

# A Relative In Our House Is Giving Bad Example To Our Children

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My problem is the right or wrong of allowing a very close relative to live under our roof if she is keeping company with an entertaining man in her home a married man who is still living with his wife. I finally followed my confessor's advice and asked her to leave. Now my husband and good Catholic friends have turned against me saying that I had no right to interfere in some one else's life. Did I do wrong?

Your letter would be a highly significant document for one who was writing a commentary on modern society. It points up clearly one of many dilemmas Christians encounter in a morally pluralistic culture. By moral pluralism I mean that there exists no general consensus or agreement on what is right and wrong.

Various alternate patterns of conduct are tolerated and frequently receive equal public approbation. The assumption is that there are no absolute criteria for judging right and wrong. Everyone is free to follow his own "conscience" and lead his own life, provided he does not interfere with others.

Although Christians possess a clearly defined set of norms governing moral conduct, how do they deal with those who do not accept their norms because they use different criteria for judging right and wrong? The problem is real and presents the Christian with a dilemma. On the one hand, he maintains that a person must follow the dictates of his conscience; on the other, he insists that basic Christian moral principles are absolute and unchangeable and must be accepted by all.

In the practical order, the solution has been to insist on tolerance. This is the correct solution, provided tolerance is based on the belief that truth in many moral areas is hard to come by and we must respect every person's sincere attempt to reach it.

Unfortunately, tolerance is often based either on the assumption that there are no moral absolutes, and consequently moral norms are changeable and relative, or on the even shallower view that my neighbor's moral conduct is none of my concern so long as he leaves me alone.

You may be wondering why I've indulged in this discussion of tolerance. I think it sets your problem in context. Your husband and friends apparently hold the quite common misconception of tolerance that I criticized above; namely, that my neighbor's belief and morals are none of my business. This is indifference, not tolerance.

It is not based on sincere respect for the truth or for the person in error but on a thoughtless desire to avoid the inconvenience of personal concern for my neighbor and the common good.

This false tolerance has



serious consequences for the individual Christian and for society. If we are our brother's keeper, we are bound to be concerned about his physical and moral welfare. If he is proceeding along dangerous or sinful paths we must warn him, or at least not encourage him by our silent acceptance.

The welfare of society itself is threatened by this false tolerance. When people show no concern over the existence of social evils, law enforcement receives little public support, injustice goes unpunished, and wrongdoers receive equal acceptance with the good. Americans have traveled a long way down this road.

Disclosures of widespread cheating, "payola," graft, and so on, are greeted with general apathy. The average American feels no personal concern.

Against this broad backdrop, let's take a closer look at the problem you presented. I gathered from your letter that the relative in question had other means of support so that you were not simply throwing her out on the street. Furthermore, since this married man was coming to your home, you were openly supporting or at least tolerating his evil, scandalous action.

Granting that they will probably continue their illicit relationship elsewhere, you will not be directly involved and have shown by your action that you condemn their evil ways.

It is inconceivable that your husband and Catholic friends should now criticize you for interfering, or as you stated, for "trying to live some one else's life." Obviously they have no regard for

public decency or for the rights of this playboy's wife. You have no right to make your home a rendezvous for public sinners, whether your relative be a simple call-girl or a sophisticated home-breaker.

Indeed, you should have taken action at once.

The criticism you are now receiving reflects how deeply the spirit of secularism has penetrated some Catholic circles. Based on a false sense of tolerance, public sinners who make a mockery of marital fidelity are openly accepted and esteemed as if their moral violations were a wholly private affair of no concern to a Christian community. What models we hold up for our children!

And as for charity, will the sinner receive any encouragement to abandon his evil ways if his actions draw no disapproval from the good?

## Support Asked For Gov. Plan

(Continued from Page 1)

gram to the legislators, Governor Rockefeller told them, "I am convinced that the time has come to supplement our present scholarship program and to initiate a new and broader program to assist young people in New York in their pursuit of higher education.

"This is of vital interest to the student and his family, but it is also a matter of large concern to the State and to the nation.

"We need to approach this problem along two principal lines: First, greater financial assistance to help the student and his family meet the rising costs of higher education and, second, the expansion of facilities.

The "financial assistance" phase of his program envisions a \$200 annual grant to college students who have to pay more than \$500 a year tuition.

The "expansion of facilities" plan includes new tax-supported colleges, such as Harpur which opened this past September near Binghamton, and new construction on campuses of existing public colleges, such as Brockport and Geneseo Teachers Colleges.

THOSE WHO endorse the Governor's plan may write their representatives as follows: In the State Senate—

Monroe County: west section, Frank VanLare; east section, Thomas LaVerne.

