Hymn for Benediction

Following is the English version of the Benediction hymn "Tantum ergo" prepared by Bishop Kearney. It is sung to the familiar melody of the hymn "O Sacred Head, surrounded."

In deep devotion bending,
This Sacrament we hail;
Let Christ's new revelation
O'er former rites prevail.
Here sight and touch deceive us
And taste does fail us, too,
But Faith, with light unfailing,
Affirms Thy Presence true.

Then glory to the Father
And glory to the Son,
And to the Holy Spirit,
The God-head, three in one.
Oh Sacrament most holy,
Oh Sacrament divine!
All praise and all thanksgiving
Be every moment Thine.

Harvest Time For an Idea

God has blessed us this year with an especially beautiful autumn season — a time each year when He paints our world in more brilliant colors than the most daring of any earthbound artist.

It is somewhat strange then to note that our divine Lord, who was so stirred by the beauty of His heavenly Father's handiwork in the world around Him, never mentions autumn.

As a matter of fact, autumn fares poorly in Scripture — it is mentioned but once in the New Testament — by St. Jude, and then in a derogatory sense which refers to "unfruitful, twice-dead, uprooted" trees — and it is mentioned seldom in the Old Testament.

Perhaps all this can be understood when one realizes autumn in the Holy Land lacks the luster we see here in New York State. There it is a barren season after a hot, dry summer, prelude to the wet, chilling winter — hardly a season to sing about.

We in this area, come Thanksgiving Day, will, therefore, have many reasons for our prayers of gratitude — and not least will be the harvest of progress garnered by the Vatican Council.

The Council this year has revealed how ideas, like fruit, have a cycle of seasons — a time to be planted, a time to grow and finally a time to be harvested.

Cardinal Henry Newman, famed English convert to the faith during the last century, a saintly scholar, said the great truths given us by our Saviour "could not be comprehended all at once by the recipients" and that it has required a "longer time and deeper thought for their elucidation" than it took simply to announce them.

Every new idea, the prelate explained, has to run the risk of being misunderstood and battled.

"At first men will not fully realize what it is that moves them and will express and explain themselves inadequately. . . . There will be a time of confusion, when conceptions and misconceptions are in conflict, and it is uncertain whether anything is to come of the idea at all."

At last, however, every good idea, every truly great idea "battles into perfection and supremacy."

One such idea that has had its long years of struggle to survive is the notion that the Church's way of worship should be something the people can see and understand easily and take part in whole-heartedly.

One of the strangest obstacles which has beset this idea for centuries is that it was championed by what the Church considered the "wrong" people.

As an example, note these two sets of statements—

- "The altar should not remain where it is but the priest should always face the people . . . He should read the Epistle facing the people . . . and then he reads the Gospel also facing the people. The sermon on the Gospel for the Sunday or the feast day follows."

- "It is proper that the main altar be constructed separately from the wall, so that one may go around it with ease and so that celebration may take place facing the people. At least, the lessons, Epistle and Gospel shall be read or chanted facing the people. There shall then be a homily on Sundays and feast days . . . an explanation either of the Scripture readings or other texts of the Mass."

The two series of quotations are obviously identical in what they call for — but they were written four centuries apart — the first by Martin Luther in 1526 and the second in a Vatican decree signed by Pope Paul VI in 1964.

Some might be inclined to conclude that Luther's error was that he was right four hundred years too soon.

We think the greater significance of the parallel is that our ancestors in the faith, who were unable in that troubled era of the sixteenth century to separate the good from the bad, or the better from the good in this matter of which direction to say Mass, in their concern for the essential elements of our religion, erected a protective wall against even any ritual changes.

The need for such change, nonetheless, was a good idea and now it has come into its own.

"In a higher world it is otherwise, but here below to live is to change, and to be perfect is to have changed often," said Cardinal Newman.

Although the Pope and the Council of bishops chose autumn as the time to announce the changes which will profoundly affect all of us in our worship of God, the very fact of change suggests we may remember those months in future years as a springtime when God proved His Church is still very much alive and that this ancient faith is still receptive to new ideas.

—*Father Henry Atwell.*

The Layman 'Emerges' at Vatican Council

By JOHN COGLEY
Special Correspondent

Vatican City — (RNS) — During the fourth week of the present session the layman fully emerged at the Vatican Council when the Fathers turned their attention to the draft decree on the lay apostolate.

This emergence, it might be said, was not so much due to the proposed statement as it was occasioned by the debate about it.

Most of the bishops who spoke out on the Apostolate of the Laity went far beyond the commission which prepared the draft in sketching out the role of the layman in the Church of the Aggiornamento.

