

'In These Poor Hands'

Pope Paul's Hope - to 'Remove All Barriers'

By Father Edward Duff, S.J.
Special Correspondent

Vatican City — (RNS) — Do Popes, as human beings, feel the urge to make themselves understood? Such a supposition seems the best explanation of a long talk Pope Paul VI had recently with a Milan journalist which filled the front page of Corriere Della Sera, Italy's leading newspaper.

It may not be without significance that the story appeared a few days after *Time* magazine had devoted its cover to the pontiff. Some thought he wanted to supply a corrective available at least to his friends in his native Lombardy. The thoughtful profile by Alberto Cavallari was published on the eve of the Pope's visit to the U.N.

The impression Pope Paul left on the Milanese journalist—or at least the one communicated to his readers—is of a man who is on top of his job, well informed of the realities of his time, relaxed in his estimate of the currents in contemporary Catholicism, capable of humor, very human, direct sometimes at himself, unpretentious, without illusions of easy solutions, informal in manner but never far from the secret emotion that surrounds his solitary decisions.

He is considerate of others, gentle in manner, affable, outgoing, a softener of hurts and a friend of friendliness. His lack of aggressiveness is not a sign of weakness but of serenity. For his abiding sense of responsibility tells him that "here the buck stops" as surely as it did in the case of the personally more forceful, and more contentious, Harry S. Truman.

The fact that the Corriere Della Sera, a sternly secular daily, would wish to assay "the style and character of a pontiff" is itself a sign of the times.

"So you want to talk about the Vatican," began the Pope after he had found the proper chair for his interlocutor.

"These days a great many people are studying the Holy See and the Council. There are a number of books on the subject, some of them pretty good, by the way. But a lot of people are certain of what the Church thinks on certain points without ever asking the Church what, in fact, she does think."

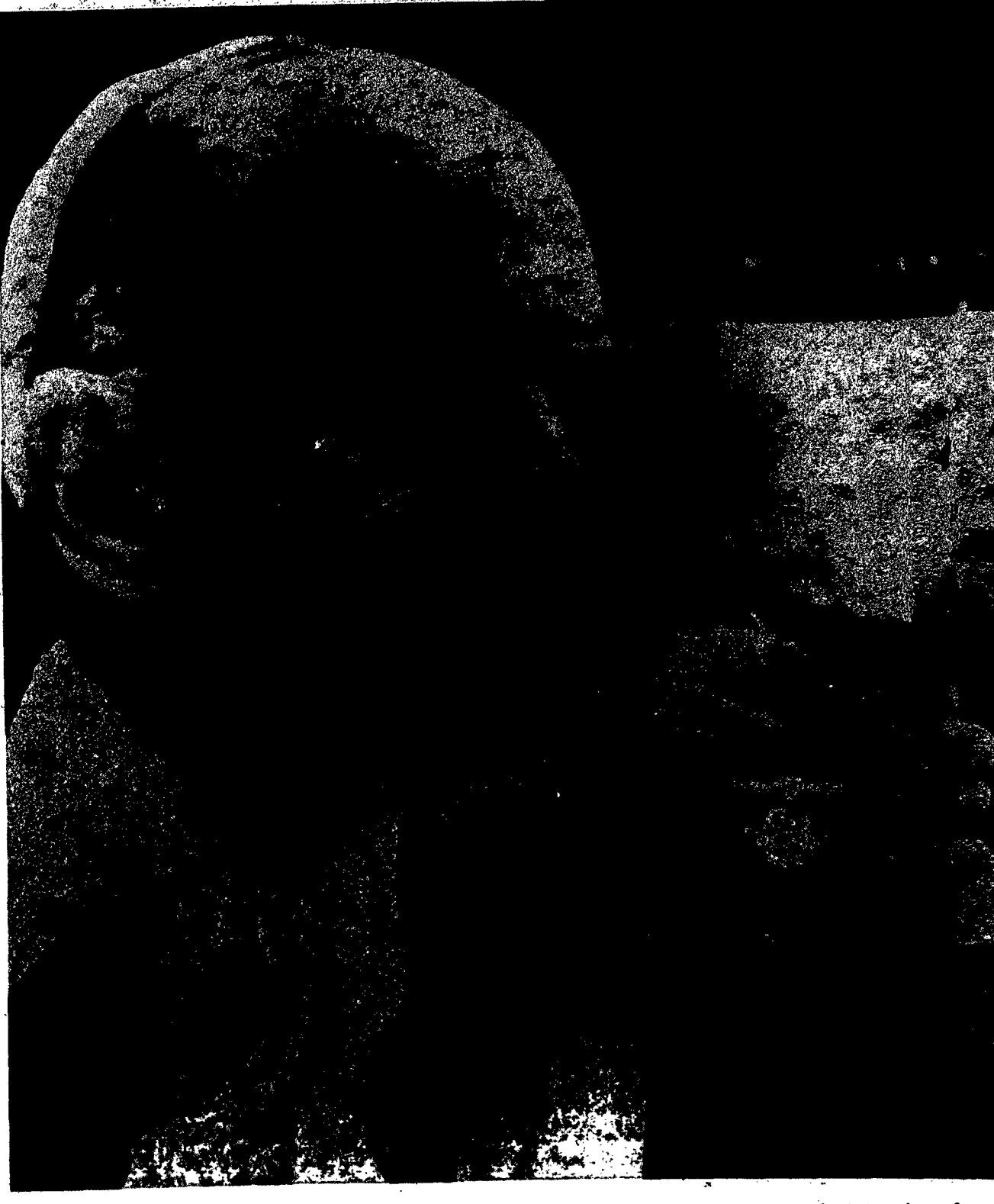
The Holy Father continued with a smile: "As a matter of fact, it is not easy to understand what is going on in the Church and the debates that are taking place. As for the world of today, the Pope, too, exhausts himself sometimes in trying to understand what is happening."

