

# CATHOLIC WORKER



Vol. XXXIII No. 3

DECEMBER, 1966

Subscriptions  
25c Per Year

Price 1c

## Albert Camus And the Church

By THOMAS MERTON

"Why do you call me 'Sir'?" said the prison chaplain, "why don't you call me Father?"

"You are not my Father," said the condemned prisoner, "you are with the others."

At the end of Albert Camus' novel *The Stranger*, there is a long dialogue between priest and condemned prisoner. The chaplain, an average, sincere, zealous and not overbright priest is trying to grapple with the stolid unbelief of a man whom he considers the worst possible type of hardened criminal. He finally drives the man to complete desperation which explodes at last into a curious blend of Zen-Satori and existentialist revolt: the unexpected result of priestly zeal! The prisoner is a single-minded Algerian clerk, Meursault, who in a moment of thoughtlessness shot a man. He felt himself to have been partly irresponsible but failed to realize the importance of defending himself in terms that

(Continued on page 4)

## New Front In Delano

El Malcriado Editor  
Sends Latest News  
Of California Strike

By BILL ESHER

When the rain comes the strike in the grapes in Delano, California, moves onto a kind of new front. The lights burn very late in the so-called "Pink House," a dilapidated tract home into which the expanding Farm Workers Union, led by Cesar Chavez, has spread itself. When I go there it is sometimes to find Dolores Huerta studying compulsory-arbitration law with a burning intensity, her always-present supply of somewhat ragged children trying to pester and distract her. It is Dolores who is taking on the huge DiGiorgio Corporation in contract negotiations, without a lawyer on the scene in Delano, and without any special knowledge, other than the school of experience. More important, she is negotiating with hard-nosed professional union officials for jurisdiction. People who don't know Dolores are worried that she will make a mistake: ask too much, or give too much. And it is not the first time that people have underestimated this beautiful little woman.

What do the people do when it rains? First, there are the "scabs": winter provides an equalizing process and there is no work for them or for the strikers. My neighbors, for example: About twenty of them—mostly small children—live in an ancient four-room far house, with holes in the walls and the roof big enough to admit the dogs and cats. When it rains they just get wet, that's all, and now most of their children are sick from it. The electricity has been off now for almost a week. Of course they want the strike to win, but they think they are too close to the margin to miss any opportunity for work that comes along. This is their

(Continued on page 6)



## Christmas Greetings

TO all who have written to us, to all our readers and writers, to all we encounter each day, to all who sit down to break bread with us, to the poor of the world, to the destitute of the world. To all the powerless ones of the earth I can only quote David's canticle to our Lord—"In Your hands are power and might; yours it is to give everything grandeur and strength."

### Christmas Greetings

TO Jim Wilson, beginning his three-year sentence for refusing to be conscripted.

TO all other prisoners opposing the Vietnam war, giving up their freedom so that man may make a few more steps toward freedom from war.

TO all languishing in prison we send the reminder also, in St. Ambrose's words, "The grace of the Holy Spirit knows no languid action." You are most active in your inactivity.

### Christmas Greetings

TO all the striking agricultural workers in Texas and California, living in destitution while heads of corporations and growers draw fantastic incomes from their sweat; to Father Antonio Gonzales, of Texas, who was one of the leaders of last year's strike and pilgrimage in Texas, and who cried out, on seeing his mother and father in the rally of marchers:

"We want these people to get enough for their children to eat. My mother had eighteen children and she has been working in the fields for forty years. She still works in the fields. She just came back from Minnesota. Why should she have to do that? My father has cancer yet he is working

in the field. Forty years migrating to look for food is too long. Wages are not eighty-five cents an hour, they are sixty, fifty or forty cents an hour—a Texas disgrace, a national disgrace!" (Quoted in the *Texas Observer*, Sept. 16.)

### Christmas Greetings

TO Hugo Blanco, peasant leader of Peru, for the past three years waiting trial in prison, sentenced to twenty-five years. On appeal the prosecutor demanded the death penalty, and the case is being considered now. Pray for him, dear readers, and write to Presidente Belacinde Terry, Lima, Peru and to the Consejo Supremo de Justicia, Lima, Peru. And to his Eminence, the Cardinal of Peru.

### Christmas Greetings

TO Francisco Juliao, exile from northeast Brazil, living in Mexico City, who organized the peasant leagues and who wrote in his Letter to Isabella, his daughter:

"I do not understand why the world must be divided into Marxists and Christians who disagree on the philosophical level but agree on the human level. If Marx proclaims equality of opportunity for all (from each according to his abilities and to each according to his needs) (Christ was more radical when he told the rich young man to leave everything and follow Him. From this I find that to be a Christian is more difficult than to be a Marxist." (Part of a quotation found in the new Mexican Jesuit Review *Comunidad*. He goes on to say that since he cannot be a half-way Christian he prefers to be a Marxist.)

TO Archbishop Helder Camara, of Recife, Brazil, in danger of jail for his championing the cause of the destitute, and what more honorable residence for such a John the Baptist? We hope he is a forerunner of many such bishops who will suffer in their efforts to put on Christ and put off the old man, to use the terminology of St. Paul.

### Christmas Greetings

TO Richard Sigh, of Grenada, Mississippi, whose leg was broken on the first day of school in September. A woman rammed her umbrella between his legs and he was beaten with clubs by men as he lay on the ground. To his father also who lost his job as part of the family's martyrdom in the civil rights struggle. Operation Freedom, c/o Rev. Maurice McCrackin, 932 Dayton Street, Cincinnati, Ohio, 45214, is helping these and other families in a similar plight.

### Christmas Greetings

TO Vinoba Bhave, who fifty years ago gave up his home and took up public service under Mahatma Gandhi and who since his death has walked the roads of India from village to village working and praying for the building up of village communes through non-violence, the rich giving to the poor and the poor sharing with each other. Beginning his seventieth year, he writes:

After an age man has to cast off his attachments, illusions and greed, be it of social service or philanthropy. The traditional course is to go on carrying on a great deal of activity and giving it up when

(Continued on page 8)

## Jim Wilson Gets 3 Years

By JACK COOK

Only partially awake, yet fully enraged at the events which were to take place this day (December 9), I descended the stairs of the building on Kenmare Street, where most of the Workers live, and knocked at the door of one of the women's apartments in order to assure myself that I had a ride to Newark, New Jersey, where Jim Wilson, my friend and fellow

On November 30th, Thomas C. Cornell, co-chairman of the Catholic Peace Fellowship, Maro Edelman and Roy Lisker were given 6-month sentences for having burned their draft cards at a rally a year ago. Their conviction will be appealed to the Supreme Court.

Catholic Worker, was to be sentenced for committing, as he said in his statement to the court, "this crime: I refuse to kill."

The door opened upon Dorothy and Pat Rusk, both preparing to go to Mass before setting off. Their mood, in utter contrast to mine,

(Continued on page 7)

## CHRISTIE STREET

By PHIL MALONEY

The pace of life has been stepped up recently at Christie Street. The Fire Department has made life difficult by discovering a variety of violations of the Building Code. Many of the violations are minor; a few, such as re-wiring and major ceiling repairs, will be costly unless we are able to move reasonably soon. The rain leaks through the roof as it is; a heavy snow may be the final blow.

Our car, a 1961 Volkswagen bus, has been the cause of a few headaches this month. Because of a constantly recurring clutch problem, Chris Kearns took the bus to the VW dealer for repairs, and it was stolen from the dealer's parking lot. The police recovered it the next day, but the transmission showed signs of trouble. Each day it becomes more apparent that the bus needs to be replaced. The cost of continual repairs and the probability that it is short-lived leads us to request a car or small truck in decent condition. The car is used to pick up food and clothing, and to deliver the paper to the post office, so it is a vital necessity.

The community has been enlarged with new faces and one old face. Jack Cook, former teacher and volunteer worker for the Catholic Peace Fellowship, has come to work at Christie Street. Jack does much of the paper work and acts as doorman during the soup line. John Burslem has come from Canada to stay for a year. John is also responsible for the huge amount of filing and paper work that is necessary to publish a newspaper. The third arrival is a homecoming; Chuck Bazzinetti has returned after a prolonged stay in the hospital. Charley Keefe, a living legend on the Bowery because of his fine soups, has successfully weathered a hernia operation at Veterans Hospital.

Thanksgiving brought many

(Continued on page 3)



# CATHOLIC WORKER

Published Monthly September to June, Bi-monthly July-August  
ORGAN OF THE CATHOLIC WORKER MOVEMENT

PETER MAURIN, Founder

DOROTHY DAY, Editor and Publisher  
MARTIN J. CORBIN, Managing Editor

Associate Editors:

CHARLES BUTTERWORTH, JACK COOK, RITA CORBIN (Art),  
NICOLE d'ENTREMONT, EDGAR FORAND, JUDITH GREGORY,  
THOMAS S. HOEY, WILLIAM HORVATH, CHRISTOPHER S. KEARNS,  
WALTER KERELL, PHIL MALONEY, JOHN McKEON, KARL MEYER,  
DEANE MOWRER, HELEN C. RILEY, PAT RUSK, ARTHUR  
SHEEHAN, ANNE TAILLEFER, EDWARD TURNER, STANLEY  
VISHNEWSKI, JAMES E. WILSON.

New subscriptions and change of address:  
175 Chrystie St., New York, N. Y. 10002  
Telephone OR 4-9812

Editorial communications to: Box 33 Tivoli, N. Y. 12583

Subscription United States 25c Yearly Canada and Foreign 30c Yearly  
Subscription rate of one cent per copy plus postage applies to bundles of one  
hundred or more copies each month for one year to be directed to one address

Reentered as second class matter August 10 1939, at the Post Office  
of New York, N. Y., Under the Act of March 3, 1879

120

## ON PILGRIMAGE

By DOROTHY DAY

Someone said to me last month, "What are you going to write about if you are no longer going on pilgrimage around the country?" And she went on to tell me she would miss travelling in thought with me since she could not go herself. One of the pleasantest ways to travel very often is with a map and guide book, right in your own bed at night, especially if you have been to the places described, which are always turning out differently from the way you had pictured them in your mind.

On two afternoons we had visitors from Puerto Rico this last month, both at Tivoli and Chrystie Street, and it was a pleasure to sit and talk with these Catholic, non-violent friends of the Nationalist Party, which is working for independence of Puerto Rico from United States domination of their culture and their economy. We will have more to say about Puerto Rico in a future issue of the paper in which we also hope to have a thorough review of two books which have recently come out. One is *Non-Violence and the Christian Conscience* by Fr. Pie Regamey, O.P., published by Herder and Herder with a preface by Thomas Merton and a foreword by Stanley Windass. One of the chapters, dealing with the violent gentleness of Christ, speaks of the gentleness having the infinite intensity of divine love, a terrible love, a consuming fire.

"The world offers us," Pie Regamey writes, "the spectacle of a colossal expenditure of energy, where men excel when they are called upon to kill or destroy, but for constructive work they hang back and drag their feet in apathy." We have been passing the book around, and one of the group at Tivoli, Marge Hughes, said it was like making a retreat to read it.

The other book is *The Pacifist Conscience*, being "classic writings on alternatives to violent conflict from ancient times to the present," edited and with an introduction by Peter Mayer. Published by Holt Rinehart and Winston. One of the articles I wrote during the Korean War is included in the book. It is an expensive book at \$7.95, but a veritable encyclopedia of background, early internationalism, theory and practice in the 20th century, a chapter on conscientious objection and a last section on Christian Pacifism and Non-violence today, in which I am included, together with Martin Luther King, Danilo Dolci, C. Wright Mills and Diederick H. Lund, who wrote of pacifism during the occupation of Norway by the Germans. There is also the beginning of the Freedom Rides, Bayard Rustin and George Houser's original "journey of reconciliation" sponsored jointly by the Congress of Racial Equality and the Fellowship of Reconciliation in 1947.

With the increasing tensions in Latin America, Africa and Asia, we need constant study of the non-violent revolution in which we are engaged.

### Visitings

When the last issue of the *Catholic Worker* came out, I was again visiting for two days at my daughter's in Perkinsville, Vermont and then for four days in Montreal with my granddaughter, who is in her last year of nursing school at St. Mary's hospital. I stayed in Montreal at the pilgrim's hospice, which is at the foot of the Mount where the great shrine to St. Joseph stands overlooking all of Montreal. Which meant that I could get to Mass at the shrine church each morning, breakfast in the cafeteria and then go about the city to visit my friends, Dixie MacMaster and her mother, Dr. Karl Stern and his wife, Jack Birmingham and his Browser's bookshop at 3505 Avenue du Parc, where there is plenty of room to sit around and dip into all the books which you had thought were out of print and which he has painstakingly found and made available. Jack's idea of a bookshop is a place where like-minded people interested in mutualism, peace and freedom can get together and plan economical publishing, translating, etc.

