

Faith Forbids Isolationism

Hartford — (RNS) — Catholics in two Connecticut dioceses were told by their bishops that isolationism and narrow nationalism are indefensible in a world weighed down with problems of human need and suffering.

Archbishop Henry J. O'Brien of Hartford and Bishop Vincent J. Hines of Norwich urged their flocks to become more conscious of international obligations. Their pleas came in pastorals issued by the two prelates to mark the annual observance of Social Action Sunday.

In his pastoral, Archbishop O'Brien said that the Church "teaches that God intended the natural resources of the world to support all those living on the earth.

"Both justice and charity demand that we recognize that every human being has a right to enough to eat, enough to wear, decent housing, sufficient education for his needs, and the means to raise properly a family of his own."

Although Catholics are agreed on these principles "when they are applied in our own land," the prelate said, "unfortunately, relatively few (Catholics) are sufficiently aware of either the necessity or the urgency of applying these doctrines to all of the human race."

Archbishop O'Brien said that "the most significant development of our times is the massive movement of men toward unity. Day by day our world grows smaller, and day by day the bonds between men must grow stronger.

"The voices of brown men, yellow men, white men and black men are the voices of our brothers and sisters in the family of which God is the Father. Their problems are our problems. Their sufferings must be our sufferings," he stressed.

Bishop Hines warned that "we live in a shrinking world" in which isolation is "neither possible nor desirable."

He said that "parochialism is out of date" and that Catholics should "be concerned about the world-worries of the Church and about humanity."

"We should be interested in the spiritual and material needs of newly developing countries," the bishop said. "We must be sympathetic to their legitimate aspirations. Catholics should be world-minded and should take the lead in striving for what all men, no matter what their color or national origin, have equal opportunity for freedom and justice."

India State Ends Red School Law

Trivandrum — (NC) — Kerala's Catholics won their uphill fight against the repressive education law passed by the state's former communist government.

The old education law brought many weeks of bloodshed in 1959 to Kerala, India's most Christian and most densely populated state, and led to the downfall of the Red regime.

Gov. V. V. Giri approved, Dec. 28, an amended education bill passed earlier by the state Legislature which changes one of the most oppressive features of the old bill. It called for appointment of teachers from a list prepared by the government.

THE NEW LAW does the following:

- Establishes a commission to select candidates for teacher training.

- Empowers the commission to choose 80 per cent of all teacher candidates for private institutions.

- Gives school managers the right to choose the other 20 per cent of teacher candidates.

- Says school managers may suspend teachers for just cause for 15 days, and not for 30.

The amended law gives Kerala's nearly 1,600 Catholic schools a new lease on life.

The old education law, passed by the Red Government in the summer of 1959, called for appointment of teachers from a government prepared list, arranged for teachers to be paid directly by headmasters, set up local boards to control school operations, and made mandatory the use of textbooks prepared by communists.

Opus Dei

Vatican City — (NC) — Pope John XXIII has named Msgr. Jose Maria Escriva de Balaguer, Superior General of Opus Dei, to be a consultant of the Pontifical Commission for the Authentic Interpretation of Canon Law.

NBC Chief Wins Award

Villanova — (NC) — William R. McAndrew, executive vice president for news of the National Broadcasting Company, has been named the winner of Villanova University's St. Augustine Award for distinction in the field of communications journalism.

The 46-year-old McAndrew is a graduate of the Catholic University of America, Washington, D.C. He worked for a Pontifical Commission for the Authentic Interpretation of Canon Law.



Church Fights Pagan Superstition

San Sebastian — (RNS) — Father Edward Moore, Maryknoll missionary, congratulates several of his Guatemala parishioners for not having taken part in the annual installation of pagan prayer men, priests and councilors. For centuries the 200,000 Indians of the mountain province of Huehuetenango have been without regular priests, and the people reverted to many of the Mayan religious practices held sacred before the arrival of the Spaniards. For the past 18 years Maryknollers have been working to revive Catholicism, and the measure of their success is that each year fewer residents of San Sebastian take part in the annual pagan installation ceremony.

