

Task of the Teacher Same as Task of the Church:

Renewal of Essentials, a Clear-eyed, Ardent 'Return to the Sources'

This talk comes at the end of the Teachers' Conference, when most of you are fagged out after a long two-day session and anxious to go home. To give you a lot of pleasant platitudes would only lull you to sleep — and the occasion is too important for that.

A direct, heart-to-heart talk is in order here — a talk about our common aims, about the local Catholic educational situation, what is being done to improve it, what you can do to improve it, and a final word about the forthcoming Ecumenical Council in Rome.

You represent the 1,650 teachers, priests, brothers, sisters, laymen and laywomen, staffing the 119 Catholic Schools of the Diocese of Rochester. You represent the 58,780 children and young men and women being taught in these schools. The environment in your own school differs from other Catholic schools in your vicinity; each place has its own particular problems.

However, all of you have a common aim: to develop in your pupils a multifold personality — spiritual and physical, moral and intellectual, individual and social. You believe that man is created for one supreme purpose: to know God, to love Him, to serve Him in this life so that we may be eternally happy with Him in heaven.

Consequently, you staff schools where education is given in an atmosphere of religion. Along with formal knowledge, you aim to impart to each of your pupils a sense of responsibility, a respect for authority, and a consideration for the rights of others. Your goal is to give all of your pupils a supernatural motivation so that they may use their talents as best they can in this life and thus achieve eternal success.

How fortunate you are as educators! The Christian scheme of education has the only well-balanced program, since it alone gives proper recognition to the child's duties toward God, himself, and society.

So much for the fundamentals; now let's discuss the local Catholic educational situation. The picture we gave you two years ago at this Conference has shown marked improvement. As of this September, practically every boy or girl who applied for admission to our Catholic high schools in Monroe County was accepted. Only last year, a thousand youngsters were turned away.

This happy situation is due chiefly to the generosity of four religious communities: the Irish Christian Brothers and the School Sisters of Notre Dame staffing Bishop Kearney High School, and the Holy Cross Brothers and the Sisters of Mercy at Cardinal Money High School. We extend a warm welcome to the new additions to the diocesan family. Without them, and our generous Catholics and business firms of Monroe County, this six million dollar project would never have advanced beyond the blueprint stage.

As you have probably heard, these two schools are not fully completed. The Brothers and Sisters and their pupils will be working under a handicap for some months. However, there is a fine spirit at both places — almost a pioneering spirit; and they should make out satisfactorily.

Earlier this year, along with the Superintendent of Schools, we met with the General Superiors of the three major religious communities of women staffing the primary and secondary schools of the diocese. We went right down the line, school by school, parish by parish. The "haves" lost some nuns; the "have-nots" particularly the poorer parishes and the suburban parishes with heavy debts, gained some. The ratio of seven nuns to three lay teachers is now fairly constant throughout the diocese.

We mention this new ratio advisedly. Some of our parishes are close to the financial point of no return. The pastors in some instances are having great difficulty in meeting their mortgage payments and supporting a heavy school budget. It could be that school and convent improvements which should be made may have to wait. We know the facilities of such schools will be understanding and cooperative. Pastors inheriting a heavy debt or starting new parishes from scratch, should have an "automatic ticket" to heaven.

Bishop Kearney, who is now on the high seas bound for Rome, is pleased with the efforts of our religious communities to provide a better formation for their postulants. These women must be not

Text of the address given by Auxiliary Bishop Lawrence B. Casey to teachers in diocesan schools at their annual conference Tuesday, September 25. Bishop Casey outlined the common aims of teachers, diocesan officials and parents in the vast Catholic school program in the twelve county Rochester Diocese. He also indicated new goals for educators and pupils as they look toward the ecumenical council of the Catholic Church to begin next month in Rome.

only good religious, but they must be good teachers as well. Therefore, the Sister Formation Movement has Bishop Kearney's hearty approval.

