



BUILDING FUND DRIVE
6 NEW MEMBERS JOINED THE 100 PERCENTERS.
TOTAL 585

Mrs. Katherine Kobylarz	Mr. & Mrs. James Near
Mr. & Mrs. Henry La Voie	Mr. & Mrs. Russell J. Terranova
Mr. & Mrs. Dominic Sorice	Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Zammit

I M P O R T A N T
DUE TO THE SHORTAGE OF NEWSPAPERS
CAUSED BY THE STRIKE.
SAVE ALL YOUR CHRISTMAS WRAPPING
and CARDBOARD FOR THE PAPER DRIVES.

Artist Charlot To Lecture Today at 4 p. m., on the art of Fresco and the Good Shepherd Mural

FROM THE WATCH

COME TO THE LECTURE

The people of this parish will have an un-usual opportunity this afternoon to see and to hear a great artist. You are all invited to come, and we trust that you will not forego this grand chance of having the marvelous piece of art explained to you by the muralist himself. Mr. Charlot's greatness lies not in mural painting alone; His canvasses and water colors are to be found in the finest galleries in the western world. He is a writer of prominent note, and as a lecturer, he has only few who are his peers. You will be wise to set aside your busy Christmas chores for a couple of hours, in exchange for a cultural treat.

ARTISTS OWN ARTICLE ON THE MURAL HE HAS DONE AT THE PARISH

Mr. Jean Charlot has graciously acceded to my wishes to write an article, in which he explains frescos, the different stages of preparation and the ideas he employed in presenting the Good Shepherd psalm.

THE FRESCOS FOR THE CHURCH OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD
 by Jean Charlot

THE FRESCOES FOR THE CHURCH OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD

The first idea for painting frescos in the new church was broached by Father Torzewski at the University of Notre-Dame, where he attended a seminar in Liturgy, and I was giving a summer course in the art of fresco painting. Bill Glass and I came afterwards for a short visit which gave us a first look at the church and as well at the problems involved in its decoration. Father offered for subject-matter the Psalm of the Good Shepherd, one of the most beautiful, and the mural was on its way, at least in my mind. Though fresco painting is rapid work at the time of painting, it must be born slowly because the problems of fitness are complex ones. Artists who live happily in the quiet of their studio, preoccupied only with art for art may be the great masters of the future, but they should not attempt fresco painting. Murals are for the many rather than for the few. They should perform a function other than that of pure esthetic enjoyment. In this case, and placed as a frame to the altar and the Sacrifice of the Mass, it should be in tune with the liturgy, and specifically with the Canon of the Mass. If possible, it should help the people realize their own intimate connection with what goes on at the altar.

That these requirements are extra-pictorial does not mean that the painter should, as the saying goes, "talk down" to the people. It is obvious that the best any craftsman can give is none too good for God. To satisfy the many requirements of his craft, problems of style, of scale, of perspective, of union with the architecture, will keep the painter busy with many other things than pious content. To bring unity to the enterprise, one needs experience and good will.

Those who followed the making of these mural panels asked questions about the unusual craft. The murals are painted in true fresco, a technique whose most flourishing period was long ago, in romanescque times. When the Italian Renaissance introduced short-hand methods of painting, relying on inspiration rather than tradition, fresco fell into disuse, and its place was taken by oil painting, easier and, in the

(Continued on page 2)

FROM THE WATCH. —

(continued from page 1)

variety of the colors used, more flattering. But fresco remains the mural method supreme.

It is painting on fresh lime mortar. Every morning, the mason lays out on the wall as much of an area as the painter can cover that day. As the mortar starts drying from the moment it is laid, there is no time to lose, and the painter has to work a full work day every day. Though painting must proceed at a fast pace to follow the ways of the mortar, the preparatory steps are many, and essential to the final success. In this case, full scale drawings were prepared on brown paper, that fix the composition and the scale of values. The colors cannot be bought commercially prepared, but must be ground by hand, in water. They must be able to resist the causticity of the lime, so that today, as was true in the twelfth century, the range of colors is practically limited to earth colors, yellow ochre, venitian red, green earth, sienas and umbers. This is not a limitation, rather an advantage, since the limited range brings to mural painting a visual seriousness that befits the large scale and noble subject-matter.

The drawing is passed to tracing paper, or at least the outlines. After the mortar has been laid, and before it hardens, these outlines are transferred to the wall by incising them with the point of a nail. This incised line, showing that the mortar was soft at the time of work, is a unique characteristic of true fresco.

As in this case, painting is rarely done under easy conditions. More often than not, the painter is perched atop of a scaffold, and cannot, as does the easel painter, take a few steps back to judge of the effect. There would be danger in such a procedure. Futhermore, it would be in vain, for, even though the work is done at arm's length, it often must be seen from far off, and look good from the side, too. In this mural, the scale of the Christ was chosen in view of the length of the church, and can be seen clearly from mostly any point.