Past Sins Need Not Cloud Happiness of Marriage

By FATHER JOHN L. THOMAS, S. J.
Sociology Professor St. Louis University

Should a girl about to be married reveal her past? I'm engaged and looking forward to a happy marriage, but a fearful doubt casts its shadow over my happiness. Long before I met my fiance I had a brief though sinful "affair." The awful mistake has been confessed and deeply regretted. Is it necessary or advisable to tell my fiance about this previous fall? I dread the thought yet don't want anything to stand in the way of our happiness.



As you have indicated, there may be question of strict justice (is it necessary?) or of simple prudence (is it advisable?) in such confessions. Let us first consider the problem of justice.

Couples normally reach their decision to marry on the basis of the love and knowledge developed during courtship. In a highly mobile society like our own, however, the relatively brief, shared experience of courtship may leave much of their past obscure. What are they obliged to reveal?

Well, let's put it this way. You are now loved for what you are, not for what you were. You have no obligation to reveal your past, and as I shall point out later, you probably should not reveal it. Let the dead past bury its dead.

There is one exception to this general rule. Sometimes the past actions of one of the partners involve commitments that endure in the present and for the future. Since marriage forms a unique, comprehensive partnership in which a couple assume mutual responsibility, each partner has the right to know what additional obligations are being assumed; for example, if one of the partners has contracted debts, or, as in your case, if your "affair" had resulted in a child for whose support you were responsible, and so on.

In all such cases, justice demands that one reveal the relevant obligations of commitments.

So much for the question. Must I reveal? Perhaps much more pertinent is the question, Should I? Because they are very much in love and wish to share all they have, young couples in particular are sometimes unwise in

their confidences with each other. They all too trustingly confess past mistakes or recount past experiences with others.

This is unnecessary and even dangerous. Let the dead past bury its dead! You love each other for what you are as you know each other now. What is to be gained by making a "general confession?" To show how much you trust each other? But there is no connection between the recital of past experiences or faults and your present love. Indeed, we may well question the motive behind such confessions. One is reminded of the religious revivalist leader who stopped one of his penitents in the midst of a vivid public confession of sins. "Brother, you aren't confessing, you're bragging!"

What if you fear that your partner may hear about your past mistakes after you're married? Unless you are certain that he will hear, and, knowing him as you do, feel that he will be seriously disturbed, you should say nothing now. Since you have no obligation to confess to him he cannot blame you later for failing to tell him all.

But is it "fair" not to tell one's partner all about one-

self? Love creates such an intimate, unifying bond that it seems only normal to want to know all about the beloved. Often the experience of love offers the one occasion many people have of communicating their innermost reflections and feelings about the past.

The beloved is a highly sympathetic audience, and this mutual communication of one's intimate past serves to extend the knowledge upon which love must grow. Would it not be a mistake to start marriage without knowing all about each other?

One must distinguish. Taking human nature as it is, some of the past should be left unrecalled and uncommunicated. Secretiveness may be a vice, but prudent reticence is a virtue.

It is well to remember that the best of us are none too strong in overcoming jealousy and suspicion. Above all, the thoughtless confession of past experiences and errors with members of the opposite sex can sow troublesome seeds of distrust that may bear fruit only many years later. Why should engaged couples or newlyweds imperil their future happiness with this possibility?