We can be grateful that the various communities are no longer allowing a girl to take the veil in June, and placing her in a classroom in September. The added emphasis on the Juniorate provides our schools with nuns who have a sound religious training and who have finished their college work before entering the classroom. There is no better investment for the long-range improvement of our school system than to follow the direction of the Sister Formation Movement.

Pope Plus XI wrote his encyclical on "The Christian Education of Youth" 33 years ago. Those who organized the Sister Formation Movement must have followed his advice. The Pope said this: "Perfect schools are the result not so much of good methods as of good teachers, teachers who are thoroughly prepared and well grounded in the matter they have to teach; who possess the intellectual and moral qualifications required by their important office; who cherish a pure and holy love for the young people confided to them, because they love Jesus Christ and His Church." How well these words of the Holy Father describe the aims of the Sister Formation Movement!

They apply equally to the lay teachers staffing our Catholic schools. Because vocations to the religious sisterhoods are not beginning to meet the needs of our schools, the role of the lay teacher in our educational system is assuming a new importance. At present, there are 490 lay teachers in our diocesan school system. Roughly three out of every ten of our teachers are lay teachers. Making a long-range projection of the expanding Catholic school population, and our ability to take care of it, it is safe to say that the percentage of lay teachers will gradually increase.

As far as the academic program is concerned, the aim of your Catholic Education Office is to develop fully qualified lay teachers, men and women who are outstanding Catholics, competent in their profession — teachers who can inspire and lead their pupils toward the appointed goals.

It is likewise the task of the Education Office to see to it that, with the tremendous increase in enrollments over the past few years, our school system does not suffer in quality because of the lack of sufficient administrative supervision. Our school system represents the biggest single activity, in terms of money and personnel, of the Diocese of Rochester. Therefore we must see to it that these teachers indeed possess the qualifications and competence to discharge the responsibility entrusted to them.

The priests of the diocese have the highest respect for the lay teachers in our Catholic schools, recognizing them for what they are, persons who have a sense of mission, dedicated to their work, and willing to make financial sacrifices to remain in the Catholic school system. For pure devotion to a cause, the great majority of these lay teachers are the equals of the religious with whom they teach.

We know the handicaps under which they labor: low pay, or at least lower pay than the public school teachers receive; in some few cases (and this is being corrected) aloofness of the religious, and exclusion from faculty meetings; lack of parental acceptance in some instances; and over-crowding of parochial school classrooms.

In terms of salary difference alone, the contribution of many of our lay teachers makes them by far the largest financial supporters of their parishes.

To balance this, let us state that the pastors, as a group, are doing the best they can to improve conditions, according to their circumstances. As an example, take the inclusion of all our teachers in the Blue Cross-Blue Shield benefit program within the past two years. If the pastors had the resources of the public school system, the taxpayer's money, the situation would improve more rapidly.

Handicapped as they are by the lack of adequate resources, the pastors should however, make every effort to provide the necessary tools for a quality education for the children of their parishes.

We know the debts of the various parishes, the crushing problems most pastors face, expansion of parish facilities, debt reduction, and a school budget which increases each year. It is tragic that the general public does not sense the contribution the Catholic Church is making to each community. On the financial side alone, the Catholic grammar schools and Catholic high schools of the Diocese of Rochester in operating expenses alone last year saved the taxpayers nearly \$34,000,000. This figure does not include the many millions that would be required to build these 119 schools.

We can also pray that the Catholic school system will share in the Federal Aid to Education Bill before Congress. Cardinal Spellman meant what he said when he stated that our Catholic schools could be priced out of existence. There is a limit to what our Catholic people can do and give. When you consider what they have already done over the years, and study the magnificent Catholic school system in the United States, you feel that the sacrifices of our Catholic people are beyond all praise.

We pay tribute to our people, but the ultimate tribute is due to the religious communities of men and women staffing our schools here in this diocese. The 119 Catholic schools would be empty shells without our teaching priests, brothers, and nuns. You neither expect nor need praise on this occasion. We merely want to say something grateful your bishops and your parish priests are in your midst for the outstanding work you are doing for the youth of the diocese.

