

## EDITORIAL

# Pope John XXIII Guideline To Youthful Reformers\*

The nation is passing through an unprecedented serious social, economic and political crisis. In the early part of this year, attempts were made, mostly by university students and labor elements, to make everybody advert to, and become deeply aware of the multiple critical illness which the national community suffers from. We need not describe the events which did shake the capital of the nation during the first three months of 1970... The crisis is far from being over; difficult days are laying ahead; it behoves us, as citizens and as Catholics, to take time out and see what our attitude and contribution must be; what our endeavor, in the light of Faith and with the strength of love, ought to be to make our institutions — whether economic, social, cultural or political in purpose — rather than create obstacles, facilitate or render less arduous man's perfecting of himself both in the natural order as well as in the supernatural (n. 146).

There are some few young men, in our large university population, no doubt endowed with generosity, who, on coming face to face with situations where the requirements of justice are not satisfied, feel enkindled with the desire to change the state of things instantly. They wish to have recourse to something like a revolution (n. 161).

The problem of bringing social reality into line with the objective requirements of justice is a problem which will never admit of a *definitive* solution; but this does not mean we should relax and feel satisfied with objectives already achieved (n. 155). In fact, all human beings ought rather to reckon that what has been accomplished is but little or nothing in comparison with what remains to be done. Human institutions must all be adjusted to this our era which the human family has already entered, wherein it has commenced its new advance towards limitless horizons (n. 156).

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\* "Pacem in Terris" (Peace on Earth), April 11, 1963.

Tear down...and then, *build up*...a new world, a new earth and, of course, new heavens! A small sector of our university youth is in the process of becoming mesmerized by this and other similar slogans. If one is going to believe them nothing short of a nation-wide *revolution* will render it possible for us to live a life worthy of man, with justice for all and malice towards none...

Let us be clear on this particular point. We honestly believe that the citizen, who sits back, with pleasure on the soft cushion of comfort which modern civilization provides, and does not contribute its own share to the improvement of the socio-economic conditions of his surroundings, of the community, local and national, of which he is a member, this citizen is not a *normal* man, much less a citizen worthy of respect.

The improvement of present-day national living conditions, depends on God and it depends on us. As it depends on God, man must live a life inwardly and outwardly in keeping with the dictates of a well informed and educated personal conscience. As it depends on us, if we remain passive, our passivity is contrary to the very sense of creation and the much talked about "man's creativeness". There are sins of inertia and intellectual laziness which will weigh more heavily on the day of judgment than sins of frailty. Yet one needs patience with others, rather patience with oneself; but patience and christian prudence are virtues strange to our age and time. Modern man seems to be possessed by the so-called *mentality of immediacy*. We have become accustomed to having our needs met immediately and tangibly. We do not wait very long for the removal of pain or the achievement of a satisfaction. The cumulative effect of such cultural factor is, in many cases, the growth of a subjective inability to see importance beyond the moment, the inability to sacrifice for a future value. Much the talk about *revolution* as the only means to extricate us from the terrible plight we are in, in the context of the present-day national situation, can be explained in the light of this unrealistic mentality: Let's change the world... But what about the means and ways! "It must be borne in mind that to proceed *gradually* is the law of life in all its expressions; therefore in human institutions, too, it is not possible to renovate for the better except by working from within them, gradually. Pius XII proclaimed, "Salvation and justice are not to be found in revolution, but in evolution through concord. Violence has always achieved only destruction, not construction; the kindling of passions, not their pacification; the accumulation of hate and ruin, not the reconciliation of the contending parties. And it has reduced men and parties

to the difficult task of rebuilding, after sad experience, on the ruins of discord." The words of Leo XIII (on *Christian Democracy*, January 18, 1901) to workers are equally valid for student masses: "To beware of sedition and seditious persons, wherever found (1); to hold inviolate the rights of every one else (2); to show willingly due deference to legitimate authority and do honest work (3); not to get a distaste for the life of the home (4); to attend especially to your religious duties, and seek in your Christian Faith the legitimate consolation she promises, amidst the hardships of life (5)." There is no heaven on earth!

Revolution, as it is commonly advocated, can mean, in the context of present-day national situation, one thing only, and this is—placing the country at the will of a communistic regime, by whatever soft name one may call it; and this is down right insanity. One cannot afford to close one's eyes to the hard and gloomy realities unfolding before our eyes. Do not underestimate, much less ignore, your enemy right in your midst. Indeed, "the future of the world (of nations) stands in peril unless wiser men are forthcoming," said Vatican II. Both youth and age will do well to reflect seriously on the words of Pope John XXIII, for as H. de Lubac says, "The Holy Spirit who guided the Apostle (St. Paul) is the same who still guides the Church, and speaks by the modern Popes. The path to which it commits us, is the only safe one. To follow it is neither *naivete*, nor syncretism, nor liberalism; it is simply *Catholicism*," the voice of Christ, "the same today, as he was yesterday, and as he will be forever (*Heb. 13.8*). Let us listen to them, today, for tomorrow may be too late!

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