

Education, Moral Sense Can Cut Highway Tragedy

Reckless drivers face possible Church censures, a Rome priest-professor stated last week.

Father Pio Ciprotti, canon law instructor at the Lateran University in Rome said that Church officials are considering spiritual sanctions against the increasing number of incompetent drivers.

Automobile authorities estimate there will be 36,000 fatalities in the United States this year. In the twelve counties of the Rochester diocese an estimated total of over 50 have already died in automobile accidents so far this year.

In most cases there was a clear violation of the moral law. Excess speed, drunken driving, hit-and-run driving, and driving without a license, are facts figuring in police reports on these accidents.

The Roman professor pointed out that irresponsible use of a car is definitely sinful even though there are no Church laws explicitly imposing penalties. God's law requiring respect for life and property is binding on car owners as well as pedestrians.

Today's automobiles with the power of two hundred horses packed beneath their hoods have changed America's way of life — and ended life in increasing numbers every year.

Over 50 million cars are on the nation's highways today. And 2 million of these cars are being driven by teenagers who boost insurance rates \$125 million higher because of the last eight years record proving young drivers are "poor risks."

High school education now includes driver training along with courses in ancient Latin and American history. A General Motors Corporation official has stated that training young drivers "strikes at the heart of the accident problem in a logical and highly effective way." Statistics bear out his statement in the fact that teen-agers who have been taught the rules and techniques of safe driving have actually only half the number of accidents as the untrained.

Since the Duryea brothers "mass produced" thirteen cars in one year at the turn of the century, the automobile industry has become in sixty years one of the major social and economic factors of the twentieth century.

The automobile has "exploded" city life sending people in thousands to live in suburbs. Industry, utility service, police and fire protection survive on specialized motorized equipment. Automobiles take the average American to work, to shop, to play, to school, and to church.

The basic problem confronting highway safety experts is making drivers realize their responsibility for whatever happens by their sleek, high-powered cars. Intelligence through education and a sense of moral responsibility through religious conviction will certainly reduce the growing accident rate and make the auto what it was meant to be — a servant and comfort to its owner.

Movie Council Confuses 'Freedom,' 'Censorship'

It is not something altogether new to hear that somebody in Hollywood disagrees with the Catholic Legion of Decency. The recent blast of the Motion Picture Industry Council, however, has chosen a new cudgel to whack the Legion. The Council has charged the Legion with "political censorship" because the Legion classified September due movie "Storm Center" as a "warped, over simplified, and strongly emotional solution of a complex problem of American life."

The movie tells the story of a small-town librarian who objects to removing a communist book from her library.

The librarian in the film story states that book-burning and repressive techniques will eventually destroy American freedom.

Legion officials gave the film a separate classification in order to caution those who view it that it handles the highly controversial subject of unrestricted liberty with inept and specious arguments. The Legion does not condemn the picture on moral grounds at all.

The movie industry Council terms the Legion's action "censorship" and charges that the Legion's listing is "contrary to American principles of freedom of thought and expression."

Now there is a nice sample of the old shell game.

The movie council wants freedom for its screens to show what they produce but then if anybody else wants the same freedom, to disagree, that the council calls "censorship."

As Catholics we don't necessarily stand around clapping our hands everytime a Communist is caught or his book is burned. But as citizens we claim the equal right to defend our nation's freedom from those who would destroy it. If that be censorship, it is at least better than the "freedom" we would enjoy if the Communists had control of our libraries and film capital.

Strange But True



Pope Calls For Consistency In Laymen's Daily Life

Pope Pius told politicians last week they should show "Christian consistency" and "technical competency" in the administration of their public office.

The Pope pointed out that the Church is interested in politics because Christ has His rightful place in parliaments and council meetings, as much as in school rooms and family homes.

The Pope was talking to 4,000 newly elected Italian mayors. He urged them to develop new housing projects for the homeless, better schools, and more recreational and cultural facilities in their municipalities.

The Pope also stated that enemies of the Church are aided in their anti-religious propaganda even by "those who proclaim themselves Christians but either administer their office or vote contrary to Christian principles." THE MAYOR in the currently popular book "The Last Hurrah" is a good example of a man who veneered his politics with piety in order to conceal rampant corruption and extensive favoritism.

And the fictional Skeffington is not half as bad as some real life political barons are known to have been.

Communist and other anti-religious elements thrive on the poverty and ignorance rampant in half the world today the Pope said. Political officers will prove themselves Christian not by a mere outward display of devotion at public services but by tackling the root causes of discontent and misery.

Although the Pope was referring to the war-torn economic conditions of Italy and the urgent need to provide for the basic needs of home, food, and education for the thousands of Italy's poor, his remarks are significant for American Catholics too.

As the Pope explained to the mayors, our faith is not a lip service creed to be observed in a vacuum. Faith is essentially a practical thing which should color and shape attitudes and actions in daily life.

