

# Should A Father Beat His Son

By FATHER JOHN L. THOMAS, S.J.  
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What do you think about corporal punishment for teen-agers? As a teacher, I am aware of many cases among some of the national groups. For example, I know a father who inflicted severe physical punishment on his sixteen-year-old boy. The lad submitted out of fear and reverence. What does the Church say about this?



Your remarks that the practice is relatively common among some groups in this country really surprises me. I felt modern parents had become so permissive that they no longer used corporal punishment even on youngsters who hadn't reached the age of reason. However, on second thought I recall that some men use physical force on their wives so I suppose that they would not hesitate to do the same with their children.

Of course there are people who feel that some spoiled young "punks" might well profit from the application of a little corporal punishment. I'm not interested in arguing the point here, but suggest that the implied need for such punishment at this late stage of personality development clearly indicates serious parental failure and is carefully calculated to remedy it.

From your description I take it that the cases you describe are not delinquents. Severe physical punishment, you say, is employed by fathers as a routine way to maintain family discipline and correct the normally expected failures of adolescent boys.

Frankly, I find the practice undignified and revolting, although I am quite ready to admit that on an exceptional occasion when the father's authority is arrogantly challenged, corporal punishment might be understandable. Even here, it would seem to me to indicate past parental failure in character training and discipline.

If parents fail in this task to any marked degree, the failure is quickly reflected throughout society and the next generation of parents neither develop more effective methods or the culture distinguishes.

Thus the current rise of juvenile delinquency indi-

icates the widespread failure to prepare the coming generation for the assumption of responsible roles in society. Whether we blame parents, the school, or social conditions, the situation must be remedied if our traditional way of life is to endure.

What does the Church say about severe physical punishment for adolescents? Catholic doctrine in this matter stresses moral principles and aims, leaving the practical applications to be worked out in terms of the varied methods and situations within each age and culture.

St. Paul states the essence of the Church's teaching on this point: "Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is just. Honor thy father and thy mother, which is the first commandment with a promise. . . . And you, fathers, provoke not your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and correction of the Lord (Ephesians, 6:1-4). Obedience is to be shown and authority exercised "in the Lord." It is impossible to reconcile the conduct you mention with this teaching.

According to Catholic teaching, the basic constant aim of the whole training process is to enable the child to master the norms, motives, and goals required for mature Christian living. The cases you mention represent an arbitrary use of parental authority. Although these practices may be explained as traditional carry-overs among some groups, they cannot be justified under modern conditions. They are bound to provoke the anger against which St. Paul warned parents, while they force adolescents to act out of fear rather than reverence and inner conviction.

At the same time, they indicate an undignified and undisciplined parental authority. Such fathers are not punishing out of love. One suspects that they have no adequate view of the purpose of discipline and deeply resent any signs of independence in their growing sons.

What can you do? Perhaps not much directly in your role as teacher. However, should the occasion arise, do not hesitate to show such parents how far from Catholic ideals their behavior is.

# Life Ebbs For Jailed Prelate Fifteen Years In Siberia Prison

Vienna — (RNS) — Ukrainian Rite Archbishop Joseph Slipyi of Lvov, who has been a Soviet prisoner almost continuously since 1945, is seriously ill in a hospital near Moscow in Eastern Siberia, according to the Austrian Catholic Press Service here.

The archbishop, who will be 68 on Feb. 17, had a stroke located in the area which was annexed by the Soviet Union from Poland during World War II.

FIRST ARRESTED on April 11, 1945, after the forcible liquidation of the Eastern Rite Catholic Church in Western and Carpathian Ukraine, he was sentenced to Siberia shortly after World War II in a concentration camp for alleged "anti-revolutionary activities."

While a prisoner in the notorious camp at Vorkuta, Archbishop Slipyi wrote a petition for his release. The latter died in November, 1944, a few months before the purge of the Ukrainian Catholic Church was launched.

He was promptly taken to Moscow, and attempts were made to force him to adopt the Orthodox faith. When this failed, the archbishop was condemned to an additional five years in a concentration camp.

In 1955, Archbishop Slipyi was set free, but only formally. The Russian authorities promised he could return to the Ukraine, where Catholic churches had been turned over wholesale to the Russian Orthodox Church.

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# Cardinal Mindszenty's Mother Dies At 86

Rome — (RNS) — Mrs. Borbala Fehm, 86-year-old mother of Cardinal Mindszenty, Primate of Hungary, died at her home Feb. 5 in the village of Eszterind in western Hungary, the Rome Radio reported.

It said that Mrs. Fehm, who had been living on a small farm owned by another son, succumbed after a long illness.

(In New York, Josef Legrad, a nephew of Cardinal Mindszenty who came to the United States as a refugee, said he had



# A Cross On Scouting's Birthday

New York — (RNS) — Cardinal Spellman of New York presents Gerald Slattery, 12, an Ad Altare Dei (Unité the Altar of God) Cross on Richard Hallinan, also 12, waits his turn. The youths were among 517 exemplary Scouts from all sections of the New York archdiocese who received the medals "for distinguished spiritual advancement, faithfulness to religious duties and outstanding service to the Church." It is the highest honor for a Catholic boy in scouting. The awards were made in connection with the Boy Scouts' golden jubilee year.

# Catholics 'Reluctant' In Justice

Baltimore — (RNS) — Labor-management relations involving a just-settled three-month-old strike by office workers at the Knights of Columbus national headquarters in New Haven, Conn., proved a tragic reminder of the reluctance, even among Catholics, to accept the Church's social doctrine, the Catholic Review said here.

In a lead editorial, the official organ of the Archdiocese of Baltimore charged that "most of the rank and file members of the K of C had no knowledge of the issues at stake."

"If THE Catholic Press hadn't told them, who would have?" the paper asked. "A prolonged labor-management dispute should never be a private meat pie," the paper said. "After all, if Catholic organization's members, for one of the parties to try and keep it so, usually points to a weakness in its case. If the Knights of Columbus had justice on their side, why didn't they at least tell their membership?"

"Even more tragic," the Review said, "were the statements made by some that the Church was not implicated in the dispute. While this may be technically true, the world unfortunately holds the Church responsible for the actions of an organization which claims exclusive Catholic membership. The Knights of Columbus is such a group."

The editorial said Supreme Knight Luka E. Hart rejected offers to arbitrate and the union refused to budge on its demands. It took federal mediators to bring about a settlement.

# China Counts 14,000 Martyrs

Albany — (NC) — Thomas Cardinal Tien, S.V.D., exiled Archbishop of Peking, said during a visit here that about 14,000 priests, Sisters and laymen have died as Christian martyrs in Red China.

China's first Cardinal also said that of the 19 Catholic Churches in the Peking area, 15 have been turned into meeting halls or government schools and the other four are run by communists cooperating with the

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# Priest Named Year's Chaplain

Washington — (NC) — A Catholic army chaplain has been honored as Reserve Chaplain of the Year of 1960.

Father (Col.) John K. Connelly of California received a special citation at the (Feb. 5) Mid-Winter National Council of Reserve Officers banquet at the Sheraton-Park Hotel here. More than 1,200 persons, including members of Congress, as well as top White House and Pentagon officials, were present.

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