



How Far Is Canterbury From Rome?

Hopes, Hazards On Road To Unity

By Father Henry Atwell

A 400 year gap divides two members of the Christian family — the Roman Catholic Church and the Anglican Church.

Today in Rome the Anglican Primate meets the Catholic Pope.

Can these two men heal the breach?

Three Rochester clergymen of the American Anglican faith — Protestant Episcopal — told the Courier-Journal in special interviews what they think are the hopes and hazards on the road to unity.

All three agree ultimate unity with Rome is a religious necessity but they cannot at this time predict "what kind of unity God is leading us into."

They also state their conviction that they are "within the one Catholic Church, established by Christ" and consider themselves, along with Roman Catholics, as true Catholics also.

The three interviewed are Rev. Arthur R. Cowdery, rector of St. Thomas Church, Winton Road, and canon (vicar general) of the Rochester Episcopal Diocese; Rev. Donald A. Stivers, rector of All Saints Church, Winona Blvd., and Rev. Franklin K. Robinson, Episcopal chaplain at the University of Rochester and at Strong Memorial Hospital.

CANON COWDERY views the recently established Vatican Secretariat for Unity as "a brand new idea" on the part of Rome officials. The Secretariat is an agency of the Ecumenical Council to be held in Rome in 1962 called by Pope John to work toward religious unity. The Secretariat is a liaison committee for contacts with other denominational leaders.

Canon Cowdery said Christianity's present divided condition "disappears our strength and makes us ineffective in

the face of rapidly expanding pagan populations and the growing Communist menace."

He said all Christians need to be "alert, alive and awake" to existing opportunities to work together toward mutually agreed goals and to develop a "better knowledge and deeper trust" of members of the varying denominations.

He also considers the present trend of Protestant groups to "more positive Christian faith and ritual way of worship" as evidence of the "Holy Spirit's guiding these people toward a unity shattered centuries ago."

Father Robinson, the University chaplain, said students are showing an increased interest in the theological positions of the different churches. He said they are "concerned and interested" in the "way Rome goes" and would like "more freedom to exchange views with Roman Catholics."

All three of the clergymen interviewed voiced a similar lament at the "lack of communication" between Roman Catholics and other religious groups.

Father Robinson said his student-pastorship considers an Episcopal-Orthodox union more likely than an Episcopal-Vatican bond. "The Orthodox position is more realistic," he said.

He admitted the present once-a-week church school program is a poor substitute for a school system which integrates faith with other subjects, such as is done in the Catholic parochial school system.

In the civic sphere, divided Christianity makes little impact, Father Stivers said, because "rather than bring up the touchy subject of religion, too many people leave it at the door" when they meet as neighbors to solve a local problem.

"Many of these problems—housing, race relations, deserting the military—cannot be solved adequately unless the religious factor is considered," he said. "Our divisions compel us to come up with inadequate solutions."

The modern Anglican family of churches is described as a "religious commonwealth" which limits independent national denominations.

THE OPINIONS of these three clergymen reflect a significant changed attitude current in most denominations separated from Vatican authority.

Old hostility has given way to respect for Rome. Complaints voiced frequently even 50 years ago about Rome's "idols, incense and tyranny" are now seldom heard.

Disagreements remain but there is a conviction that "convention" can build solidarity even if not unity with Roman Catholics.

How did the break between Rome and the Anglican Church begin?

Catholics point to King Henry VIII as the chief culprit. Because the Vatican refused to grant him a divorce, he forced the English Parliament in 1534 to proclaim him the "supreme head" of the Church in England. He shortly thereafter, however, attempted to introduce Protestant doctrine into the English Church. Under the boy king, Edward VI, a definitely Protestant church was given to the Church.

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dox organizational structure is more like our own," he said, "with more self-determination within each religious community."

He also stated the students are generally "unhappy" over the divisions in Christianity and "wish something could be done about it."

FATHER STIVERS, a parish clergyman, finds the divisions of Christianity cut deeply into family life—education and civic programs.

"We definitely try to discourage mixed marriages," he said, "because in these situations religion usually gets shunted to a secondary position and sometimes gets shunted right out entirely."

He considers it "morally irresponsible" for an Episcopalian to make the promise marriage required by the Catholic Church to rear children as Roman Catholics.

"I don't blame your Church for requiring it," he said. "I blame our own people who involve themselves in the situation where it is required."

One of the major dilemmas facing Episcopal parents, he said, is the increasing secularism of public school education — an inevitable by-product of the divided religious allegiance of this nation's citizens.

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survived in isolated families and parishes and this "continuous Catholicism" survives in their Church today, they say.

Pope Leo XIII in 1896 in a now famous decision admitted the sincere religious faith of Anglicans of this era but bluntly rejected their claim to any historic link with the pre-Reformation Catholic Church in England. He declared the Anglican Church is a "religion of the future" which limits independent national denominations.

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The symposium was part of George Washington University's 15th annual Religion in Life Week.

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Father John Courtney Murray, S.J., told a Nov. 21 symposium on religion and human rights. "Religion has taught man that he is the image of God. This doctrine of man as the image of God was deposited as a leaven in society, and has been crystallized into the doctrine of the rights of man."

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University of Rochester chaplain, Rev. Franklin Robinson, conducts religious devotions daily in Strong Memorial Hospital chapel.