Despite a feeling of reverence, we may venture a few suggestions to the religious about their school work, and by implication, to the lay teachers also.

Religious women, like the Church herself as she approaches the Ecumenical Council, should rid themselves of the notion that numerous accidents will add up to the substance of a Christian life. Centuries ago, the author of "The Imitation of Christ" made this pungent observation: "Such a lot of harm is done by religious who lose sight of the intention for which they were founded, and divert their energies to what is no business of theirs."

Having a "perfect" First Communion procession, having the finest statues on the classroom walls, beating every other school in raising funds for the missions, winning the most scholarships in the diocese — these things are nothing unless in those very classrooms there are teachers

who are filled with reverence and humility before the Christ they meet in their students. From this reverence and humility will spring deep love and the desire to serve.

The most pressing task awaiting the religious teacher (or the lay teacher of religion) is the same task awaiting the Church on the eve of the great Council — not the addition of modern gadgets to her life and work, machines and furniture, but a renewal of essentials — a clear-eyed, ardent "return to the sources," a reawakened realization of what Christ really conceives religious teachers to be, of what He desires them to be. His representatives set in the midst of souls who need Him, and to whom they must give His love, His reverence, and His service.

For example, there could be a greater sincerity and vitality to the prayers said in the classroom; a freshness about them each day; a reverent pause before praying; greater variety in the prayers themselves and in the intentions for which they are offered; constant reminders that we pray to God because we love Him. If the teacher's manner is affected and pompous, the prayers of the students will be meaningless.

We realize how crowded your teaching schedule is, but you could do much good if you visited the sick — sick children, sick parents, poor parents, aging parents, dying parents, needy families — even doing manual services for mothers who are "up against it." There could be no more effective teaching of the real meaning of the charity of Christ reaching out to others. Our people should know that despite the beautiful new convent (provided by thoughtful pastors and generous parishioners), and despite the station wagon in the driveway and the well-equipped school, you are still aware of human needs and suffering.

Speaking of parents, be concerned about the heavy financial burdens many fathers and mothers carry, particularly those with one or more children in a Catholic high school. Seek ways to save them money. We believe the book-rental system, if at all feasible, should be in every school. Don't make non-essentials "essential purchases" — this notebook and this notebook only; this special crayon box; and so on. Our school support comes from the generous hands of those in very moderate circumstances — often, poor people. Let the parents know that you understand their predicament and are not anxious to add to it. Let the people feel you are in their midst, as one sent to help them, but not a different humanity from them.

Just a word about the public schools in your parishes. Sometimes there may be inconvenience in trying to fit the released-time classes into a crowded school. But we should make a special effort



At diocesan teachers' conference — Bishop Casey and Father William Roche, superintendent of schools, with community supervisors of schools, Sister Mary Agnes of the Sisters of Mercy, Sister Mary Patrice, Sisters of St. Joseph, and Sister Leonarda, School Sisters of Notre Dame.

to do all we can for them. They are not second-class children, but our own youngsters, 40,000 of them, who need religious instruction more than the boys and girls of our own schools. The Confraternity of Christian Doctrine, under the leadership of Father Schnacky, is now embarked on a program of training more lay teachers for the public grammar school children in this county and elsewhere, and we wish him and the Mission Helpers of the Sacred Heart all possible success.

Speaking of teaching, the teaching in our Catholic schools could be revitalized, that is, renewed with more intense living, along two lines: First, the teaching of religion needs improvement. The religion class, of all the subjects in the curriculum is the one most often slighted in its preparation. Some presume too much on their status as religious, and on the good things they have soaked up over the years. To teach religion, and make it mean something, requires careful preparation by the teachers and by the parish priests who give weekly instruction in each classroom. Secondly, our efforts to form a Christian character in our students must reverse direction. Teachers must become more and more aware of their teaching really is in itself: the witnessing and guidance of the unfolding of a human personality.

