man's body is made up of millions of tiny particles of matter, which we call body cells, united together to form one body, so too with the members of the Church. Christ is the head of this body of the Church. The Holy Spirit is its soul. As a soul is present in the whole body and in each part of the body, so too is the Holy Spirit, whom Christ gave to His Church, present in the whole Church and in each individual member of the Church.  

This idea of the Church permeates the letters of St. Paul. Writing to the Christians of Corinth, he says: "You are the body of Christ, member for member." And elsewhere in the letter he explains: "As the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, many as they are, form one body, so, also, it is with Christ." In his letter to the Ephesians he speaks of Christ "as head over all the Church, which, indeed, is His Body, the completion of Him..." And he exhorts them: "Wherefore, put away lying and speak the truth, each one with his neighbor, for we are members one of another."  

Pope Pius XII  

Pope Pius XII has urged us to return once again to this concept of the Church. Just a few years after becoming Pope, on June 23, 1943, he issued an encyclical letter to the entire Catholic world. This document is considered today as possibly the greatest and most important that has come from his pen. It is an explanation of the doctrine of "The Mystical Body of Christ." In the opening paragraphs the Holy Father states:  

If we would define and describe this true Church of Jesus Christ — which is the One, Holy, Catholic, Apostolic Roman Church—we shall find nothing more noble, more sublime, or more divine than the expression "the Mystical Body of Jesus Christ" — an expression that springs from and is, as it were the fair flowering of the repeated teaching of the Sacred Scriptures and the Holy Fathers.  

He says that he was moved to write this encyclical not only by the "surpassing grandeur of the subject" but "also by the circumstances of the present time." It was the Holy Father's hope that the realization of this doctrine might do for us today what it did for the Christians of old. The teachings of Paul and the other Apostles bore great fruit. The unity and cooperation, the mutual helpfulness and understanding of Christians, became such that the pagans would remark: "See how these Christians love one another!" It was this great love for one another that drew many to investigate and embrace Christianity.  

Its Greatest Expression  

The greatest expression of the union that exists among all the members of the Mystical Body with Christ and with one another is in the Sacrifice of the Mass and in Holy Communion. From all different occupations and races and conditions of life, we gather together at Mass to offer God a gift. The gift is the same for all of us. It is Christ, who becomes present on our altars. With Him and in Him and through Him, we offer ourselves to God, all of us united together in one body, under Him as our one head.  

At the Communion table we come together, rich and poor, doctor and ditch-digger, child and old man, white and black, German and Frenchman. We eat together at the same table, partaking of the same Food. It is Christ who has drawn us together. To each, Christ comes without distinction. And, to each, He comes for the same reason: to unite each man to Himself and to the other members of His Mystical Body, to make love active in his daily life. This is the great family meal of the Church on earth, through which we are continually drawn closer...
For Men of Good Will

together. As St. Paul puts it: "Because the bread is one, we though many, are one body, all of us who partake of the one bread." 10

The Way To Peace

Truly, then, "we though many, are one body, all of us who par-take of the one bread." The bond of union that exists between all Catholics is superior to the bonds that unite any other group of men on the face of the earth. As the Pope says, the principle of union among us is "vastly superi-or to whatever bonds of union may be found in a physical or moral body." 11

We are one as a body is one. We must work together as a body works together. We need one another as the hand needs the foot or the eye needs the ear. We are the body of Christ, and we must treat one another as we would treat Christ.

A tired, skeptical, discouraged world needs the doctrine of the Mystical Body of Christ today—lived out in its full implications—to show it the way to a lasting unity, love, and peace.

So you have read the booklet. It probably has not been easy going for you. It must have taken patience and maybe gump-tion to wade through it to the end. Congratulations to you.

But where do we go from here? What can I do about all this anyway, you might ask.

Every man of good will, no matter how unimportant he might think he is, can do his share in helping to bring about a better understanding between the races. Every man can pray and offer sacrifices for this inten-tion. And every man can use the little opportunities that God might put before him to act out his convictions and to show the way to others. He can express his convictions, too, in his con-versations with his neighbor.