On Sunday morning Sue and I went to the Russian liturgy at Our Lady of the Presentation and met Father Ledit, S.J. who was taking Father Leoni's place for the day. Father Ledit's work is to give retreats thirty-six times a year, six days each, a most difficult schedule. But one can see he is a man of great energy. The ikons were painted by Norkus, a Lithuanian educated in Russia, Siberia, Denmark and Canada, in that order. The mural above the altar was painted by Mother Mercedes, now prioress of the Carmelites in Morristown, New Jersey. The liturgy lasted from ten to twelve and then there was a requiem (though that is not what they call it) for the Russian mother of three women present at the Liturgy, who had prepared a feast for the congregation which was served afterward with the usual coffee and rolls. There was beautiful singing from the choir and even the babes in arms received communion.

### Abbe Saey

In the afternoon Sue and I went with Karl Stern to visit an old friend, Abbe Saey, at St. Ireneus Church at Atwater and Workman Streets. We sat in a little apartment all painted and furnished with built-in bunks, tables and bookshelves, ready for occupancy by some of his forty or fifty Samaritaines, women who go out every other day to work in the homes of the poor, washing and scrubbing and caring for children

(Continued on page 6)

To most of us today travel is a commonplace. Journeys of a thousand miles and more are made in a casual spirit that would have stunned our forebears at the turn of the century. Gone now the weeping and the wailing of the Middle Ages that attended a journey over a horizon twenty miles distant from home, when the road that led away from the familiar was a road into darkness, peopled with all the terrors of the night. And yet for all our newfound ease and speed in travel we sometimes forget that travel fundamentally is motion and that motion, suddenly arrested, can have violent results. There are still the terrors of the road and the night, and they are not all the results of motor failure, burst tires, and the unmarked curve on a mountain road.

On the night of October 12th, 1959, Dr. Paul Villagomez, a dentist resident in Monterey, Mexico, had occasion to find himself traveling a lonely secondary road in Mexico, some 50 miles south of Laredo, Texas. With him in the car were his two younger sisters, Martha, twenty-one; Hilda, eighteen; and his brother Juan, fourteen. The family group were returning from a visit with friends in Texas.

Past a wide curve in the road and entering a stretch of lonely, mesquite-studded mesa, the car ground to a halt with a clogged



fuel line. The delay was exasperating, and, surveying the situation, Dr. Villagomez, as head of the family, came to a value judgment: he would get assistance and he would travel faster alone, so accordingly he left his sisters and brother with instructions not to move from the car and went on foot down the highway toward the nearest garage. When he returned two hours later he found his sister Martha and his brother Juan shot to death and his sister Hilda dying of gunshot wounds. Driven to the hospital in shock and semi-coma, she described her assailant as an American with two gold teeth and blonde hair, weighing about two hundred pounds and wearing a white shirt and black pants. The American, she said, drove a blue Chevrolet. He had come upon them suddenly in the night, attempted to start the stalled car and, failing, had suggested that they accompany him to the nearest town. When they refused he had gone berserk and drawing a pistol had begun firing at them. During the melee Hilda had struggled with him and scratched his face. The police apparatus was set in motion and the story and description of the American was broadcast to the surrounding area.

Among the travelers on the highway where death struck the Villagomez family that night was an American, Dykes Simmons, who had crossed the border about forty-five minutes behind the Villagomez car. According to his subsequent sworn testimony he did not see any parked car. He had driven till midnight along the unfamiliar road on a vacation into Mexico and then, suffering from driver fatigue, had pulled over to the side of the road and slept in

his car. In the nearby village of Allonde the next morning, a Mexican national, Jose Mancha, noticed Simmons shaving in his car. Intrigued by the sight of the car-battery-operated electric shaver Sr. Mancha struck up a conversation with Simmons and took him to his home to meet his wife and family. Later he took Simmons to a small hotel in the village.

The police of the village of Allonde, having been alerted by the radio broadcast, made inquiries on the presence of any strangers among the residents of the area and, running across Sr. Mancha and hearing his story, accompanied him to the hotel and awakened Simmons. The police questioning was cursory: Simmons did not weigh two hundred pounds, he did not have blonde hair, and he did not have two gold teeth. They apologized, left, and Simmons went back to sleep. A routine radio report was filed by the police of the town to the state headquarters.

Several hours later, a detachment of State Police arrived at the hotel, seized Simmons, drove him to jail and held him incommunicado. Their questioning of him was lengthy, exhaustive and thorough, including beating, torture, and holding a cocked pistol to his head and threatening him with instant death if he did not confess. The Mad Hatter aspect of the questioning was increased by the fact that Simmons had only a rudimentary knowledge of Spanish and only a dim realization of what he was being questioned about. At the end of the questioning, throughout which he maintained his innocence, Simmons was charged with the murders of Martha and Juan Villagomez and the shooting of Hilda Villagomez. From then on, due process of law, by the standards of any civilized society, was consistently violated. Simmons was forced to dress in white shirt and trousers and led before the dying Hilda Villagomez alone. By Mexican law Simmons should have been in a line-up, among at least a half dozen other men wearing the same clothes and sitting, roughly, the same physical description as the assailant. The state prosecutor alone heard Hilda's dying, whispered alleged identification: "He is the one—but if I am wrong may God forgive me." A member of the American Consulate, who very apparently was ignorant of the rudiments of Mexican law, stood by without protest during the alleged identification. Simmons was formally charged, tried and subsequently sentenced to death by firing squad.

### The Other American

Several days after the confrontation with Hilda in the hospital room, another American, Donald E. Martin, a physician of Texas, was arrested in the streets of a village adjacent to Allonde, the scene of Simmons' arrest. Dr. Martin, at the time of his arrest, was nude and engaged in idly firing off a .22 calibre pistol at the buildings and inhabitants of the village. Following his arrest Dr. Martin confessed the shooting of Martha, Juan and Hilda Villagomez. Dr. Martin, like Simmons, did not weigh two hundred pounds nor did he have two gold teeth. He did, however, have the good fortune to draw a good consular representative at his questioning. Within twenty-four hours he was across the border in a straitjacket. Following psychiatric treatment Dr. Martin recovered and is now practicing medicine in Texas.

Seven years later Dykes Simmons is still languishing in a Mexican jail, still under the sentence of death by firing squad. There is strong evidence that on at least two occasions the Mexican government, apparently aware of the violations of law in his questioning and embarrassed by the prodding of the State Department, in turn prodded by the American

Civil Liberties Union, have offered Simmons freedom, via a commutation of his sentence, if only he will go on record confessing to the murders. Thus far Simmons has refused to do so, stating that "to confess to something I did not do in order to gain my freedom would be to compromise both my conscience and the truth."

That Simmons deserves to go free by the standards of existing Mexican law is undoubted. Since it is also undoubted that, in the words of the Irish proverb, "Tis easy to sleep on another man's found," and that both the American and Mexican governments will continue to dawdle in the matter, a reminder to our congressman might be in order. The reminder need not be long, just a few words: "I am interested in the case of Dykes Simmons. When will he be freed? Why isn't he free already?"

You never know. Lots of us have occasion to travel lonely roads at night. It would be good to know that if any of us ran afoul of the terrors of the night that someone would give a thought to our welfare. In the natural order of course. In the transcendental our worries are moot.

STATEMENT OF OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT AND CIRCULATION (required by Act of October 23, 1962; Section 4369, Title 39, United States Code).

1. Date of Filing: October 1, 1966.
2. Title or Publication: The Catholic Worker.
3. Frequency of Issue: Monthly.
4. Location of Known Office of Publication: 175 Chrystie St., N.Y., N.Y. 10002.
5. Location of the Headquarters or General Business Offices of the Publishers (not printers): 175 Chrystie St., N.Y., N.Y. 10002.
6. Names and Addresses of Publisher, Editor, and Managing Editor: Dorothy Day, 175 Chrystie St., N.Y., N.Y. 10002; Martin Corbin, Managing Editor, 175 Chrystie St., N.Y., N.Y. 10002.
7. Owner (If owned by a corporation, its name and address must be stated and also immediately thereunder the names and addresses of stockholders owning or holding 1 percent or more of total amount of stock. If not owned by a corporation, the names and addresses of the individual owners must be given. If owned by a partnership or other unincorporated firm, its name and address, as well as that of each individual must be given.): Dorothy Day, 175 Chrystie St., N.Y., N.Y. 10002.
8. Known Bondholders, Mortgagees and Other Security Holders Owning or Holding 1 Percent or More of Total Amount of Bonds, Mortgages or Other Securities (If there are none, so state): None.
9. Paragraphs 7 and 8 include, in cases where the stockholder or security holder appears upon the books of the company as trustee or in any other fiduciary relation, the name of the person or corporation for whom such trustee is acting, also the statements in the two paragraphs show the affiant's full knowledge and belief as to the circumstances and conditions under which stockholders and security holders who do not appear upon the books of the company as trustees, hold stock and securities in a capacity other than that of a bona fide owner. Names and addresses of individuals who are stockholders of a corporation which itself is a stockholder or holder of bonds, mortgages or other securities of the publishing corporation have been included in paragraphs 7 and 8 when the interests of such individuals are equivalent to 1 percent or more of the total amount of the stock or securities of the publishing corporation.
10. This Item Must Be Completed for All Publications Except Those Which Do Not Carry Advertising Other Than the Publisher's Own and Which Are Named in Sections 132.231, 132.232, and 132.233, Postal Manual (Sections 4355a, 4355b, and 4356 of Title 39, United States Code): That the average total number of copies printed is 85,000. Paid Circulation, 75,000; Free Distribution, 3,000; Total No. of Copies Distributed, 88,000. That the Single Issue Count Nearest to Filing Date was 88,000; Paid Circulation, 85,000; Free Distribution 3,000; Total No. of Copies Distributed, 88,000.

I certify that the statements made by me above are correct and complete.

Edgar Forand,  
(Business Manager)

The cover design this month is by Rita Corbin, our art editor.



# A Farm With a View

By DEANE MARY MOWRER

Cold blows the wind across the wave-tossing Hudson. Cold blows the wind among the fallen leaves shivering on the ground. Yet I feel the December sun warm upon my cheek, and know that it shines brightly on chickadees, sparrows, juncos, and nuthatches feeding and twittering at my southern window boxes. Then I hear the wind blow through the pines and hemlocks, and I think the trees sing, like a living Advent wreath—**Make straight the way of the Lord. Stir up our hearts and come.**

It is the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe. This morning at Mass—in which Dorothy Day, Stanley Vishniewski, Arthur Lacey, Joe Dumenski, and I participated at St. Sylvia's, in Tivoli—I prayed for all those near to us who have asked for our prayers, who have need of our prayers. Most particularly I prayed for Jim Wilson, who had just received a three-year sentence to prison for burning his draft card and refusing to cooperate with any form of military service, for preferring to serve the gentle Prince of Peace rather than murder his brothers. Then I prayed for peace, that Our Lady, Queen of Peace, might intercede for us with her son, the Prince of Peace, that He might warm, transform, the cold winds of hate blowing through our hearts so that we, like the pines and hemlocks, might sing (being made straight, made ready by His love)—**Gloria in Excelsis Deo.**

Yet I write in Advent. Cold winds blow across the Hudson, among the dead leaves. In Vietnam the winds of war blow cruelly, through the leafless trees of defoliated forests, over the napalm-burned bodies of innocent women and children. O will He not lie cold in His manger? When will the crooked be made straight? **Sancta Maria, ora pro nobis.**

Yesterday at Mass—it was Gaudete Sunday—I heard the priest read those lambent words of St. Paul: **Rejoice. Again I say, rejoice.** The sun had come out, dispelling the fog of the preceding week, but the day was still rejoicingly mild. Kay Lynch remarked, as she drove us to Mass, that the mountains across the river once again showed clear and bare and sparkling. Then when we returned from Mass, I heard again the twittering of many birds, in the trees, about my windows, joining, it seemed to me, in the chorus of the day—**rejoice, rejoice.**

Sundays at St. Joseph's rural house of hospitality are usually times of rejoicing; for they mean not only the liturgical joy of the day but also the gathering of family and friends in that other communion of good food and good talk. So it was on Gaudete Sunday. Our old friend, Spike Zawicki, had come all the way from Mexico to visit us. We had not seen Spike since he had brought the Bishop of Tepic, Mexico, to spend the night and say Mass in our chapel at Peter Maurin Farm. For awhile after dinner, Dorothy Day, Helen Iswolsky, Kay Lynch, and I sat talking with Spike, who told us of his present work among the poor campesinos of a remote, tropical region below Vera Cruz. We spoke, too, of Jim Wilson and the other conscientious objectors and of our ever-present anxiety about the escalating war in Vietnam. Dorothy said that perhaps Spike's isolation might save him in the event of the United States suffering a nuclear holocaust. It seemed a grim thought for such a rejoicing day. Yet how utterly unrealistic it would be to think our country can continue its present militaristic, imperialistic, materialistic course without paying any penalty for the reckless disregard of the lives and well-being of others. It can only be a question of time—and that time may be much shorter than we think—until nations hostile to us will

have the weapons and striking power to attack us with the very kind of weapons in which we so foolishly repose our hope for the future. War between nuclear powers can only mean disaster for both. We have only a short time to learn how to live in peace with other nations, how to practice that genuine love and goodwill which all men respect. O Mary, Mother of Sorrows, weeping for the suffering and evil men inflict on each other and on your Son, pray for us that we may seek and find His peace.

