

**A RENEWAL IN . . .***(Continued from page 3)*

hoped to taste once more the purity of laughter.

"How many times had I lost myself, and you found me?" I said. I gathered her hair in a handful, and pressed her head to my breast. I gently stroked her arm. She was lithe, ardent and aromatic. "Now I can brave the cruellest of winds and rains. I can command and be obeyed. For you are here."

"Yes. . . And it is only your notice that I demand of you," she said.

Cupping her face in the palms of my hands, I beheld her and her fairness made my soul her tributary for enraptured praises. I slowly brought my lips to hers. A shaft of moonlight hit the rail of the balcony and was directed into the artificial pond below; it bounced in several reflections that rang the leaves of the surrounding ferns, as though they were some lyres of ancient Rome.

The music in the sala ceased; there was a shuffle of footsteps; then, the leave-taking. Silence next. We leaned on the balcony, and looked out, carefully viewing the portion of the world and humanity presented to us. Afterwards, we reconstructed our dreams, reformed our plans, restored our objects, all for the best. I said my resolutions and promises, to which she listened with great understanding. She smiled at me, and I asked myself how the deuce did I live the days when I missed such blessing.

A shadow was cast on the balcony; we turned around, and saw my forever laughing friend. "Everybody has gone to hear the Mass. When shall we go?" he said.

"Right now!" we readily answered.

And we gladly walked towards the house of prayer, the three of us—Faith and Man, and Bliss.

**CHRISTMAS, 1960****CHAOS on Earth and  
HATRED to Men . . .**

ONCE AGAIN Christmas comes and the bland December breeze shall be filled with Christmas carols with this oft-repeated phrase: "Peace on earth to men of goodwill."

In these times when the whole humankind is being threatened with possible annihilation from a nuclear war, we cannot help thinking that the message which the angels sang to herald the birth of Christ may sound painfully strange and absurd, sarcastic and ironic.

What hopes have this generation and the future generation for **peace on earth**? What could have the heavenly voices meant by **men of goodwill**? Has the message of the angels after all come to naught?

Christmas comes, yet on the international scene the peoples of the world watch with stifled breaths as the brilliant scientists and great minds work feverishly to perfect the deadliest weapons which would butcher millions and millions of precious human lives at the press of a button.

Meanwhile on the national and local scenes we witness our so-called "leaders" cutting each other's throat in their mad scramble for fame and power. Our government officials, "the servants of the people", are recklessly looting the treasury of the nation, unmindful of the widespread poverty, disease and misery among the masses.

This Christmas the voices of the angels of the Lord shall become faint and their message shall become unintelligible. We can no longer appreciate the beauty, neither can we unravel the mystery of those lines, for as we look into our hearts, we cannot find the Holy Babe there. Nowhere can we find the Blessed Virgin Mary and the simple carpenter adoring the Holy Child wrapped in swaddling clothes. And nowhere can we see the humble shepherds paying their homage to the Savior. We do not have an inch of space for the Holy Family in our hearts for They are "untouchables." This Christmas we will also think it absurd to bend our knees to the King of Kings, for His crown is but a wreath of thorns. We, who someday shall scan the infinite spaces and the heavens and exclaim, "There is no God!" will also find it very embarrassing to take lessons in humility from a group of unlettered fishermen.

We, in all our conceit and fake "wisdom" shall continue to be confused unless we cease behaving like heathens and infidels. Our only hope for salvation and peace on earth is to live and behave like Christians. And our only hope for goodwill is to be humble before the greatness and infiniteness of God.

Then and only then can we decipher the meaning and fulfill the message which the angels sang, "Peace on earth to men of goodwill."

**by CHRIS G. GABRILLO**