

What Can We Do To Modernize Our 'Old-Fashioned' Parents?

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My husband and I have an in-law problem in reverse. Our relatives don't interfere with us, but we'd sometimes like to change them! We both have parents who are second generation descendants of immigrants. They frequently embarrass us by their slips in grammar, their views on food, dress, marriage, family life, etc. We don't like to neglect them, yet they really live in a different world. What should we do?

Your problem is what the social scientists call a culture conflict. When it occurs in the family it means that parents and children have learned two different ways of life and consequently had to agree. It has been so common in our country because we are a nation of immigrants — only the Indians are really natives.

Coming originally from many different nations and cultures, the successive waves of immigrants brought with them their own diverse ways of life. Their descendants passed through, or are now passing through, the various stages of gradually abandoning the old ways and adopting the new.

The speed with which the change is made varies greatly among different groups and among individuals within the same group. Some adopt new ways at once, some cling to the old, only to see their children take up the new. The possibilities for conflict between generations must be evident.

IN HANDLING this problem, several points should be kept in mind.

First, there is a tendency to consider what is old or different to be inferior to the new and familiar. This need not be true.

There are many ways of preparing food, dressing, raising a family, and so on. Different cultures have worked out different ways of life. Who is to say which is superior? However, because most of the immigrant groups coming to America arrived poor — the rich usually don't migrate — their language and culture came to



be considered socially inferior by those who had arrived before them. The terms "foreigner" or "immigrant" became synonymous with socially inferior, though in reality they mean only "different."

Second, many of the immigrants and their descendants have been slow to drop their native language and culture, not because they were incapable of learning the new, but because they value their own.

We may not agree with their attitude, but we certainly cannot question their right to it. Older people in particular find it hard to understand why they should change. They are proud of their native heritage, enjoy their own way of life, and believe we should accept them as they are.

Some would even feel guilty of betraying what their forefathers suffered and fought for if they were to abandon

their language and culture here.

THIRD, as members of our minority groups move into the social system, nationality differences gradually become less important. The process takes time, but we no longer feel the compulsion to "Americanize" everyone by force and brand all national differences as marks of inferiority.

Hence I feel you are being a little hard on your parents.

Why not be realistic? They are your parents to whom you owe love and respect. They have given you life and raised you — nothing will ever change that. They cherish their language and their traditions. Are these necessarily inferior?

You say they live in a different world. In a sense, every generation does, but is it so different that love and sympathy cannot lead to respect and understanding?



Carolina Couple Provide Foster Home

Raleigh — (NC) — Like the old woman who lived in a shoe, Mary Elizabeth Pelone has so many children —

But like the woman of the nursery rhyme, she knows just what to do.

The wife of Mike Pelone, a husky, good-natured, and devout Irishman, just gets more. Their family now must number in the hundreds.

The Pelones, with their own children nearly grown, are now giving foster children a start in life. It's all part of the foster parents program in North Carolina, a program handled by the Catholic Bureau of Charities.

The Bureau provides care for Catholics with problems. It helps displaced persons. It helps to straighten out the youngster whom society often

casts a juvenile delinquent. But, perhaps most important, it helps children find a home.

Much of the work is done by the Missionary Sisters of the Blessed Trinity under the supervision of Sister Agnes Miriam and Msgr. Begley. They are the ones who accept unwanted children, place them in a foster home, and then finally find for them couples who will adopt them.

Lourdes Stretcher Bearer Dies At 98

Lourdes — (NC) — Count Etienne de Beauchamp, honorary Belgian consul who was founder and president of the International Society of Voluntary Stretcher-bearers of Lourdes, died here at the age of 98.

Count de Beauchamp's life had been identified with Lourdes for half a century. Since 1922 he had headed the committee in charge of the hospitalization of the large number of sick who visit Lourdes every year.

HIS DEVOTION to Lourdes began in 1881, when he first came here and volunteered his services as a stretcher-bearer. In

1894 he lost his wife, his father, his mother, and then his two children. He had great difficulty adjusting to his loneliness.

In 1906 the French government suddenly terminated its concordate with the Holy See and began to seize church property.

Count de Beauchamp hastened to Lourdes, saw the situation caused there by the government's action, and leased the Grotto at his own expense to save it for the Church. When settlement was made between Church and state, he returned the property to the use of the Church.

During the period of the lease, the count began to create facilities for the care of sick pilgrims. He was one of the founders of the two hospitals which now serve them.

Count de Beauchamp died during the annual French National Pilgrimage to the Shrine of Our Lady in the Grotto here. His funeral was attended by many of the pilgrims who had known him for many years. Several bishops took part in the ceremonies.

Pope Pius XII sent a message of condolence.

Report

Liturgy Progress In U.S. Midwest

Collegeville (RNS) — Midwest Catholics are more willing to accept change and progress in the Church than are their co-religionists in other areas of the country, a Benedictine monk said here.

Father Paul Marx, O.S.B., of St. John's Abbey here, addressed the 18th North American Liturgical Week conference.

HE CITED willingness to accept liturgical development and modernization of church art and architecture as evidences of healthy open-mindedness and freshness of viewpoint found more frequently among mid-west Catholics than among others in America.

Because of the receptivity to new ideas and progress in the Midwest, the monk said, it was not surprising that the American liturgical movement started in the area 31 years ago.

The movement, which stresses active lay participation in church rites, was founded in 1926 at St. John's Abbey by the late Dom Virgil Michel of St. John's, the Rt. Rev. William Bush of St. Paul Seminary and the Rt. Rev. Martin B. Hellriegel of St. Louis, Mo.

It now is "over the hump" in becoming accepted by Catholic clergy and laity, but still runs into "an enormous amount of opposition," particularly among Eastern Catholics unwilling to accept change, Father Paul said.

He stressed that the movement does not advocate changing the basic elements of the Church.

"The Scriptures, the Mass, the Sacraments cannot be changed," he said, "but the externals can and must stay in tempo with changing times. And continued study of theology over the years cannot help but bring new insights and interpretations of the apostolic writings of the Church."

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Father Paul also emphasized that the movement does not advocate a rapid overturn of time-honored customs and traditions. For example, he said, some churchmen estimate it may be half a century before American Catholics hear the Mass sung wholly in English rather than in Latin. "But," he said, "the change into the vernacular is definitely gradually coming."

Rice At Weddings Mess For Janitor

Buffalo — (NC) — Parishioners at St. Louis church here have been requested to discontinue the custom of throwing rice at weddings.

The parish bulletin noted that the practice stemmed from an ancient well-wishing for the bride and groom, hoping "their children are as numerous as the grains of rice."

The parish priest added that the tossing of rice and confetti made "an awful mess" for the janitor.

Two Nuns Mark 70 Years in Convent

Milwaukee — (NC) — Two nuns who are more than 70 years old have observed their 70th anniversaries as School Sisters of Notre Dame, it was disclosed at the community's motherhouse here.

One is Sister Obadiah, 72, the other is Sister Barbara, 71.

Biological Association
Worcester — (NC) — The 20th general meeting of the Catholic Biblical Association of America will be held at Holy Cross College here from September 21-24. Under the patronage of St. John J. Wright, the meeting will feature the readings of the



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