On the feast of the Immaculate Conception, Father Guerin of the Marist Fathers came to say Mass for us in our chapel. Like Spike, Father Guerin is an old friend. During the mid-nineteen-fifties, he often came over from the Marist Novitiate on Staten Island to say Mass for us at Peter Maurin Farm, or give retreats and days of recollection. Now that the Marist Fathers have moved their Novitiate from Staten Island to Rhinebeck, Fr. Guerin is once again our neighbor and has promised to say Mass for us whenever



it is possible for him to get away. So on the Feast of our national patron, the Immaculate Conception, I prayed again that our country might learn to live in peace with other nations, in peace and amity at home. O Mary conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to you. Teach us how to talk, how to do, that our words and actions may be illumined with peace.

### Visit From Shantidas

The second Sunday of Advent was made memorable for us here at the farm by the visit of Lanza del Vasto and his wife, Chantarelle. A student and friend of Gandhi, Lanza del Vasto is the founder and head of a community in France where non-violence is taught and practiced. The Ark is a self-sustaining community, a way of life stripped down to the essentials of utility and beauty. The life is austere, and devout, with living and liturgy blended in a sacramental attitude toward all life. They raise their own sheep, spin and weave their own wool, design and make their own homespun clothes. They believe in prayer and fasting, but they have also led and organized some of the most daring demonstrations for peace. We felt truly honored to have the del Vastos with us and to hear them tell of their work. Sunday morning, they chose to walk to Mass and back, Lanza wearing sandals without socks. Before they left they sang for us the beautiful song of the weavers and the prayer they sing before meals. For themselves the mem-

bers of the Ark seem to have found a way to peace. It is a way that others could follow—if they wished, if they dared.

The first Sunday of Advent, coming so soon after Thanksgiving, seemed overflowing with the bounty and thankfulness of that day. Paula de Aragon and her daughter Rachel, who visited us so often at the beach houses, came for a first visit on Thanksgiving Day. Joe and Audrey Monroe, who now that they have a car come more often, were also, with us, bringing guitars and an inexhaustible bounty of good humor and goodwill. Mrs. Jean Keelan and her boys, who spent some time here during the Peacemakers conferences, seemed delighted to be here, as we were to have them. Alba Ryan, Lorraine Freeman and her boys, Beth Rogers and Frances Bittner, George Nelson, Don Parrish, Pasquale Valenziano, John Burslem, all helped us to enjoy the day and the good food which Hans and several helpers had prepared. So Advent began for us with thanksgiving.

But on the first Sunday of Advent the shopping centers and market places were already crammed with toys, gauds, gadgets, and all the fabulous merchandise of luxury, temptingly displayed Christmas gifts against a background of canned Christmas carols. And in the forests the slaughter of the great and beautiful evergreens had begun, so that those who had never thought to plant a tree might marvel at the beauty of a dead one. No Christmas tree stands by His manger who cries with cold and hunger, the cold and hunger felt by millions of children all over the world. How can He hear the angels singing when the radio and phonograph, muzak and television, have stolen their song?

In a community like ours, the days of Advent must be filled with work as well as prayer. Those who work know that work is prayer. With some ill, with others coming and going, there have been many newcomers who have helped out from time to time. So the list of those who keep the routine work going is not short: Bob Stewart, John Filligar, Hans Tunnesen, Mike Sullivan, Fred Lindsey, Alice Lawrence, Kay Lynch, Rita Corbin, Marge Hughes, John McKeon, Luigi, Brother Placid, Reginald Highhill, Leslie Zitz, Ursula McGuire, Arthur Lacey and many others who helped out even though they stayed for only a few days. Stanley Vishniewski works at his printing and writing. Jim McMurry, with the help of Joe di Carlo, has almost completed his hermitage. Helen Iswolsky has made much headway with her translation and has written several articles. Dorothy Day has also written several articles, some of which have been published in *Ave Maria*, has done some work on her book, and written more letters than many of us would write in many years. Marty Corbin keeps busy with his editing, has attended some important conferences, and given several talks to colleges and other groups. Kay Lynch, in addition to her many other duties, finds some time to help me prepare the material for my book. Some of us also spend time in the chapel. And if work is prayer, prayer is also work. As for the sick among us, they know that suffering is both work and prayer.

### Books and Films

Yet even in Advent, life on a Catholic Worker farm is not all work. We have our diversions. Books are popular with almost everyone. Helene Iswolsky, having finished reading me E. M. Forster's *A Room With a View*, is now well into Sigrid Undset's great trilogy *Kristin Lavransdatter*. When Marty Corbin has time, he continues reading to me from Dickens. On Friday nights, there are usually several for Bob Stewart or Kay Lynch to drive to the free movies at Bard College. One memorable night, Helene Iswolsky,

(Continued on page 6)

# Joe Hill House

By AMMON HENNACY

Darrel Poulson is to be shot at sunrise on January 9, 1967. This will be the sixth time he has faced the dawn. William Fowler, the court-appointed lawyer who has defended Poulson at his own expense for five years, will probably appeal to the Board of Pardons before the execution date. Since November 14th, I have been picketing Governor Rampton and the Board of Pardons daily for an hour at noon in front of the State Capitol. Susan Anderson, the wife of a professor at the University, has been helping me picket, often with her baby.

Rabbi Relkin, Dean Frensdorf, of the Episcopal Church, Hugh Gillinhan, the Unitarian minister, and Lowell Bennion, a liberal Mormon professor at the University, have publicly opposed this

CW readers should write at once to the Board of Pardons, State Capitol, Salt Lake City, Utah, and ask that Poulson's death sentence be commuted to life imprisonment in the State mental institution.

On November 11th some of us picketed and poster walked downtown in memory of Saint Martin of Tours, who was a conscientious objector, and the four anarchists who were hanged in Chicago on November 11, 1887. I will lead a poster walk against the war in Vietnam at noon on the Saturday before Christmas.

The men continue to come and go at our Joe Hill House. For new readers I repeat that our address is 3462 S. 4 W. All are welcome to come day or night.

# Christie Street

(Continued from page 1)

gifts of food from generous people in the area. We received enough to provide a large dinner in the evening and a regular meal instead of soup for the line. Jim Wilson demonstrated his culinary talents by cooking a tasty meal for the line and Tony Bizewski was responsible for the excellent turkey dinner in the evening.

The Thanksgiving weekend was also the occasion for giving thanks for other gifts; my wife gave birth to a healthy son. Six minutes later, Dave Miller's wife, Cathy, gave birth to a daughter.

If the weather does not forcibly remind us, Thanksgiving warns of the approaching winter. Winter is a particularly difficult time on the Bowery; the need of wine's warmth seems more acute, and the cold pavement is a less than inviting place to spend the night. Rags become a matter of urgency; they are the difference between frostbite and comparative warmth. We would appreciate gifts of winter clothing, especially heavy coats. We distribute these clothes every afternoon to all who ask for them.

Ruth Collins and John Coster have addressed us twice last month, on the first occasion about the new CW house and its accompanying legal technicalities, and on the second about their work in forming cooperatives in Harlem. December's scheduled speakers include Robert Lowell, the poet, and Dr. Robert Pollock, of Seton Hall University.

Paul Mann recently incurred the wrath of the government by failing to report for his pre-induction physical. No action has been taken to prosecute him yet.

**"We cannot resist war and injustice with just a few, no matter how saintly or courageous they may be. I do not think it was part of Christ's gospel that the world would be saved automatically or that He would save it automatically. The assumption was that mankind would respond."**

Rev. Michael Scott



execution. I have written to the Catholic bishop asking him to take a stand, or at least to allow those priests who are concerned to speak up, but I have had no response.

For readers who have not followed this case, Darrel Poulson was committed, when still a young man, to the State mental institution in Provo. He had been obsessed with sexual matters for a long time. One day, after he was paroled, he told the police that he was going to do something bad again and asked them to lock him up, but they replied that he had not done anything yet. The next day he killed a baby-sitter. He was quickly convicted and sentenced to death. Because one of the three alienists who was supposed to have examined him had not been called to testify, his lawyer appealed to the higher courts, but to no avail.

In my leaflet I declare that Poulson's guilt is shared by: the home, in that it provides the basic training for good and evil that guides a man throughout his life; the Church, because it argues theology and forgets to practice the Sermon on the Mount, which says to return good for evil instead of evil for evil, and to forgive seventy times seven; the school, because it stresses subject matter instead of meeting of needs of students as they seek an education and the tools with which to face society and find their own way, and the State, because its prisons are schools for crime and it stresses punishment in its courts, prisons and wars rather than treatment in hospitals and mental institutions.

### ELEGY

on the fourth anniversary of the death of Louis Massignon

The sound of a mower through the grass  
Was like a sick man's struggling for breath.

The leaves from the tree fell,  
I thought, like hands at its side.

Like a meaning that passes from the mind  
Quiet came and made the sound elusive.

I felt a pain in the quiet  
That wasn't age or autumn.

It seemed to occupy and leave the lawn,  
The thing responsible for fearful thoughts

And desolation. I thought of my deceased professor,  
Who knew the quiet as pity for the old,

And death as ecstasy for certain lives  
Allowed—at last—to be useless . . .

Herbert Mason



his society was willing to understand and accept. As a result he got the death penalty when, in fact, there were enough extenuating circumstances to warrant a much lighter sentence.

One of the themes of the novel is the ambiguity and "absurdity" of a justice which, though logical and right in its own terms, is seen to be an elaborate tissue of fictions—a complicated and dishonest social game in which there is no real concern for persons or values. Meursault is condemned, in fact, for not playing that game, as is made abundantly clear when the prosecution proves to the jury's outraged satisfaction that the accused did not weep at his mother's funeral. In the trial the sentimental exploitation of this fact curiously assumes a greater importance than the murder itself. The whole prosecution is irrational, pharisaical and indeed irrelevant to the actual case. All through the trial, the accused, though not particularly smart, gradually realizes that society is interested not in what he really did, but only in completely reconstructing his personality and his actions to make him fit its own capricious requirements—its need for the complete evildoer.

And now the prison chaplain, having taken for granted all that has been decided in the courtroom, proceeds to work the prisoner over in the interests of other requirements: the need for a complete penitent. Since to repent one must first believe, the chaplain simply tries to convince Meursault that in his heart of hearts he "really believes" but does not know that he believes. Meursault replies that though he cannot be quite sure what interests him, he is quite certain of what does not interest him: and this includes the whole question of religion. Meursault is right to feel offended by the priest's self-assurance, which simply adds to the affront that the court has visited upon his dignity as a person.

All through the imprisonment and the trial, the prisoner has in fact been treated as if he were not there, as if he were so complete a nonentity that he was not able to think or even experience anything validly for himself. "I am with you," says the chaplain with smug assurance based on perfect moral superiority, "but you cannot realize this since you have a blinded heart." In the end the prisoner reacts with violent indignation against this cumulative refusal of lawyers (his own included), judges, jury, the press, the Church and society at large to accept him as a person. There is considerable bite in the sentence, "I answered that he was not my Father, he was with the others." After all what is a Father whose relation with his "son" is no more than his relation with a chair or a table—and a chair that is about to be thrown out with the rubbish?

