

SOME MODERN DOMINICAN APOSTOLATES

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VERY OFTEN THE SPIRIT, the life blood, of a particular civilization can be caught, summed up, and expressed by a true "man of his times." Such a man, it seems to us, was Pope Pius XII. He spoke of our age as the age of technology: "We live, as the expression goes, in an age of technology. . . ."¹ And what could be more characteristic of the age in which we live? The so-called "underdeveloped lands" all have today their hydroelectric dams and power plants. Technology has revolutionized agriculture, has turned mining into a bearable means of livelihood, has wrought the profoundest changes in commerce and trade. Over and above this "new look" in age-old occupations, there are television, atomic subs and possible trips to the moon. There is automation in almost every phase of modern life. In fact, there can even be too much technology, and Pius XII saw this danger too: "The achievements of technology," the late Pope continued in the address quoted above, "can blind our gaze so that purely spiritual and supernatural values pale before it."²

There were many other aspects of our era that Pius XII caught and expressed. Some of these were in the fields of politics and government; others were in medicine and pure science; and still others—by far the greatest number—had to do with moral values and social betterment. In regard to these last Pope Pius stated: "In our opinion, no other era since the advent of Christ has been so decisive regarding (the social) development of man as this one of (ours)."³

A paraphrase of this saintly Pontiff's most optimistic view of our age and its place in history might sound like this: *We are at the threshold of a new age, an age of tremendous technological possibilities for social betterment and large-scale charity, provided only that men will heed the call to Christian charity and to peace.*

Dominicans have a vital role to play in the formation of this "new era." We could prove as much from the lesson of history, from the often incredible adaptability of the Order's apostolate to the needs of

each succeeding age. But we can prove it better still from solid facts, from the fact of solid contributions to be made to this "new era." In our opinion, the Order of Preachers has two such contributions to make and a third potential contribution of possibly greater long-range consequence. The first of these is in the field of technology, through a positive contribution to modern science: the Albertus Magnus Lyceum for Natural Science at River Forest, Illinois. The second is in social work. Here we might single out the work of Dominicans in many countries (France, Germany and Italy, for example, and in Belgium the work of Fr. Pire), but the outstanding Dominican social work, by reason of its specialized use of modern technological methods, is the ever growing International University for Social Studies "Pro Deo" in Rome, founded by Fr. Felix A. Morlion, O.P. After a sketch of these two Dominican contributions to the intellectual life of the twentieth century, we will add a few remarks on the possibilities—unique and important—of our Dominican Third Order Secular as an organ of the lay apostolate.

The Albertus Magnus Lyceum

The first Dominican contribution to the "new era" that we are considering—the Albertus Magnus Lyceum—grew out of an idea: that religious truth, to which Dominicans are dedicated by their special vocation, is most accessible to men, most secure and living in itself, when it thrives in a cultural atmosphere where each of the great intellectual disciplines is accorded its rightful place. Such a cultural atmosphere certainly does not exist today. Metaphysics, once queen of the sciences, is everywhere looked upon with scorn. Natural science is often accorded a place of honor that, speculatively speaking, it does not deserve. And further, even among the physical sciences themselves there is a radical disunity and fundamental lack of synthesis.

This last consideration, of the need for synthesis in science, has become central to the work of the Lyceum. The Fathers who founded it in 1951 (under the leadership of Fr. William H. Kane, O.P.) took as their specific purpose research in the foundations of modern science. Considering the scientific writers who have set themselves to the solution of this problem of synthesis—such great names as Poincaré, Einstein, Eddington, Whitehead, Planck and Haldane—we can readily see what an important purpose the Fathers have chosen.

The permanent staff of the Albertus Magnus Lyceum is headed by Fr. William H. Kane, O.P., as Director. Fr. Kane holds the degrees of Master in Sacred Theology and Doctor of Philosophy and has had training in Biology and the Philosophy of Science. The other Do-

minicans on the staff, all solid theologians and Doctors of Philosophy, have taken special studies in many branches of modern science: Fr. John D. Corcoran in Experimental Psychology, Fr. Benedict M. Ashley in the Social Sciences, Fr. Raymond J. Nogar in Biology, Fr. William A. Wallace in Engineering, Physics, Modern Logic, Mathematics and the History of Science, Fr. John T. Bonée in Modern Logic and Mathematics, Fr. J. Athanasius Weisheipl in the History of Science, and Fr. Albert Moraczewski in Chemistry. The staff has also included non-Dominicans, notably Dr. Herbert Ratner, M.D., of Loyola University in Chicago, and Dr. Vincent Edward Smith, Ph.D., the well known philosopher and long time editor of *The New Scholasticism*.

