

Winter 2009

Browsing through *The Viatorian*, the aged journals/newspapers of St. Viator College in Bourbonnais, IL, there are articles that have a timeless appeal and/or an interesting topic. The following articles from the winter of 1908-1909, one hundred years ago, are examples of such works.

The Magi

An article about the Feast of the Epiphany was published in the January 1909 issue of *The Viatorian*. The author, a student in the class of 1911, compares the experience of the Magi to our own experience as human beings in constant search of faith – a timeless story.

The College Forum

The Magi.

Following closely upon the feast of Christmas comes a festival set apart by the church to perpetuate a significant and remarkable event—the feast of the Epiphany. This feast has been celebrated in the church for years and has always been observed with love and devotion. The word Epiphany means the manifestation or appearing of our Lord to the wise men. The historical details may be found in the gospel for this day's mass. What lessons may be learned from this narrative, lessons of love, lessons of humanity, lessons of faith. The Magi never doubting, never hesitating, never asking the why or the wherefore, were content to follow over desert and mountain with patience and confidence, the bright star of hope. No difficulty, no obstacle could cause them to lose faith. Even when the star disappeared they did not give up hope. They did not separate and declare that they had been laboring under an illusion. They pushed on more determined than ever and on asking where it was that the Messiah was to be born and hearing that Bethlehem was to be the chosen spot, they immediately set out with all haste, never stopping till they reached the little city. When they had left Jerusalem, says St. Mathew, "the star went before them, until it came

and stood over where the Child was, and seeing the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy." Judge then their surprise to see the star standing over a common stable and when entering to find our Lord laying in a manger wrapped in swaddling clothes. We too are like the Magi. We have like them been in darkness, but the grace of God has raised us up to see the brilliant star of Faith shining through the rifts in the dark clouds of despair, beckoning and imploring us to come out into the full sunlight of His mercy and goodness. Oft times we may lose sight of the star and be blinded by the temptations and allurements of the world's passing vanities but it is only a trial God is giving us to test us and see if we are worthy of His love, and finally, the temptation conquered and thrown aside, we are at once made stronger, and if we look again we may always see the star reappear, brighter and clearer, shedding its soft beams upon us like a shower of diamonds, and continually leading us upward nearer to the goodness and sanctity of the everlasting Presence.

S. T. Wedge, '11.

The Catholic Encyclopedia

From *The Viatorian*, February 1909 issue, the article below describes the beginnings of the Catholic Encyclopedia. It has been in publication for over one hundred years now, from its beginning in 1905.

The Catholic Encyclopedia.

Catholics are anxious to be active in the literary world, and the latest achievement in the field of literary endeavor is the Catholic Encyclopedia. In this new departure the board of editors has been surprisingly successful, in fact has succeeded beyond its hopeful expectations. The publishers have a just reason for exultation, for not only are they making rapid progress as to the publication of the volumes but also in regard to the securing of subscriptions, the present amount accruing from this source amounting to a grand total of more than a million dollars. Up to date there are only four volumes of the total number of fifteen published, but when we consider the tremendous labor, and the numerous difficulties to be overcome in the compilation of a work of this kind, we indeed appreciate the efforts of all contributors and have naught but praise for the men who are putting forth their best efforts and literary talents to make this work a success.

The Encyclopedia is fulfilling a long felt want, and is the reward of the patient hope of all Catholics, for this is the first attempt of Catholics, the world over, in a matter of this nature. Ever since the so-called Reformation several centuries ago enemies of the Church have been most energetic in carrying on an infamous proparganda of spreading calumny and falsehood, in distorting historical fact, and in robbing Catholics of their just appreciation and deserts, and it is by means of this Encyclopedia that these venomous errors will have a very effective refutation. The Catholic Encyclopedia is indeed a literary work of inestimable value, a treasure house of knowledge and when it is completed should find a place upon the library shelves of every Catholic institution and family in America. J. A. Williams, '10.



For further information on the history of this successful publication, check out this link:
<http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/00001a.htm>

For information on New Advent's digital project for putting the original 1913 edition of Catholic Encyclopedia on the web, check out this link:
<http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/00002a.htm>

A Poem of the Season

The following poem was written at the end of 1908, yet rings true today. A person's life is comparable to the seasons – there are bright times and dark times, full times and barren times. With change, comes hope and the cycle of life continues on.

WINTER.

How gloomy the season that rests with us now,
It seems as though age has disfigured its brow,
But it's only for time, it assumes such a phase
Soon nature the curtain of Spring-time will raise.

The trees are deprived of the leaves they long bore,
Through the storm's fearful raging, the wind's mighty roar,
They are scattered afar, ne'er again to be seen,
Whils't they left the tall branches so bleak, so serene.

The meadows are clothed in a gloomy array,
The blush of the flowers has faded away,
The creek that once sparkled and rippled and fell
Is now a grey margin stretched out thro the dell.

The woodland where nestled the birds of the air,
Where but yesterday roses and lilies bloomed fair,
Is today cold and lonesome, deserted, alone,
Save the loud shrieking winds, which have made it their home.

But the time is not far when a season more bright
Will dispel all our sorrow and bring us delight,
When the birds will again their sweet melodies sing
When nature announces the advent of spring.

Each and every misstep on the pathway of life
Is a season that's freighted with sorrow and strife
But the hope of the future must e'er urge us on
Through the storm's fiercest raging to the portals of calm.

K. O. E.

1 The Viatorian. Bourbonnais, IL: St. Viator College, Vol. 26, No. 4, (January 1909):124-125

2 The Viatorian. Bourbonnais, IL: St. Viator College, Vol. 26, No. 5, (February 1909):166

3 The Viatorian. Bourbonnais, IL: St. Viator College, Vol. 26, No. 2, (November 1908):31