Attentive to all movements in the Church and in the world, diligent in his duties as general chairman of the 20th Ecumenical Council in the history of Christendom, Pope Paul has one overarching preoccupation: a great part of humanity has lost all religious faith, a fact that must be analyzed and remedied.

"We must be direct and perceptive in grasping the meaning of the times in which we live," the Pope remarked. "The Church wants to become many-sided to reflect better the contemporary world. And so she had decided to set her plow in the infertile, even the stoniest, soil, to turn it over, to give it life, to bring to light what was buried. That sort of ploughing up produces tremors, strains and problems. It was my predecessor's lot to start the furrow. Now the task of driving ahead is in the hands of the Pope who looks at his hands, resting on the desk and, as if embarrassed by the vigor of his own metaphor, quickly went on.

"A great many people are asking why the Church is taking on such tasks. Why this dialogue, they want to know." Such questions, Pope Paul remarked, indicate an ignorance of the real problem. He promptly defined it: "The Church offers herself to the world and finds a world which in great part no longer believes."

Obviously, the Church must take this frightening fact to



Pope Paul, like every priest, begins his day at Mass. The Pontiff was recently interviewed by a journalist from Milan where he had been archbishop before elected to the papacy. The accompanying article is a report of that interview.

heart. Reminiscing over his years as Archbishop of Milan, he reported that he had looked through the records of the diocese under his illustrious 16th Century predecessor, St. Charles Borromeo. "The problems of those days included a confessional to be bought, a church to be repaired, three troublesome drunks in town and a witch who was upsetting people. Today the problem is the millions of people without religious faith."

Differing conditions call for differing pastoral postures, observed Pope Paul. There is "the necessity for the Church to disclose herself to the world. We must go out to meet those who no longer believe and who distrust us. We must say to them: 'This is what we are like. Tell us why you don't believe and why you oppose us.'"

"That's the dialogue," said the Pope. "That, you see, is what it is all about."

"To talk, to explain, to want the other person to feel at ease, to know how to listen, to strive continuously to remove all barriers between the man and the Pope, not to opt for easy solutions, all of this seemed to me the constant, touching, precious capsule and the fundamental character of Paul VI." Such was the summary of the Milanese journalist to this section of his colloquium with the Holy Father.