The aim of Christian education is not the great name or the self-satisfaction of the teacher, nor the instilling of knowledge for worldly success, but the GROWTH, the maturing of the whole child into the true and perfect Christian, able to think, judge and act in accordance with the example and teaching of Christ. This process begins in the mind, in the heart, and in the conscience of the child. Teachers must reverence, nurture, and encourage the good that is there. They must draw it out, NOT SUPERIMPOSE their own ideas and moral sense.

Why do many children of our Catholic schools, particularly the boys, turn off religion like a faucet when they leave school in June? During summer vacation, it's Mass — yes, daily prayers — no, Holy Communion — no. How ex-

plain the leakage from the Church, the shocking, sudden changes in personality of many of our high school graduates once they leave school, the invalid marriages, the secularistic spirit shown by so many of our adult Catholics who have had long years of religious training? Granted that much of this is due to the bad example of parents and their indifference — there remains also the disturbing thought that perhaps these people were never really taught. What is superimposed by the teacher withers in adult life, but what has its roots deep in the being of the child is not lost when he leaves the sheltering atmosphere of the Catholic school. He really believes — and he lives his religion.

We could sum up these suggestions, given in friendly fashion, in one sentence: Religious teachers must, like Christ, serve, not seek to be served. Whatever the role, major or minor, God gives us Catholic educators through our superiors in helping spread His kingdom. He expects us to be generous in spirit. He expects us to put everything we have into our particular assignment, to do our job to the limit of our ability — and, by that word "limit," we mean the extreme limit.

If we have the time-clock mentality, the lackadaisical approach, the attitude that we will do just so much, and no more, the "minimum quid," the least possible to get by, we are of little help to the Church, and we shall be judged accordingly. Paradoxically, the harder we labor at God's work, presuming that we have the proper interior motivation, the happier we shall be, the more we shall really live. There is a rich promise in Our Lord's cryptic statement: "He that shall lose his life for My sake, shall find it."

Two weeks from Thursday, the great Ecumenical Council will open in Rome, and the eyes of the Christian world will turn expectantly to Pope John and the Catholic bishops gathered about him.

We can state the purpose of the second Vatican Council very simply. Like Christ, the Church is both human and divine. Although the

Church is divine in its teaching, in its essential holiness and indefectibility, it has us as its members, human beings, prone to many weaknesses. It is in this human aspect of the Church that restoration is needed. From time to time it is necessary to renew discipline, to rekindle zeal, to adopt new methods of winning souls for Christ.

As Pope John said recently: "We are expecting really great things from this Council. It aims at bringing back a greater vigor to faith, to doctrine, to Church discipline and to religious and spiritual life, at making clergy (and religious) on every level shine with a new holiness; fostering the social apostolate, nourishing a deep religious spirit that will make it clear to everyone that each person is our brother and our friend. . . . We aim at restoring to full splendor the simple and pure lines that the face of the Church of Jesus had at its birth, presenting it as its Divine Founder made it."

You are a member of the Church which is seeking renewal. It is, therefore, your personal responsibility to seek that renewal and purification first within yourself, and then help your pupils to do the same; otherwise God could call you to account for your lack of cooperation at this critical moment of history. One wonders, without passing judgment, what is the fate of those who lived at the time of the general councils before the Reformation, which sought to reform the human element in the Church — but expressly spiritual."

be traced to the lack of purity of heart in the faithful of those times?

Please get across to your pupils the essential importance of this Council. Read about it. Follow its progress, and do not be disturbed if it makes no startling pronouncements. Above all, pray! Say daily with your pupils (if they are old enough to understand it) the prayer of Pope John for the success of the Council. Pray each day to the Holy Spirit, as the Apostles did before Pentecost, that He will give your bishops and the bishops of the Council light and understanding. The Vatican Council is so important that human efforts and human powers will not, by themselves, bring it to a successful conclusion.

Prayer and penance — this is your theme during the Council. You are the Church. It is you who need renewal.

New Magazine For Children

St. Paul — (NC) — A new magazine, *Alm Higher*, for 9-to-12-year-old children, made its debut here. It is published by the Catechetical Guild Educational Society. The 32-page magazine will be published monthly except in July and August.