What, it might be asked, is the import of the Lyceum on the world of technology? The answer, of course, is none at all . . . directly. The Lyceum is not meant to develop better technological methods in any field. But its importance can be great through the benefits it offers to technology's parent, theoretical science. The research of the Lyceum is geared to the speed of collaboration, of teamwork between practicing scientists and philosophers with an interest in scientific synthesis. This interplay of mind and mind, this interchange of ideas, cannot help being of benefit to science. This is the conviction of the members of the Lyceum staff and it seems to be a genuinely sound conviction.

The results of the Lyceum's work so far have not been world shaking, but they do show great promise. One result, an attempt at incorporation of the ideas into a college curriculum—the St. Xavier Plan—was discussed previously in *Dominicana* (September, 1958). The Fathers of the Lyceum have also edited a book, *Science in Synthesis*,⁴ a report of the Summer Session held at the Lyceum in 1952. This Session was devoted to five weeks of discussion—between practicing scientists and the Fathers—on basic problems in Physics, Chemistry, Biology and Psychology.

Science in Synthesis is an interesting book, showing as it does how much can be achieved by the Lyceum's method even in an experimental session. The Introduction outlines the problem of synthesis, sketches out the correct approach to solution (teamwork), and details the make-up and scope of the Lyceum as aimed at utilizing this correct approach. The bulk of the book, of course, is devoted to a day-by-day account of the proceedings and conclusions arrived at.

Another aim of the Albertus Magnus Lyceum, also outlined in the Introduction to *Science in Synthesis*, is that of publishing technical studies—books, dissertations and articles—on theoretical issues and concepts pertinent to the problem of scientific synthesis. A number

of such studies have been published; here we need single out no more than four (the four that seem to have the most direct bearing on scientific synthesis and therefore indirectly on technology). The first of these is concerned with stating the problem: Raymond J. Nogar, O.P.: *An Analysis of Contemporary Theory of Physical Science* (a dissertation: printed in *The New Scholasticism* XXV, 4, October, 1951, under the title, "Toward a Physical Theory"). A second important study, of the demonstration value of the modern sciences, was made by Fr. William A. Wallace, O.P.: "Some Demonstrations in the Science of Nature" (*The Thomist Reader*, 1957, pp. 90 sqq.). In this article Fr. Wallace is concerned to show—against those scientists who would deny any certainty to their own discoveries—that the great names in modern science have actually *demonstrated* their conclusions (in the Aristotelian sense of "demonstration") whether they knew it or not, thus emphasizing the fact that they have arrived at demonstrably certain truths. Two other studies on more specialized topics are: J. Athanasius Weisheipl, O.P.: *Nature and Gravitation* (a dissertation; printed in *The New Scholasticism* XXVIII, 4; XXIX, 1 and 2, 1954-55); and Dennis Zusy, O.P.: *An Investigation of the Thomistic Definition of Life in the Light of Virological Research* (an unpublished S.T.Lr. dissertation⁶).

These results, far as they are from solving the problem of scientific synthesis in terms acceptable to all parties concerned, yet serve to show that the Albertus Magnus Lyceum for Natural Science is working in the right direction. Should the influence of the Fathers of the Lyceum spread in the future, modern science will definitely be the better for it and technology can then strike out in ever new directions under the guidance of the new scientific synthesis.

"Pro Deo" University

The International University for Social Studies "Pro Deo" was founded in Rome in 1944 by Fr. Felix A. Morlion, O.P., a Belgian Dominican who had spent a large part of World War II as an exile in the United States. A tireless worker, Fr. Morlion did not waste his years in this country, but capitalized on the opportunities it offered him to continue the work he had been doing previously.

Fr. Morlion dubbed his work "the apostolate of public opinion." It had its roots in his work as a weekly columnist for a Flemish Catholic paper. In 1930 Fr. Morlion initiated the first of his organizations, the "Offensive for God." (Perhaps the best known of the several similar organizations founded by Fr. Morlion is DOCIP, *Documentation Cinematographique de la Presse*, a press service on film topics). He

joined to this work the task of teaching others the techniques of his "apostolate." This parallel work continued for some years up to the founding—in exile from the Nazis in Portugal in July of 1940—of the "Center of Information Pro Deo" (CIP). This was a press service with Catholic, but not apologetic, aims: to produce news releases for the secular press that would not be slanted but would emphasize the spiritual and moral values latent in current news. All this "apostolate" came to be called the "Pro Deo Movement"; it helped Fr. Marlion tremendously when he came to found the University at the end of World War II.