The fresco painter paints on the wet mortar when it is of a deep gray, and yet, he must decide what the effect will be later on, when the gray mortar will have turned white in drying. The hazards involved are similar to the risks taken in firing pottery, that changes texture and color and requires much experienced knowledge.

The place where the fresco is painted corresponds in shape and place to the absidal arch of the byzantine basilicas. These ancient walls were usually decorated with a majestic bust of Christ, of gigantic scale, as Pantocrator, or Master of the Universe. This inspired me in turn to attempt a byzantine Christ modified, with more light and perspective, and a more alive assymetry, but retaining, as I hope, the majesty of a bizantine mural. The static quality of this transverse piece is required by the very large scale.

In the two uprights, more movement, a more dynamic treatment, signals the change to a smaller scale, and more anecdotal subject. The christians are represented by the lambs that are under the care of the Shepherd. The psalm gave us the two moods expressed. In one upright, **the valley of death** is suggested by lambs lost in thorn bushes.

They long however for salvation. The means are shown by two angels. One carries Veronica's veil, an ancient symbol of the Passion, suggesting that our suffering can be done in union with the Passion. The other angel with a chalice, suggests how the Eucharist will take us out of the valley of death, into the fullness of grace.

The other upright, not yet painted at the time of writing, has for its theme **the green pastures**. The lambs here are happy, in a rich meadow, by a stream. Two angels underline again the sacramental theme. One represents baptism, that the psalm expresses as being the waters of peace. The sacred oil mentioned in the psalm refers to Confirmation, that second angel expresses visually with hands outstretched, enclosing the tongue of fire that is symbol of the presence of the Holy Spirit.

The psalm speaks also of a **table spread with food**. This allusion to the altar did not need to be expressed in painting, since in this case, the mural itself is but a frame for the altar itself, and the Real Presence.

I jotted those notes at Father Torzewski's bidding. They may be somewhat disjointed but have the advantage of being written, not in retrospect, but while the work is still in the making, and thus may

(continued on page 3)

carry to the reader some of the feeling of the painter of a fresco, while he is still on the scaffold, battling with the wall.

Third installment of the life work of Artist Jean Charlot, taken from the magazine Current Biography.

**BIOGRAPHY OF JEAN CHARLOT FROM THE SEPT. 1945
ISSUE OF THE CURRENT BIOGRAPHY MAGAZINE**

Editors note: We concluded last weeks installment by quoting from the magazine, "in 1929 the artist went to Washington, where he collaborated in publishing two works based on the Yucatan expedition."

Charlot now began a long series of teaching and lecturing engagements. The first of these was with the Art Student's League, where he lectured on fresco painting intermittently from 1931 - to - 1941. During this period he also lectured at the Chouinard School of Art, Los Angeles; The Florence Cane School of Art in New York City; the Walt Disney Studios, Hollywood; the Univ. of California, Berkley; the Univ. of Iowa; Columbia U., New York; the U. of Georgia; Athens; Black Mountain College, North Carolina; Smith College, Northampton. Of these various connections, the most outstanding was the three years 1941 - 1944, spent as artist-in-residence at the U. of Georgia, through a grant of the Carnegie Corp.

Although known chiefly as a muralist, Jean Charlot has had great success as an easel painter. His work was introduced to the North American public in 1923, when he exhibited with the Independent group in New York City. In 1925 he exhibited in the Mexican Exhibition at Los Angeles, and in 1928 the Mexican government sent his paintings, together with work of other artists, to the group show held at the Art Center in New York. More than fifty one-man shows followed. Parnassus (an Art Magazine) called an exhibition at the John Levy Galleries in 1931 "one of the most exciting shows of the season" and described certain paintings as "literally dazzling". In 1938 an exhibition of water colors attracted attention for their monumental quality and resonant color. "His figures", wrote Martha Davidson in Art News, "seem chiseled out of rock of heroic scale, and they have the solidity, the magnitude and the expressive force of their Mayan-Aztec ancestors."

Mr. Charlot has been a fluent writer of critical and historical articles on art, contributing to many American and European periodicals. In addition to his books on the Mayan excavations and the Georgia murals, he is the author of "Art From the Mayans to Disney, a collection of essays, and Catalogue of Prints". He has also illustrated twenty published books. His works are to be found in the Uffizzi Gallery, Florence; the British Museum in London; the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and the Museum of Modern Art, New York; the Phillips Memorial Gallery in Washington; the Walker Galleries in Minnesota; museums in Chicago, Philadelphia and Rochester; and private collections.

On May 26, 1939, Charlot was married to Dorothy Zomah Day, of Brigham City, Utah. They have four children. Ann Marie, John Pierre, Martin Peter and Peter Francis. The slight hazel eyed artist, whose dark hair is now graying, prefers fresco painting to all other activities and admits that the illustrations of juvenile books is rewarding only when his own children approve the results. Although French by birth and training, and now an American citizen, Charlot is always associated with modern Mexican movement in Art.