COURIERJOURNAL Friday, July 16, 1965

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Dropouts Reveal Spiritual Drought

Pope Paul told throngs at the Vatican last Sunday that the world, instead of going forward has "taken a step backward on the road to peace.'

His gloomy comment probably followed a look at Sunday newspapers which told of the escalating war in Vietnam and dashing of British hopes to bring the combatants to a conference table.

If the turmoil in southeast Asia could be described as "a step backward" them some aspects of religious life could be described as "a landslide backward."

The malignancy is not sectarian. It cuts across all denominational lines and the Catholic Church is far from immurie.

A few statistics will illustrate the point -- *

America magazine reports this week that the Catholic population in the United States is up 42 per cent from its 1954 figure but that the number of priests is up only 22 per cent. And the total number of nuns has actually gone down — there being 60 fewer nuns now in the country than there were last year.

Lee Berton, a staff writer for the Wall Street Journal recently reported that 60,000 Protestant and Jewish congregations are without a full-time clergyman. To complicate the situation, 120 ministers have joined the Peace Corps.

Lay people too are said to be "in the throes of a crisis of faith." Novelist Edward R. F. Sheehan told delegates at the Catholic Hospital Association meeting in St. Louis last month that the Church faces a "deep problem" as a growing number of young Catholics feel the Church has no "relevance" to them and they stop " attending Mass and receiving the sacraments.

Seminaries are noticeably suffering the impact of this spiritual drought.

A nationwide survey by Sulpician Father Cornelius Cuyler tabulates statistics from 1935 to 1952 and shows an 83 per cent dropout rate in the nation's seminaries. Father Cuyler says this high percentage is due in large

Rochester Traveler Meets Local Missioners

By STEPHEN MAY (Special to The Contier)

High on a wooded hill overlooking a picturesque bay some 20 minutes drive from down town Hong Kong, a Maryknoll priest from Rochester is studying Cantonese so he can bring spiritual and material assistance to the colony's immigrant population.

This month Rev. Vincent F. Corbelli, son of Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Corbelli of 4240 Lake Avenue, expects to be assigned to a parish in one of Hong Kong's crowded resettlement areas.

In preparation for this task, he has been putting in nine hours a day learning the Chinese dialect he will need to communicate with his parishioners. Even with a tape recorder and intensive individual instruction, Father Corbelli, who has been studying since September, told me that progress seemed slow. Unfamiliar muscles are required and each tone gives a word a different meaning, he explained.

Up to now emphasis has been on the spoken language. Later there will be time to work on reading and writing. "We're here to instruct, motivate and educate, so command of the language is the first essential," Father Corbelli pointed out,

their care.

munism,

chosen.

gamut from distributing sur-

plus food to teaching typing to

supervising a noodle factory

they set up several years ago.

All this, of course, is in addi-

tion to their overall mission

of bringing the spiritual conso-

lations of the Church to thou-

sands who have suffered under

the cruel rule of Godless com-

It is tough, demanding shirt-

looking forward to it.

poor in any way I can."

He added that eventually he will conduct Mass mainly in Cantonese.

The Rochester priest lives and studies in a red brick Maryknoll House, in front of which is a curved driveway and white statue of Our Lady of Maryknoll. The building was formerly a rest house for priests working all over China.

With all clerics now excluded from that land of atheism, Maryknoll fathers concentrate their efforts in Hong Kong and Taiwan, Eight other priests are

in residence, one of whom is also engaged in language study. A 1951 graduate of Aquinas

Institute, Father Corbelli was ordained in Maryknoll in 1960 and did vocational and promotional work in Cincinnati for four years. He expects to spend the rest of his life in Hong Kong, with the exception of six months in the United States

every six years. Since 1949 the Maryknell Fathers - the only American priests in Hong Kong - have been directly engaged in the

work of helping destitute immigramis from Red China who have flooded into the already overcrowded British colony, Ef-

in Hong Kong.

centers in areas entrusted to Their activities run the

selves out of a job by establishing a native clergy."

Stephen May, author of this article, is a young Rochester attorney who recently completed a four - month, seventeen. country study trip around the world. In Hong Kong he met two missionary priests from Rochester. He reports on their work in this article. Mr. May has been an execulive assistant to former Senator Kenneth B. Keating and Ambassador Henry Cabot lodge. As on a previous trip in 1962, he conferred with diplomats, journalists and local people to gain first-hand knowledge of the countries he visited.

Very

A graduate of Corpus Christi School in Rochester, Father O'Halloran attended St. Andrew's Seminary before entering Maryknoll to study for the priesthood. Following his ordination in 1956, he taught in Pennsylvania and Illinois prior to beginning his missionary work in Hong Kong in 1962.

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Both priests are members of Maryknoll, the Catholic Foreign Mission Society of America, which was established in 1911 by the American Bishops to recruit, send and support American missionaries in overseas areas. Today, Maryknoll fathers are active in 13 countries, where they serve as official representatives of the Church.