The purpose of the University—"to train freedom's future leaders"—arose, fundamentally, out of the chaotic conditions throughout Europe after World War II. The free nations could not survive without stable political and economic frameworks. For this reason "Pro Deo" established Schools of Political Science, Economic and Business Administration, Industrial and Labor Relations, Mass Communications Media (the press, radio and TV), Commercial and Diplomatic Languages, and Graduate Schools of Applied Social Sciences and Public Opinion—all conducted along the lines of social science research as carried on by the larger American universities.

"Pro Deo" believes that if the future leaders of the various (especially European) countries are trained to apply the new insights of industrial technique and technology generally, as well as of the social sciences, to the problems of their respective countries, the major conflicts and difficulties of an upside-down modern world can be eliminated.

The graduates of "Pro Deo"—some 10,000 of them!—have already begun to exert their expected influence. Besides a large number of Italian radio and TV personnel trained at "Pro Deo," there is a growing percentage of Italian civil service employees who are being sent to "Pro Deo" on government fellowships. The earliest of these were in Public Administration only, but now the Italian government is sending junior executives from virtually every government ministry. All Italian staff employees of the European Common Market have received specialized training at "Pro Deo." Similar support has been given to "Pro Deo" by South American countries, notably Brazil, Argentina, Chile, and Colombia; the graduates of "Pro Deo" from these countries work, for the most part, in the important fields of Diplomacy and International Relations.

The importance of "Pro Deo" should not be underrated. The application of technology to social needs is perhaps *the* means of worldwide social and economic improvement for the future. One need

think only of the immense possibilities of South America and Australia as land asylums for the overcrowded populations of the world, granted a truly monumental technological achievement in opening up the unused areas of these two continents. Sociology alone will not effect these changes; perhaps only the conversion of the world will! (For great charity will be demanded to allow Asians, for instance, into Australia.) But the study of technologized sociology can assuredly prepare the way for any such future developments, and, in the meantime, can do immense good all over the rest of the world.

"Pro Deo" is not in any sense a merely Dominican contribution to the "new era." It is not even an entirely Catholic contribution—the staff and the student-body of the University include men of many faiths, Protestant, Jewish, Moslem and others, as well as Catholics. But the genius behind the entire project was a Dominican, Fr. Felix A. Morlion, O.P. From the original idea, through the difficulties of foundation and early growth, to its present prospering state, "Pro Deo" has been no more and no less than the outstanding fruit of Fr. Morlion's dreams and plans of twenty-five years. And besides Fr. Morlion as Rector, "Pro Deo" includes on its staff several other Dominicans. The most important of these is probably Fr. Enrico di Rovasenda, O.P., in the vital role of President of the Graduate School of Applied Social Sciences.⁶

The Third Order and the Lay Apostolate

"You have responsibilities to assume in Catholic Action. . . . And since the Catholic Action movements need solid doctrinal foundations and efficient techniques to diffuse Christian truth and to create, where necessary, a network of programs for material assistance, for social formation, and for religious education, you are in a position to apply all the resources of your initiative"—so spoke Pope Pius XII to the Dominican Third Order gathered in Rome, August 29, 1958.⁷

This challenge—made with all the authority of the Supreme Pontiff himself—tells us that the Third Order has a role to play in the lay apostolate, and, to a certain extent, indicates what that role is. But in order to see more precisely the role of the Third Order, we can outline the needs of the lay apostolate, then see how the work of the Third Order can fill some of these needs.

Nearly everyone today realizes the importance of the laity in the work of the Church. Pope Pius XII summed up this belief for the rest when he said: "The collaboration of the laity with the Hierarchy has never been so necessary nor practiced in such a systematic

way as now."⁸ This importance is based upon the vastness of the role the Church is called upon to play in the modern world. The whole world stands in need of a spiritual revitalization, not merely in the sense that it needs the "good news," the gospel of Jesus Christ, but also in the sense that spiritual moral values must be made to play their proper role in all walks of life: in government and public life, in business, labor and management, in recreation, and perhaps most of all in education and communications (the press, radio and TV).

It is the work of the lay apostle to "reform" his own particular walk in life. He is not asked to be an evangelist, a nagging preacher or "do-gooder." He is asked rather to put sound moral principles to work in his daily occupations. He is asked to see that values are held in the right perspective, from the most important down to the least, and in the correct order. This can be carried out best by individual initiative in an apostolate of "like-to-like" (student to student, newspaperman to newspaperman, policeman to policeman, etc.). Yet individual initiative often goes astray. Hence the need of groups for Catholic Action; hence the need of supervision by the Hierarchy.