When you have the courage to speak up in a conversation, it might not have any visible ef-fect right away. In fact, an argu-ment might ensue. But if you try to stay calm and keep the old sense of humor, what you say will bear some fruit. When the other person goes home that night he will have some new ideas to think about in regard to the subject of race, and he will know that there is at least one of his friends or associates who does not agree with him. This is in itself a worthwhile ac-complishment because many seg-regationists have a way of think-ing that everyone does a g r e e with them.

Catholic Leaders

The chances are, however, that you are a leader of some type or other in Catholic circles. Maybe you hold some office in a parish society or in some o t h e r Catholic organization. At least you are probably respected as a good Catholic by others in your neighborhood or parish. There are some, few or many, who look to you for guidance.

If this is the case, if you do hold some position of influence over others, you, especially, have a duty in this matter. If God has given you leadership ability, you must use it for a good pur-pose.

While you might be waiting for someone else to be the first to speak up, he is probably wait-ing for you.

The occasion will come—at a meeting, at church on Sunday, at
a gathering in the parish—to express or to act out your convictions. Use the occasion; do not continue to push it off forever. Your action is needed now.

In this regard, we appeal, especially, to fathers and mothers of families. A child is born with no prejudices; he learns them. Over this child you exert the most profound influence. Use it for good.

The Human Family

"God did not create a human family made up of segregated, dissociated, mutually independent members," Our Holy Father tells us. God created a family that should live as a family in mutual love and friendship and cooperation.

In time of tragedy, men realize this without instruction. When disaster strikes, when towns and cities are ravaged by storm or flood or war, men forget about the colors of their skin. At a time like that every man needs his brother and every man is a brother.

God has been good to us here in the Archdiocese of New Orleans. He has spared us, time and time again, from oncoming danger. But let us not try His patience. We cannot wait for a disaster to learn cooperation with one another.

We, Especially

Especially we, who are members of the same Catholic Church, must begin to learn this cooperation right now. As Catholics, we are a family within the human family. We are more than that. We are a body. We are a union among men that surpasses any other physical or moral union in this world. We are the Mystical Body of Christ. In that body, a Negro Catholic is united to his fellow Catholics like one hand of a man's body is united to the other. Before all else, we have to begin to realize this relationship and live it in practice.

Do not fear that the Church will lose anything by taking a stand on this issue. The Church is primarily a spiritual organization. Its mission is to teach the truth and put it into practice. By sincerely fulfilling this mission, the Church can never lose. Hardships it might experience. Criticisms it will receive. In the long run, it will gain back many who have been driven from its fold, and will produce, for the future, a generation of stronger and better Catholics.

The Church is "the light of the world," "the city set on a mountain." It has to represent Christ without fear before the nations. The eyes of the world, and, especially, the eyes of oppressed people everywhere.

Epilogue

Fifteen years ago, when this nation was devoting its energies to a World War designed to maintain human freedom, the Catholic Bishops of the United States issued a prayerful warning to their fellow citizens. We called for the extension of full freedom within the confines of our beloved country. Specifically, we noted the problems faced by Negroes in obtaining the rights that are theirs as Americans. The statement of 1943 said in part: "In the Providence of God there are among us millions of fellow citizens of the Negro race. We owe to these fellow citizens, who have contributed so largely to the development of our country, and for whose welfare history imposes on us a special obligation of justice, to see that they have in fact the rights which are given them in our Constitution. This means not only political equality, but also fair economic and educational opportunities, a just share in public welfare projects, good housing without exploitation, and a full chance for the social advancement of their race."

Progress Made

In the intervening years, considerable progress was made in achieving these goals. The Negro race, brought to this country in slavery, continued its quiet but determined march toward the goal of equal rights and equal opportunity. During and after the Second World War, great and even spectacular advances were made in the obtaining of voting rights, good education, better-paying jobs, and adequate housing. Through the efforts of men of good will, of every race and creed and from all parts of the nation, the barriers of prejudice and discrimination were gradually but inevitably eroded.

