

Is Silence the Only Alternative?

Notre Dame — (RNS) — The case histories of 13 "suppressed" or "silenced" Roman Catholic priests are described and analyzed as a "crisis of communication" within the U.S. Catholic community in the Jan. 8 issue of Ave Maria, national Catholic weekly magazine published by the Holy Cross Fathers.

The 31-page publication is entirely devoted to the meaning of the ecclesiastical disciplines imposed upon a growing number of youthful clergy who lodged protests on controversial and national issues, such as race relations and peace in Vietnam, since June, 1964.

Included in the listing is Father Daniel Berrigan, S.J., associate editor of Jesuit Missions magazine, and co-chairman of the Clergy Concerned About Vietnam, who was allegedly ordered, because of his pacifist involvements, to withdraw from the interreligious committee and was removed from New York to Mexico by his religious superiors.

The case of Father Berrigan and that of Father William Du Bay have become "causes celebres" of the magazine. Commentator, and the lay-edited newspaper, The National Catholic Reporter, both noted for liberal viewpoints. Father Du Bay cabled Rome to remove James Francis Cardinal McIntyre who the priest said was not providing moral leadership in the Los Angeles race situation.

What happened to these and other priests is discussed in Ave Maria by several writers, including a bishop, priest, a nun, a Lutheran pastor and two Catholic laymen in the context of religious obedience and what one called "holy disobedience."

"Commentators debate the existence of a 'crisis of authority' in the American Catholic community," observed Father John Reedy, editor, introducing the special issue. "If there isn't a crisis of authority, there is, at least, a crisis of communication."

"The agencies that publicized Father Berrigan's transfer can be expected to publicize other similar incidents as they occur. The group that protested this transfer will grow larger and more vocal with successive incidents."

Father Reedy said the magazine had solicited "as many viewpoints as possible," in the belief that "Catholic journals must try to serve as vehicles of discussion in the present post-Vatican Council period. His editorial added:

"Some viewpoints and some levels of authority are insufficiently represented in this

special issue. This is not because we failed to seek these opinions; rather, it is because a number of authorities, for a number of reasons, chose to refrain from comment at this time and in this way.

"We sympathize with these considerations; but we regard the resulting imbalance as unfortunate."

Besides Fathers Berrigan and Du Bay, the magazine summarized what happened to those "silenced" priests who were re-assigned, disciplined or restricted by their superiors after they spoke out on various issues:

Father Joel Moelter, allegedly banned from offering Masses at St. Bernadette's parish, Los Angeles, after he condemned California Proposition 13, which removed a state-wide ban on discrimination in housing transactions.

Father J. Clement Burns, reportedly removed from La Salle College faculty at the request of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, after being arrested in a rights demonstration in Cambridge, Md.

Father John V. Coffield, former pastor of Ascension church, Los Angeles, who went into a Chicago parish, alleging repeated reprimands from Cardinal McIntyre for preaching on race and civil rights.

Father Philip Berrigan, brother of Daniel, reportedly ousted from the faculty of Epiphany College Seminary, Newburgh, N.Y., for his outspoken criticism of the Vietnam war. He is now in a Negro parish in Baltimore.

Father Philip E. Berryman, transferred two days after a sermon on racial justice from all-white St. Philip the Apostle church in Pasadena, Cal., to Notre Dame Academy for Girls, in Los Angeles, last May.

Father Maurice Ouellet, transferred from St. Elizabeth's Mission in Selma, Ala., in July, for helping to shelter out-of-town priests and nuns who were there to aid Negro voter registration. Now in Winoski, Vt., he wrote in Ave Maria that the Church "came to the threshold of a real involvement in the Negro's cause" but "refused to walk across it."

Father Gommor A. De Pauw, founder of the Catholic Traditionalist Movement and caustic critic of English in the new liturgy, who quit the movement on orders of Lawrence Cardinal Shehan and was transferred from his St. Mary's Seminary post to a Baltimore parish.

