

A Look at Labor Justice That Backfired

By A. C. Tuohy

This is a story of a simple man's faith. Faith in himself, in his conscience, and in justice.

This man worked for his employer for twenty-nine years.

He was no longer a young man. He was making around \$65 a week, the result of many years of hard work and application.

A SHORT TIME AGO there was a strike. To many non-partisan critics it was a just strike. This employee was not on strike, but he did feel that the strikers were justified.

He could not bring himself to cross the picket line. His conscience and the law of the land said he did not have to.

For three days he stayed home. On the third day he decided that he had some obligation to assist the striking employees. So he joined the union.

He did not do this stealthily and under the cover of darkness. He went to his employer and told him what he had done.

ABOUT THE TIME the strike started, the Senior Clerk became a partner in the firm. Our man of simple faith was in line for promotion.

After the strike was over the man returned to work. He did his work as he always had done. He worked for several weeks. At the end of this period he was laid off.

He was told that there was no longer any need of some one doing the work he had been doing for many years. Since the job was superfluous, so was he.

The employer offered him ten weeks severance pay. This meant

that, if he retired peacefully, he would receive a going away present of \$650.

THE MAN REFUSED the severance pay. It did not compensate him for his twenty-nine years of hard work. It would not take care of him for the next twenty-nine years. It would not help him find other work which paid \$65 a week.

He felt he was fired because he joined a union.

Later events proved him correct. A few weeks after his discharge a new man was hired to do his work, the work that in the employer's eyes was no longer necessary.

The National Labor Relations Board then entered the picture. The man brought his case to it.

The Board told him that he had a good case. They told him that it was likely that he would get his job back with all the pay he had lost since the discharge.

But—and here's the rub—it would take nine months for the Board to process the case.

The man is convinced of the justice of his case. But he is also wondering how he is to support his family in the next nine months, should he have to wait until justice triumphs.

THE BOARD could, of course, obtain an injunction against the employer even before it held hearings on the case. The injunction would force the employer to rehire the man until the case was decided.

The Board, through its General Counsel, has been doing just that against unions. Whether it thinks a "little fellow" is worthy of this protection is another matter.

The upshot of the matter will be that the man will get another job. Even though the NLRP decides in his favor, most likely he will not want to work for an unfriendly employer. So most likely the employer will not be penalized for his unfair labor practice. And so it goes on Wall Street today.

Club Curbs Comic Sales South Bend, Ind.—NC—The South Bend Pharmacy Club has promised to ask all drug stores in the U. S. to stop selling comic books until book publishers guarantee standards of decency.

American Girls Who Become Nuns Are Career Women in the Service of Christ

By REV. R. T. TORMEY

These are days of giant strides in human careers. In Philadelphia two men have been chosen as candidates for the highest government offices in the land. Their influence on our nation and our world may be historic. Every day in our churches more and more young couples pledge to each other sacred vows of matrimony—starting out to form a life and a family together.

But other significant omens of the future are also shaping our world. THIS MONTH THERE is an army of nearly two million young people taking a first hopeful step into our challenging world. But these sober graduates of high school and college have heard learned speakers use the overworked cliché that young America will find a critical and selfish world indifferent to their starry-eyed debut.

Hardly any commencement orators today have tried to brighten the future with any Christian optimism. It seems to be a secret that Almighty God is still the Lord of this troubled world, and that His divine plans will be done for the greater happiness of all of us even though His ways are slow. And the orators seem to be rather cynical too, that our modern age offers any rosy dreams of happiness for young people who give up their natural idealism.

In this surge of graduates there are hundreds of young women who have been thinking for a long time: "How can I make my life something bigger than my own interests?" Many exciting roads of opportunity stretch before the young women of today: in contrast to the girl of just a generation ago, the modern girl has a wide-open opportunity for work and play and career-responsibility.

IT IS THIS modern freedom which makes the courage and the self-sacrifice so truly notable in those girls who this month will kneel in a convent chapel begging permission to enter a better life as a nun in a religious community.

Here we must sketch a few of the thoughts which the Church would like to have you understand about the religious life. What is the philosophy of living which persuades a young woman to step around the bright threshold of a worldly maiden's life to enter a religious order?

The American people respect our nuns on the street and marvel at their wonderful work in hospitals, schools, orphanages, and mission lands. But many persons have a confused knowledge of a sister's life, and the ideals which inflame her spirit.

I have heard people say: "A girl who enters the convent does so because she was blinded by the personal glamour of some nun who taught her in school." Or, "Maybe she joined because she was high-pressed by her parents or some pious priest."

And many well-meaning folk actually believe that all nuns land in convents on the second bounce from a frustrated love affair. You may even have heard whispered reports that pious religious are the timid little girls who could not make their way in the world. These stories are exaggerated.

More likely, the girl who becomes a nun is the one who was the smartest in her class at school, one who loved to dance and swim and to go to parties, and one who probably had several beaux until she fell so completely in love with God, when a girl enters the veil.



Nuns like these—more than 140,000—are working for Christ today in the United States but more are needed to staff the new schools and hospitals now being planned.

religious life she is hardly ever able to name the exact, single reason which opened the convent door for her. Most of them go through many days and months of distress, confusion and searching doubt.

Some "shop around," as it were, to find the religious community whose life they most care for: others seem dedicated to one group right from the time their first interest is born in their yearning minds.

THERE IS REALLY only one big motive which inspires the religious vocation. It is a deep determination to give one's life to Jesus Christ. Our nuns do this that they may please Him, that they may save their own souls, and may exemplify the virtues of Christ to the world. They are moved always by a desire to help the world to know and love God better.