Another ironic sentence shows up what Camus thought of the Church, as exemplified at least by this priest: "According to him the justice of men was nothing and the justice of God everything. I remarked that it was the former that had condemned me." The chaplain appears to make a distinction between the justice of man and the justice of God, but in actual fact he has assumed that the justice of man is the justice of God and that the truth of the verdict is the truth of God. When bourgeois society speaks, God speaks. This is taken so much for granted by him that he does not even think of questioning it.

Another priest, more subtly portrayed by Camus, is the Jesuit Paneloux in *The Plague*. In this novel Camus created a great modern myth in which he described man's condition in this life on earth. It refers more especially to French society. We know that *The Plague* is also about the German occupation of France, and Paneloux represents in some sense the

French clergy under the Nazis. But he also represents the Church as she confronts man in his moral and metaphysical estrangement—his "lostness" in an absurd world. What will she offer him? Can she give him anything more than a predigested answer and a consoling rite? Does she ask of him anything more than conformity and resignation? At the outbreak of the plague Paneloux delivers a hell-fire sermon on the justice of God and the punishment of iniquity, the need for penance and for a return to decent churchgoing lives. In other words the plague is a punishment. But for what, precisely? Sin! Later he learns, by working with the doctors in the "resistance," that things are not quite so simple as all that and that such a black-and-white interpretation of social or moral crisis no longer convinces anyone. He proceeds to a new position which is, however, still unconvincing because no one can make out quite what it is. He now, in fact, demands a wager of blind faith that sounds like fatalism. In the end he lays down his life, but his sacrifice is ambiguous because, for obscure motives of his own, he has refused medical help.

There is in *The Plague* a decisive dialogue between Rieux the doctor and Paneloux the priest after they have witnessed the sufferings and death of a child. Paneloux no longer has any glib explanation, but only suggests that we must love what we cannot understand. Rieux replies, "I have a different conception of love. And I shall refuse to the bitter end to love this scheme of things in which children are tortured." This is a caricature of the theology of evil. Does Christianity demand that one "love a system, an explanation, a Scheme of things," which for its coherence demands that people be tortured? Is that what the Gospel and the Cross mean? To some Christians, unfortunately, yes. And it is they who present Camus with an absurdity against which he must revolt. This is not a question of ill-will or culpable scandal—only a tragic misunderstanding. Camus' evaluation of the Church is not unusual and not totally unsympathetic, but it is especially worth attending to, since Camus has retained a kind of moral eminence (which he himself often repudiated) as the conscience of a new generation. By reason of his personal integrity, his genius, his eloquence and his own record in protest and resistance, Camus still speaks to our world with resounding authority. His judgments carry much more conviction than those of Sartre, for example, who has thrown in his lot with Marxist power politics, or those of Marcel and Mounier, who, though respected outside the Church, have exercised their influence mostly inside it.

If we as Catholics wish to get some idea of what the secular world thinks of us and expects of us we can still with profit turn to Camus and question him on the subject. As a matter of fact, shortly after the end of the War, the avant-garde Dominicans at the publishing house of Le Cerf invited Camus to come and answer this important question. Notes on the talk were preserved. They are very instructive and have lost none of their validity today.

Camus opened his remarks to the Paris Dominicans with some interesting observations on dialogue. We are by now familiar enough with the fact that dialogue requires openness and honesty, and this supposes first of all that on both sides there is a complete willingness to accept the other as he is. This also presupposes a willingness to be oneself and not pretend to be someone else. On the part of the non-believer (Camus courteously begins with the non-believer) it is essential to avoid a kind of secular pharisaism (pharisaïsme laïque) which in the name of Christianity demands more of the Christian than the

secularist demands of himself. "I certainly believe that the Christian has plenty of obligations," Camus admits, "but the man who himself rejects these obligations has no right to point them out to one who has recognized their existence." This is charitable of him, indeed. Pharisaism works two ways: on one hand the man who thinks that it is enough to recognize an obligation by a purely formal and punctilious fulfillment, is a pharisee. On the other the man who detects the failure and points to it, without fulfilling an equivalent obligation himself, is also a pharisee. Camus had an exquisite eye for this kind of thing, as his novels show (see especially the perfect pharisaism of Clamence in *The Fall*). According to him, pharisaism is one of the worst plagues of our time. In *The Stranger* the whole trial is an exhibition of the pure pharisaism of French bourgeois culture. Camus is no less aware of the pharisaism of Marxists, as we see in the long section devoted to them in *The Rebel*.

If it is not the business of the non-believer to judge the Christian's behavior, it is nevertheless essential that the Christian be a Christian if he is going to engage, as Christian, in dialogue with somebody else. Already in those days Camus had run into Catholics who, in their eagerness to be "open," were willing to throw their Catholicism out the window. True, the example he cites is not convincingly scandalous. In a discussion with Marxists at the Sorbonne, a Catholic priest had stood up and exclaimed, "I too am anti-clerical." There are a lot of us who know exactly what he meant and would, by now, be willing to join him in his declaration, if by "anti-clericalism" is meant weariness and exasperation with the seminary veneer of self-assurance, intolerance, expert knowledge of inscrutable sciences, and total mo-



Rita Corbin

ral superiority to the laity. Nevertheless, if one is a priest, one cannot allow oneself the rather indecent luxury of repudiating one's fellow priests en bloc in order to indulge one's own vanity or wounded feelings. It is quite true, and we must admit it, that life as a priest in these times of questioning and renewal is neither simple nor easy. One has to live with things that do not seem to be authentic or honest, let alone agreeable. One is likely to be impatient for reforms that are not only long in coming but may never come at all. And one may at the same time be the target of criticism which, though ambiguous, has enough ground in fact to be irritating. A cleric might well be tempted to free himself of these distressing conditions by joining some radical minority and taking up a position from which he can righteously attack his fellow clergy. If what he seeks by this is comfort for his own ego and recognition by an in-group of his own choice, Camus warns him that he is deluding himself.

Nevertheless, we must not take Camus' dislike of "anti-clerical priests" too absolutely. He did not mean to silence all public

# ALBERT CAMUS' A

(Continued)

opinion and self-questioning within the Church. On the contrary, he called for such self-criticism and self-examination, and he approved of it when he met it, for example, in his friend the Dominican Pere Bruckberger ("Bruck"). Camus' notebooks abound in spiritual nosegays like these, culled from the garden of Bruck's conversation.

"G. has the look of a priest, a sort of episcopal unction. And I can hardly bear it in Bishops."

"Those Christian Democrats give me a pain in the neck."

Camus naively said to Bruck: "As a young man I thought all priests were happy." Bruck replied: "Fear of losing their faith makes them limit their sensitivity. It becomes merely a negative vocation. They don't face up to life." And Camus added: "His dream, a great conquering clergy, but magnificent in its poverty and audacity." Poverty and audacity were two qualities that appealed more and more to Camus. He looked for them, as we shall see, in the Catholic Church but did not always find them.

### III

It would unduly complicate this article to go into Camus' difficulties with the Augustinian theology of sin and grace, and the reasons why he took scandal at a certain pessimistic religious approach to the problem of evil. But we recall that at the University of Algiers, Camus wrote the equivalent of an M.A. thesis on "Plotinus and St. Augustine." It is not enough to say, as one recent writer has said, that if Camus had read Teilhard de Chardin instead of Augustine he would have been more likely to become a Christian. Maybe so, maybe not. But he remained more or less impaled on the same dilemma as Ivan Karamzov: if there are evil and suffering in the world, and if God is omnipotent, then the fact that He permits the evil must mean that He is responsible for it. And if the evil has to exist in order somehow to justify the divine omnipotence, then Camus will return his ticket to paradise, he doesn't want to go there if it means admitting that this is "right."

Stated in the terms in which he states it, the problem becomes an esthetic one which cannot really be solved by logic or metaphysics: a question of structure that is unsatisfactory because it lacks harmony and unity—it is in fact to him esthetically and morally absurd. He cannot accept it because it repels his imagination. It is like a play that falls apart in the third act. To demand that one simply accept this with resignation and to say it is "right" (in the sense of satisfactory to man's deepest sense of fittingness and order) is simply an affront to man, thinks Camus. And a lot of other people go along with him. We need not argue the theoretical point here.

What is crucially important in our world is not evil as an abstract scenario but evil as an existential fact. It is here that Camus speaks most clearly to the Church. The unbeliever and the Christian both live in a world in which they confront evil and the absurd. They have different ways of understanding these facts, but this does not make too much difference provided they offer authentic protest and resistance. Camus then raises the question that has recently been hotly debated as a result of Hochhuth's *The Deputy*. Why did not Rome speak out more clearly and forcefully against the crimes and barbarities of Nazism?

Why shall I not say this here? For a long time I waited during those terrible years, for a strong voice to be lifted up in Rome. I an unbeliever? Exactly. For. I knew that spirit

would be lost if it did not raise the cry of condemnation in the presence of force. It appears that this voice was raised. But I swear to you that millions of men, myself included, never heard it; and that there was in the hearts of believers and unbelievers a solitude which did not cease to grow as the days went by and the executioners multiplied. It was later explained to me that the condemnation had indeed been uttered, but in the language of encyclicals, which is not clear. The condemnation had been pronounced but it had not been understood. Who cannot see in this where the real condemnation lies? Who does not see that this example contains within it one of the elements of the answer, perhaps the whole answer to the question you have asked me? What the world expects of Christians is that Christians speak out and utter their condemnation in such a way that never a doubt, never a single doubt can arise in the heart of even the simplest man. That Christians get out of their abstractions and stand face to face with the bloody mess that is our history today. The gathering we need today is the gathering together of men who are resolved to speak out clearly and pay with their own person. When a Spanish bishop blesses political executions he is no longer a bishop or a Christian or even a man . . . We expect and I expect that all those will gather together who do not want to be dogs and who are determined to pay the price that has to be paid if man is to be something more than a dog.

This is strong meat and it has lost nothing of its strength since 1948. It can be repeated today, and perhaps with greater effect than before, since the Vatican Council has so obviously and explicitly told all Catholics to listen to what the world has to say to them. This is it!

Camus' challenge is nothing new. We can say the same thing to ourselves, and we do when we are in the mood. And yet there remain always that fatal ambiguity, that confusion, the muddle, the fuss, the hesitation, the withdrawal into obscurity, and finally the negation of what we just said. We give it out with one hand and take it all back with the other. We promise everything and then cancel it all out by promising the opposite to someone else. In a word we have to please everybody. So we are uncertain, dubious, obscure. And finally we just give up and keep our mouths shut.

Fully to understand the implications of Camus' stark demand we have to see it against the background of his thought and not against the background of what has been standard practice in Christian society for centuries. We can accept with great good will Camus' declaration of the necessity to protest against injustice and evil. But when we look a little closer at society the picture is not so simple. It is on the contrary very intricate, and threads work within threads in a complex social tapestry in which, everywhere, are the faces of bishops, of priests and of our fellow Catholics. We are involved everywhere in everything and we have to go easy . . . Perhaps that is why it is so simple to blast off against Communism. There are no bishops of ours in Russia and we have nothing invested there except hopes. Communism has made it easy for us: by its single-minded hostility to the Church it has become the one force we can always condemn without compromise at any moment . . . until, perhaps we start making deals with Communism



# AND THE CHURCH

from page 1)

too. Then there will be nobody left!

Where we see unavoidable, distressing and yet "normal" complications, Camus sees "the absurd." What we accept and come to terms with, he denounces and resists. The "absurd" of Camus is not the metaphysical absurd and meant of Sartre, and his "revolt" is not the Sartrean nausea. The absurd of Camus is the gap between the actual shape of life and intelligible truth. Absurdity is compounded by the ambiguous and false explanations, interpretations, conventions, justifications, legalizations, evasions which infect our struggling civilization with "the plague," and which often bring us most dangerously close to perfect nihilism when they offer a security based on a seemingly rational use of absolute power.

It is here that we are forced to confront the presence of "the absurd" in the painful, humiliating contradictions and ambiguities which are constantly and everywhere evident in our behavior as Christians in the world. To mention only one: the scandal of men who claim to believe in a religion of love, mercy, forgiveness, and peace, dedicating themselves wholeheartedly and single-mindedly to secular ideologies of hate, cruelty, revenge and war and lending to those ideologies the support of a Christian moral easuistry. And when the Church officially examines her conscience before the world and repudiates this contradiction, many Catholics still find ways of ignoring and evading the consequences of what the Church has said. "The arms race is an utterly treacherous trap for humanity and one which injures the poor to an intolerable degree . . . Divine Providence urgently demands of us that we free ourselves from the age-old slavery of war. But if we refuse to make this effort . . ." (Vatican Council II, *Gaudium et Spes*, 81.) Who is making a really serious effort? A few of us are perhaps thinking it over! Certainly the Church has spoken without ambiguity, though still in official language: but if Christians themselves do not pay attention, or simply shrug the whole thing off, the ambiguity persists, and it is perhaps more disconcerting than it was before. The prisoner in *The Stranger* did not even hope that the chaplain would be any less absurd than the lawyers and the judges. He knew in advance he was "with all the others!"