Wayne, Ontario, Yates, Seneca and Schuyler Counties: Dutton S. Peterson.

Steuben and Chemung Counties: Harold A. Jerry, Jr.

Cayuga, Toga and Tompkins Counties: George Metcalf.

Livingston County: Austin W. Irwin.

Address senator's mail to Senate Chamber, State Capitol, Albany, N.Y.

In the Assembly—

Monroe County: J. Eugene Goddard, S. William Rosenberg, Paul B. Hanks, Charles Stockmeister.

Wayne County: Joseph C. Finley.

Ontario County: Robert Quigley.

Yates County: Paul Taylor.

Seneca County: Theodore Day.

Schuyler County: Jerry W. Black.

Steuben County: Charles D. Henderson.

Chemung County: Harry Tift.

Cayuga County: George M. Michaels.

Tompkins County: R. S. Ashberry.

Toga County: Richard Lounsbury.

Livingston County: Kenneth Willard.

Address assemblyman's mail to Assembly Chamber, State Capitol, Albany, N.Y.

### N.Y. Cardinal Endorses Plan

New York — (RNS) — Francis Cardinal Spellman, Archbishop of New York, hailed Gov. Nelson Rockefeller's recent proposal to the state legislature to provide \$200 in annual aid to all students attending church-related and other private colleges and universities in the state.

The cardinal lauded the controversial plan before 1,100 persons gathered here for an alumni dinner marking the golden anniversary of his graduation from Fordham University.

Introduced to the group by New York Lieutenant Gov. Malcolm Wilson, also a Fordham alumnus, he prefaced his prepared speech by saying, "I also thank Lieutenant Governor Wilson for siding with Governor Rockefeller to have justice for every college in the State of New York."

### Boxer Dies Stirs Protest

Vatican City — (RNS) — Osservatore Romano, Vatican City newspaper, questioned the morality of boxing as a sport after an Italian amateur heavyweight fighter had died in his first fight.

The boxer was Oride Matteuzzi, 22, who succumbed after leaving the ring during the first round of a scheduled three-round bout.

"It is not important if a doctor says that the athlete is in full possession of his faculties," the editorial said. "The final aim, and the human price of the competition, poses again the problem of a sport which recalls the cruelty of primitive fights."

## Father Ray Minder's Report



The following parishes are reported leading in payments on pledges for the two new Catholic high schools to be built in Monroe County.

Highest percentage of January payment—St. Mary's Church, Rochester.

Highest percentage of cash received to total goal — Our Lady of Victory Church, Rochester.

Highest amount of cash paid to date — Blessed Sacrament Church, Rochester.

## Church Prospers In Congo

Leopoldville — (RNS) — Although the Catholic Church in this strife-torn country has been left substantially free to carry on its work, the past several months of chaotic independence have left their mark on her.

The consensus here is that in about two-thirds of the 33 Catholic dioceses in the Congo, the Church is prospering.

THE MENACE of Communism which hung over the country immediately after its independence from Belgian rule last summer now appears to have diminished. However, the recent revival of deposed Premier Patrice Lumumba's fortunes has deepened the shadow cast by it over some parts of the country.

Savage inter-tribal feuds hinder the work of the Church in some parts of the country. But practically all the missionaries who were driven from their posts by mutinous troops or rampaging tribesmen have returned to them.

About a third of the Congo's estimated population of 14,000,000 are Catholics. There are more than 400 native Congolese priests and about 8,000 foreign missionaries, including about 2,500 priests in the country.

Congolese priests with a few exceptions have kept clear of inter-tribal strife. But there have been victims. A minor seminary at Kalenda was attacked by Kanioka tribesmen in the Luluburg diocese. They tried to force a native priest, Father Thomas Beya, to tell them which

of his pupils belonged to an enemy tribe. The priest refused to say and he was beheaded in front of his pupils.

It is obvious that political independence has been misunderstood by a large section of the Congolese. Even members of some Catholic youth groups have interpreted independence as freedom from all authority.

Observers in Leopoldville credit the mission schools with saving the country's missionary endeavors during the past months. They point to the good reputation of the schools which

protected the missions as a whole from widespread attacks.

Most of the mission schools remain open today. They are government-subsidized but it remains to be seen how long this financial aid will last.

Catholic schools in the Congo have more than 1,200,000 pupils. It is thought that the Church's future here depends on the eventual outcome of the political struggles which have enveloped the nation. Extreme nationalists want to eradicate all vestiges of colonial rule including the missions.

## Dogma 'Prison' Clouds Viewpoint On Church

Genoa — (RNS) — Augustin Cardinal Bea, in a lecture here, warned Catholics that "we cannot close our eyes to the difficulties, criticism and opposition which are to be found in the many statements of our Non-Catholic brothers" with regard to the forthcoming Second Vatican Council.