It is doubtful if the combined editorial staffs of The Commonweal, Cross Currents, Jubilee, Ramparts, and the Catholic Worker, with Michael Novak thrown in for good measure, would have been more critical of the lay apostolate schema than the bishops who rose to comment on it.

Both conservative and progressive Fathers found it wanting, the one group because it went too far in outlining the freedom of the laity and the other because it did not go far enough. That may sound as if the schema is a sound middle-of-the-road document. But the problem is that it zig-zags back and forth, working both sides of the street.

The draft was variously described as "uninspiring" (Archbishop Owen McCann of Capetown), "timid and hesitant" (Auxiliary Bishop Stephen Leven of San Antonio—who incidentally described himself last week as a "long-time-no-see" member of the hierarchy), "unrealistic" (Bishop Gerard H. De Vet of Breda, Holland), "confused" (Archbishop Vicente Enrique y Tarancon of Oviedo, Spain), "too clerical" and "patronizing" (Joseph Cardinal Ritter of St. Louis), "a great disappointment" (Bishop Remy De Roo of Victoria, Canada), "speaking to ourselves" (Bishop Alexander Carter of Sault Ste. Marie, Canada), "repetitious, lacking in order" and "verbose" (Archbishop Denis Hurley of Durban), "narrow-minded and one-sided" (Archbishop Adam Kozlowiecki of Lusaka, Northern Rhodesia), and "weak in its doctrinal foundations" (Archbishop Ignace Ziade, a Maronite prelate of Beirut, Lebanon).

Even the Latin grammar of the schema came in for a drubbing. Archbishop Carlo Maccari of Mondovi, Italy said that it was "not up to conciliar style."

The closest thing to general approval came from the arch-conservative Michael Cardinal Browne of the Roman Curia. According to the paraphrase of Cardinal Browne's words issued by the Council press office, he said that "the text is good, even excellent." But even the doughty Dominican cardinal had reservations. He suggested a number of changes necessary "in order to preserve proper balance and to achieve greater accuracy of expression."

Practically every schema that has come before the Fathers has received its share of criticism. Usually it is a matter of praising with faint damns. In the case of the draft on the lay apostolate, however, the indictments were severe. Not since the original presentation of "The Sources of Revelation" which was withdrawn for complete revision by Pope John in 1962, has there been such widespread rejection of a Council proposal.

Fernando Cardinal Cento, a benign though somewhat ineffectual prelate, veteran of the Vatican diplomatic corps, was charged with major responsibility for the lay apostolate draft.

It was noticeably hurt by the barrage of criticism. Other bishops and theologians who worked on it for more than three years —a number of whom consider themselves models of "progressive" thought—seemed to have been equally stunned by the vehemence of the attack. It was evident in the defensive reaction—a few of them revealed that though they might have expected criticism, they were not prepared for quite that much.

What went wrong?

The most obvious inadequacy, of course, was the absence of the layman's touch in the presentation of the material. The draft is couched in the stiffest seminary rhetoric and reads as if it were written in a chancery office. More than one Council Father noted the whiff of old-fashioned clericalism that clings to it, though episcopal noses are not unduly sensitive to such an odor.

Moreover, in spite of all the goodwill in the world, its tone is patronizing toward the laity and vaguely offensive. Laymen of an earlier generation might have accepted this patiently enough as proper ecclesiastical style, but the modern laity, sensitively conscious as they are of their Christian vocation and the dignity of their place in the Church, are not about to. Some bishops saw that right away.

In addition, the schema suffers from the awkwardness that appears to be the special mark of group-think presentations. That it is the product of a committee's labors and was written and re-written until all the juice was gone is evident in every stilted phrase it uses and nervous qualifications it makes — and they are frequent and numerous.

Actually there were laymen involved in its preparation — but they were not called in for consultation until after the soup was spoiled, so to speak. It was a clear case, said the Canadian Bishop Carter (in English), of "too little, too late." Bishop Carter, incidentally, described the total absence of lay representatives on the preparatory commissions themselves as an "absurd situation."

The laymen consulted at the eleventh hour were not always the wisest choice, either. Some of them are heads of official Catholic organizations who move constantly in the clerical ambience. A few, but not all by any means, said Msgr. George H. Higgins of Washington, D.C., a peritus who worked on the schema, are "more clerical than I hope I am."

If the commission and subcommission members were so tone-deaf to the "churchy" music of the draft document, how did it happen that so many bishops caught it?

For one thing, the bishops had the document in their hands for several months, and some were wise enough to run through it with members of their laity. Other bishops who are actively engaged in the pastoral apostolate have trained their ear to know what goes and what does not go these days with members of the flock.

