

JOSEPH BREG

The Tyranny of Minorities

Much of my writing life has been devoted to defending minorities. Now I must insist that even majorities have rights.

In recent years there has been an attempt to enslave us under the intellectual tyranny of groups.

The attack on the rights of all people, as against the few, has centered in matters of religion.

We have been lectured everlastingly about tolerance; but the smallest minorities have been encouraged to be ferociously intolerant.

Thus in the school case in Champaign, Ill., an atheist mother persuaded the U.S. Supreme Court to outlaw religious instruction in school property because, here child, whom she forbade to attend the classes, was "embarrassed." This is carrying the despotism of smallness to the point of demanding that everybody be required by law to accept the dictation of one dissenting individual.

NOW WE HAVE another instance this time in Minnesota. The state is approaching its 100th anniversary celebration. A centennial emblem is being prepared. The proposed design includes a cross, symbols of the primary part played by Christian denominations in the state's beginnings and growth.

The cross would be simply a recognition of a huge historical fact about Minnesota. But there arose at once one of these ridiculous clamors which we have come to expect of late.

The few atheists and agnostics who are to be found among any million humans, being cried out that their rights were being violated. And of course they rushed upon the scene that once admirable, but now prevarical and splinter-picking organization, the Civil Liberties Union.

The archbishop of St. Paul rightly defended the right of the overwhelming majority of Minnesotans to have some voice in their state's emblem. Dr. Oscar A. Benson, president of the Augustan Lutheran Church, took a different position:

"To have the cross on the emblem of a state for a centennial which is supposed to represent every citizen of Minnesota is to discriminate against those citizens to whom the cross is not a symbol.

... The real test of the sincerity of my democratic convictions is my willingness to protect the rights of minorities with whom I might be in complete disagreement.

"If I insist on imposing my convictions on others, just because there is a majority standing with me, I may some day have to suffer with a minority which is not able to force its convictions on the rest of the community."

Falser than that, you might say, no one can speak. But the statement does more credit to Dr. Benson's heart than to his head. He is not defending the rights of a minority. He is not defending any rights at all. He is simply surrendering everybody's rights to the Hitlerian tantrums of an unreasonable handful.

THE RIGHTS OF MINORITIES do not include the right to bully the majority out of its rights. No minority has the right to behave like the dog in the manger.

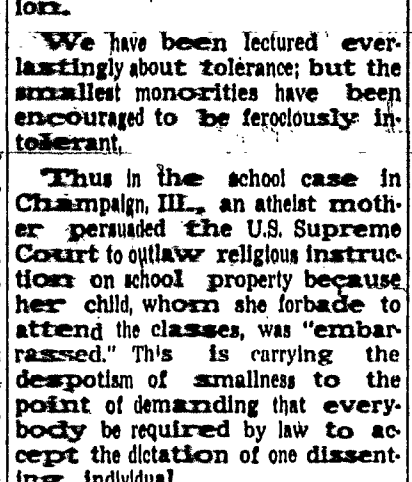
Dr. Benson has got it backward. Neither he nor any other religious person is trying to impose any convictions on anybody. It is the other way around.

WHAT HAS BEEN happening in Minnesota is that a tiny minority has been trying to force these state to act on its religious convictions, just as the atheist mother in the Champaign case talked the Supreme Court into burdening the whole public school system with her irrationality.

If they surrender to spoiled-bribe anti-religious groups, continuing action or later we will be forced to strike the name of the Creator from the Declaration of Independence.

This nation was made by religious people, and we have every right to exercise the religious freedom that we are given.

There is no one to force the free man to believe the good man's religion. There is no one to force the man to believe what he wants to believe.



Catholics throughout the world will highlight the month of May with devotions honoring the Blessed Virgin Mary. Picture above was drawn by a Chinese convert, Lu Hung Nien. The dove at the right carries the rose of suffering; the dove at the left bears the lily of purity, epitomizing the lives of Jesus and Mary. (RNS Photo)

Why Catholics Honor Mary

By REV. HENRY ATWELL

Catholics throughout the world mark May as a month of special devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary.

In exchange, St. John learned what it was like to have Mary for his mother.

To have her smile and encouragement in his work, her sympathy and solace in his trouble, her constant inspiration to prayer and virtue were certainly factors sustaining the young apostle in his life long struggle to launch the infant Church on its trek across the world.

Certainly there must have been conversations between John and Mary when they would talk of the old days at Bethlehem, Nazareth, Carphanum, of Calvary and Easter.

No wonder that John could write his gospel with such vivid detail, such precise recollection because he not only had once seen it all himself, he also heard it again as told him by the loving Mother of the Lord.

THE HISTORY of the Church is a record of how each subsequent "beloved disciple" linked Jesus and Mary in a close-knit devotional pattern.

