

## EDITORIAL

“**T**HERE IS NOTHING NEW UNDER THE SUN.” The Old Testament Preacher’s theme is still true. Truly, new men do arise, and they produce new thoughts, and new moments of time have their own individual fleeting existence in that infinitesimal point which divides the future from the past; but when we consider carefully, are they really new? Men today do the same things they have always done, they think the same thoughts, they aspire to the same ideals. ‘History repeats itself’ is an axiom we see verified so many times.

What might come to some as a novel proposal regarding the rebirth of the diaconate as a separate function (see p. 20) is actually a proposal to bring back what was once a prominent feature in the Church’s teaching and parish activity. Perhaps it seems new at first, but after careful investigation, it appears as a proposal to bring back an office which the Church well knew and used in her early days. To the Church, this is ‘old hat.’

In our role as communicator of current Catholic thought, we offer this idea to our readers in view of the Second Vatican Council whose opening is not long distant. The preparatory commissions have discussed this point, but as yet have published no official decisions. As intelligent observers of the Council and interested members of the one true Church of Christ, we should know what is under discussion, what is offered as example by other “communities,” and what is imitable or adaptable by the Church. Even if the Church accepts nothing from those not united to the pope, we have the advantage of knowing what these others are doing and how sincerely many of them long for union. Regardless, then, of the acceptance or rejection of this proposal by the Council, we stand to gain by a better knowledge of a historic function of the hierarchy, and likewise by a more sympathetic view toward the efforts of unity seekers.

Also in connection with the Council is the announcement of Pope John proclaiming St. Joseph as patron of the Council. We offer a survey of the basic elements of the theology concerning this patron whose patronage extends not only to the Council, but also to the whole Church. Advocates of a more prominent place for Joseph in the Church’s liturgy have succeeded in bringing the case to a plane where careful preliminary investigation has been made with an eye to having the issue discussed in the

Council. Here again, a knowledge of fundamentals will serve sincere Catholics well.

In addition, we present treatments of three perennial problems whose solutions are sought in every age in diverse manners. The old problem of evil which began with Adam and Eve still plagues many: what is it? Secondly, how can we call God a good provider for men if He allows so much evil and suffering? And finally, an excellent review of a highly commendable translation of *St. Thomas' Commentary on the Metaphysics of Aristotle* provides the occasion for a discussion of the subject of metaphysics. Although this article is primarily a book review, we have included it in the philosophy section as deserving special notice. The particular professional qualifications of the reviewer, Rev. T. C. O'Brien, O.P., Ph.D., make an attentive study of the review imperative for students of philosophy. Studying St. Thomas occasions the use or misuse of his works as an authority or a supporting argument. "The Challenge of Thomism" provides a perceptive analysis of these "uses" of St. Thomas.

Finally, a historical study of Jewish "monks," the copyists of the famous Dead Sea Scrolls, completes our survey of theology, philosophy and sacred scripture.

The current, the perennial, the ancient: component elements forming the first issue of *Dominicana's* forty-seventh year.