

## Editors Find Understanding

By MANFRED WENZEL

Bonn — (NC) — When a controversial story on Catholic matters reaches a German Protestant editor, it is likely to pick up the phone and get an authoritative Catholic view on the matter.

This was not the case four years ago. Then, an editor of a Protestant periodical was more likely to blaze away at "Catholic power" whenever he had the chance. The editor might sight his quarry in a routine pastoral letter, or even in a national dedication.

TODAY'S HAPPY cooperation between Catholic and Protestant editors is a by-product of the 1956 General Synod of the German Protestant Church at Hanover. Catholic and Protestant journalists covering that meeting held their own private synod to discuss major religious issues and controversies in the news.

Out of this informal get-together grew a preparatory committee of five Protestant and five Catholic journalists, including the editors-in-chief of the Catholic and Protestant news services in Germany. This committee has organized

full-scale meetings of Protestant and Catholic journalists at least once a year.

Site of these meetings alternates between Catholic and Protestant institutions. The first meeting was held in March, 1957, at the Protestant academy in the village of Loccum, in Lower Saxony. The following December a second meeting was held, at a Catholic institution near Dortmund.

The first subject on the agenda is always theological, or at least lies on the fringe of theology. The forthcoming editorial Council of the Catholic Church was the principal topic at last year's meeting, held at the 11th-century Benedictine monastery of Maria Laach.

At this year's meeting, held last month at the Protestant academy at Arnsdorf, the journalists discussed the struggle of the churches against communism.

The second part of the three-day meeting is reserved for discussion of controversial points such as mixed marriage, concordat problems and rivalries among missionaries of

different faiths. Each subject is introduced and explained by two experts, one Catholic and one Protestant. These experts make clear their views on the problem and the position of church authorities. Discussion follows.

Attendance is not limited to journalists working on Catholic or Protestant periodicals. Many journalists from the secular press attend the meetings.

From the beginning, these meetings have had the approval of the Catholic Bishops of Germany. A representative of the hierarchy is present at the opening session. Archbishop Lorenz Jaeger of Paderborn, who is the representative of the German Bishops in interdenominational matters, is generally asked to address the opening session.

The Protestant churches are always represented by at least one outstanding churchman, such as Dr. Martin Niemöller.

It is incontestable that the atmosphere surrounding interdenominational questions in the German press has grown both clearer and more friendly. Much of the credit

for this must be given to the institutions called the "five brigades," which was set up by the joint meetings of Catholic and Protestant journalists.

This is how the brigade works: Let us suppose that the editor of a Catholic paper receives a news item dealing with Protestantism and does not understand it fully. He has two telephone numbers, each of an outstanding expert on Protestantism who is willing to assist him.

By making one call or two, he may learn that the news constitutes a radical change of policy, in the Protestant church, or that it is relatively unimportant. Knowing this, he can write his story more confidently and more professionally.

The same conditions hold true in matters affecting the Catholic Church. Two Catholic experts are on constant call to explain the position of the Catholic Church and to put the news in historical and theological perspective.

Since this system went into effect there has been no recurrence of misunderstanding such as that surrounding the

dedication of the German nation to the Blessed Virgin in 1954. Many Protestant periodicals granted this act of Cardinal Frings of Cologne, as a "further example" of the "imperialism" of the Catholic Church.

Such examples of misunderstanding, standing could be multiplied but they all precede that first meeting of Catholic and Protestant journalists.

## Classroom In Clouds

Cleveland — (NC) — About 30 high school teachers from this diocese will take to the air this summer to make next fall's science and mathematics classes come alive for their students.

The Air Science Indoctrination Program, sponsored by the Cleveland diocesan school board, will consist of flights within a 75-mile radius of Cleveland. It will be a practical application of science and mathematics to aeronautics, aerial navigation, and airport flight control.

## A Time To Be Responsible

Three Catholic spokesmen this week — from Rochester to the west coast Spokane — agreed our times need an alert, active laity.

In Rochester for a Pentecost Sunday Cenacle Retreat Guild Mass, Donna Myers told 200 women they must be "witnesses like the apostles" not only by the simple method of "good example" but by "everything we think, or do, or say" so a confused world can find "Christ and His truth in us."

Cardinal Cushing of Boston, speaking at Spokane's Gonzaga University graduation, said the modern world does not look to the Church for guidance — the Church "must go to it." The prelate said, "This apostolate must be, at most points, the job of laymen."

Also this week, Father John O'Brien, noted expert on convert work, attributed this past year's 140,000 adult convert figure to the increased interest of lay people in making the faith better known.

All three speakers echoed a long standing plea of the Popes of this century: Inviting the Catholic laity to a more active role in Church work.

Actually, enormous strides have been taken in this direction. There never was a time in the past four hundred years when the Church was advancing on so many fronts as today. We are living in an era comparable to the expansion of the Church in apostolic times and in the age of the evangelization of Europe.