Because this method of quiet conciliation produced such excellent results, we have preferred the path of action to that of exhortation. Unfortunately, however, it appears that in recent years the issues have become confused and the march toward justice and equality has been slowed if not halted in some areas. The transcendent moral issues involved have become obscured, and possibly forgotten.

Our nation now stands divided by the problem of compulsory segregation of the races and the opposing demand for racial justice. No region of our land is immune from strife and division resulting from this problem. In one area, the key issue may concern the schools. In another it may be conflicts over housing. Job discrimination may be the focal point in still other sectors. But all these issues have one main point in common. They reflect the determination of our Negro people, and we hope the overwhelming majority of our white citizens, to see that our colored citizens obtain their
full rights as given to them by God, the Creator of all, and guaranteed by the democratic traditions of our nation.

There are many facets to the problems raised by the quest for racial justice. There are issues of law, of history, of economics, and of sociology. There are questions of procedure and technique. There are conflicts in cultures. Volumes have been written on each of these phases. Their importance we do not deny. But the time has come, in our considered and prayerful judgment, to cut through the maze of secondary or less essential issues to come to the heart of the problem.

**Question Is Moral and Religious**

The heart of the race question is moral and religious. It concerns the rights of man and our attitude toward our fellow man. If our attitude is governed by the great Christian law of love of neighbor and respect for his rights, then we can work out harmoniously the techniques for making legal, educational, economic, and social adjustment. But if our hearts are poisoned by hatred, or even by indifference toward the rights of our fellow men, then our nation faces a grave internal crisis.

No one who bears the name of Christian can deny the universal love of God for all mankind. When Our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, "took on the form of man" (Phil. 2, 7) and walked among men, He taught us the first two laws of life: the love of God and the love of fellow man. "By this shall all men know that you are my disciples, that you love one another," says the Master (John 13, 35). He offered His life in sacrifice for all mankind. His parting words to His followers was to "teach all nations." (Mat. 28, 19).

Our Christian faith is of its nature universal. It knows not the distinctions of race, color, or nationhood. The missionaries of the Church have spread throughout the world, visiting with equal impartiality nations such as China and India, whose ancient cultures antedate the coming of the Savior, and the primitive tribes of the Americas. The love of Christ, and the love of the Christian, knows no bounds. In the words of Pope Pius XII, addressed to American Negro publishers twelve years ago, "All men are brothered in Jesus Christ; for He, though God, became also man, became a member of the human family, a brother of all." (May 27, 1946).

Even those who do not accept our Christian tradition should at least acknowledge that God has implanted in the souls of all men some knowledge of the natural moral law and a respect for it teachings. Reason alone taught philosophers through the ages respect for the sacred dignity of each human being and the fundamental rights of man. Every man has an equal right to life, to justice before the law, to marry and rear a family—embodied in the Christian, moral and social adjustment. And to an equitable opportunity to use the goods of this earth for his needs and those of his family.

From these solemn truths there follow certain conclusions vital for a proper approach to the problems that trouble us today. First, we must repeat the principle embodied in our Declaration of Independence— that all men are equal in the sight of God. By equal we mean that they are created by God and redeemed by His Divine Son, that they are bound by His Law, and that God desires them as His friends in the eternity of Heaven. This fact confers upon all men human dignity and human rights.

**Personal Differences Among Men**

Men are unequal in talent and achievement. They differ in culture and personal characteristics. Some are saintly, some seem to be evil, most are men of good will, though beset with human frailty. On the basis of personal differences we may distinguish among our fellow men, remembering always the admonition: "Let him who is without sin... cast the first stone. . ." (Jn., 8, 7). But discrimination based on the accidental fact of race or color, and as such injurious to human rights, regardless of personal qualities, cannot be reconciled with the truth that God has created all men with equal rights and equal dignity.

Secondly, we are bound to love our fellow man. The Christian love we bespeak is not a matter of emotional likes or dislikes. It is a firm purpose to do good to all men, to the extent that ability and opportunity permit.

Among all races and national groups, class distinctions are inevitably made on the basis of like-mindedness or a community of interests. Such distinctions are normal and constitute a universal social phenomenon. They are accidental, however, and are subject to change as conditions change. It is unreasonable and ignobly to the rights of others that a factor such as race, by and of itself, should be made a cause of discrimination and a basis for unequal treatment in our mutual relations.