There were other difficulties connected with the draft.

For instance, a number of Fathers noted that it is not an accurate reflection of the theology of the laity put forth in the monumental "De Ecclesia" (On the Church). The lack of coordination is painfully obvious. It is almost as if the two schemata were talking about separate entities in their treatment of the laity. In "De Ecclesia" the laity are treated as fully mature members of the Church, sharing a common priesthood and enabled by the grace of the sacraments to fulfill a genuine Christian vocation by living as men of the world and to participate in the life of the Church with a full sense of "belonging."

These teachings are duly noted in the opening section of the schema on the lay apostolate, but as it goes on, the style, tone and emphasis of the document revert back to the father-knows-best attitude of yesteryear. Archbishop Franjo Seper of Zagreb, Yugoslavia, said that the text reeks of the "horror of the laity which has been too common in ecclesiastical circles."

In commenting on the disparity between the two documents concerned with the laity, the energetic Archbishop Hurley, the young intellectual leader of the South African hierarchy, predicted that if the schema is left as it is there will be a danger of two kinds of laity developing, the one claiming to be "of chapter 4, De Ecclesia" and the other claiming to be of the laity "of the Lay Apostolate schema."

A mitigating factor to be taken into account for the failure of the document may be the fact that it was drastically reduced in size. Actually it is only one-fourth its original length, since the commissions working on "De Ecclesia" and the forthcoming draft on "The Church and the Modern World" covered much of the same material. That of course does not explain away the unfortunate tone, the verbosity, or the needless repetition which several Fathers complained of.

It is almost certain now that the schema will have to be drastically altered or even entirely re-written if it is ever to get the approval of the Council Fathers.

There are rumors that laymen will be consulted in making the revisions and perhaps more of them will come out of secular milieux. Msgr. Higgins announced at a press briefing that he was going to recommend that the schema be re-done by one competent writer in order to get around the problem of jerry-built prose.

In spite of the negative emphasis of so many of the interventions on this schema though, the discussion provided some valuable material for the Fathers to chew on. Certain basic disagreements about the role of the laity in the Church, and indeed about the whole concept of a lay apostolate, showed up.

Most of the bishops went along with the proposition in the schema that the exercise of an apostolate by members of the laity is not a privilege granted by ecclesiastical superiors but a religious obligation.

"The Christian vocation by its very nature is also a vocation to the apostolate," the draft says.

But even this was not universally accepted.

For example, Bishop Luigi Barbero of Vigevano, Italy, stated that since the lay apostolate means collaboration with the hierarchy in specific tasks and programs, not all are qualified for it nor, consequently, are all called to it. As Bishop Barbero understands it, the apostolate is like a vocation to the priesthood or the religious life. It is not enough to want it, one also has to have the physical stamina as well as the mental and moral qualifications necessary for it, and to receive a clear "call" from the proper ecclesiastical authority.

At the other end of the spectrum, Bishop Kozlowiecki, the Northern Rhodesian prelate, warned against "institutionalism" or the strait-jacketing of lay initiative. He reminded the Council Fathers that they had just completed talking about religious liberty for all. The same spirit, he said, the liberty of lay people in the Church should not be circumscribed by authoritarian restrictions. "It is not our job to dictate to the Holy Spirit."

The intervention of Bishop Paul Sani of Indonesia ran along the same line. The faithful must be taught, he said, that the apostolate is not something distinct from their daily lives, something they do after-hours. Rather it is their daily life.

These differences between the "institutionalists" and the more free-wheeling interpreters of the lay apostolate came to the fore again and again. The schema states that a bishop has responsibility for the apostolate of his entire diocese and quotes a bolstering dictum from a Father of the Church, Ignatius of Antioch: "Let them do nothing without the bishop."

The "institutionalists" pounced on the quote. St. Ignatius, in the context of his writing, was referring to the celebration of the liturgy rather than the Apostolate of the Laity, but his words were particularly dear to the all-out supporters of Catholic Action in the aula. Catholic Action of course is officially defined as "the participation of the laity in the apostolate of their hierarchy."

The free-wheelers, though, felt that the words of the saint were not applicable. A number of them objected either to the "favoritism" shown to Catholic Action in the schema (Cardinal Ritter), to the monopolization of the words "lay apostolate" by official Catholic Action (Cardinal Suenens), or to the "residue of clericalism" implicit in the insistence on an episcopal "mandate" for the apostolate (Archbishop D'Souza of Bhopal, India).

Their concept of the Apostolate of the Laity seemed to be basically sacramental and biblical, rather than canonical and juridical. For them the idea of a lay apostolate is based fundamentally on the "priesthood of the laity"—a phrase which, despite its Pauline source, makes so many conservative bishops apprehensive.