Turning his attention from the world to the Church, the Pope found no comparable mood of crisis, a fact he felt demonstrated by the debates in the Council. "The formation of two parties, the progressives and, as they are often called, the non-progressives, never raises the question of basic loyalties. The good of the Church is at the bottom of all the discussions. Were there disturbing signs of a struggle within the Church, the Pope would know about it, you can be sure. He would be concerned and he would clarify matters. That is his job." To demonstrate his

point Pope Paul smiled and slipped the chair he was sitting on. Many problems fail to be seen in focus, when viewed from a distance, the pontiff asserted, the Roman Curia being one. Organizational changes are in order to improve its effectiveness, conceded the veteran of the Vatican administration, but grounds for serious complaints, as was true in the past, do not exist. Deficiencies in proper functioning are under study and will be eliminated.

The pope's observations on the position of the Church in Italy had largely local interest. He was determined, he said, to treat Italian Catholics just as Catholics in any other land but the situation is complicated by the simple fact that the Holy See is geographically situated in Italy. He hoped for mutual respect between Church and State and a recognition of separate spheres of activity. "We constantly tell our priests: 'Don't meddle in political matters, don't ask for favors, don't haunt people so that you are indebted to them for favors.'"

Adverting to the invitation to

participate in the 20th anniversary celebrations of the United Nations, Pope Paul said that it was out of the question for him to say in reply, "Thanks very much but I haven't the time." Turning down the invitation to address the General Assembly would have saved him fatigue and money. "But for the first time the heads of state of the whole world want to hear the voice of the representative of Christ, so it is impossible not to make the trip."

Turning again to the Council, the pontiff noted that it had served "to simplify many things," merely as the occasion of the encounter of men of different Churches, it is significant, he felt. The daily presence of the delegate-observers was evidence for all to see. "To be sure, no decisive steps have been taken. We must not harbor illusions. But in the meanwhile the atmosphere has changed."

Pope Paul illustrated his point by reporting an incident which occurred during a reception for the delegate-observers. A Waldensian pastor extended his hand to the pontiff and said: "Ehelo,

it's 500 years since we met last." Toward the close of the talk, the Milanese journalist reported, the Holy Father seemed to want to give him a glimpse of the burdens of the papal office: "How many problems there are! . . . We want to open ourselves to the world and, as a result, we have to decide day by day issues that will have consequences through the centuries. We have to answer questions of modern man, of today's Christian, some of them extremely difficult such as those connected with Christian family life."

The Pope became concrete: "Take birth control, for example. The world wants to know what is to be thought about it and we are endeavoring to formulate a reply. But what answer to give? What to say is a nice question. Not for centuries has the Church had to face a similar situation. And the issue is one which, one might say, is somewhat inappropriate for churchmen, even humanly embarrassing. Thus commissions meet, reports and studies accumulate. Oh, if it was only a question of conducting surveys, you see. But, finally, it is up to us to decide. And there we are alone. Deciding is not as easy as studying. Well, we must say something. But what? Really, God's light is needed here."

Such a confidence, made on the eve of the flight to New York, should quash all notions that the Pope's U.N. speech foreshadowed the ultimate and awaited answer to the question on the morality of family limitation.

Pope Paul is in fine health, the news account indicated. He still breezed from his summer in the Alban Hills. His features are fuller and softer than in photographs where he seems taut, cold, pallid. His is not a nervous temperament, the journalist judged. Has the present pontiff, scrutinized from all sides, been stereotyped? Signor Cavallari of *Corriere Della Sera* suggests as much in concluding the story of his historic colloquium.

"What is termed anxiousness in him struck me as reflectiveness. What is called 'Hamletism' seemed to me to be a realism with all the flexibility that a truly realistic attitude demands. What some consider indecisiveness is perhaps better described as a gentleness of manner, prudence, gradualism. In sum, Pope Paul is a man of the 20th Century, disdainful of cheap gestures for effective man-to-man talk. He is conscious that the times in which we live involve boldness, doubts, contradictions and the rare courage of describing this ambiguous situation. Mindful of the currents of contemporary history, he keeps his emotions to himself."