It is doubtful that anywhere their work is more needed -or more appreciated - than in the incredibly populous area of Hong Kong with its continuing problems of human misery.

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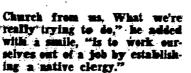
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living in the colony now, he fold me, Among the 25 other Maryknolf-fathers assigned to Hong Kong is Rev. James V. O'Halloran, whose mother Mrs. Sophia O'Halloran lives at 29 Avondale Road, Irondequit. Since his arrival there two years ago he has been busy Rochester's Father Corbelli at Maryknoll House with the many problems of his parish in a resettlement area. Last August he helped residents dig out after a savage typhoon inundated the area and left 5,600 temporarily homeless. With considerable envy,



sleeve work, much of it involving physical toil and depriva. tion, but Father Corbelli is "This is what I came here for," he said. "My task will be to minister to the needs of the It might be added that his warm, informal manner and intense dedication to his calling will stand him in good stead in the challenging work he has Father Corbelli is particularly concerned about education, a major problem in a community where 50 per cent of the population is under the age of "There are 600,000 children who want to attend classes but can't because there aren't

Father Corbelli reports that Father O'Halloran's Chinese is

good, adding that he's doing his best to catch up.

measure to the increasing number of dropouts in recent years compared to the earlier years in his survey,

He comments, Surely all the fault does not lie with the candidates."

Which raises the question-where does the fault lie?

Most every spokesman these days has developed his own scapegoat to blame - from too much materialism or too much permissiveness to too much ecumenism or too much experimentation and change.

Any Catholic who drifts from the faith these days. or any aspirant to the priesthood or convent who drifts from that vocation is promptly labeled a "victim" of the "new scripture" or the "new theology" of of just the whole "new breed" in general.

The fault, however, is most probably not out there in this galaxy of new ideas but, as Cassius long ago told Brutus, in ourselves.

If the shepherds find a dwindling number of sheep to follow them, are the sheep alone to be blamed?

Cassius also told Brutus, "Men at some time are masters of their fate." This, it seems, is one of those times when the shepherds will have to make decisions which determine not only their own fate but that of their sheep as well.

For Christians, the ultimate model of shepherding is that of the great Good Shepherd who garnered his followers in ways more orthodox churchmen today would reject out of hand. As Rochester's Baptist minister, Rev. George Hill, is quoted in the current issue of Look magazine, "The Cross was not a Favorite Citizen Award handed to Jesus by the Jerusalem Chamber of Commerce."-

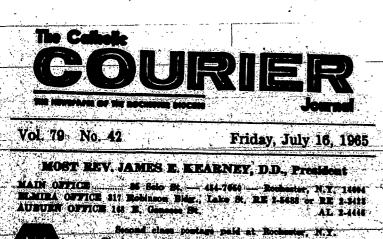
If thousands of young people enroll in the Peace Corps or conduct Freedom Schools down south, then we can't say there's a lack of generosity.

Somehow the Church has lost its original image as an effective agency to serve those who are in either spiritual or material need. It looks too often like a comfortable, complacent little group intent on taking care of itself-and the cross seems more a decoration than a way of life.

It has been the genius of the Church that it has always found its way back to this path to Calvary and to the Coliseum. That road today leads perhaps through the inner-city and through Selma, through the jangle of beatle music and the jungle of chaotic morals and despondency. Seems ridiculous? The way of the cross, however, never did make much sense to those who prefered the status quo.

The dropouts and the dropoff, therefore, are more accurately blamed on our own failure to be truly and totally Christian rather than to shunt blame onto some new phenomenon in the ecclesiastical spectrum.

-Father Henry A. Atwell



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them," he told me. In one Maryknoll school, 800 applied fectively supplementing the gallant efforts of the Hong Kong government to place the newcomers in tonement war, ters, they have established nich housing areas, refugee centers, schools, clinics and welfare

for 40 openings in the freshman class. iho main thing Rathyl develop Ute to become priests so that even-tually they can take over the

enough facilities - to handle

A same in Hong Kong telements where Father Corbelli will be pastor.

Text and symbol for Sixth Sunday after Pentecost.

High Schools Preferred

Washington --- (RNS) Roman Catholics should divert some, of their money and manpower from many of the newer colleges-especially for women -to a solid junior college and high school program if Catholic educators are to meet the demands placed upon them.

This evaluation of a presentday Catholic dilemma was given by Father Nell G. McCluskey, academic vice-president of Gonzaga University, Spokane, Wash, He addressed a conference of the nation's Catholic high schools are so few," enroll-Georgetown University.

"New ways must be found to multiply good Catholic high schools," he told the National Cathelic Education Association.

Catholic schools, he reminded, often are faced with operation on tight budgets which, in turn, are partially responsible for using outmoded teaching methods. "And because Catholic high schools are so few, enrollment is "moving in an elitist direction."

By that, Father McCluskey meant that the high schools could be more selective in their students. "Very quietly," he

said, "the principle seems to be openting that since there is not room for everybody, we take the prepared youngsters whose families can afford to pay the tuition and fees."