Father Louis A. Gales, editor, said: "We hope to inspire boys and girls with a higher purpose of life by giving them good examples of Christian living in articles that are more or less expressly spiritual."

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Reactions At Random

Panic, No Solution to Cuban Threat

By GERARD E. SHERRY
Editor, Central California Register

This is a time of great frustration for the people of the free world. It is especially frustrating for the American people because for the first time in our history, Communism has a foothold close to our shores.

Since the end of the Second World War, Communist Imperialism has made great strides throughout the world. Though subversion, war, and deceit, more than one-third of mankind is under the Communist yoke. The freedom of nearly a billion people has been sacrificed on the altar of Marxist Imperialism.

Events in Cuba and Berlin point up a danger which we have never faced before — the actual confrontation of the forces of the U.S. and the Soviet Union in these crises-ridden areas.

Berlin has been a trouble spot since the creation of the East German puppet regime in 1946. And Mr. Khrushchev has blown hot and cold in relation to it, according to his particular political or personal whims. The situation could explode at any moment.

Cuba represents the other direct danger. Ninety miles from the Florida Keys, it represents a formidable offensive base for any designs that international Communism may have

on these shores or Latin America. The ominous build-up of Communist might on the Sugar Island has a direct bearing on the security of these United States. We would be foolhardy to ignore it.

In the circumstances, what is the United States to do? I think the first thing is to follow the sage advice of President Kennedy: Keep our guard up, and keep our nerve. We must avoid hysteria. We must avoid panic.

Sad to relate, there are leading political and vigilante groups which prefer to emulate the bluster of Mr. K. They rattle sabres (which aren't their own) and call for an invasion of Cuba, and the destruction of the infamous Berlin wall. They seem to think that all the risks of a nuclear holocaust are quite justified in the present situation. They are all for the big gamble now, with the obvious inference of winner take all.

The trouble is these sabre-rattlers do not have the responsibility; they do not have the knowledge needed to make the fateful decision of war or peace. Some of them have never seen a country laid waste by the arms of war. They have never lived through a bombardment of their homes, or a scorched earth policy. They don't know what it is like to be one of millions of refugees, homeless, destitute, and starving. They have never seen

their own loved ones lying mangled in a bombed out structure. In other words, they have never known war on their own doorstep.

Those who have responsibility in our government realize that in dealing with the Russians war isn't inevitable; but that it may well be the only decision in the end, if we are to save our institutions. They know too, that the whole world will be involved.

The sabre-rattlers call for going it alone if necessary, as if our European Allies were afraid to stand up and be counted. But it is not that simple. Most of these countries, in the last two Great Wars, have had great suffering in their own homeland. They know the fruits of war they know what it brings, economically, politically, and spiritually. I am sure that if there is no alternative, they will stand up and be counted, but they are not going to rush into it until all other avenues have been exhausted.

Our leaders know this and they agree with it. It is the only sensible approach to an extremely complex problem. The fate of the world hangs in the balance. And any decision to be made must face the awesome consequences of the ultimate weapon.

What is the goal of jumping in to destroy Russia if we ourselves are destroyed in the

process? If there were no alternative, they'd have to take the risk. However, there seems to me that the calm balm of reasoning might well have its effect.

Cuba and Berlin are fraught with grave dangers, but they do not necessarily mean the end of all our hopes and dreams for a world of peace and tranquility. There is still time for the statesmen of the world to get together, conscious of their possible final destruction, and come to some solution which will save the peace.

I realize that to some this is a foreign hope. They want the dreaded Red menace eliminated here and now. They sound the tocsin of war, and appear enthusiastic about it. But we elected a government and a President who inherited through our mandate the responsibility of conducting the search for peace. He alone has the necessary information to make the decision. We should follow his lead and pray for him that he may be right in all that he does in this regard. This is not a question of Republican versus Democrat, conservative versus liberal; it's a question of the American people backing their President in this hour of crisis.

A divided people will encourage the drums of war. A united nation will probably stave it off.