We can only surmise how far we would go if we could rouse the forty million Catholics in this country to a concerted crusade not just to defend the bastion of our rights but to build the Kingdom of God for souls. In this we can be sure sincere Christians of other allegiances would be glad to work in parallel programs to make our nation better in its moral life, richer in the spiritual heritage we owe succeeding generations.

The stirrings of what might someday be can be seen in many lay groups already active in the Rochester area — these include the Legion of Mary with its strictly spiritual program of aid to souls — the Sodality with its two-fold emphasis on individual development and apostolic action, the Christian Family Movement with its goal to strengthen family life according to Christian principles, the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine which roots its program in knowledge of the faith, the Knights of Columbus especially as it continues its informative ads on matters of religion in the major secular magazines of the country, and scores of other organizations geared to make the layman effective in the Church's work for souls.

There is a further need for lay action and that is beyond the confines of Catholic organizations.

The Christian concept of life needs to be brought into the world of business, entertainment, communications, labor, medicine, education, law, into these fields the clergy are, in most cases, unable to go. Intelligent, responsible Catholic lay people are, therefore, the bridge to bring the Church's wisdom into these aspects of present day living.

Inasmuch as the spiritual needs which arise in these areas are so delicate, an organization's efforts to solve them might do more harm than good. That is why individual Catholic lay people must face their responsibility and with courage, conviction and prudence aid in bringing to these problems a Christian solution which, as experience shows, is invariably a reasonable and workable solution.

## Catholics 'Free' In Public Office

Burlington — (NC) — Sen. Thomas J. Dodd of Connecticut said here that the U.S. Catholic office holder is "a completely free agent" guided by "his personal judgment as to the best interests of his country."

He also declared that the typical U.S. Catholic does not seek a "privileged position" for his Church, any more than Non-Catholics do for theirs.

SENATOR DODD made his comments while discussing what he called "the current Catholic issue in American politics" in a commencement address at Trinity College, a Catholic women's school.

"The Connecticut legislator said he did not 'pretend' to speak for all Catholic office holders. He said, however, that his own experience as an elected official who is a Catholic has raised him 'to formulate his own estimate of the attitudes and the responsibilities of American Catholics on the question of Church and State.'"

In his attitude toward the relationship between religion and politics, the Catholic "embraces the American tradition of separation of Church and State," he declared.

"It is thankful that in this country those of his faith and of other faiths are spared the persecutions they have suffered in the past and continue to suffer today in other lands, and he opposes the persecution of religious minorities anywhere," Sen. Dodd said.

"A Catholic does not seek for his Church the privileged position accorded it in some countries, just as his Non-Catholic neighbors do not seek for their churches the privileged position they enjoy in other lands."

The Senator described American Catholics as "grateful" that the Church in this country is "not encumbered with the political entanglements and temporal problems" it faces elsewhere.

He said the U.S. Catholic does not seek "public support for the activities of his religion."

However, "he may seek a rightful share in those public services and benefits which, according to the Supreme Court, do not involve a violation of the separation of Church and State," he said.

Sen. Dodd said Catholics regard the Catholic clergy and hierarchy with "respect,

reverence, and gratitude." But they also know "the distinction between guidance and dictation, as do the officials of his Church," he declared.

"In his capacity as an elected representative of the American people, the Catholic is a completely free agent, guided in all his public acts by his personal judgment as to the best interests of his country," Sen. Dodd said.

Excerpts from Sen. Dodd's address follow:

"I do not presume to speak for the American Catholic in public life, but my experience in that position and the challenge which is presently being made to Catholics to justify their public role has led me to formulate my own estimate of the attitudes and the responsibilities of American Catholics on the question of Church and State."

"In the realm of faith and morals, the representative American Catholic embraces the American tradition of faith and morals and by a free act of his free will, without reservation, without exception, without apology."

"In the realm of the political relationship between religion and politics, the American Catholic embraces the American tradition of separation of Church and State."

"He is thankful that in this country those of his faith and of other faiths are spared the persecutions they have suffered in the past and continue to suffer today in other lands, and he opposes the persecution of religious minorities anywhere."

"He does not seek for his Church the privileged position accorded it in some countries, just as his Non-Catholic neighbors do not seek for their churches the privileged position they enjoy in other lands."

"He is thankful that the growth of 'un-constitutional' religious faiths in the American States to occupy the preferred status of established religions, at the time our Constitution was adopted."

"The representative American Catholic does not seek to make his religious code of personal conduct binding upon all by making it the law of the land."

"His attitude toward the priests and bishops who make up the hierarchy of his Church is one of respect, reverence and gratitude. He re-



SENATOR DODD  
American tradition

gards them as protagonists in the great drama of spiritual salvation. He looks to them for instruction in matters of faith and morals and for spiritual guidance in those temporal matters upon which moral questions impinge.

## Daily Mass Calendar

Priests of the Rochester Diocese whose names are listed below died on the date indicated. Your prayers are requested for them.