It is the destiny of Paul VI to preside over a reawakening of Council new orientations. The Church is acknowledging the plurality of problems in the world and must devise a plurality of means to confront them. The primary responsibility here is Pope Paul's. The stereotypers might understand him better as the continuer of the arrangement of John XXIII if they would remember the council of the late Pope's encyclical, *Pacem in Terris*: "If there is to be any improvement in human institutions, the work must be done slowly and deliberately from within."

World Synod Set for 1966
Vatican City—(RNS)—Workmen have begun converting two large halls of the Vatican Palace into a meeting place for the Synod of Bishops established recently by Pope Paul VI.

Modern multi-translation equipment, amplifiers and voting machines are being installed to facilitate the work of the synod, which will consist of about 150 bishops.

It is generally expected that the first session of the synod will be held in the Fall of 1966.

BEHOLD HOW GOOD IT IS AND HOW PLEASANT WHOSE BRETHREN DWELL AS ONE

Text and Symbol, 22nd Sunday after Pentecost (Drawing is chapel of Mt. Saviour Monastery near Elmira)

The Right to Avoid Barbarous Cruelty

One aspect of the Vatican Council that has been given little publicity is the number of fringe activities in which the bishops are more patients than agents.

Perhaps the most remarkable of these activities is the emergence of the lay pressure groups who try to capture the attention of the bishops and other Council participants to have their particular goals given Council approval.

Two of these groups have been one advocating a liberal view of birth control and the other, urging a strong condemnation of war, at least nuclear war.

The maverick Jesuit Archbishop Thomas D. Roberts quipped that any one who is for the Pill is against the Bomb, or anyone who is against the Pill is for the Bomb, but nobody seems to be for or against both at the same time.

The advocates of the Pill and other birth control drugs or devices for Catholics have pretty much had their say and gone home but the peace group is still in the Eternal City.

They have chosen a less dramatic but in the long run perhaps a more effective way than burning draft cards to drive their point home. They fasted for ten days on water alone. "They" were 20 women from several countries — France, the United States, Austria, Belgium, Italy and Argentina. Their fast coincided with Pope Paul's trip to the United Nations in New York City. They spent their ten day fast also in prayer, at a convent near Rome.

One of the women was Dorothy Day, now 67, who became a Catholic in 1928 after first-hand knowledge of Communist attempts to exploit the hopes and frustrations of U.S. workingmen. With French-born Peter Maurin, she founded the "Catholic Worker" in 1933 — an attitude, a movement, a way of life, and a newspaper with the same name.

In her drab, well-worn clothes, she looks more like an elderly schoolteacher of a past generation rather than a vortex of controversy on current subjects.

The fasting women were upset because the Council's Schema 13 statement on "the Church and the Modern World" seemed to admit the moral right of nations to use nuclear weapons, at least defensively. "As long as international institutions give no adequate guarantee to peace," the Schema said, "the possession of these armaments, exclusively as a deterrent for an enemy equipped with the same weapons, cannot be said to be in itself unlawful."

The Schema did admit, however, that all nations should (as the United States does and many Catholic countries don't) respect "those people who, as a witness of Christian meekness, or out of respect for human life of a sincere distaste for all use of violence, refuse in conscience to do military service or certain actions which in time of war lead to barbarous cruelty."

Did the women's fasting affect the Council's decision?

This much is certainly true—not a line in the Schema nor a word spoken in St. Peter's was anything other than a vigorous condemnation of that super-patriotism and national egoism which so often invokes religion as its inspiration and corals churchmen to its support. Benedictine Abbot Christopher Butler of England said, "All men have a moral duty not only nor primarily to their own country but to the whole human fellowship."