To really understand what Camus asked of Christians that evening at the Dominican house of Latour-Maubourg, we would have to understand his difficult analysis of two centuries of cultural and political history in *The Rebel*. This book is, admittedly, a failure. But its insights remain nevertheless extremely precious, and they enable us still to see through the specious claims of the power politician (so often accepted without question by Christians both of the right and of the left) and to detect beneath the superficial arguments the absurd void of nihilism and mass murder. At this point we might quote a Catholic thinker, Claude Tresmontant, who restates in purely Catholic terms exactly what Camus means by being a "Rebel" against "the absurd":

But the child is going to inherit also, and especially by the education he is going to receive from his environment, a set of ready-made ideas, a system of judgments, a scale of values which, as often as not, he will not be able to question or criticize. This system of values, in the aggregate of nations, in large part is criminal. It is the reflection of a criminal world in which man oppresses, massacres, tortures, humiliates, and

exploits his brother. The child enters into an organized world, on the political, economic, mental, mythological, psychological, and other planes. And the structure of this world is penetrated and informed by sin. The child is not born in Paradise. It is born in a criminal humanity. In order to have access to justice, to sanctity, the child, as it grows up, will have to make a personal act of judgment, of refusal, of choice. It will have to make a personal act of opposition to the values of its tribe, of its caste, of its nation or of its race, and of its social class, in order to attain justice. To a certain extent it will have to leave its tribe, its nation, its care, its class, its race, as Abraham the father of the faithful did, he left Ur of the Chaldees to go into a country that he did not know. Holiness begins with a breach. Nothing can dispense this child from breaking with "the world." In order to enter into Christianity, the child will have to choose between the values of the world, the values of the tribe, its nation or its social class, and the values of the Gospel. It must renew its scale of values. It must, as it were, be born anew, from the spiritual point of view; it must become a new creature. Tertullian said one is not born a Christian. One becomes a Christian. The access to Christianity represents a new birth. One can then legitimately distinguish between the state which precedes this new birth and the state which follows it. The state which precedes this new birth is the state which the Church call "original sin."

(Christian Metaphysics)

But does the Catholic Church clearly and always define the relation of the Christian to secular society in these terms? Does it not in fact, like the chaplain in *The Stranger*, identify itself at times with this society?

For Camus it is clear that a certain type of thinking and talking, a certain mental attitude, even though it may be vested in the most edifying pontifical cliches, betrays a firm commitment to economic and political interests which are incompatible in the long run with the message of the Gospel, the true teaching of the Church and the Christian mission in the world. It is the commitment that speaks louder than any words. It manifests itself in the peculiar absurdity of official double-talk, the language of bureaucratic evasion, which, while nodding politely to Christian principles, effectively comes out in full support of wealth, injustice and brute power. For Camus, it is axiomatic that any ideology, any program, whether of the right or left, which leads to mass-murder and concentration camps as a direct consequence is to be revolted against, no matter how "reasonable" and "right" it is made to appear.

Speaking in an interview in Sao Paulo, Brazil, in 1949, Camus said: "Only the friends of dictatorships, the people who set up concentration camps, can be in favor of war. It is the duty of writers to sound the alarm and to fight against every form of slavery. That is our job."

The Camusian "Rebel" fulfills the role of the prophet in modern society, and it is to the writer and the artist that Camus looks above all to carry out this essential task. Nowhere in his work do we find him expressing any real hope of this prophetic voice being raised in the pulpit or in the documents of the Church, though as we have seen, he still says it is the Church's job to speak out also. He no longer looks to her for guidance—but he does at least

hope for a little support. If she cannot lead, she can at least follow!

In the same interview, speaking of the poet Rene Char, "the biggest event in French poetry since Rimbaud," he says he expects far more from poets than from moralists. "When you say 'poetry' you are close to love, that great force which one cannot replace with money, which is vile, nor with that pitiable thing they call 'La Morale.'" (Note that in French primary schools there is—or was—a weekly class in "La Morale" in which the children memorize the most appalling platitudes. One wonders if our catechism is much better.)

It was said above that *The Rebel* is not a fully successful thesis on revolt. In spite of some acute and detailed analysis and diagnosis, nothing is very positively prescribed. But there remains a basic ambiguity in the



Rita Corbin.

book. In his study of modern revolutionary violence and his analysis of its inevitable trend toward tyranny and mass murder, Camus attributes this to the godlessness of modern revolutionaries. At the same time he admits that without God there can be no rational philosophy and practice of nonviolence. Yet he still cannot make the Pascalian wager of faith (by which he seems at times to be tempted). If there is to be a choice between faith and the absurd, his stoic conscience will, in the end, dictate the choice of the absurd. And the "absurd man" of Camus remains strangely isolated even though, if he is consistently faithful to his steady view of the absurd, he should proceed to a revolt that joins him in solidarity with other men of his own kind. But this solidarity lacks human validity unless it is in the service of life and humanity. In other words, revolt is legitimate only if it refuses all complicity with mass murder and totalism of whatever kind, whether of the right or of the left.

"There is one problem only today," said Camus in a statement of 1946, "and that is the problem of murder. All our disputes are vain. One thing alone matters, and that is peace."

However, Camus was never an out-and-out pacifist. He always admitted the possibility of a strictly limited use of force. He had various reasons for this, besides the rather complex one of his rejection of faith in God, which at the same time implied the impossibility, for him, of consistent nonviolence and pacifism. Since man can attain only an "approximation of justice" then it is futile for him to hope to avoid all use of force, but he must restrain himself and exercise full, indeed heroic, responsibility in keeping the use of force down to the minimum, where it is always provisional and limited and never in favor of a cause that consecrates and codifies violence as a permanent factor in its policies.

The peculiar isolation of Camus' position comes from his inability to cope with the idea of God and of faith to which his sense of justice and his instinctive nonviolence nevertheless enticed him. In the same way, he was led up to the "silence of God" by his interest in the studies on the phenomenology of language writ-

ten by his friend Brice Parain, an existentialist who became a Catholic in the late forties, when he was closely associated with Camus. In fact we cannot do full justice to Camus' relations with the Church without taking into consideration his interest in the ideas of Parain. It is here that Camus' dialogue with Catholicism developed on the most intimate and profound level.

In an age of highly academic linguistic analysis, Camus appreciated the courage of Parain, who sees the problem of language as ultimately a metaphysical problem. The questioning of meaning raises the whole question of reality itself and in the end Parain is asking one thing above all: can language make sense if there is no God? In other words, what is the point of talking about truth and falsity if there is no God? Is not man, in that case, reduced to putting together a series of more

or less arbitrary noises in the solitude of a mute world? Are these noises anything more than the signals of animals and birds? True, our noises exist in a very complex on-going context of development and are richly associated with one another and with other cultural phenomena: but can they be true? And does this matter? Or are they merely incidents in a developing adventure that will one day end in some kind of meaning but which, for the time being, has none?

Parain rejects this post-Hegelian position and returns to the classical idea of language as able to provide grounds for at least elementary certitude. If language has no meaning then nothing has any meaning. Language has enough meaning, at least, to reassure us that we are not floating in a pure void. In other words, communication becomes possible, and with it community, once it is admitted that our words are capable of being true or false and that the decision is largely up to us. "To name a thing wrong is to add to the miseries of the world." We are thus called to take care of our language, and to use it clearly. "The great task of man is not to serve the lie." These words of Parain might have been uttered—and have been uttered equivalently many times—by Camus. And so Camus says, in a review—article of Parain's books, "it is not altogether certain that our epoch has lacked gods: it seems on the contrary that what it needs is a dictionary."

It is certainly true that the twentieth century has been distinguished for its single-minded adoration of political and cultural idols rather than for the clarity and honesty of its official speech. The sheer quantity of printed and broadcasted doubletalk overwhelms the lucid utterances of a few men like Camus.

But once again, Camus remains sober and un-idealistic. Our task is not suddenly to burst out into the dazzle of utter unadulterated truth but laboriously to reshape an accurate and honest language that will permit communication between men on all social and intellectual levels, instead of multiplying a Babel of esoteric and technical tongues which isolate men in their specialities.

What characterizes our century is not so much that we

have to rebuild our world as that we have to rethink it. This amounts to saying that we have to give it back its language . . . The vocabularies that are proposed to us are of no use to us . . . and there is no point in a Byzantine exercise upon themes of grammar. We need a profound questioning which will not separate us from the sufferings of men . . .

It is unfortunately true that the "Byzantine exercises," not only of logical positivism (which nevertheless has a certain limited value) but of all kinds of technical and specialized thinking, tend to remove us from the world in which others, and we ourselves, are plunged in the dangers and the sufferings of an increasingly absurd and unmanageable social situation. As Camus and Parain have seen: we have to rethink that whole situation and we no longer possess the language with which to do it.

Such a language will necessarily confine itself at first to formulating what is accessible to all men. But it will not talk down to them or cajole them. It will enable them to lift themselves up. Yet if the artist, the peasant, the scientist and the workman are all going to communicate together, their language will have to have a certain simplicity and austerity in order to be clear to them all without degrading thought. This means not the attainment of a pure classic prose (though Camus admits he thinks of a "new Classicism") but rather of a kind of "superior banality" which will consist in "returning to the words of everybody, but bringing to them the honesty that is required for them to be purified of lies and hatred."

It is at this point that we can see what Camus is asking not only of intellectuals but also of the Church: this purification and restitution of language so that the truth may become once again unambiguous and fully accessible to all men, especially when they need to know what to do.

I think that everybody will readily admit that the language of the Church is distinguished by a "superior banality," but this is not the kind that Camus was talking about. We can certainly say that the Church speaks without hatred and that she does not lie. On the other hand, as we saw, it is quite possible for her to speak in such complex, unclear, evasive and bureaucratic language that her message is simply inaccessible even to a reader of some education and average patience. With a few outstanding exceptions, the clergy, Catholic thinkers, teachers, writers, too often speak so confusedly, so timidly, so obscurely, that even when they are telling the truth they manage to keep it out of circulation. In fact one sometimes wonders if some of the writers of official documents have not trained themselves to tell the truth in such a way that it will have no visible effect. Then one can say indeed that one has "told the truth," but nobody will have got excited or done anything about it!

After all, it was not Camus who said to the Church: "Go, teach all nations." And the teaching of the nations is not to be accomplished by the triumphal utterance of totally obscure generalities. It is not enough for us to be at once meticulously correct and absolutely uninteresting and unclear. Nor, when we have clarified our speech and livened it up a bit can we be content that we have merely declared the truth, made it public, announced it to the world. Are we concerned merely to get others to hear us? We have a hearing. But how many of those that hear us, and understand what we are saying, are convinced? Perhaps we are satisfied with proving to them (and thereby to ourselves) that we are convinced. But the kind of rethinking that Camus—and the world—call for demands not only the publication of official statements but the common effort to

(Continued on page 8)



## On Pilgrimage

(Continued from Page 2)

and the sick. And every other day is spent in prayer and study in the church. Among the Samaritains is Fr. Saey's mother, now eighty-five, and there are eight in their infirmary. The day of the Samaritains begins at six with a meditation and then Mass. They live on alms and keep silence except where charity and their work makes speech necessary. It was they themselves who rejected the hour a day of recreation and talk which Father Saey suggested for them. He gives two conferences a week and two on Sunday. The room was lined with shelves of books, all uniformly covered with brown paper and neatly titled. They enjoy the best of spiritual reading and conversation, one might say, with the great. They listen to them and speak to them and to God in prayer.

Abbe Saey started to give retreats in 1937 and ceased to give them in 1942. He can no longer give retreats, and the women with whom he works are silent, so there are no new recruits for this work. I warned him that if I wrote about this work he was liable to receive visits from many kinds of applicants, so great is the hunger for holiness, but so few count the cost or can pay it. However, anyone attracted to such a vocation should be given a chance to try it. No one could live in such silence or in such hard manual labor if she was not called to it, if she did not have a true vocation for it. These women, who lead this life in the world, read the *Catholic Worker*, I am happy to say, (those of them who read English) and they pray for us, and so does Father Saey. A long time ago a cloistered sister told me that she did not read the paper and I asked her to read it so that she would pray the harder for us.

