



Is Church's Advice About Dates 'For The Birds'?

By FATHER JOHN L. THOMAS, S.J.

I am a priest in a fine Catholic high school and feel that your advice on teen-age dating is for the birds. As the boys and girls parents know, a girl who has a boyfriend is only a step away from a moral life. If they begin to date, they will be going out with a boy. I am sure you are right in your advice about dating.

Well, Father, I am sure that as a priest in a high school who has been dating since the fourth grade, you have acquired considerable experience and insight. I am bound to respect your opinion.

At the same time, as you will know, that one who has had the opportunity to study dating patterns throughout the nation as well as in other schools, may have some ideas about this.

We must develop a reasonable judgment about the matter. It is not only a matter of fact, but of principle. We must study the long range as well as the immediate effects of this practice and the individual.

Have you taken all these points into consideration in forming your opinion?

I think you revealed the real nature of our disagreement when you stated, "They can only have a normal life if they begin to date their personal life now." Let's analyze this statement carefully. For the sake of the church, let's analyze it behind our current teen-age dating patterns.

The validity of the statement is based on two assumptions. First, that early dating advances the personalities of teenagers. Second, that this is the only way that they can be developed so that they will not take place, they will not be able to lead a normal life.

Are these assumptions true? Before answering this question, we will have to know something about the develop-

ment of adolescent feminine personality.

Personality has many components. Its constitutional elements, including physical traits, temperament, and intelligence, are rooted in heredity but allow considerable room for development. The component termed character, including primarily a philosophy of life and acquired habits, grows out of experience and learning, so that it must be developed by personal effort.

The development of personality, therefore, must include the balanced development of all these elements. Furthermore, since adolescents are preparing themselves to live in a definite kind of society, their development must include adequate preparation to meet the needs they will face as adults.

In our society this implies long years of serious formal study, and consequently a considerable gap in time between the period when they reach biological maturity, i.e., readiness for sexual relations, and social maturity, i.e., readiness to assume the obligations of marriage.

We must not make the common mistake of identifying general knowledge and skill in human relations with the narrow, emotion-loaded experience of current dating patterns.

In spite of the above remarks, Rita, I find it easy to appreciate your position. Most teen-agers are not made sufficiently aware of the serious need to prepare themselves for adult life during adolescence.

Our affluent society conceals from the freedom of adults but the responsibilities of children. Although sex is everywhere openly exploited, its personal implications for young people are never faced squarely. Teen-agers require wholesome entertainment and recreation, yet society seems unable to provide them, while parents leave youth to their own devices.

Isn't it time that parents and teen-agers start acting together as a family unit in making adolescence a healthy Christian period of preparation for life?



College Honors Bishop Kearney

DEDICATION CEREMONIES of St. John Fisher College administration building took place last Tuesday in rites on the East Ave. campus. Building was dedicated to Bishop James E. Kearney, founder and first chancellor of the men's college. In photo above are: (from left) Bishop Kearney, Very Rev. Charles J. Lavery, C.S.B., college president, and Joseph J. Myler, chairman of the Board of Advisory Regents, who gave the dedication speech. Commemorative plaque is the work of artist John C. Menihan.

Only For Proven Need

Equal Aid Asked For Pupils

Chicago — (RNS) — Archbishop Albert G. Meyer of Chicago urged that all temporary federal aid to education should be fair to parents of children attending non-public schools.

In a letter to Sen. James Murray (D-Mont.), chairman of a Senate Labor and Public Welfare subcommittee, the prelate said that if Congress deems federal aid to education necessary, then "the aid should be temporary assistance, granted only for specific purposes in areas of proven need."

Writing in his capacity as episcopal chairman of the department of education of the National Catholic Welfare Conference, Archbishop Meyer added that the aid "should be fair to parents of children attending non-public schools by granting to private non-profit institutions long-term, low-interest loans for school construction."

The prelate said that the education department is "acutely aware of the needs of teachers and is not opposed to the improvement of their position," but stated:

"A federal subsidy for teachers' salaries appears incompatible with the idea of temporary aid; for, such a proposal, as a practical matter, is inherently non-terminable."

As for proposals to aid school-house construction, the archbishop said that if Congress rates such a measure necessary "to aid the parents of public school children... it cannot in justice be indifferent to parents of nonpublic school children" who bear heavy financial burdens.

He said fair action by Congress will maintain the diversity which is "a cherished feature of the American way of life" and will avoid reducing educational effort to a "common mold."

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Segregation Said Against God's Law

South Bend — (RNS) — Bishop Vincent S. Waters of Raleigh, N.C., said here that Roman Catholics cannot endorse segregation legislation which "violates the law of God."

"SEGREGATION based on race alone violates the law of God since it implicitly denies the unity of the human race," the southern bishop declared. "Where secular laws uphold segregation, Catholics may not uphold such laws."

The bishop was one of 12 panelists who addressed a two-day symposium on school desegregation sponsored by the University of Notre Dame Law School. Panelists included leaders in church life, government, education, politics and the legal profession.

Fear Of God Key To Peace

New York — (RNS) — Dr. Charles H. Malik, president of the United Nations General Assembly, declared here that unless the world's statesmen are inspired with the fear of God, "which is the same thing as His love," all people shall be permanently treated to the spectacle of the blind leading the blind.

Addressing some 900 guests at the Twelfth Biennial Conference of the Associated Alumni of the Sacred Heart, Dr. Malik said the final responsibility for peace rests with all "those whose duty it is to mediate God to man," rather than the sole concern of statesmen and diplomats.



Cardinal Aboard Cruiser

CARDINAL CUSHING of Boston was greeted aboard the world's first guided-missile cruiser, the USS BOSTON, on a recent visit by Chaplain John A. Widman, a priest of the Rochester Diocese (photo above). Ordained in 1944, Lt. Cmdr. Widman was assistant pastor of St. Philip Neri and St. Andrew parishes in Rochester and St. Alphonsus Church, Auburn. He entered the Navy in 1948. On June 1, Father Widman will be detached from the BOSTON to report to Naval School Pre-Flight, Naval Air Station, Pensacola, Florida.

Smog In Their Eyes

New York — (RNS) — Two Jesuit scientists at Fordham University here are conducting experiments aimed at providing some answers to the problems of smog. Father Frederick Dillemut of New York and Father Duane Sidmore of Grand Forks, N.D., are engaged in tests during which they look with infrared light through 120 feet of air laden with hydrocarbon materials to determine how ozone forms on a smoggy day.

Police Crack Down On Smut

San Mateo, Calif. — (RNS) — San Mateo County officials, backed by Protestant and Catholic parent teacher groups, have cracked down on the sale of two "off-color" magazines here and in Burlingame. Police asked newsstand dealers to remove from display the current issues of "Adam" and "Monsieur." Meanwhile, District Attorney Keith Sorenson urged other communities in the county to impose a ban on the magazines.

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