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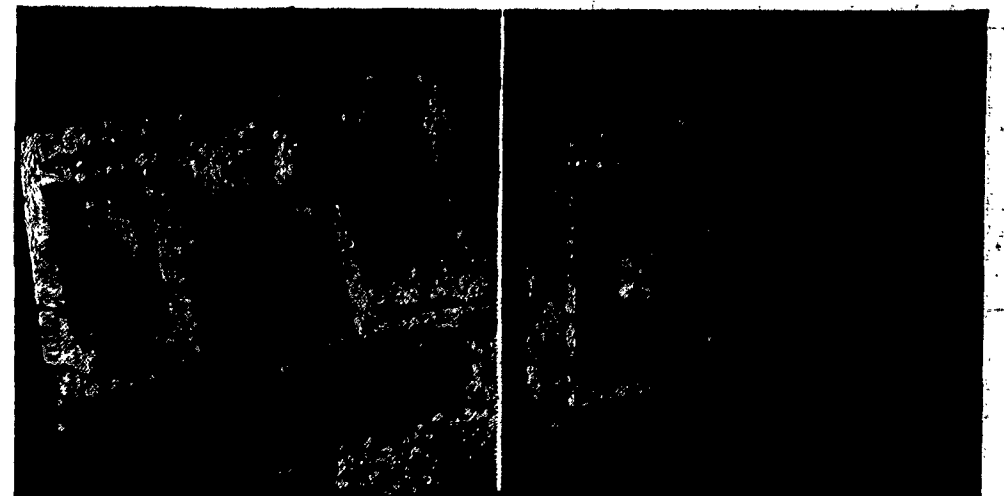
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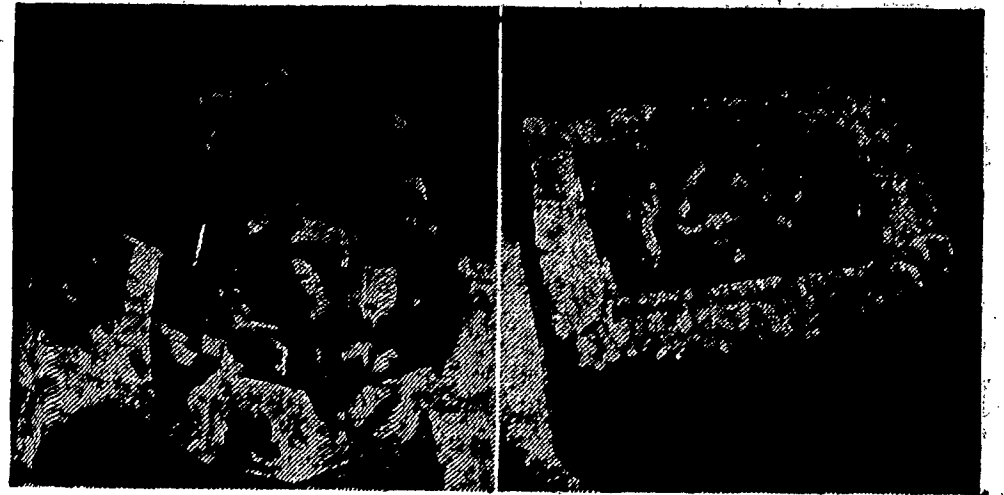
by Russell Stover

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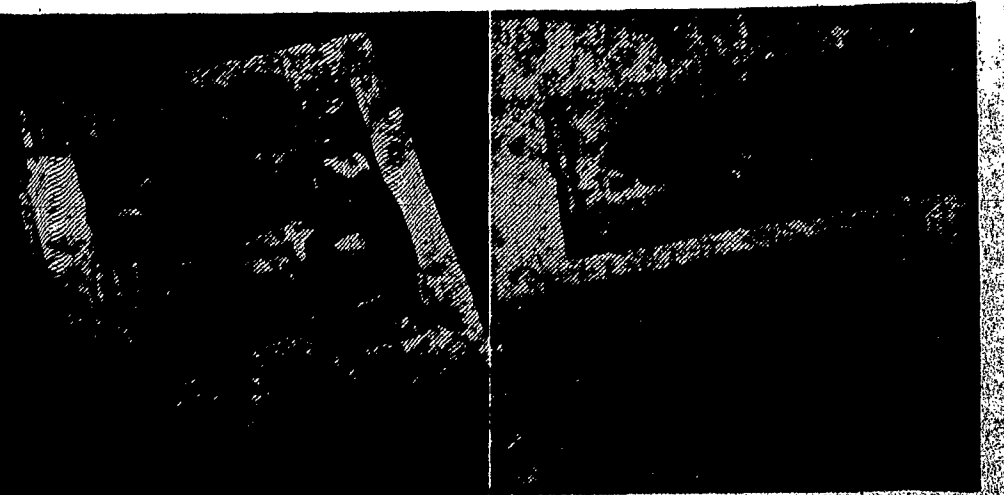
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