Artists like Raphael and Michelangelo made Jesus and Mary the subject of their masterpieces.

Theologians like Aquinas and Bernard detailed the worship due to God and the reverence due His Mother.

Peasants crossed themselves in adoration to Christ and knelt at a roadside shrine to ask Mary "pray for us."

It is also significant that the present vicar of Christ, Pope Pius XII, who has slashed through the customs of centuries to make the Eucharistic Christ available to the people is equally noted for his emphasis on devotion to our Lady.

This Pope of the Blessed Virgin, when he lay poised on the brink of death, was granted the unique privilege, a vision of Jesus, and restored to a vigor described as "miraculous."

The simple devotions of family Rosary, May shrines at home, hymns and prayers honoring Mary are thus rooted in firm theology, confirmed by traditions dating back to the apostles and based on a love which had its beginning in the Sacred Heart of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

Priest Describes 'Responsibility' Teen-agers Need To Own, Drive Cars

By REV. EDWARD F. MILLER, C.S.S.R.

SPRING IS HERE, and hard upon the heels of spring comes summer. Even though automobiles are used in winter (chains, snow tires, anti-freeze and such) as well as in the other seasons, it is in spring and summer that they come into their own. It is then that automobiles afford the most enjoyment both in the opportunity they offer people to take a ride in the country on a Sunday afternoon, or a ride across the country during vacation, or just to get behind the wheel and drive.

Ownership of an automobile supposes that the owner has arrived at a point in life when he can accept the high responsibility that goes along with such ownership and belongs generally to adults.

By that is not meant only the responsibility of keeping the tank full of gasoline, the insurance policy paid up, the oil changed at the proper time and the tires checked.

It means (beside the above) the feeling of responsibility for one's neighbor's welfare, of being big enough and intelligent enough to hold a couple of thousand (or hundred) dollars worth of intricate and powerful machinery in one's hands without having so much machinery and so much power go to one's head.

Ownership of a car demands this kind of responsibility.

TEEN-AGERS in their early teens find it difficult to be sensitive to this high office of responsibility.

However, this does not mean that teenagers in their early teens should never be allowed to drive a vehicle that is possessed of a motor, four wheels and a steering apparatus, and that belongs to the family.

Certainly teen-agers may drive a car on occasion.

But there are conditions that accompany both the statement and the permission. By no means do we say that every teen-ager and on every occasion should be allowed to back the car out of the garage in order to direct it alone where he will.

Some teen-agers think that this is exactly the way it should be. They think there should be no conditions. They should be treated like grown-ups. They should be allowed the car with the same wide freedom as big brother enjoys who has reached the age of twenty-five and big sister who will never see twenty-five again.

Teen-agers who think like that are the ones who generally do the damage to their fellow-teen-agers' reputation and to other people's life and property.

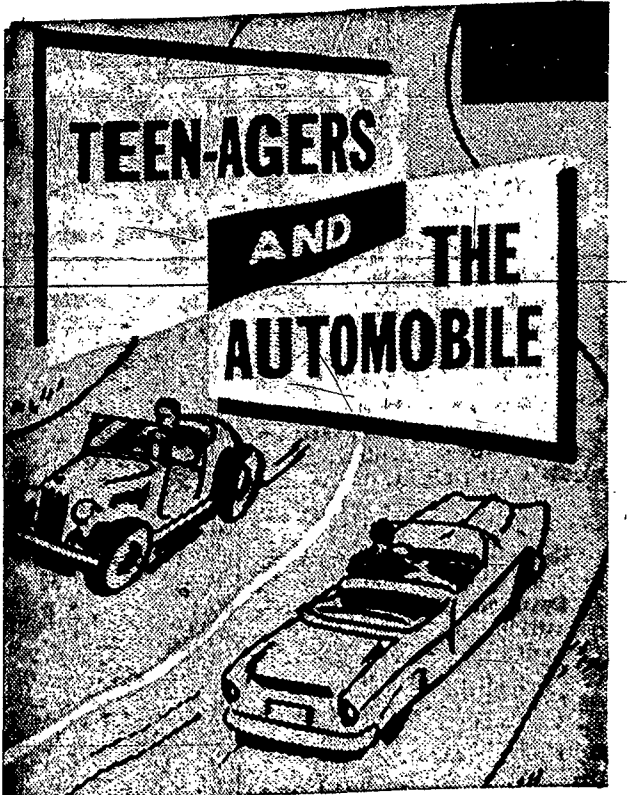
Seldom should they be allowed to have the car. And when they are allowed, they should have a strong man at their side to see to it that they stay at least within the broad outlines of the traffic laws.