There is a young group of priests who wish to update the Samaritains, but, as Father Saey points out, there is not much updating to be done about the family wash of the poor. Two parishes are merging, and there is a rumor that he is to be transferred. But he has outlasted pastors and other vicars at St. Ireneus. Karl told me that Anne Freemantle once asked him where to go to confession and he sent her to Father Saey. When he saw her on her return her comment was, "Another St. John of the Cross."

### On the St. Lawrence

The next morning I started for home but stopped at Caughnawaga, an Indian village, to visit with Father Plante, the nephew of Father Pacifique Roy, the priest of whom I have written so often, and he gave me more material for the book I am writing, *All Is Grace*. We talked about the retreat movement, about the family, about Indians, and about the river itself, which we looked out on while we ate lunch together in a little sitting room in the old rectory.

Up to forty ships a day go through the locks of the St. Lawrence and they seem to ride high above you, great vessels of twenty-six thousand tons, bearing wheat or iron ore. In mid-December everything is frozen and traffic stops, but it begins again around Easter. They are contemplating, it is said, another great waterway connecting the Hudson with the Richelieu and the St. Lawrence, fighting the weather which closes the St. Lawrence Seaway so many months of the year. They have robbed the Indians even here at the reservation, taking the river front, which is now Crown property, for Seaway.

### Boston Requiem

Two weeks after I got back I received a telephone call at Tivoli telling me of the death of Jane Marra, who was responsible for starting all the *Catholic Worker* activities in the Boston area. She was to be buried from the cathedral on Wednesday, so Tuesday

noon I took a bus from Albany at one-thirty, which brought me into Boston at six. Calling John Cort's home, I found that I was just in time for the wake. Arriving at the funeral parlor, I met Arthur Sheehan, Ignatius O'Connor, Catherine Ahearn, John Kelly, the Corts and Charles Dastoli, Oni Shea and her husband and two of her children, and two of the Little Sisters of Jesus who live in that area and work at manual labor in a Catholic Hospital. There was a beautiful service led by Father Francis from the British Honduras.

The wake service is contained in *Our Parish Prays and Sings*, a book published by the Liturgical Press at Collegeville, Minnesota. There were additional readings from the Scriptures, including that wonderful scene from the 36th chapter of Ezekiel, which has so comforted me in time of war: "Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain that they may live. Thus says the Lord God: Behold, I will open your graves, O my people; and I will bring you home into the land of Israel. And you shall know that I am the Lord, when I open your graves and raise you from your graves, O my people. And I will put my Spirit within you, and you shall live, and I will place you in your own land; then you shall know that I, the Lord, have spoken, and I have done it, says the Lord."

The next day, after a requiem Mass at the Lady Chapel in the Cathedral, we drove out to Waltham to the Marra family plot. It was a sunny day. Father Francis said the prayers at the grave and gave a homily with great simplicity and beauty. Our hearts were warmed, and we were happy for Jane, that she had finished her course in peace and joy and could look back on a full and fruitful life. She had started the *Catholic Worker* in Boston, and Arthur Sheehan and John Magee had come to live in the house on Tremont Street which Peter Maurin and Stanley Vishnevsky and others had often visited. They had sold papers and carried on discussions on the Boston Common. Hospitality continued for many years. The Upton farm was bought by the Boston group; four families settled there and twenty-eight children grew up there. Ed Willock came to the Boston house and decorated its walls with murals, and went from there to help start the Worcester House of Hospitality, and married one of the girls who came to help; later he came to New York to start the magazine *Integrity* with Carol Jackson. From that magazine came a community of families up the Hudson, within commuting distance from New York, who built each others' houses and aided each other in sickness and in health. That community is still there, and the farm at Upton, though both the old Boston and the Worcester houses are no longer operating. But John McKenna, a teacher, and the former Cathie Sullivan, who is now his wife, have been running a house of hospitality in the slums of Boston and now at Roxbury, for the past year.

It is not of these things that the newspapers spoke in their obituaries of Jane Marra. They told of her active and successful life in the trade-union movement of Boston, and her work as secretary of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union for many years. She had aided the worker in the needle trades, and she had helped the unemployed and the unemployables. A great and beautiful life. May she rest in peace.

"Not what thou art, nor what thou hast been, doth God regard with his merciful eyes—but what thou wouldst be."

The Cloud of Unknowing



## A Farm With a View

(Continued from page 3)

Marty Corbin, Kay Lynch, Joe de Carlo, Pasquale, and I went to Bard College to hear Olga Andreyev Carlyle and Professor Michael Minihan, who teaches Russian at Bard, discuss modern Russian writers. After the talk, we went with Professor Minihan to his apartment, where Mrs. Carlye, Helene, and the professor led us in a more informal discussion of present-day Russian writers, particularly those of the Soviets, about whom of us know so little. We were delighted a week or so later when Professor Minihan came to visit Helene here at the farm and continued the discussion in our dining room. As one might expect on a farm with woodland paths and an incomparable view, walking is also a favorite diversion. The other day I particularly enjoyed a walk up the high and wooded hill which is the site of Jim's hermitage. Jim and Joe, the builders, acted as guides along the way and about the house. It is a beautiful hermitage, where Contemplation will surely dwell. But Jim himself should describe it.

Some of us enjoy more intellectual and esthetic pursuits. Although folk singing continues popular, some of us like also to listen to recorded classical or liturgical music. One night recently Helene Iswolsky, Marty, Jim McMurry, Joe de Carlo, and I gathered in Helene's, which has become our Russian center, to hear Jim and Joe give a reading of some of their poems. The poems were good and were well read. I am glad that I have them on tape, and can listen to them again.

Tonight as I sat at my typewriter, Helene came to my room to tell me that it was snowing. I put on my coat and stepped out on the roof which we call the sun deck. I felt the wet flakes on my cheek and the accumulated softness under my feet. I heard the children run outside crying out with delight at the wonder of new-falling snow. Standing in that white moment, I thought of the true meaning of Christmas. I prayed that all our friends and readers might enjoy a holy and blessed Christmas with the peace which only the Christ Child can give. O Mary, Mother of God, pray for us that we may not forget that where there are those who are hungry, He is hungry, where there are those who are cold, He is cold, where there are those who are suffering, He is suffering. Hark, the herald angels sing. Peace on earth to men of good will.

## New Front In Delano

(Continued from page 1)

first winter in California, and out of fear, stupidity or necessity, they have not joined the huelga.

No work for the scabs, and very little opportunity to picket for the strikers. About a hundred strikers went to Los Angeles last week for a "gate collection" at the entrance to the big auto plants and missile factories. The money they raised will help bolster the depleted strike fund. Without the help of the AFL-CIO, we probably couldn't make it, but their help is not really enough for us to make it very comfortably. Cesar is in Mexico, presumably laying the groundwork for closing the border, an essential task if the strike is ever really to change the lives of farm workers in all California and Texas. And while he was gone, one of the old-line AFL-CIO organizers who has been helping us, was tortured and maimed in the most bestial manner by unknown assailants. It is a huge power game, deadly serious, and all of us are willing pawns in that game, because the stakes are very high, not for ourselves, but for the farm workers, who have no way out if we fail.

Outside of the power game, there is the daily routine, which is not deadening because we can see the whole picture and our individual place in it. Every day Manuel Sanchez and Helen Serda "hold court" in their hiring hall—which is a part of an old tortilla factory facing the freeway, a building they have to share with the Teatro Campesino, our tempestuous indigenous actors, who are right now playing to capacity crowds of farm workers in the Pacific Northwest. Their tour there this month is the beginning of the huelga in Washington, Oregon and Idaho. Farm workers who see their performances will take it on themselves to organize those three states, using the small helps that we can give them. The process is just as simple and as complex as that.

### Medical Care

While all this is going on, two trailers, sitting in a muddy encampment on the edge of Delano, bulge with people. This is the miraculous Farm Workers Health Clinic, which has actually survived since the beginning of the strike on donations of time and money by dedicated doctors who drive three hundred miles from San Francisco to Delano in order to spend a day treating people who desperately need their healing hands. In my only professional contact with them, their volunteer dentist fixed up my rotting teeth. The "professional" relationship was gone; here another human being simply helping me, and together we were part of the whole thing that is the Delano strike. I guess that is what community really means. It really works: in spite of horrible conditions, impossible tasks, disorganization and occasional stupidity, this saving force provides a continual regeneration for everyone here: our value as individuals is reaffirmed in the obvious value of the whole scene. It is because of this that the scabs want the strike to win, that Dolores has the strength to fight against hard-bitten arbitration lawyers, that the Teatro can so easily communicate with the thousands of voiceless, ghost-like people who pick the crops.

In describing the whole thing, I haven't even scratched the surface: people fanning out from Delano across the whole country; Jerry and Jane Brown in the vineyards of New York State; Eugene Nelson, Tony Crendain and the Chandlers in Rio Grande City, Texas, the end of the world, holding out against the impossible odds of an open border and ruthless police repression. The strike is on the streets of San Francisco, where our workers there—church people, young radicals, rank-and-

file unionists—patiently walk the picket lines, scheme their way into newspapers, and raise money and food. Then there are the truck-chasers: strikers who follow the loads of grapes to distributors and stop them with picket lines. There is the boycott; third in a successful line. This one is against Perelli-Minetti and Sons, a winery and vineyard in McFarland, California, five miles from here.

And there is the principle of nonviolence, which permeates all of these activities. The picket line passed the test last month, when, after the striker Manuel Rivera was viciously run down by a rancher's truck and crushed, they did not retaliate. This kind of thing is very, very hard to do, because it makes you very angry to see someone run down like this. Rivera is slowly recovering.

A week later that same picket line saw the capitulation of the rancher, Goldberg and Sons, making the third victory for the farm workers: Schenley, DiGiorgio, and now Goldberg.

"Leroy's House," next door to the Pink House, shelters a small corps of shock troops, who are experts (like Gilbert Padilla) in getting benefits to which farm-worker union members and strikers are entitled to under state welfare and disability laws. There is also a credit union, and there will soon be a co-op store. We have a piece of land, eighty acres outside of Delano, and someday it will be occupied with all of the now decentralized operations, and we will be able to forget about broken glass, leaky roofs and heaters that don't work.

### How To Help

New for the commercial, which Dorothy so kindly suggested I include. Our own little community within the strike is called the "Farm Worker Press." Every two weeks we publish a magazine concerning the farm-worker movement called *El Malcriado*. It costs \$2.50 a year and is well worth it. (For instance, Princeton University saw fit to pay us the exorbitant sum of one hundred dollars for a set of back issues.)

We also publish books and records about the strike. *Huelga*, by Eugene Nelson, costs \$1.50. It tells the story of the early days of the strike and has some pictures. *Basta*, a very beautiful book of photos and text, costs \$2. The 33 rpm record, costing \$3.98, is *Viva La Causa*. It's sort of rough, but Pete Seeger liked it, and it is certainly unusual.

The Farm Worker Press is as poor as the strike of which it is an integral part, and it is only through all kinds of financial gymnastics that it is possible to publish these things. Right now we need money badly. At first I was selling "shares" of ownership in Farm Worker Press to our supporters for \$10 each; but the ranchers are always keeping the law down on us, and my lawyer tells me that if we continue, I will go to jail. So I will beg readers of the *Catholic Worker* to send us \$10 "tokens of support," so that we can carry on our very important work of keeping everyone informed about the strike, and more important, of providing a newspaper for the farm workers which is their own paper.

Our address is Farm Worker Press, Box 1060, Delano, California. We will give any specific strike contributions to the Union, or to the Clinic, but we do need money ourselves very badly, and I am not ashamed to beg for it because of the work we are doing.

And also, please go to your liquor store, and ask them to take Perelli-Minetti products off their shelves. Their brands are Eleven Cellars and Tribuno.

ALBERT CAMUS:

"Liberty is not a gift that one receives from a state or a leader."



# Jim Wilson's Day in Court

(Continued from page 1)

was one of joy and gaiety. Miss Day spoke eagerly of the importance and power of Mass, of Jim's act as a form of martyrdom; she spoke, too, of how strongly she felt about Jim, whose absolutist position, unencumbered by lawyers and compromise, stark in its Christianity, was truly that of the Catholic Worker. Mass seemed, however, uppermost in their minds at the moment; rage, unfortunately, being uppermost in mine, I did not ask if I might join them.