A recent Catholic Digest survey for example, indicated that the currently hot subject of



Catholics as citizens have a responsibility to use their ballot or political office in keeping with the principles of their faith, Pope Pius said in an address to 4,000 Italian mayors last week. The Pope called for "Christian consistency" in applying the Christian creed to the basic problems of political life. (20th Century Photo)

racial segregation. Catholics tend to disregard the Christian and official teaching on the subject and go along with the general attitude prevalent in the area where they live. Southern Catholics tend to follow the southern attitude demanding segregation.

Louisiana laymen in the state legislature there publicly opposed Archbishop Rummel who termed segregation "sinful." Drastring segregation laws were enacted there just last week despite the Archbishop's threat of excommunication.

ANOTHER prevalent pagan attitude is the increasing approval of divorce as a solution to marriage problems. Many Catholics, though recognizing that they themselves cannot be divorced to remarry again, accept the divorce and remarriage of their friends as a "personal affair" as if God's law didn't affect the case at all.

In the entertainment world, movies, stage plays, magazines, books are produced which strike at fundamental moral virtues, and nominal Catholics disregard Church guidance and instead attend or read such productions with the excuse "everybody else is doing it."

In labor management relationships, Catholic union members or employers too frequently solve their mutual problems on the basis of expediency rather than seeking the Christian solution as proposed by Catholic sociologists.

Racial injustice, sanctity and permanence of marriage, supervision of entertainment, work and wages — these are everyday practical issues with religious and moral principles.

Catholics in key positions who compromise their faith for their own political or economic advantage are certainly guilty of the crime of hypocrisy. They definitely are not "consistent" as the Pope said they must be.

It is equally true that Catholic people with an "ordinary job" have a responsibility first to be informed in their faith and how it is to be applied in the crucial questions of the day, and secondly by their intelligent "power at the polls" to elect to political office only those who are actually convinced that God's law takes priority over human preferences.

Fortunately there is no Catholic Party in this country. Catholics vote as Americans. But whether they vote as Democrats or Republicans, they must act not just as citizens, not just as efficient officials. They have a primary duty of acting as Christians. In that they will serve God, church and country to best advantage.

The idea is not merely to get you to do what we want you to do. The idea is to get you to recognize for yourselves what is right to do, and to want to do it just because it is right.

For instance, you and Jim never drew pictures on the wall-paper. When you first began scribbling I explained how Mommy likes to keep the house looking nice for us. I showed you where the paper is, in a drawer, and asked you to do your drawing on that. And you did it.

It's much smarter, that way, than waiting until you do something that annoys us, and then getting cantankerous and slapping you. What we want from you is cooperation with God and us. We get it because we don't spank, and we don't spank because we get it. It's a happy circle, isn't it Geena? Yes, it is, it's a happy family circle.

JOSEPH BREIG

'Why Don't You Spank Us?'

"Dad, why do you never spank us?" Our daughter Geena, at the age of eight, has a thoughtful and inquiring mind. And she is nearly inseparable from her 10-year-old brother, Jim. That is why she said "us."

I chuckled to myself as I contemplated the preposterous thought of spanking Jim. He weighs more than two-thirds as much as I do. With my typewriter trained muscles, I would need a derrick to get him even an inch off the floor.

Why do I never spank you, Geena? I will give you an answer that makes sense to me, even though it does seem to go around in a circle. I do not spank you and Jim because you are good kids; and one of the main reasons you are good kids is that I do not spank you.

YOUR MOTHER and I do something that we are convinced is much better. We try to explain; and we find that it works. We would be astonished if it didn't.

We can be scientific about this matter. If we want to. Suppose that a man wants to train a dog. He studies dog nature. He finds that a dog can't talk; and he the dog can't carry on a conversation. They can't sit down and reason together about how to do this trick or that trick.

But the man discovers that the dog does have a kind of memory, and that the memory goes into action when certain conditions are repeated. A slapped dog will avoid a hand raised in a snapping position. A rewarded dog will respond to future rewards. And so on.

THE MAN, being scientific in his approach, will train the dog according to its dog nature — according to its learning capabilities. It is slow work, and if the man and the dog could talk things over, that is what the man would elect to do, unless he were more foolish than I suppose.

You and Jim, Geena, are human beings. You have intelligence and free will. Any honest scientific examination will show that you understand things, you can learn from listening to words, you can reason, and you can make choices.

Our job, therefore, is not slapping you. Oh, maybe we had to slap your hands when you were very young to keep you from burning yourselves on hot things, or cutting yourselves with sharp things. But that was before you'd begun to reason and to understand speech.

IT'S DIFFERENT now. If we whacked you now, we would be bypassing your human nature. We would not be treating you according to your capabilities. In stead of helping you to develop your marvelous minds and wills, we would be acting as if you didn't have them.

Now let's step out of the realm of experimental science into the realm of revealed religion. You and Jim, therefore, are more than beings with intelligence and free will. You are the images and likenesses of God.