MOST TEEN-AGERS, thank God, do not answer this description at all. They do not believe that they have just as much title to the use of the car as father and mother. If they get the car at all, they know that it is because they have proved conclusively that they can drive a car without putting themselves and everybody within a block of their flying wheels in serious jeopardy of losing their lives.

In other words these teen-agers have proved themselves responsible young people and their elders know it and consequently are not afraid to trust them.

How have they proved themselves responsible young people in keeping with their age, their temperament, their training, their education?

In many ways. By the way they applied themselves to their studies, even to the ones they did not like, in high school; by the way they treated their mother and father at home; by the way they reacted in times of emergency—a drowning, a fire, an accident on the street,



a sickness in the family; by the way they looked upon games and sports in relation to the other far more important affairs of life.

It is things such as these that prove whether or not people can be relied on, whether or not they have sense enough and prudence enough to handle well something over and above the ordinary occupations of the day.

Driving a car is over and above the ordinary occupations of the day in the life of the average boy and girl in their early teens. Therefore the burden of the proof is upon them. They must show by all their actions that they can be trusted with a car.

When they think that they can honestly measure up to this idea of responsibility, they may ask their mother and father for the use of the family car. It is entirely up to mother and father whether or not the permission is to be given. Teen-agers must always remember that they have no innate right to the use of the car.

If there are mothers and fathers looking over the shoulders of their teen-agers while they, the teen-agers, are reading this article, let them, the parents, ponder well whether or not their children have reached that state of maturity so as to be trusted with so mighty a machine as an automobile.

LET PARENTS ponder before God, and act in their decision as God Himself would act if He were in their place. Let them not be guided by sentiment and parental love in the making of the decision.

If the teen-agers are still children in their way of acting and thinking and judging, the parents under no circumstances should grant them permission to use the car even though they plead and cry and threaten to run away from home.

Whatever damage children in their early teens cause to life and property through an inept use of an automobile can be laid on the conscience of the mother and father who permit children to use a car who are not yet old and wise enough to do so.

However, even though young teen-agers have proved that they can be trusted with a car and are mature enough to know what to do in the midst of heavy traffic and sudden emergencies, there are two things that they must always remember.

First, they must guard against every tendency to show off.

There are boys who cannot set a car in motion without tearing off in a swirl of dust, a burst of noise and at top speed. This is nothing but an effort to get all eyes to turn in their direction and to admire them for what they think is bigness and toughness and manliness.

Boys who drive like that should be kept away from the steering wheels of cars until they grow up.

Secondly, they must remember that there are certain commandments of God that bind them every moment that they are behind the wheel of an automobile.

What are these commandments?

The fifth commandment, "Thou shalt not kill."

Generally we associate killing and injuring with a gun. There are other things that can injure and that come under the fifth commandment. A car can kill and maim and shatter bodies like an exploding shell. A car can be more lethal than a cannon.

This is so when the driving is too fast, when the driving is careless (passing on turns and hills, crossing over the line at the middle of the road), when the car is mechanically unfit to be on the road (poor brakes, dim lights, bad tires), when there are too many young folks packed in the seat of one time, when the driver is inattentively instructed in the handling of a car, when the driver is tired or has had a little too much to drink.

If anyone is killed or injured when the above conditions prevail, and when the driver of the car knows that the above conditions prevail, the driver can be guilty of murder just as though he pulled the trigger of a revolver against the temple of a man whom he did not like and wanted to get rid of.

And, of course, if the driver kills himself under such circumstances, he has made himself guilty of suicide.

The seventh commandment, "Thou shalt not steal."

Stealing is only a part of the seventh commandment. Included in the prohibitions of the commandment is the destruction of a neighbor's property. Ordinarily one thinks of property destruction as the breaking of windows, the defacing and deforming of school desks and other school equipment, and so forth.

There is more to it than that. And that is what the young folks forget.

Running into and damaging another automobile because of carelessness; destroying the property of the city, such as light poles, traffic signs, sodded areas because of a refusal to live up to the rules necessary for safe driving; wrecking the car in which the driving is being done if the car belongs to someone else—these are all sins against the seventh commandment.

The sixth commandment, "Thou shalt not commit adultery."

Here again the car plays a part in the commission of a serious sin that many teen-agers do not even think of; they connect the sixth commandment with sexy movies, rotten books, obscene pictures and a few other practices that are shameful and gravely wrong.

Yet the car can be an occasion of serious sin when a boy and a girl go out for a ride in a car and then decide to park in some dark lane or corner so as to be able to give themselves over to passionate petting and necking and prolonged kissing.

No decent girl will allow herself to be drawn into a car or trapped in a car for immoral purposes of this kind.

No decent boy will ever suggest that a girl go out for a ride with him in order that he may seduce her into these practices when he has found a spot that is sufficiently secret and untraveled. Never will the good boy and girl use a car at all if it is going to cause them to sin.