**Enforced Segregation**

The question then arises: Can enforced segregation be reconciled with the Christian view of our fellow man? In our judgment it cannot, and this for two fundamental reasons.

1) Legal segregation, or any form of compulsory segregation, in itself and by its very nature imposes a stigma of inferiority upon the segregated people. Even if the now obsolete Court doctrine of "separate but equal" had been carried out to the fullest extent, so that all public and semipublic facilities were in fact equal, there is nonetheless the judgment that an entire race, by the sole fact of race and regardless of individual qualities, is not fit to associate on equal terms with members of another race. We cannot reconcile such a judgment with the Christian view of man's nature and rights.

2) It is a matter of historical fact that segregation in our country has been carried out to the fullest extent, so that all public and semipublic facilities were in fact equal, there is nonetheless the judgment that an entire race, by the sole fact of race and regardless of individual qualities, is not fit to associate on equal terms with members of another race. We cannot reconcile such a judgment with the Christian view of man's nature and rights.

Here again it is appropriate to cite the language of Pope Pius XII: "God did not create a human family made up of segregated, socially isolated, and politically independent members. No; He would have them all united by the bond of total love of Him and consequent self-dedication to assisting each other to maintain that bond intact." (September 7, 1956).

**Economic and Educational Opportunity**

One of the tragedies of racial oppression is that the evils we have cited are being used as excuses to continue oppressive conditions that so strongly fostered such evils. Today we are told that Negroes, Indians, and others so often called dispossessed Americans differ too much in culture and achievements to be assimilated in our schools, factories, and farms. The Congress and the schools, the cities and the people, the public and semipublic facilities were in fact equal, there is nonetheless the judgment that an entire race, by the sole fact of race and regardless of individual qualities, is not fit to associate on equal terms with members of another race. We cannot reconcile such a judgment with the Christian view of man's nature and rights. Here again it is appropriate to cite the language of Pope Pius XII: "God did not create a human family made up of segregated, socially isolated, and politically independent members. No; He would have them all united by the bond of total love of Him and consequent self-dedication to assisting each other to maintain that bond intact." (September 7, 1956).

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ian, Polish, Hungarian, German, Russian. In both instances differences were used by some as a basis for discrimination and even for boycotted ill-treatment. The immigrant, fortunately, has achieved his rightful status in the American community. His community was wide open and educational equality was not denied to him.

Negro citizens seek these same opportunities. They wish an education that does not carry with it any stigma of inferiority. They wish economic advancement based on merit and skill. They wish acceptance based upon proved rights as American citizens. They wish economic opportunities. They wish an education that inclines us to view problems in their proper perspective. Their problems we face, to prepare for ad-

vances, and to bypass the non-essential if it interferes with essential progress. We may well deplore a gradualism that is merely a cloak for inaction. But we equally deplore rash impetuosity that would sacrifice the achievements of decades in ill-timed ill-considered ventures. In concrete matters we distinguish between prudence and inaction by asking the question: Are we sincerely and earnestly acting to solve these problems? We distinguish between prudence and rashness by seeking the prayerful and considered judgment of experienced counselors who have achieved success in meeting similar problems.

Vital That We Act Now
For this reason we hope and earnestly pray that responsible and sober-minded Americans of all religious faiths, in all areas of our land, will seize the mantle of leadership from the agitator and the racist. It is vital that we act now and act decisively. All must act quietly, courageously, and prayerfully before it is too late.

For the welfare of our nation we call upon all to root out from their hearts bitterness and hatred. The tasks we face are indeed difficult. But hearts inspired by Christian love will surmount these difficulties.

Clearly, then, these problems are vital and urgent. May God give this nation the grace to meet the challenge it faces. For the sake of generations of future Americans, and indeed of all humanity, we cannot fail.


NO RACE, COLOR BAR IN CHURCH
U. S. Bishops' Stand Reaffirmed
By M. F. EVERETT
Reprint Catholic Action of the South, May 14, 1961

The Church's concern for the welfare of all people, regardless of color or race, was voiced in New Orleans May 5 by the Most Rev. Egidio Vagnozzi, Apostolic Delegate to the United States.