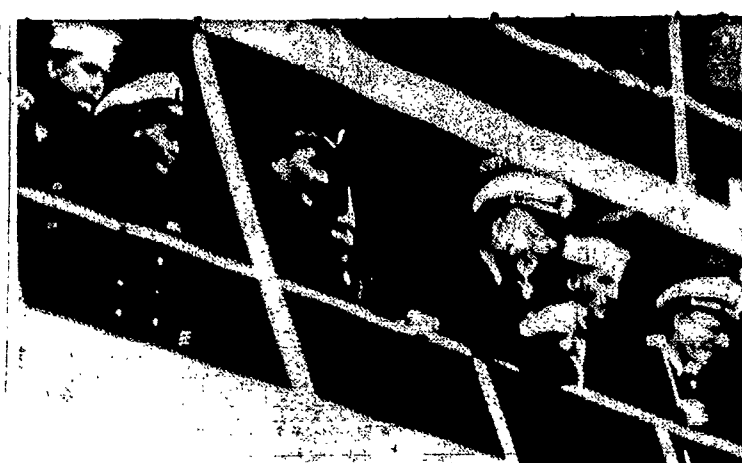
What, then, is our job? Our job is help you to develop your powers as fully as is reasonably possible. Our job is to lead you to think before acting, to decide what is right to do, and then to do it.

WHACKING YOU isn't the way to go about that. You come to the age of reason ready to be taught, eager to learn, able to understand. So we explain. If necessary, we explain over and over.

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Deepfreeze Madonna

Second prayer said at Mass on this Sunday just before the epistle will honor "Our Lady of the Snow."

The August 5th feast recalls a fourth century legend that a miraculous midsummer snow in Rome outlined the ground plan of a church to be built in honor of the Blessed Virgin. The church was then constructed, rebuilt several times later, and is the famous St. Mary Major church in Rome today.

The fourth century story, however, has a twentieth century climax.

In the dark six months' night of Antarctica at the "bottom of the world" the U. S. Navy has stationed 96 men to establish base sites for South Polar exploration during the 1957-58 International Geophysics Year.

Seismologist Jesuit Father Daniel Linehan accompanied the Navy's preliminary task force which surveyed Antarctic landing areas in 1955. While there, he erected a statue of Our Lady of the Snow high over Hut Point Camp where the Navy's task force is waiting for the summer of 1956-57 and the second part of "Operation Deepfreeze."

Father Linehan in this week's America magazine describes his three months' cruise as chaplain and civilian scientist.

The South Polar continent he terms "almost a dead continent." Except for an occasional insect, a little moss, and a few gulls and penguins, the vast white land is lifeless. American personnel there are supplied food and other necessities by specially designed icebreaking ships.

Australians and Russians have also made preliminary explorations on the remote but strategic continent.

Captain Robert F. Scott established the first American base in Antarctica in 1902. Admiral Richard Byrd later opened "Little America" as a provisional permanent camp on an ice island 750 feet thick.

Father Linehan writes that the summer time dustfree sky shows every shade of blue from light aquamarine at the horizon

to black ultramarine in the zenith. He describes the Antarctic as a land of "intense whiteness, sheer blueness, awful brilliance, total silence."

As chaplain to the Navy's Catholic personnel, Father Linehan reports that daily Mass attendance and frequent Communion became quite common. He says that he noticed frostbitten hands holding the Communion plate, as well as the cramped and stiff hands of pilots who had struggled with a helicopter's controls in the tricky weather conditions there.

The Jesuit priest scientist is now back at his Boston College Observatory post in Weston, Massachusetts. In his prayers, he says, he asks Our Lady of the Snow to protect the 96 Navy men who are "wintering in" at the camp beneath her statue.

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H opposes Communism inside India, not for religious reasons, but for political and economic reasons. He feels that a purer form of Socialism would be better for India than would Russian Communism.

When it comes to Communism outside India, Nehru is indifferent. He feels he has enough troubles of his own without starting more trouble by making Russia or Red China his enemy. He is indifferent to the "moral" rightness or wrongness of foreign Communists.

Some months ago, I had a conversation with an Indian who was a convert to Catholicism. He told me he admired Nehru tremendously and expressed a hope that he would become a Catholic eventually.

My friend claimed that India has a right to be neutral now, as Ireland was neutral in the World Wars. He said that India could never stand up under invasion from Russia or China as its army is small and its people poor. Moreover, the fifth-column Reds in India would wreak havoc in case of war. The impoverished Indian millions already lend a favorable ear to Red propaganda. Witness the ovations received by Khrushchev and Bulganin on their Indian tour.

All this is true, to a certain degree, but don't think it justifies Nehru's policy of calculated indifference to injustices in Red territory. His criticism of the Russians on July 15 was almost his first harsh commentary on the Soviets.

Nehru may wake up some day to find that India lost its body as well as its soul by remaining neutral.

Nehru shows real respect for the Church and has at times bestowed upon it certain favors. He himself is apparently an agnostic. He admires Christ as a man who was a great social reformer, but he does not believe in His divinity.

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FATHER SHEERIN Doesn't Pay To Be Neutral

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It is true that Britain is not the West, but to Nehru's eyes she represents India's long years of agony under a Western colonial power. He has had too little contact with the United States to be able to distinguish her from her Western allies.

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