THAT IS OUR STORY on teen-agers and the automobile. Lots more could be said, and important things too.

For example, warnings could be given teen-age boys and girls against having races with cars on public highways, against playing games with cars that might easily end in death, stealing cars for the thrill of it.

But these things oftentimes are done by young people whose minds have drifted just a little bit off center. We turn them over to the doctors.

The rest of the young we turn over to God, to their guardian angels, to the Blessed Virgin Mary and to their patron saints, and we ask these great ones to get right in the car with the teen-agers when the teen-agers decide to go out for a ride and to stay fixed in that car with them until the young folks are safely back home and their feet fastened upon the ground once more.

There can be no trouble if that prayer is answered.

This article—"Teen-agers and the Automobile" may be obtained in pamphlet form for ten cents a copy from the Ligurian Pamphlet, Reading Service, Fishers, Ind.

From Now
Classrooms
First Grade
...back to classrooms for their studies.
...already bulging with so many pupils, face over-crowding when schools open in September.
...forty nine thousand youngsters are enrolled in the schools of the Rochester Diocese.
...thirty four thousand Catholic pupils attending schools throughout the twelve-county Diocese...their religious instructions in one-week religious classes.
...sky-rocketing population boom has Catholic parishes and parish priests worried about the future of education in this country.
...pastors now report as many as ten new Catholics in one parish in one year. If these Catholics remain in their parish to be educated, they will need a ten-room first grade school building.
...what this will mean for the pastor "who provides a full eight grade school. He will have to construct an eighty-room educational factory.
...instruction of Catholic pupils in public schools is certainly not the ideal solution. Law and common sense demand that a Catholic child receive a complete Catholic education, kindergarten through high school and college, in a Catholic school.
...parents demand a Catholic schooling for their children because they themselves know that there is no adequate substitute for full-time Catholic schools.

...facts, however, indicate that hundreds of infants from now.
...parish priests recognize that the Catholic Church in America now faces one of its greatest challenges: an insatiable demand for immediate, extensive school expansion, and they constitute the mutual-aid societies of Catholic clergy and laity.
THERE ARE THREE major road-blocks standing in the way of this needed expansion, and they constitute the mutual-aid societies of Catholic clergy and laity.
FIRST, there is the blunt problem of money. A pastor to build a school unless he has the funds to pay for its construction. And new schools are most urgently needed in those areas where parishioners are already struggling with their own highly mortgaged new homes and large families.
NEXT, there is the problem of staffing the schools once they are built. There are, fortunately, still large numbers of young women who each year don the nun's veil to give their lives in service to God and His little ones.
But the soaring numbers of these "little ones" make it impossible to place a nun in every classroom. Many parochial schools have already adopted the plan of engaging lay teachers to work in partnership with the sister directed schools.
THIRD, there is the fact that there are just not enough nuns to care for the established parishes much less sufficient numbers to pioneer in establishing new ones.
What is the answer?
In the present, only God knows that in full.
What now there are a lot of people who are struggling to find the solution.
Parents are worried because they want a Catholic education for their children. Parish priests are worried because they lack the funds absolutely needed in order to construct new school buildings. Diocesan school authorities are worried because even if they had the schools who is there to staff the classrooms?
The solution of course, ultimately rests in the hands of God. He gives His blessings to those who humbly seek them in prayer. This first step, prayer; priests and parents can readily take together.
We will then have to await the grace and guidance of God to find the way to build and staff the schools soon to be filled with the swelling numbers of "little ones" so dear to the Heart of God Himself.

Graham Skips Scripture Doctrines

Evangelist Billy Graham will launch his crusade to convert New York City the middle of this month.

Catholics do not question Evangelist Graham's sincerity that they challenge his brand of Christianity.

For a man who preaches "straight from the Bible," Billy Graham skips significant sections of the Scriptures.

He knows the Bible speaks of the Virgin Mary, but he doesn't mention her.

He knows the Bible speaks of repentance, but he never mentions that Christ gave the apostles and their successors the power to forgive the repentant sinner.

He knows the Bible speaks of Peter, of one Church, of the "binding" of all that Christ taught, but Graham admits he doesn't mention these controversial subjects.

HIS SUCCESS in attracting vast audiences is proof that God-seeking Non-Catholics are tired of the halfhearted of churches long separated from Christ's one true Church.

We hope the average American man-in-the-street will be made a better way of life through hearing the noted Evangelist.

The average Catholic man-in-the-pew meanwhile will thank God for the fulness of faith and the grace of sacraments which Christ entrusted to His Catholic Church. He will be glad that someday Billy Graham himself will be lost to the fullness.

Friday, May 3, 1957
COURIER-JOURNAL