All Saints Episcopal Church pastor, Rev. Donald Stivers, gives Communion at Sunday service.

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To heal the rifts of Christianity, initiative and vision linked to faith without compromise are ingredients needed in any program working toward unity.

Christians have added consolation in their efforts. They are convinced they do not work alone nor with mere human ingenuity. They believe their Saviour will bless those who seek to fulfill His will "that they may be one."

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Religion's Role In Politics

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rights of man goes in the Greek concept of the city, as the Roman concept of law as "a limited instrument in the service of society," and finally "in the Germanic distinction between the just ruler and the tyrant, who is no ruler at all and who may be rejected."

He said the opposing parts of the paradox could be reconciled.

"Religion is primarily about God," he stated. "But it is also about man. Man has a 'sacredness' because he has been visited by God. Also, religion has taught man about himself."

At this point the theologian made his assertion that the religious doctrine of man as the image of God acted as a leaven in society to provide the political doctrine of the rights of man.

Father Murray continued: "Insofar as religion has anything to say about rights, it

Bishop Kearney's Appointments

- DECEMBER
- Friday — Sheraton Hotel — Address, First Friday Luncheon — 12:15 p.m.
 - Saturday — Convent — L.F.C.A. Mass — 8:30 a.m.
 - Tuesday — Morristown, N.J. — Golden Jubilee, Filippini Sisters — 11:00 a.m.
 - Thursday — St. Bernard's Seminary — Solemn Pontifical Mass — 9:30 a.m.
 - Sacred Heart Academy — Marian Devotions — 4:00 p.m.
 - Monday — Nazareth College — Low Mass — 4:15 p.m.
 - Tuesday — St. Andrew's Seminary — Low Mass — 9:30 a.m.
 - Friday — St. Ann's Home — Low Mass — 9 a.m.
 - Saturday — St. Mary's Hospital — Low Mass and visitation of patients — 8:30 a.m.

Bishop Casey's Appointments

- DECEMBER
- Sunday — St. Francis Xavier — Confirmation — 1:30 p.m.
 - St. Andrew — Confirmation — 3:00 p.m.
 - Our Lady of Perpetual Help — Confirmation — 4:30 p.m.
 - Monday — Sacred Heart Hall — Boy Scout Court of Honor — 7:00 p.m.
 - Immaculate Conception Hall — High School Campaign Meeting — 8:00 p.m.
 - Thursday — St. Bernard's Seminary — Solemn Pontifical Mass — Patrocinial Feast — 9 a.m.
 - Monday — Sacred Heart Hall — Rosary Guild Christmas Party — 8:15 p.m.
 - Thursday — Sacred Heart Hall — Men's Club Christmas Dinner — 8:30 p.m.
 - Sunday — Sacred Heart Hall — Legion of Mary Christmas Party — 6:00 p.m.
 - Sunday — Sacred Heart Cathedral — Solemn Pontifical Mass — 12 Midnight.
 - Saturday — Sacred Heart Cathedral — Pontifical Low Mass of Thanksgiving, Sorensen — 7:45 p.m.

Citizens Disagree On Censor Need

Union City, N.J. — Censorship is no answer to the problem of raising community standards of tastes and decency in publications, Donald J. Thorman, a Catholic lay leader, declares in the December issue of The Sign, national Catholic magazine, published here.

Thorman, a member of the National Advisory Board of the Family Life Bureau, N.C.W.C., writes of the need of a positive program to combat the growing number of obscene and amoral books and magazines appearing on the shelves of America's newsstands.

"What is needed," he says, "is a positive program to encourage the reading of decent literature, to raise community standards of tastes and decency, so that the sleazy, cheap and vulgar publications will fall by the wayside for lack of an audience."

"In this area, censorship is no answer," Thorman declares, "because once we move from the area of that which is blatantly filthy we find citizens of a community beginning to disagree on what should be censored. Without community agreement, censorship is a democracy in an unwelcome."

In the area where censorship is workable, where the publications in question are clearly objectionable, Thorman cites the effectiveness of such programs as Citizens for Decent Literature — a civic organization active in various communities since 1956 and organized nationally since last February.

In Cincinnati, for example, Thorman says, "CCL first awakened people to the fact that almost any local newsstand carried moral poison in the form of paper backs and magazines. Through the efforts of a group of ladies in the community, some 75,000 signatures of women were obtained in a city-wide 'Mother's March on Obscenity.'"

When police arrested a store owner who displayed objectionable magazines, Thorman reports, CCL followed through by obtaining voluntary help of a psychiatrist and two psychologists as expert witnesses for the prosecution. The result, he adds, was a 17 page decision by the presiding judge saying the material was "beyond any reasonable doubt obscene." The defendant was found guilty as charged.

"But there is another important phase to the problem, arising from that type of literature which may fall short of what is legally punishable and may still defy the moral standards of a notable number in the community," The Sign article says.

"Few Americans," Thorman states, "would object to that basic censorship which expresses the consensus of an overwhelming majority of our citizens. But many Americans would draw the line about any other kind of censorship. If that censorship is not the answer, then we must look to a positive program to raise community standards."

Thorman concludes: "Censorship is a necessary part of the moral life of a community, but it is not the only answer. We must also have a positive program to raise community standards."

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