His Excellency declared that the statement issued by the American Hierarchy in 1958—"Discrimination and the Christian Conscience"—is the position of the Church on race relations, to which all sincere Catholics must subscribe.

Citing foreign assignments just given to eight Divine Word Missioners, he said that much as priests are needed in the South, the way to obtain many vocations is to send missionaries abroad. Archbishop Vagnozzi ordained seven Divine Word Missioners May 4 in St. Augustine seminary, Bay St. Louis, Miss. Of this group, five are Negroes, the largest class of Negro seminarians ordained together in the United States, and four of the five are from Louisiana.

The Apostolic Delegate later presented mission crucifixes to seven Divine Word priests and one brother. The brother and four of the priests are Negroes, two of them from Louisiana.

On a visit May 4 to Archbishop Joseph F. Rummler of New Orleans, Archbishop Vagnozzi recalled that he had ordained a Negro last March among a group of Franciscan priests in Washington, D.C. He said he ordained the class in Bay St. Louis specifically "to show the concern of the Holy See and the Church for the welfare of all people regardless of color or race."

"Within the walls of the Church," he continued, "it is the soul that counts...and the soul has no color. The only important difference is whether one is with the grace of God or without His grace."

His Excellency recounted how within a few recent years the Church has increased notably the ranks of Colored Cardinals, there now being one in Africa and four in
Asia, and has increased the number of Colored Bishops very consider-
ably.

"It is gratifying to realize," he con-
tinued, "that in the United States, which had only seven Negro priests 20 years ago, there are now 112. There should be many more, but this increase shows the proper trend."

"On the question of integration," the Apostolic Delegate declared, "the Bishops of the United States in 1958 issued a statement, 'Discrimination and the Christian Conscience,' that is the position of the Church, a position to which every good right-thinking Catholic must subscribe."

"Of course, changes cannot be made too suddenly," he continued, "and if patience is a virtue on every occasion, it is particularly important in this question. However, it is essential to progress in the line of integration without ever going back."

"The Holy See has full confidence in the American Bishops, and each Bishop in his own diocese will have to decide what measures to take and what changes to be adopted. It is the desire of the Holy See that all Catholics, clergy and faithful alike, faithfully and willingly follow the directions of their Bishops."

References

The quotation from Pope Pius XII, as given on the first page, is taken from an address to representatives of the Apostleship of the Sea. The complete address was carried in English in L'Osser-
vatore Romano, Vatican newspaper, September 9, 1956.

The words of Samuel Cardinal Stritch were spoken on the occasion of a convention of the Committee on Hospitals of the Catholic Inter-

The words of Archbishop Janssens are taken from his sermon delivered at the dedication of St. Katherine Church, the first church for Negroes in New Orleans. The sermon, in full, is given in Part I, Chapter II, of this booklet.

PART ONE

Chapter I

1These statistics have been compiled from several sources. The estimates of United States population were taken from the publication, Current Population Report of the U. S. Dept. of Commerce, Bureau of Census, Washington. The estimates of Louisiana population are taken from a report from the State Dept. of Health, Education and Welfare, 418 Royal Street, New Orleans. The estimates in both of these reports are made as of July 1, 1956. The statistics for the Catholic population are taken from the Official Catholic Directory, Jan., 1957, and from figures submitted by the Archdiocesan Chancery Office.


3Roger Baudier—The Catholic Church in Louisiana, p. 76-77.


5Ibid., p. 206.

6Ibid., p. 84.
For Men of Good Will

Chapter II

1This is mentioned in a report on the work of the Church in the Archdiocese among the Negroes, dated July 8, 1884. The report is signed by G. Raymond, Vicar General, and was submitted to Archbishop Leray of New Orleans. The letter is in the Archdiocesan Archives in the Chancery Office. It states: "It might be possible in the City of New Orleans to have some separate churches for them; but even there it would have many difficulties. It would completely disturb the existing French parishes, if the colored population were taken from them. Most colored people, moreover, would not like it, preferring to be with the whites. This was the opinion of the Most Rev. Archbishop Odin and Pereche. Besides they are well attended to in the French parishes of the City."