No one can be so naive as to think that a Council document will solve the world's most agonizing problem overnight. But a clear-cut pronouncement will certainly help us ordinary Catholics to recognize the desperate urgency of the nuclear—and even conventional war—dilemma and will guide us in contributing responsibly our Christian share in an effort to resolve that dilemma.

Perhaps if more of us did some praying and fasting, we will be able to hear God speak His word of peace through the Council when it comes to voting point by point on Schema 13 later this month.

—Father Henry Auwell

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MOST REV. JAMES E. KEARNEY, D.D., President
MAIN OFFICE: 36 E. 9th St., Rochester, N.Y. 14604
RUBEN OFFICE: 111 Robinson Bldg., Lake St. NE 1-4000 or NE 2-4022
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Integralists Challenge Teilhard's Influence on Council

By GARY MacEOIN

Rome—Teilhard de Chardin's name has scarcely been whispered in St. Peter's in all the thousands of interventions and millions of words that have focused the thought and shaped the conclusions of the second Vatican Council. It is a name loaded with emotional overtones. The Fathers who were most conscious of expressing his ideas hesitated to attribute them.

His image and spirit, nevertheless, have never been far away. In some respects, this has been his show even more than Pope John's. For if John was the politician able to translate ideas into actions, Teilhard was the theoretician who dared formulate the new concepts in the first instance.

The discussion of Schema 13, the Church in the contemporary world, inevitably sharpened the conflict over Teilhard, posing the issue in concrete terms. Does man's life on earth have a intrinsic function and value, or did God create it simply as a way of determining whom to reward, whom to punish?

numbers who could not hope for any appreciable wellbeing here below, it was consoling to be assured that they were storing up treasure for a life to come. Modern man, conscious of his power over the material universe and his ability to modify and improve his environment, asks for a more profound interpretation.

Teilhard offered just such a concept by presenting creation as a continuing activity in which God has made man his associate. By identifying the positive elements in the world, and at the same time offering it the additional meaning contained in Christ's message, Teilhard began the dialogue which Schema 13 seeks to establish on a formal basis.

The so-called integralists among the Fathers, those who oppose any change whatever in what they consider traditional Catholic positions, understandably reject his approach. Curiously enough, however, it also met a strong emotional resistance among the Germans—usually leaders of progressive ideas at the Council. The apparent reason is that their recent experience, combined with the Protestant atmosphere in which they live, stresses for them the evil in the world,

making them suspicious of such an optimistic philosophy of life.

A concerted effort has been made on the margin of the Council to exploit this divergence within the progressive camp, in the hope of getting Schema 13 watered down before it comes back for a final vote. A French "integralist" group, which calls itself *Rock*, gave a series of conferences—well attended by bishops and perit—of several of which Teilhard was the whipping boy.

"Between 1916 and 1919, Teilhard changed his religion," according to the summing up of Henri Rambaud. "He may have always wished to remain a Christian, but he no longer knew what Christianity was."

"More moderate in tone but no less devastating in conclusion" was Father Philip of the Trinity, a Discalced Carmelite who is consultant to the Holy Office. The teaching of Teilhard, he said, "is an evolutionist modernism of a esoteric-religious type, placed under the sign of a vague pan-Christism."



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a fellow-Jesuit and personal friend for 30 years, gave a talk under other auspices a few days later. At least 200 could not get into the hall. In addition to bishops and theologians, the audience included many of the Jesuit missionaries forbidden by the Holy Office to read Teilhard.

Drawing a striking parallel between Teilhard and St. Paul, Father de Lubac said that both had been missionaries and both had been conscious of the cosmic scope of Christ's work. What Teilhard had done was to continue where St. Paul was forced by reason of the limited knowledge of his day to leave off, stressing the evolutionary aspect of the universe.

Like St. Paul, he said, Teilhard "had been stirred up by the great inspiration of Christian freedom. They both also shared a great anxiety to be recognized by Peter."

Another blow to the integralists has been the official rehabilitation of Father Teilhard by the new Jesuit general, Father Peter Arnspeck. He said, "One of the great mistakes of the thought of the modern world" in his work, he has said, "the positive elements far outweigh those which are negative or open to question."