The ride from dreary New York to dismal Newark was uneventful, yet fraught with anxiety and tension. Arriving in plenty of time, Dorothy invited Pat and me to breakfast in a restaurant near the Federal Court Building. A joyful breakfast, in her words. But, again, I could not meet that occasion. To be sure, I remembered the joy with which the early Christians are reported to have met their deaths; the perennial Christian paradox: one must die in order to live; that such a death, being in fact an affirmation of life itself as well as the doorstep to a new life, was to be greeted joyfully, not mournfully. But I knew Jim Wilson and his wife Raona; we had worked together, talked anxiously about the problems we confronted at the Worker, with the government, in our time. I shared the anxiety and tension which preceded the then unknown date of sentencing; shared, too, their relief when that date was finally made known to them; and, in dread and hope, awaited the passing of sentence.

It was long in coming. We had time to grow accustomed to the pretentious decor of the courtroom; the buzzing *tete-a-tetes* of lawyers and defendants in the seats around us, oblivious to the drama going on in front of the judge; accustomed to the harsh officiousness of the courtroom detectives, who would not tolerate the babies crying; we grew accustomed, also, to the unvarying formulae—the monotonous repetitions—of Judge Shaw who, in addressing each defendant, addressed him in exactly the same words, informing him of his unparalleled rights and privileges, particular, of course, to the present situation.

Finally, after all the arraignments, after all the dull procedure, the time of Jim's sentencing approached. A Jehovah's Witness, who had pled guilty, as Jim did, to refusing to be inducted, was to be sentenced first. He appeared confused and the judge soon convinced him that he was; if he wanted to retract his plea and call for legal aid, the judge would assist him. He was asked to sit down and think it over.

Jim was called to the bench. The judge asked if he wanted counsel. "No, Sir" Jim replied. Judge Shaw then went on to point out that religious grounds were the basis for refusing military service in this case also, to which Jim agreed. But the Judge dropped that issue and spoke of how, as it appeared to him, Jim was not going to do anything the law required. Interrupting the Judge, Jim asked if he might read his statement, and immediately, the manner of Pavlov's dogs, the Judge replied, "I will take into consideration anything, etc., etc." After Jim had read his statement, which did not seem to be of great interest to the Judge, the latter asked him if there were any other country in which he would be granted such rights and privileges

as were here, in this courtroom, being granted to him? and didn't he (Jim) think that it was necessary, in order to preserve these rights, that Americans, from time to time, fight for them? Not meeting with the response he desired, he then went on to observe that Jim was "a very wrong man with a high degree of immaturity,"—one who looked upon himself as a law unto himself; who obeyed only those he liked. He had no choice but to condemn such arrogant immaturity. Judge Shaw then sentenced Jim Wilson to three years' imprisonment.

Jim Wilson comes from an upper-middle-class background and a most conservative town in New Jersey. Working with us he preferred the raw reality of the first floor of Chrystie Street's St. Joseph House—the unabashed humanity of the soupline, the frequent and raucous fights, the pitiful needs of the men on the Bowery, to the second and third floors, the clothing room, mailing room, office, which seemed far removed from those naked needs, that overwhelming stench of the first floor (do not ask from whom the stench comes; it comes from us all). Jim gives witness, in the Pauline sense, to his Christianity. His witness—in existential terms "confrontation"—with the essential elements of his day include not only the men on the Bowery, the people in the peace movement, the preoccupied Christians of our time; but also the minor officials of our Kafkaesque state. He tries to reach cops, probation officers, judges, F.B.I. agents, even self-seeking conscience-ridden professionals who, upset perhaps at the polarity of Jim's and their lives, sought him out.

Jim was taken away. Outside, our group broke up: some to take Raona back to the city; Miss Day and Pat Rusk to be temporarily lost in the maze of industrial Jersey, then to watch the sun set, and finally to return to the Worker for dinner; still others remained to be with the Jehovah Witness as he was sentenced. He was not confused anymore. "Yes, he was guilty of refusing to be inducted. No, he would not accept counsel. No, he would not seek CO status. No, he would not kill. The judge, bewildered, had no recourse but to sentence him to three years' imprisonment.

Rage, then, must give way to joy.

"Thieves, robbers, murderers, swindlers are examples of what one must not be, and they inspire in men's minds a horror of wrong doing. But men who commit acts of theft, of robbery, of chastisement, and gild them with some religious, scientific, or liberal justification—who do it as landowners, merchants, or manufacturers—appeal to others to imitate their acts; they injure not only those who suffer under them, but thousands and millions of men whose morals they ruin by destroying the distinction between good and evil in these men's minds. A single sentence of death, carried out by men not under the influence of passion, by prosperous, educated persons with the encouragement and assistance of Christian clergymen, corrupts and brutalizes mankind more than hundreds or thousands of murders committed by uneducated working men, usually in an access of passion. Every war even the shortest, with all its accompanying losses, thefts, tolerated excesses, robberies, murders, with the supposed justification of its necessity and justice, with the praise and glorification of warlike deeds, with prayers for the flag and the Fatherland and the hypocritical anxiety for the wounded, corrupts man more in one year than millions of robberies, arsons, and murders committed by individuals under the influence of passions in the course of hundreds of years."

LEO TOLSTOY



## Book Review

**THE RESPECTABLE MURDERERS** by Paul Hanly Furfey. Herder & Herder, \$4.50. Reviewed by STANLEY VISH-NEWSKI.

Look in the mirror. What do you see there? A smiling kindly jovial face. The reflection of a person who would not cause harm to anyone. A good citizen who obeys the laws and refrains from kicking his dog. A person who remembers to send his mother-in-law flowers for her birthday.

No!—what you see there is a murderer—a respectable murderer, and this is the frightening thesis of Monsignor Furfey, who is with the sociology department of Catholic University and was one of the early pioneers in the social-action movement of the American Church. In the early years of the Catholic Worker he conducted several memorable retreats for the staff and took an active part in the work.

His two books (written at that time) *Fire on the Earth and Mystery of Iniquity* were searing indictments of the social evils in the 30's and at the same time outlined a program of action for those interested in working for a Christian social order. His latest book will cause many a "good citizen" to examine his conscience.

The criminals of our society are not only the ones that have been placed behind bars for the individual crimes of murder, robbery, rape. No—according to Monsignor Furfey, the greatest crimes in history have been committed by the so-called respectable people—the stolid, well-meaning citizens who form the bulk of our society.

The real criminals and murderers of society are the good citizens (look in the mirror, dear reader) who give obedience to evil laws. Monsignor Furfey makes a claim for civil disobedience, for what is called the virtue of disobedience: "To be charitable, one must often be disobedient."

It is the good citizen, by his blind obedience to doubtful laws, his silence and his disinclination to upset the modern conventions, who is responsible for the slaughter of the European Jews and the horrors perpetrated by the Nazis. It is he who is responsible for the bombing of noncombatants. It is he who is responsible for the poverty and degradation of millions, both in this country and abroad.

What is horrifying and disturbing is the realization that these crimes against humanity were not committed by criminals outside the law; they were committed within the framework of the legal system—often with a farcial trial to maintain some pretense of legality—and the ordinary good citizen stood by and approved.

The slave system, with all its horrors, was kept going only because good people believed in it and gave it their support. It is interesting to note that the arguments against the abolitionists are almost the same arguments used against the pacemakers who oppose war as a national policy.

"It is apparent," Monsignor Furfey writes, "that the great injustices of history, the exploitations of the defenseless, the massacres of the innocent, the savage persecutions, are perpetrated not by disreputable men who disobey good laws, but by respectable men who obey evil laws."

# Visiting a Prisoner

By CHARLES BUTTERWORTH

Some of our friends and visitors will undoubtedly remember Tony, who used to help Roger O'Neil give out clothes at the old Chrystie Street house. He was known to us then as Tony Morrissev. When we moved to Spring Street at the beginning of 1959 Tony did not go with us. In 1960 we learned that he had been arrested, and I went to visit him in jail at 100 Centre Street. He and two other men had been caught trying to steal some whiskey from a bar. On this charge Tony did over two years in Auburn prison. Meanwhile he became engaged to a girl he had worked with at St. Vincent's Hospital.

As soon as he was released from Auburn, Tony was arrested again. Although we had known nothing of any previous trouble, it seems that he was wanted by the Georgia authorities. In March 1957 Tony had been convicted in Fulton County, Georgia for a hold-up involving eleven dollars. He had no lawyer, pleaded guilty, and received a sentence of from five to ten years. Shortly after being sentenced, he had escaped from prison and made his way to New York City and eventually to the Catholic Worker.

Lawyers from the Legal Aid Society managed to delay Tony's extradition for another year by appeals to state and Federal courts. However, the United States Supreme Court refused to hear the case and in February 1964 Tony was taken back to Georgia. In escaping from prison he had taken a guard's automobile and he therefore received a life sentence, which he is now serving.

After investigating the case, an American Civil Liberties Union lawyer in Atlanta wrote to me:

"If we were successful at a hearing on the writ the maximum relief we could expect is an order for a new trial. At such a new trial, Mr. Morton (Tony is known in Georgia as Robert Morton) might possibly get the death penalty for robbery by force. In addition, he could possibly later be tried for his 1957 escape. As things now stand he could possibly get a parole after serving seven years. I think, after studying this case, that it would be to his advantage not to seek a new trial, via habeas corpus, but to seek a parole based upon good behavior, etc., at the appropriate time."

### Southern Hospitality

Having occasion to go to Georgia this summer, I decided to visit Tony at the prison in Reidsville. I arrived at nearby Claxton on a Saturday night and telephoned the local Catholic church to find out the time of Sunday Mass. Father Richard Steinkamp answered and, when he learned my situation, came for me in his car and drove me to the rectory for a TV dinner. While we were eating, Father James Hite, who turned out to be a friend of the Catholic Worker, came in. He is the chaplain at Reidsville and knows Tony, so he arranged for me to attend the prison Mass on Sunday.

I was able to talk to Tony for over an hour. Visitation takes place in a large room and is very free. There is no table between prisoner and visitor, children are permitted to visit, husband and wife are allowed to embrace. I learned that conditions in the prison had improved greatly in the past year or so under the new warden, A. L. Dutton. Tony works in the prison hospital and is the equivalent of a practical nurse. He enjoys his work and is reading medical books in his spare time. He has given up the idea of a new trial and is instead hoping for probation after five years. Even this will require legal expenses and Tony has therefore been doing leather work to make extra income.

Tony can receive mail from any-

one and would be very happy to hear from friends who knew him at the CW. If you can use hand-stitched leather goods (woman's shoulder bag, man's wallet, key case, etc.), for gifts or personal use let him know what you would like.

His address is: Robert Morton, 49026-C, Reidsville, Georgia 30453.



## Prisoners for Peace 1966

The list of those imprisoned in the United States for refusal of conscription and other anti-war activities is longer this year than ever before and we hope that your readers will flood the prisons with greeting cards during the holiday season. Please remember that your card should bear only your name and address; in most cases, cards containing personal messages will not be delivered. A few minutes of your time while preparing your Christmas list can mean a lot for the morale of those who are making the sacrifice of months or years in jail for the cause of peace. The list below is as complete as we can make it; a list of prisoners for peace throughout the world can be obtained from the War Resisters League, 5 Beekman St., New York, N.Y. 10038.

- James A. Johnson, Dennis Mora, David A. Sarnas, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas.
- Christopher Hodgkin, Fred Moore, George Jalbert, Federal Prison Camp, Allenwood, Pa.
- Jerry Venable, Federal Reformatory, Chillicothe, Ohio.
- Barry Bassin, Federal Penitentiary, Lewisburg, Pa.
- Darryl Skrabak, Federal Reformatory, Lompoc, Calif.
- Francis Galt, Jon Jost, Federal Correctional Inst., Sandstone, Minn.
- Robert Twigger, Stockade, Fort Hood, Texas.
- Mike Wittels, Post Stockade, Fort Knox, Kentucky.
- Paul Perrier, Stockade, Fort Polk, La.
- Michael Couch, Treasure Island Brig, Calif.
- Jeffrey Whittier, Federal Youth Inst., Ashland, Kentucky.
- David Bell, Terry Sullivan, William McMillen, James Walsh, Federal Correctional Inst., Danbury, Conn.
- Robert A. Hill, Federal Reformatory, El Reno, Oklahoma.
- Gregory Beardall, John Phillips, Tom Radd, Federal Reformatory, Petersburg, Virginia.
- Murphy Dowouis, Federal Correctional Inst., Seagoville, Texas.
- Raymond Crane, Stockade, Fort Jackson, South Carolina.
- Felix Chavey, James M. Taylor, Stockade, Fort Ord, Calif.
- Anderson, Bert Kanewski, Naval Correctional Inst., Portsmouth, New Hampshire.

