

## EDITORIAL

**C**RATES! That's what we're being packed into, mile after mile of crates. Stuffed full with excelsior, solidly built, plastered with labels, the crates are man's own devising; and into them go souls. Men's souls, Christian and pagan, are boxed in on all sides by technology, immorality packed softly into every space, ideologies stenciled on the tiniest surfaces. The resulting claustrophobia engenders panic; only the strong survive. Some are bored to death, others are scared to death; the latter are demoralized by the prospect of losing everything, the former have decided that they have nothing worth losing.

This must be our starting point. We are superior to these tests because of the life God shares with us; but we would be blind to deny the hardships. This issue of *Dominicana* turns its attention to some of the most evident symptoms of despair. "Something for Nothing" was prompted by the cover feature of *Time* magazine a few months back. Unlike *Time*, *Dominicana* does not conclude its analysis without providing an answer to the unsettling quandry of frayed nerves and emotional illness in a world taunted by annihilation. The author of "As Bright and Glittering Bodies" takes another tangent off the same thematic statement; his answer probes deep into the secret reaches of the eternal mystery of God's own life—a life the Christian marvelously shares. On the philosophical level, "Some Serious Thoughts on Thinking" outlines a realistic approach to the fundamental problem of the validity of human knowledge. The importance of answering this problem rightly can be shown by pointing out that thinkers answering it wrongly have given several disturbing modern philosophies to the world.

But recognizing and prescribing for the sickness surrounding us is not enough. The Kingdom of God is within us; we should recognize it in one another. We have to affirm the positive prospects for a hopeful future, which aren't entirely lacking. One of the things which should be uppermost in our thoughts is the preparatory work of the coming Second Council of the Vatican. We can say this with reason, since in practically every recent address given by the Holy Father he has mentioned the forthcoming council and begged prayers for its success. Our Catholic Faith assures us that the Holy Ghost infallibly guides the Church assembled in an Ecumenical Council with extraordinary graces. It remains a sign of great blessing,

then, that our times will see the benefits of such a tremendous force for good.

Other signs of hope appear even outside of the Church of Rome. Over the last twenty years, for example, the Protestant community in Burgundy at Taizé has become a center of spiritually minded non-Catholics who seek prayer and silence. Here about fifty men from Calvinistic and Lutheran backgrounds aim at being actively involved in what concerns Christian Unity and renewal. Brothers judged competent go two by two to assist troubled people, perhaps on Africa's Ivory Coast, perhaps in Algiers or Marseilles. Some of the brothers have visited America, at Packard Manse, the ecumenical center near Boston. But these expeditions represent the overflow. The community strives first to acquire personal competence. They agree to a common life of poverty, chastity and obedience. Their rule stresses interior silence, meditation on the Beatitudes, and enjoins thrice daily worship interceding for the Church and the world. Roger Schutz and Max Thurian are writers of the Community. Schutz is the founder; Thurian has produced books on confession and Holy Communion, marriage and celibacy, and worship.

Every year at Fursteneck Castle, Assia, in Germany another well known Protestant group meets. This is *Die Sammlung* (The Gathering), a group of Lutherans working for a truer form of religion. The convictions of this group, while requiring deep examination, seem quite a departure from the common sentiments ascribed to Lutheranism. Instead of holding for an invisible Church, *Die Sammlung* maintains the visibility and juridical character of the Church. They accept the Mass as a Sacrifice, ordination of select men as priests as contrasted with universal priesthood, the value of Tradition instead of Scripture alone, and a reaffirmation of merit and good works.

Anxiety may be rife; we seem to catch it in the air we breathe. But as human beings gifted by grace, we are required to do more than breathe. We have to see the good side of things, the side that is from God. There are reasons to hope and reasons to despair. It depends on how high is our vantage point.