These are supreme ideals—they demand a complete dedication of heart and soul. To do all this with a surrender of her whole being to Christ, a real religious knows that she must shut much of the world out of her life, that she may all the better serve her Divine Lover.

A young woman in becoming a nun leaves the society where money and charm and talent are the accepted coins for what a person wants in life. In the convent she willingly exchanges all these things for three solemn vows, or promises.

By a vow of poverty the girl renounces her personal rights to property and money; no more to be bothered with the necessary evil of wondering how she will be fed or what she will buy to wear or what roof will shelter her.

In making the vow of chastity, she renounces the joys of married life and company keeping and all the thoughts and acts that make physical romance so attractive to a young woman. She prefers the greater joy of being the mystical bride of Christ till death.

Finally, the vow of obedience makes her subject to superiors for whatever work she may be given in any city or country where she may be sent. Beneath the modest religious robes which hide the woman's body a nun has not changed her feminine character. She does not become saltily or even

humanly perfect overnight just by entering a convent.

But she has said to her God, "Please let me accept part of that cross You carried. I have given up home and parents and brothers and sisters for You—please give me Your divine love in exchange."

The superb dignity of being a nun is that this way of life is her own choosing. She does not forget the world, nor hate it; rather she is putting it aside to embrace a fuller way of living.

Look at it this way. Every conscientious Christian strives to keep as much evil as possible out of his life. Every girl who takes the nun's veil strives to go further: She wants to be perfect in God's eyes.

There is an archaic error in some minds even today that the young nuns are captive within their convents. Really, the door is always open—a girl may leave at any time to return to her family if she decides the convent life was not planned for her. It is far more likely that the Superior after careful decision may call a girl and say to her: "Sorry, Sister, but wouldn't it be better if you went back to the telephone company?"

IF SHE HAS a keen, inquiring

mind and has shown promise in high school or college, after a year or so, she may be sent to further schooling, to specialized studies which fit her for future work.

But always in the first year or so, she is being studied carefully by kind and wise superiors for quirks of temperament, signs of emotional instability and moodiness. The Church wants no "Holy mopes."

If you suspect that convents are gloomy, you should visit one someday. There are probably more innocent laughs in a convent than any place else on earth. The true simple laughter of pure minds and the charity of humor that is tolerant and friendly brightens every community of nuns.

In plotting her vocation to the religious life, a girl has a choice of over 200 different orders, or congregations of religious women, in which she may join. They vary in their requirements and their work, and especially so in their costume, or habit, as it is called.

Within these orders there is room for every skill and talent no matter how humble. Some religious may be cloistered nuns, like the Carmelites, willingly shut away from the world for a life of almost unending prayer. Some may be hardheaded busi-

Bell Rings End 400-Year Ban

Lausanne, Switzerland—NO—Following rescinding of an order promulgated 400 years ago prohibiting the ringing of Catholic church bells in Lausanne, the bells of the Catholic Church of Notre Dame were rung out and received in welcoming answer the sound of the bells of the Protestant Church of St. Francis.

ness women who build and operate great hospitals and schools.

Most of our religious groups of Sisters teach or nurse, or serve in hospitals and orphanages. There are many other communities which send their Sisters overseas for mission work or into the slums for social work.

AND ALWAYS THEIR mightiest task is the daily labor of their prayers—the constant crescendo of praise for God and of petition for themselves as their work and for us who do not take time to speak to God.

But whatever the approach, the dignity of every job, whether lofty or menial, is characterized by the original ideal of love which persuaded the nun to enter the community. Every task to which these women put themselves is for a single purpose, the glory of God.

Whether she is teaching 45 squirming youngsters in a grammar school classroom or lecturing to students in a fashionable girl's college, whether she is binding the infected sores of a dying leper in Manila, or feeding little orphans in a school in Chungking, she is happy to be one of the "unsung heroines of God."

They are worried so deeply in love with God that they will go wherever His Church goes. They will love and serve every one of His children.

Although there are 140,000 Catholic nuns in the United States, their number is not half of what the Church prays for and needs.

Vocations are coming but our modern girl finds it hard to pull away from the whirl of the world where selfishness is glorified, where pleasure is so enticing.

The world's magnetic charm draws a young heart more powerfully than the intangible attractions of religious life. But the grace of God and the crowning virtues of sacrifice and love will never fail to win the soul whom He chooses to be His Bride.

THREATS TO SCHOOLS HIT

Providence, R.I.—The recent report of the President's Commission on Higher Education and current moves to overhaul the tax-exemption provisions in the Internal Revenue Code were perceived as twin threats to private educational institutions in an address at Providence College's 40th commencement by the Very Rev. Robert J. Slavin, O.P., college president.

Father Slavin declared the "so-called private school in the United States has an enviable history of service," and should not exempt in a few cases, "be called a private school at all." He stressed the public good of the institutions, "in making a constant and enviable contribution to society, judged by its concern for the progress of the nation and the influence for good that it exerts. It is just as much a public school as are those institutions which are supported by public funds."

"It is estimated that \$300,000,000 was spent in the last year for Catholic private education in the United States. If the pupils of these institutions were not taken care of by Catholics, the government would have to take care of them. Let it not be forgotten that while the Catholic out of his own resources is building and equipping his schools and paying the costs of instruction and maintenance, he is at the same time a taxpayer contributing to the education of other people's children in the tax-supported schools," Father Slavin continued.

"Because it is not in the American manner to fight at a distance a situation that involves injustice, we are confident that some device will be worked out to lift from the shoulders of private institutions the burdens they have and recompense them."

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