The "priesthood of the laity" as they see it is to be exercised not only by active participation in the liturgy of the Church but by Christians in the world whose duty it is to "incarnate" the spirit of the Gospel in the life of society.

It is not a "priest's helper" or substitute for missing religious they have in mind when they talk about apostolic laymen. The basic "mandate" for the layman in fact is derived not from a communique from the chancery office but from the sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and to a great extent, marriage.

When it comes right down to it, the inspiration as to how to proceed to fulfill this generic "priesthood" of lay Christians, consequently, is more the business of the Holy Spirit than of the local hierarchy. The hierarchy, to be sure, has a duty to "test the spirit"—that is, authoritatively to pronounce against heresy and dissension in the Church—but it is not empowered to crush the spirit.

The Fathers who take this position are quite persuaded that the Church needs both "priests" and "prophets" to invoke a classic distinction, and that sometimes the "prophets" with their charismatic gifts are found in the ranks of the laity.

Historically, such "prophetic" laymen as Francis of Assisi (who later became a deacon), Ignatius Loyola, and Philip Neri (both of whom became priests after their work was under way), and Joan of Arc are cited as supreme examples of the kind of "lay initiative" they want to encourage.

In the United States one might cite Orestes Brownson, the late Peter Maurin, and numerous lesser figures who initiated works that gave expression to their faith.

The "institutionalist" school of thought was represented clearly by Bishop Biagio D'Agostino of Vallo di Lucania, Italy, who stated without ifs, ands, or buts that "the lot of the apostolate is in the hands of priests." In this view, the lay apostolate should be almost as rigorously structured, juridicized, and carefully directed as the apostolate of the clergy.

The Apostolate of the Laity, as they see it, is conceived not as a right but as a privilege, and a derived privilege at that, issuing from the overarching apostolate of the hierarchy. Consequently, the permission to exercise must be "mandated" from above. It is given specific tasks to perform by the bishops and its exercise remains always under his supervision, though he may grant it more or less freedom to experiment.

In this view, much more attention is given to social undertakings than to individual initiatives. To serve well in the organized ranks of Catholic Action, as the "institutionalists" see it, is the greatest contribution, and maybe even the only significant contribution, the layman can make to the work of the Church in the world.

The difference between these two "tendencies"—to use the soft-spoken word now employed at the Council to denominate drastically opposing ideas—can be noted in the recurring phrases used by either party. One speaks frequently of "lay initiative," "charisms," and "the prophetic." The other uses soldierly language, like "mandate," "commission," and "militant."

Neither concept, of course, totally cancels out the other. Both can exist side by side in the Church, in some places they actually do. But they are rarely found equally regarded by the same person because, if the truth be told, they reflect two different operating concepts of the Church. One is the product of the old "siege mentality," the other of the new, "open Church" mentality.

The Catholic Action of Italy, for example, with its highly structured organization, bureaucratic leadership and mass-movement tactics has long horrified the apostolic groups of France, with their cellular "team" approach and strong emphasis on "penetration," personal formation and spiritual liberty.

Again, neither of these two approaches seems congenial to Americans. The mass-movement is foreign to the religious tradition of an American shaped by free-church Protestantism, with its distaste for disciplined crowds and religious pressures. The cellular movement is too suspiciously "Fifth Columnist" to go in a society priding itself of its openness, and almost paranoic about possible conspiracies.

More and more the Church in America has given up experimenting with European models of the lay apostolate and is developing its own—like the family missionary efforts — which in fact if not in theory depend more on "initiative" than "structure."

At the present time, to strengthen that position, the American Catholic community takes great pride in the late President Kennedy. Mr. Kennedy would undoubtedly blush to be called a "lay apostle." But there is a widespread feeling among American Catholics that the work he did was not wholly cut off from the notion of the Apostolate of the Laity—and certainly it was not dependent on any hierarchial "mandate" or ecclesiastical bureau.

The Kennedy experience has had a tremendous effect on shaping the current idea of the lay apostolate for the American Catholic community, including many of the bishops. That too is evident here in Rome.

This idea is quite different from the one still dominant in Italy and other Latin countries where the words "Catholic Action" suggest aggressive political movements. Such overtones are sedulously avoided not only by Catholics in pluralistic nations like the U.S. and Britain but in the developing "mission countries" and, for obvious reasons, those behind the Iron Curtain.