Cardinal Bea heads the Secretariat for Christian Unity set up in preparation for the Ecumenical Council. Excerpts of his lecture were broadcast by the Vatican Radio in many languages.

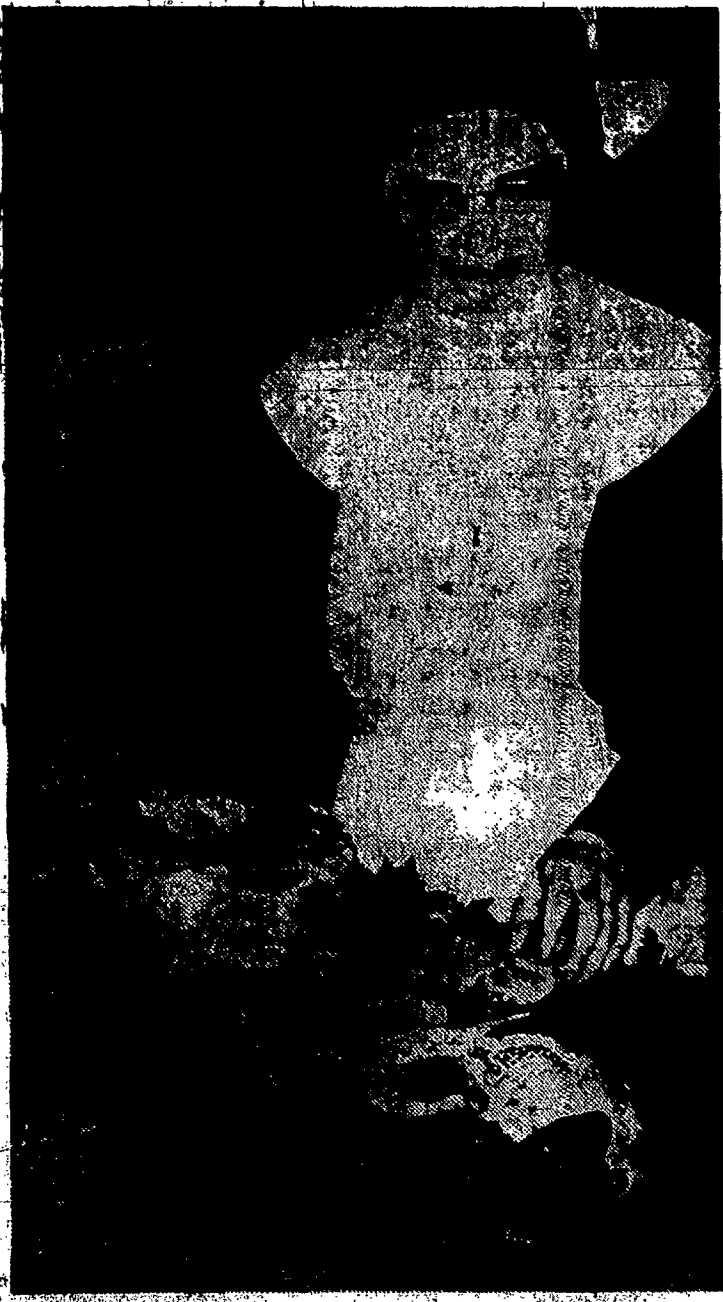
"The difficulties are neither few nor small," the cardinal said. "The immovability of the Catholic dogma is often considered by Protestants as a dogmatic prison. Their concept of mentality of modern man."

Cardinal Bea added that in order to meet some of the opposition halfway, the Council will bring ecumenical law up-to-date so that it will be "in line with the requirements and mentality of modern man."

## Press Month Author Dies, Forty Years an Editor

Techny — (NC) — Final tribute was paid here to Father Francis Markert, S.V.D., 76, missionary-journalist and "Father of Catholic Press Month."

HE SUGGESTED the observance of Catholic Press Month at a meeting of the Catholic Press Association in Washington, D.C., in January, 1920. Father Markert made the suggestion to the late Bishop William T. Russell of Charleston, S.C., who was the first episcopal chairman of the then newly organized Press Department, National Catholic Welfare Conference. He told the Bishop that the observance would boost interest in the Catholic press in the U.S.



### Nun Wins Trip To Poland

Cleveland — (RNS) — Sister Maria Izabela of the Sisters of the Holy Family of Nazareth puts final touches on one of 17 original ham dishes she entered in a national Polish ham contest. One of the recipes — she doesn't know which one — won her and another nun a trip to Poland. A jet plane in early February will take her to Poland where she will visit relatives in Krakow. Sister Maria cooks for the St. Stanislaus convent.

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