It was as a Catholic Action *group* that Pope Pius XII envisioned the work of the Third Order in the lay apostolate. The Dominican Third Order was to cooperate with other third order groups, with other lay groups in general, and especially with organized Catholic Action. The function of the group in Catholic Action is to train individuals, to make them leaders, each in his respective field. Now the Dominican Third Order—since it shares in the intellectual ideals of the Order (*Veritas and Contemplata aliis tradere*)—is uniquely fitted for this role of training leaders. The Third Order shares in the legitimate pride the Order takes in St. Thomas Aquinas. It can, then, offer a Dominican and Thomist contribution, of *order*, to a disordered world.

An excellent example of what can be accomplished in this area is the School of Lay Theology in New York. It is being handled completely by laymen, Third Order members on the administrative level, and it is having a tremendous success. Attendance grows constantly. The students are enthusiastic and the prospects are bright. The courses, incidentally, are not just series of lectures but regular classes in theology, following closely the order and doctrine of St. Thomas.

Other vital areas in this apostolate can be divided into two classes, those for the ordinary Third Order member, and those for the member with a college background or better. In the first class we might place such opportunities for influencing others as P.T.A. groups, civic planning organizations, Big Brother and Big Sister movements—in

short, all the ordinary community gatherings that suffer from timidity on the part of Catholics who hold back and will not join. For the other class, the members with a college degree, there are crucial opportunities in public life, in education, in journalism, radio and TV, and so on.

We do not, of course, imply that all these activities are immediately possible for our Third Order members. It may be remembered that we spoke, in beginning this article, of the Third Order contribution to the "new era" as a *potential* contribution. But we also said that, as a potential contribution, it might well be of greater long-range significance than the two *actual* contributions, for the simple reason that the latter depend for their ultimate success on the interest of the laity. Only laymen can enter the field of technology and theoretical science in sufficiently large numbers to insure the sound cultural atmosphere toward which the Fathers of the Albertus Magnus Lyceum are striving. Only laymen can implement Fr. Morlion's plan since "Pro Deo" is meant primarily as a training ground for *lay* leaders.

In concluding our remarks on the Third Order, we should note that the primary purpose of the Third Order is not the lay apostolate. The Proceedings of the First National Congress of the Third Order of St. Dominic, printed as *Perfection in the Market Place*, open with a Foreword by the late Cardinal Stritch of Chicago in which he states clearly: "The Tertiary hasn't in mind primarily a program of Catholic Action. . . . The Tertiary has in mind personal sanctification." Yet this same booklet, *Perfection in the Market Place*, is literally filled with proofs of the vitality and potentialities of the American Third Order, potentialities that make it a ready instrument for the American apostolate.

Conclusion

This sketch of three Dominican apostolates of the mid-twentieth century, since it was limited to just three, has passed over but not forgotten the many other apostolates in the marvelously diversified work of the Order today. We have not considered the many editions of the *Summa* of St. Thomas, in nearly every modern language and with excellent commentary; nor have we mentioned how the riches of the spiritual life have been brought to "everyman" by such Dominican authors as Fr. Garrigou-Lagrange, Fr. Vann, Fr. Pepler, and Fr. Plé, as well as by such Dominican spiritual reviews as *The Life of the Spirit*, *Vida Sobrenatural*, *Vie Spirituelle*, and *Cross and Crown*; we have not concerned ourselves with the advances in lay theology, e.g., the theorizing of Fr. Congar on the theology of the laity, and

the work of Fr. Walter Farrell in bringing the riches of St. Thomas to the average layman and to the Sisters. All this we have passed by because we think the world stands today at a crossroads of history, because we believe we are at the threshold of a "new era" if only we can take full advantage of our opportunities. Of all the Dominican apostolates of the present day, the three we have chosen—the Albertus Magnus Lyceum, "Pro Deo" University, and the Third Order—seem most conscious of this "new era," seem to be utilizing the methods best calculated to bring it into being (or at least seem to be in an admirable position to do so).

FOOTNOTES

¹ Address to 78th Congress of German Catholics, Aug. 17, 1958; *The Pope Speaks* V, 2, p. 200.

² *Ibid.*, p. 200.

³ Address to Youth of Italian Catholic Action, Mar. 19, 1958; *The Pope Speaks* IV, 4, p. 430.

⁴ Dominican College of St. Thomas Aquinas, River Forest, Ill., 1953.

⁵ St. Rose Priory, Dubuque, Iowa, 1956.

⁶ Further information about "Pro Deo" may be obtained by writing to the American Council for the International Promotion of Democracy Under God (C.I.P.) Inc., 45 E. 65th St., New York 21, N. Y.

⁷ Cf. *The Pope Speaks* V, 2, p. 185.

⁸ Address to Second World Congress of the Lay Apostolate, October, 1958.