2Archdiocesan Archives, Volume entitled "Diocese of New Orleans 1833—" p. 68.

3Ibid., p. 80.

4Ibid., p. 81.

PART TWO

Chapter I

1Canon 216, no. 1.

2Canon 1350, no. 1.

3Synodal Decrees, no. 360.

Chapter II

1From a lecture by Dr. S. Ross Taggart, Chief of Venereal Disease Program of the District of Columbia Dept. of Public Health. The lecture was quoted both in the New Orleans Times-Picayune, Feb. 6, 1956, and in the publication Christian Impact (P. O. Box 694, N. O., La.).


References

Chapter III

1Synodal Decrees, no. 365, i.

2A complete study of the "Moral Aspects of Segregation" was made by Rev. Joseph Costello, S.M., S.T.D., Professor of Moral Theology at Notre Dame Seminary in New Orleans. Father Costello's study was printed in the early part of 1956, and copies of it were distributed by the Archdiocesan Chancery Office. Father Costello gives the reasons why segregation is sinful and also discusses the question of how Church authorities could have been justified, in past years, in tolerating the evil, especially in Catholic schools. To show the sinfulness of segregation Father Costello quotes several of the most outstanding American theologians.


4This section on the Archbishop has dealt only with his public statements and letters of years gone by. More has been accomplished in these years, however, than mere talk. To recount the actual progress made in the field of interracial justice and charity in the Archdiocese of New Orleans, within the past years, would fill a book in itself. The history of the progress made during the period 1947-1954 was the subject of a thesis for the B.A. degree submitted to the Faculty of Notre Dame Seminary by Jules Guste, and is in the seminary library. Reprints of part of it were made some years ago by the local Catholic "Commission on Human Rights."

PART THREE

1Genesis 4: 15.

2What is Race (Published by UNESCO—1952) p. 83.

3Ibid., p. 12.

4Ibid., p. 29-36.


For Men of Good Will

PART FOUR

Chapter I

1. Matt. 9:9-13
4. Luke 4:40-41 and
5. Luke 9:52 to 55
14. John 8:48
15. John 4:9

James Hyland, The Dove Flies South (Bruce Publishing Co., Milwaukee, 1934). This book has been recently reprinted.

Chapter II

1. The figure on Negro priests was supplied by the Most Reverend Egidio Vagnozzi, Apostolic Delegate to the United States, in an interview reported in Catholic Action of the South, May 14, 1961. Statistics on the 42 Negro Bishops were compiled by the Rev. Carlos A. Lewis, S.V.D., and printed in the August-September, 1961, issue of the St. Augustine's Messenger, St. Augustine's Seminary, Bay St. Louis, Mississippi.


6. I Cor. 12:27.
7. I Cor. 12:12.

Chapter IV

2. Ibid., #1.
3. Cor. 10:17.

In his treatise on the Eucharist in the Summa, Part III, Q. 73, a. 2, St. Thomas quotes this text and says that from this “it is clear that the Eucharist is the sacrament of the Church’s unity (sacramentum unitatis).”

Chapter III

2. Published originally by the Official News Agency for the Society of the Propagation of the Faith, this report was reprinted by the Catholic Interracial Council—(2108 W. Bertheau Ave., Chicago 18, Illinois), p. 8.

3. Ibid., p. 11-12.


Chapter V

2. Col. 3:11.
4. I Cor. 12:27.
5. I Cor. 12:12.
7. Eph. 4:25.

2. Ibid., #1.
3. Cor. 10:17.

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Epilogue

References

PRAYER

Almighty and eternal God, may Thy grace enkindle in all men love for the many unfortunate people whom poverty and misery reduce to a condition of life unworthy of human beings.

Arouse in the hearts of those who call Thee Father, a hunger and thirst for social justice and for fraternal charity in deeds and in truth. Grant, O Lord, peace in our days, peace to souls, peace to families, peace to our country, peace among nations. Amen.

From the

Holy Year Prayer of Pius XII.