Sunday, June 12 — Holy Trinity (white), Gloria, 2nd prayer of 1st Sunday after Pentecost. Creed, Trinity Preface, 1935 — Rev. Patrick Neville, 1936 — Rev. John Kelly, 1934 — Rev. Daniel Sullivan.

Monday, June 13 — St. Anthony (white), Gloria, Creed.

Tuesday, June 14 — St. Basil (white), Gloria, Creed, 1936 — Rev. George Dowd.

Wednesday, June 15 — Mass of 1st Sunday after Pentecost (green) for Mass of Marys (red), VR. Preface, 1935 — Rev. Patrick Neville, 1936 — Rev. John Kelly, 1934 — Rev. Daniel Sullivan.

Thursday, June 16 — Corpus Christi (white), Gloria, Sequence, Creed, Common Preface.

Friday, June 17 — Mass of 1st Sunday after Pentecost (green), VR. 1936 — Rev. Edward Lynch.

Saturday, June 18 — St. Ephrem (white), Gloria, 2nd prayer of St. Mark and St. Marcellinus, Creed.

## Reapings At Random

## A Fuzzy World -- Mr. Crummles' Phenomenon

The theater is a fuzzy world.

It can produce joy and sorrow, laughter and tears, tension and relaxation—all with the push of a stage light. It's an artificial world populated by real people, who mostly live to give pleasure.

One only regrets that in this day and age the theater has lost its meaning for the bulk of the people. There was a time when going to see a play was a great adventure, a monthly or annual visitation which gave prestige to the family and added glory to the performers.

Today we are out of touch with the theater world, probably because its makeup is so contrived. It used to be just the theater. Now there's the legitimate and the illegitimate; the good plays and the bad plays. These judgments, it seems, have nothing to do with the performers or their performances.

In addition, plays are judged by whether they have a "message" or not.

Many plays have become mediums of propaganda, both political and social. And the message follows a particular reviewer's line. It's a good play and the performers are magnificent if the party line isn't followed. It's a bad play and the poor actors are damned for their gross neglect of true art.

One is reminded of that magnificent im-

presario, Mr. Vincent Crummles, leaping across the pages of Dickens' memorable "Nicholas Nickleby." There is also that delightful little horror, ten-year old Miss Ninetta Crummles, known to her public as "The Infant Phenomenon."

Crummles and company were true pioneers of the early (legitimate) theater. They set out to entertain. The only "message" Crummles wanted to get across was:

"My daughter—my daughter, the idol of every place we go into, sir. We have had complimentary letters about this girl, sir, from the nobility and gentry of almost every town in England. The talent of this child is not to be imagined. She must be seen, sir—see—to be ever so faintly appreciated."

The buildings that housed Crummles' type of company were not impressive. There was no outside marquee with blinking neon lights; no carpeted foyer; no gilded lobby. The best there was only the gilt, the staid and the glory, all looking coarse, cold, gloomy and wretched.

These primitive conditions however did not dampen the ardor of the performers or their patrons. It was art for art's sake, despite the Infant Phenomenon. The players lived a community life. There were no matins and lauds,

but there was mutual sympathy and understanding—each player sharing in the joys and sorrows of the other. When there was sorrow, it was kept in the community and was never allowed to still the laughter of the stage.

Oh, surely, there was sorrow, but it was only to portray the lines of some poignant drama. There was, in effect, a real creed of showmanship. The simple folk lapped it up in great measure. There was no question of escapism, it was rather genuine entertainment.

The Crummles of the day worked about the box office, but not to the extent that the stars could become temperamental. One day it would mean beef steak and Yorkshire pudding, the next watery soup and stale bread. Whatever the menu, however, the players performed, conscious of Shakespeare's lines:

"All the world's a stage, and all the men and women merely players. They have their exits and their entrances; and one man in his time plays many parts, his act being seven years..."

These comments are offered after a visit to the Strawhat Theatre in Oswego Mills, Maryland. Mr. Crummles was brought to mind because the Strawhat Theatre is no Broadway luxury house. It is a simple utilitarian theater building, housing Summer Stock and touring first class players in the stage.

Like all Summer Stock theaters the Strawhat is the home of budding young actors and actresses who abound in the presentation. I saw that's why, though, of "The Infant Phenomenon" come in. Some appeared as young as Miss Ninetta. I can almost hear their parents say:

"Our daughter—our daughter, the idol of every place we go into, sir..."

Maybe ordinary folk should take a new look at the theater and see if it cannot provide some of the good entertainment which we sorely need these days. We get little of it on the radio, even less on TV. For many of our youngsters the corner drug store, with its screaming juke-box and shelves of pornography, seem to be the acme of their entertainment effort.

It appears to me that the Strawhat Theatre and the hundreds of other similar summer stock houses throughout the country are performing a real service to the community.

It's up to the community to take advantage of it. In order that youngsters, especially, should have their perspectives broadened in relation to entertainment. We all might then better appreciate what the world owes to the Vincent Crummles of today.

—GERALD R. SPERRY