### Important Notice

In the near future, the Post Office is going to require ZIP codes on the mailing of all periodicals. We ask our readers to help facilitate the extra work this will involve for us by including the ZIP code on all new subscriptions and changes of address.



# Catholic Peace Fellowship Takes Shape In New Jersey

By JEAN KEELAN

We were a roomful of individuals packed into a living room, seated on chairs and floor, leaning in from the dining room or the foyer. Most of us had never laid eyes on each other before, but we were all Catholics living in New Jersey: a draftsman, a textbook-company consultant, a hotel worker, a teacher from Rutgers, a union man, a computer programmer, a high-school teacher, a priest studying for an advanced degree, a housewife active in (and enduring) a poverty program, a priest assigned to a suburban parish, a plumbing jobber, a nun teaching biology, a high-school student, a college teacher of English, a salesman, an advertising copywriter, a physicist, and a priest administering high-school. Most of the people were in their late thirties or early forties. The question we put to ourselves was "What can we do to learn and spread Christian teachings on peace and non-violence?" We decided first to speak in turn, identifying ourselves by name, town, occupation, and motivation.

"I was a conscientious objector during World War II. I have been deeply interested in peace all my life, but the world has become increasingly brutal and now my son is in the armed forces. I have had no influence whatever, not even in my own family."

"I was in the service in World War II but I think this war is morally vicious and politically stupid."

"I was born and raised right here, a member of the Italian community. When I was a boy of fourteen I had a traumatic experience. I saw a priest bless cannon that Italy would use against Ethiopians. I never got over that. I saw many other terrible things after that and haven't been much with the Church. Until tonight."

"I don't know much about peace. I came here to learn."

"People, Catholics anyway, are conditioned to accept only what they hear from the pulpit. Unless there is more direction given from those in authority, we're lost."

"War is irrational and man is supposed to be a rational being. Yet when I speak from the pulpit I infuriate people by the score. They say to hell with you and they never give you a second chance."

"The Church never supported us during all those cold years in cold C.O. camps, but several people became Catholics. Who can see why?"

"I belong to a Church that is known definitely for two things: it's against birth control and for Bingo. If it had not been for reading the Catholic Worker I would have left years ago."

Certain things kept coming up as each of the 24 present spoke: "I am alienated from Catholicism. I'm out of step with everyone in my parish and perhaps in my town. I have often thought that this Church couldn't be what Christ, who once was poor, had founded. But I kept reading the Catholic Worker and trying to work at being a Christian."

After we had all spoken once, it arrived. There was community. There was hope, and for some perhaps there was faith again.

We discussed what we could do to deepen our understanding of peace and nonviolence, and then, feeling we had a need to meet

again, we chose a date in about three weeks. There was a supper, brought by those who had come, many spirited conversations, a visit from a Congressional candidate who was using his campaign to educate people in the moral use of white power, and gradually people left, thanking one another warmly for the experience. And that was it, not a meeting but a happening, renewal, agape. This was the first meeting of the Catholic Peace Fellowship of New Jersey.

Ed note: Priests, religious and lay people in New Jersey who would be interested in getting together informally to discuss Catholic principles and practice in regard to war and peace are urged to get in touch with Mrs. Keelan, who lives at 23 Oakwood Place, Elizabeth, New Jersey, and represents the Catholic Peace Fellowship in that area.

## CHRISTMAS GREETINGS

(Continued from page 1)

death comes at God's bidding. I am, however, inclined to take another course—to enter before death the finer domain. This idea has been haunting me for two or three months . . . As acting decreases, action gets stronger. One should be able to master a technique of this kind . . . by purity of head and heart. A mother's decision to forego a meal because of some particular conduct of the child, has an instantaneous effect on the latter . . . It depends upon God's will, not on Man's effort, and yet it is impossible without effort.

Christmas Greetings

TO all in Southeast Asia. And it is with hanging head and heavy heart that I write this, filled with shame for my country. To those in Indonesia, reeking with the smell of blood where anti-communism has meant a massacre of nearly a million people these last years. How little attention has been paid to these fearful deeds! Speaking of Vatican Council II, Pope John, beloved by the world, said he was pronouncing no anathemas. He was speaking with love to all men, in all the world, in his *Pacem in Terris*, without exception.

TO all in Vietnam, north and south, we cannot speak in words, but more in tears. I say to myself, God will wipe away all tears from eyes, as He has promised, but as for us, in our prosperity, in our pride, we can only do penance. God is not mocked. There is a fearful retribution laid up for us, we who made and dropped the first atomic bombs and since have supplied nuclear weapons to other nations.

What madness is this, that the U.S.S.R. and China, formerly our allies are now our enemies and Germany and Japan, formerly bitter enemies, are now our allies.

Christmas Greetings

(though we could go on indefinitely) TO all who read these greetings and who in some manner, according to their vocation, married or single, hermit, contemplative or active, are sharing in such struggles for a better world, and may they find, whether they are confined in prison, or home or sickbed, in poverty, sickness or pain, that somehow or other, by some great mystery, "All the way to heaven can be heaven, because He said I am the WAY."

"The ingenuity of our scientists may be unable to save us from the consequences of a single rash act . . . If I am sometimes discouraged it is not by the magnitude of the problem but by our colossal indifference to it."

General OMAR BRADLEY



## Albert Camus

(Continued from page 5)

arrive at new aspects of the truth, in other words dialogue, community, not only among believers but between believers and unbelievers as well.

The whole work of Albert Camus is centered upon the idea of telling the truth. The relation of words to the inscrutable presence of what he called the power of words to identify the absurd as such. The function of words in establishing community among men engaged in resisting and overcoming the absurd. The power of words to lead revolt in a creative and life-affirming direction. The power of words against murder, violence, tyranny, injustice, death. The novels, stories and essays of Camus explore this question from many angles, and everywhere they reach the conclusion: we live in a world of lies, which is therefore a world of violence and murder. We need to rebuild a world of peace. We cannot do this unless we can recover the language and the thinking of peace.

The tragedy that is latent behind the fair and true declarations of the Church on peace, justice, renewal and all the rest is that these words of truth and hope are being devoured and swallowed up in the massive confusion and indifference of a world that does not know how to think in terms of peace and justice because in practice the word peace means nothing but war and the word justice means nothing but trickery, bribery and oppression.

Anything the Church may say to such a world is immediately translated into its opposite—if indeed the Churchmen themselves are not already beguiled by the same doubletalk as the world in which they live.

To all of us, Camus is saying: "Not lying is more than just not dissimulating one's acts and intentions. It is carrying them out and speaking them out in truth."

Ed. note: Thomas Merton's most recent books, all published by New Directions, are: *The Way of Chuang Tzu*, interpretations of the Taoist philosopher; *Gandhi on Non-Violence*, selected texts from *Non-Violence in Peace and War*; and *Raids on the Un-speakable*, a collection of his own prose pieces and drawings.

## Philadelphia Area Readers:

An extremely useful Community Peace Calendar is published monthly by the Philadelphia Peace Center. It lists almost daily activities for peace planned for the coming month and includes supplementary information on speakers, literature and discussion groups available to area residents. Announcements for listing should be sent in by the middle of the previous month. The cost of producing the calendar is about ninety-five cents a year but anyone who asks for the calendar will receive it regularly. Write to:

PHILADELPHIA PEACE CENTER  
Architects Building,  
Room 414  
117 South 17th St.  
Philadelphia, Pa. 19103

## A Poem Dedicated To Terre Des Hommes

(Written after reading Esther Frankel's letter in the July-August issue) *Terres des Hommes*, consider how loud your voice is. I can hear it, far as I am from the glaciers where I once lived, Yodelling out to those who hang on ropes in the blue crevasse Or dangle from rock, the cord unravelling swiftly, swiftly. They are lost in a mountainous and eternal country, The landscape tight-lipped, gigantic, as they swing, grimacing, Deaf to the high clear yodel saying: This is the way, this is the way!

(I saw the children dancing in Southeast Asia in August, Dancing daintly, prettily, with their scarves of napalm, Their cloaks of phosphorus. These expensive gifts we have given them They will be permitted to keep forever. The opal wings Of the tissue that once was epidermis contrast so Effectively with their dark and alien skins).

*Terre des Hommes*. I hear you calling out that there is time To return before the last storm whistles down from the north, Before the ropes unravel to a thread. "In Europe," You write on the stubborn snows, in letters as tall As the palm-trees of quite another continent; "In Europe we have found several hundred beds For the children." You draw an arrow, showing where The Swiss lakes lie, where cows wear garlands Of gentianes around their necks, where children May rest for a while beneath the ether masks.

(In the jungles of their homeland no silky tiger moves, No zebra stamps on the plain, no elephant trumpets, no water buffalo Ruminates, shifting rice paddy greens between its jaws. The leaves Have died silently under the stutter of helicopter spray, And the children, dancing without gas-masks, turn toward us And smile at their own deaths, wondering a little, not wishing to intrude.)

For a long time your yodelling went unanswered, *Terre des Hommes*; Then the words came, written on heavy white paper, white As the White House. "Dear *Terre des Hommes*," it began, And continued: "The American Air Force cannot be used to transport

Vietnamese Children who might be in need of medical attention. There exists No American financial means to assist your activities. Yours truly." And the signature? I swear it is not mine. I wouldn't have had the time to write the letter out. I'm working creatively, trying out variations on the themes they dance, These children who slide through the moonlight, bat-colored now, Screeching like bats. Their dance cannot be mazaruka, not polka, Not bolero, nor hornpipe, or jig. It must be A regional dance to which they step carefully, carefully, So as not to disturb the flesh that still clings to their bones.

Kay Boyle

## LETTERS

### Works of Mercy

175 Chrystie St.  
New York, N. Y.

Dear Friends:

Peace and God's blessing. I write this letter as a note of appeal. My wife Catherine, my daughter Juanita, and I want to begin a Catholic Worker house of hospitality in Washington, D.C. We need your prayers and generosity.

Our desire is to live a life of voluntary poverty while serving the corporal and spiritual needs of our brothers and sisters in Christ. We beg from you for the means by which we can live and serve.

St. James the Apostle will be our patron. "If anyone is a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like a man looking at his natural face in the mirror; for he looks at himself and goes away, and presently he forgets what kind of man he is. But he who has looked carefully into the perfect law of liberty and has remained in it, not becoming a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, shall be blessed in his deed. And if anyone thinks himself to be religious, not restraining his tongue but deceiving his own heart, that man's religion is vain. Religion pure and undefiled before God the Father is this: to give aid to orphans and widows in their tribulation, and to keep oneself unspotted from this world." James 1:23-27

In Christ,  
David Miller

### Pen-Pals

Kibbutz Negba  
Doar Na Nachal  
Lachish Tzafon  
Israel

Dear Editors:

Could you tell me if you know if there are any of our people, i.e. anarchists, living in Israel? If so,

where are they? Sometimes I feel a little lost among the *Mapamnikim*.

Also, I appeal to you as a teacher. I am teaching English in a kibbutz in Israel. To give my children more practice in English I am trying to find pen-pals for those who want to write to Americans. Their ages range from thirteen to seventeen years, and about forty want to write. If you have or know of any children who would be interested in corresponding with young kibbutzniks, would you please give them my name and address and tell them to write to me, giving name, age, sex preferred, and interests? If there is a surplus of Americans, I am sure that I can find correspondents for the extra children on neighboring kibbutzim.

I prefer my children's pen-pals to be about a year younger than they, as younger children will be writing in simpler English; but the point is not imperative.

Thanking you in advance for your time, help and consideration in all, I remain.

Sincerely yours,  
Ronl Brown

## Economic Brotherhood

Box 74  
Suva  
Fiji Islands

Dear Miss Day:

I am still telling the credit-union story to the people of the South Pacific. We teach it as a way of showing our concern for one another, and you would be very pleased to know how many have practiced faithfully in this spirit what they have learned.

You and yours will always have a remembrance in my daily Mass.  
Sincerely in Christ,  
Rev. Marlon Ganey, S.J.

### Friday Night Meetings

In accordance with Peter Maurin's desire for clarification of thought, THE CATHOLIC WORKER holds meetings every Friday night at 8:30 p.m. at St. Joseph's House, 175 Chrystie St., between Houston and Delancey Streets.

After the discussions, we continue the talk over hot sassafras tea. Everyone is welcome.