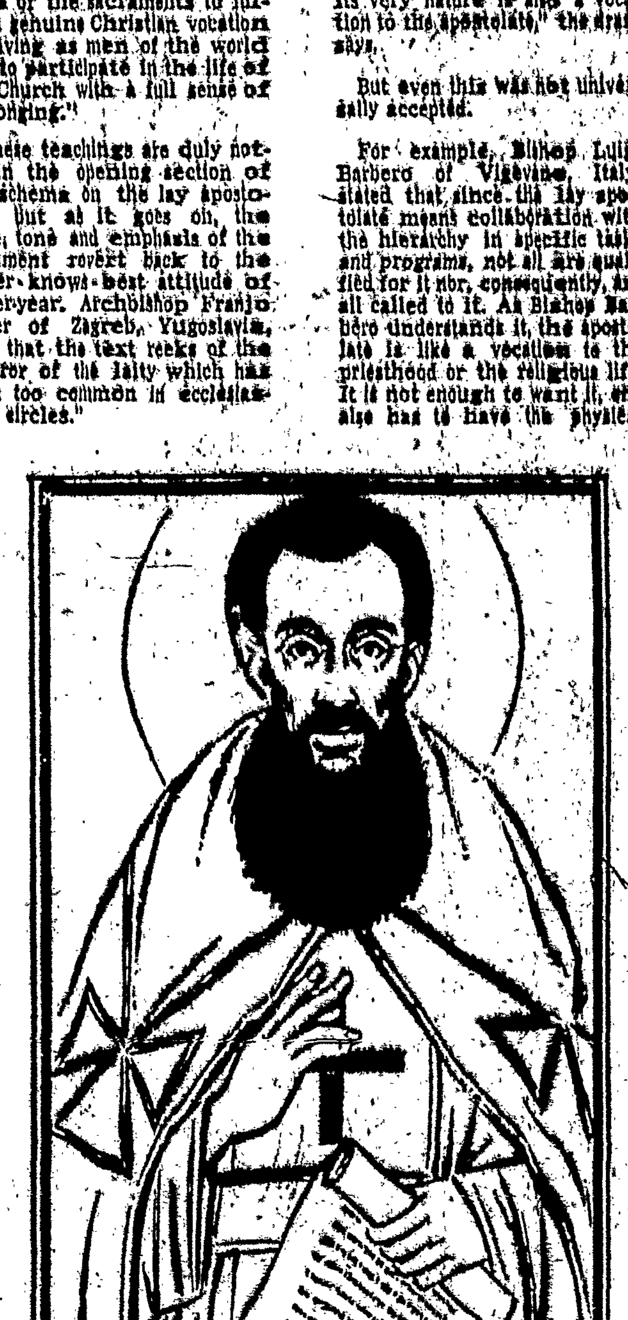
Some of these considerations though they were never spelled out, were behind the vigorous differences between the Fathers of the Council discussing the lay apostolate. The non-Italians, though, were at a disadvantage. Catholic Action as it is understood in Italy has been lavishly praised by recent Popes, right down to Paul VI, who has already twice commended it as a noble expression of the lay apostolate. The bishops who might take a dim view of it as a universal model, then, felt that they had to talk around the subject, lest they seem to be critical of the Holy Fathers.

An underlying difficulty facing those who were charged with drawing up the ill-starred schema on the lay apostolate was that they felt both these views had to be given equal weight. The document they came up with consequently had the virtues of neither, nor did it receive the wholehearted support of either school.

It was charged by the one with being a relic of old-style clericalism and juridicism, and by the other with soft-pedalling the benefits of Catholic Action.

A spokesman for the first group of critics, for example, said that "there is no hope for the Apostolate of the Laity if they are always to be under the thumb of clerics" (Archbishop D'Souza). A spokesman for the other side said in characteristically military terminology that "the enemies of the Church are legion today and we should not be lulled into a sense of false security and be induced to lay down the arms of prudence" (Archbishop Carlo Maccari).

It looks now as if to get a text which will find friends as well as critics, the Commission of the Lay Apostolate is going to have to take sides. The give-a-little, take-a-little strategy of their first effort won't work.



Patron of Ethiopia

A court official, St. Frumentius, a youth from Tyre was wrecked on the Ethiopian coast, and with another young man, St. Aedesius, was taken to the Royal Court at Aksum, where both in time became officials. Frumentius was consecrated Bishop at Alexandria by St. Athanasius, and sent back to preach the gospel in Ethiopia. His feastday is October 27.

The Catholic
COURIER Journal
THE NEWSPAPER OF THE ROCHESTER DIOCESE

Thursday, Oct. 22, 1964 Vol. 76 No. 4

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Second class postage paid at Rochester, N.Y.
As required under the Act of Congress of March 3, 1879.
Single copy 15¢; 1 year subscription in U.S. $5.00
Canada $5.50; Foreign Countries $6.75