The shortage of high schools and jurnior colleges, he contends, is carried by too much effort being concentrated on Catholic colleges "whose future

Council Book Published

Washington (NC)-"Council Daybook: Vatican II, Sessions 1 and 2" has been published here by the National Catholic Welfare Conference. The 81/2by-11 inch 384-page paperback book_contains_the_day-by-day news coverige of the first two sessions provided by-the N.G.W.C. News-Service, as well. as many speeches and summaries of council documents.

It also includes the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy and the decree on the Media of Social Communication. There is a comprehensive index.

as solid four-year colleges is extremely doubtful."

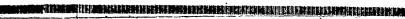
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"The proliferation of Catholic colleges, especially for women, has been the bewilderment of the academic community. They condemn themselves to the limbo of mediocrity, and in the academic market place they debase the general coinage of Catholic higher education," he commented.

The resultant "screening" of freshmen entering Catholic high schools, he said, "automatically -guarantees a high level of ability and achievement.'

It is vital that Catholic high schools produce good products, he said, because Catholic leaders "more and more will have the responsibility for preserving the values and virtues of Christian morality in a world, as he sees it, shifting away from these values.

Utilization of team teaching methods, expanded use of television, more flexible scheduling, large and small group instruction were among methods the principals were told they could use to strengthen the caliber of teaching in parochial



Do We Need a 'Grievance Man' to Speak for us?

By GARY MacEOIN

The Swedes have long had an institutionwhich I believe would have captured wider attention were it not for its absurdsounding. This is the ombudsman, and it isn't at all absurd when it is translated into English as "grnevance man.".

The ombudsman is a government official whose job is to protect the citizenfrom the excesses of officialdom. Any citizen may complain to his office about illegar, unfair or even implite public service. He also reads the newspapers and keeps his eyes open, and he can take the initiative when he thinks it appropriate.

. I can speak from rather wide experience of officialdom in many countries, and I think that we in the United States are blessed with public servants of high integrity and courtesy. In my dealings with the income tax. I have always been given the benefit of the doubt. I once even got a refund when tax officials discovered a mistake in my mathematics. Customs men similarly tend to assume that I am law-abiding and engaged in legitimate pursuits.

Yet even in this country, everyone knows that the citizen must maintain

eternal vigilance against the encrosch-ments of breaucracy, its natural tendency to serve itself rather than him. We have developed many ways to do this. One is the appeal to our congressman. Another is the creation of permanent organizations, such as civil liberties committees, and ad-hoc groups to protest the closing of a hospital or the routing of a highway

through a playground.

All these ways have worked, but all leave something to be desired. The tradileave semiching to be detired. The tradi-tion of holp from one's congressman is one of our strongest. But Congress mem-bers are complaining that it is touding to distract them from their true function. "Many members of the House and Senate," Vice-President Homphrey has said, "spend up to 30 per cent of their own time and that of their individual complaints or reservert." requests."

Formation of citizen protection groups is also deeply ingrained in our traditions and should remain also. But it is open to abuse. Some recent complaints of police brutality have tended to take on racial overtones. Other groups have raised politcal or ideological issues. And one always remains with the problem that the individual or group that should loudest usually .

The Swedes have more than 150 years experience with the ombudsman, and they claim that he is the best solution to the problem It is interesting to note that, with the modern proliferation of bureaucracy. others are following their example. Finland set up the office when it became in-dependent after World War 1. Denmark followed suit in 1955, Nev Zealand in 1962 and Norway in 1963.

One of the campaign pledges of the labor governments that recently came to power in Britain was to establish the office of ombudismas, and pressmably this pledge will be fulfilled. Canada Australia, Ireland and the Netherlands are studying similar proposals. So in fact is the United States.

A bill introduced last year in Congress and reintroduced in the current session by Congressman Henry Reuse of Wiscon-sin and Sentor Clairborne Pell of Rhode sland proposes the creation of the office under the title of "administrative counsel of the Congress." The hope is for a more rational and methodical handling of the light with be individual complaints now dealt with by individual Congramment.

And what about the Church? It is hardly surprising that one of the suggestions made during the Council for aggiornamente was the establishment of the office of ombudsman. Not everyone will praise the practical judgment in all matters of the proponent, Archibithop Thomas Roberts, S.J. But none who has over known him can doubt his dedication and his me passienced concern for the small man, the ordinary Christian and citizen trying to do the best he can in situations over which he exercises no control.

When Archbishop Roberts presented his proposal in Rome, he certainly put forward powerful arguments for speeding up the machinery of Church decision. He instanced delays of ten years in ruling on marriage appeals. "What use," he asked, "is even a favorable decision ten years later?"

The Council decree on the Church calls for expression of opinion by the laity to the hierarchy on relevant matters through organs to be created for this purpose. I should not be surprised if among these organs in some American discusses we soon see someting very similar to the office of the ombudianan

high schools.