Father James E. Groppi, ordered in October by Auxiliary Bishop Roman R. Akielski of

Milwaukee to stop civil rights activities but subsequently supported by Archbishop William E. Cousins, back from Rome, as a "dedicated and sincere priest with a lot of guts, if you will."

Father William Whelan, a Milwaukeean also forbidden from participating in the demonstrations by a Chancery official.

Father Bonaventure O'Brien, ordered to quit the Interfaith Task Force and not to accept speaking engagements after being critical of the Albany, N.Y., Democratic city administration, and

Father Daniel Kilfoyle, S.J., formerly associated with Father Daniel Berrigan in the Vietnam peace group, now studying at Union Theological Seminary, New York, in preparation for an ecumenical assignment.

In one of the Ave Maria articles, Father Bonaventure, a Franciscan priest, described problems of the priest/bishop or priest/religious superior relationship when the priest's action "is conscientiously inspired and yet silence is demanded."

After Father Bonaventure, a professor of theology at Siena College in Loudenville, N.Y., was ordered Nov. 9 by the Franciscan Province in New York to stop his interreligious social work, Albany Bishop William A. Scully, had commented that this was "an administrative decision." The prelate added in reply to criticisms: "Such decisions are the responsibility of the bishop alone and the reasons for such decisions must be left to God and the conscience of the bishop."

Father Bonaventure observed that "we are in transitional stage in the Church" in new developments.

"Quite often," he wrote, "it seems that the superior is a man or woman who has not kept up with the development, for various reasons, and finds himself with a document in his hands, and since he does not understand it, he rejects it from insecurity or other reasons. This creates tension — not a Christian tension. I do not mention this in a spirit of disrespect, but in an attempt to understand."

Many of the practical problems of authority vs. obedience arise from the fact that the individuals involved, he continued, are not willing, or maybe do not see the need, to sit down and talk the matter over. "What can result, he said, is a "smothered hostility" which can show itself in "depression, loss of interest in work

Citing the Vatican Council's declaration on religious liberty, Father Bonaventure asked: "... can a superior respect the freedom of a man's conscience, if he himself is not free?" Involvement in social action "means stepping on toes," he said, and while a bishop may agree that his clergy should do this, and involve themselves in community betterment, there may also be "important people in the bishop's diocese who do not want to see these people become united. . . . Is the bishop free to respect the freedom of a man's conscience? Or is he trapped?"

"I do not believe that social action is separable from the sacrament of Holy Orders," Father Bonaventure stated, citing imperatives derived from "the nature of personhood, the commands of Baptism and Confirmation and the social encyclicals of four recent Popes. This thinking is also indicated, he said, in the writings of St. Paul, St. Thomas Aquinas and Teilhard de Chardin as to the role of the Christian at home with the world." He continued:

"Since the priest is or has, through the sacrament of Holy Orders, the role of leadership in the Eucharistic liturgy as redemption continued through creation, his leadership is incomplete unless it is extended to the practical. . . .

Also discussing the relation between a priest and his bishop, Msgr. Daniel M. Cantwell, head of the Catholic Council on Working Life in Chicago, suggested the possibility of a "court of appeals" where outspoken priests could receive a hearing of their views.

"I wish also," Msgr. Cantwell observed, "that we reacted to the committed priest with some answer other than quieting the troublemaker."

Msgr. Cantwell said there is both a crisis of obedience and "a crisis of leadership" in the Catholic Church.

"There is a crisis in the way a bishop thinks about himself — whether he relates primarily to an institution or to people — whether people, all the people in his diocese, especially those who need him most, the poor, the disenfranchised, the unwanted, the segregated, can look to him as a friend, as a leader to bring them freedom and new life, not in the hereafter, but today for their children."

James P. Carroll, South Bend public relations consultant, described the Berrigan case as "a disaster" and "an exercise in awesome clumsiness" from almost every public relations point of view.

Priest 'Disobedient' For Aid to Strikers

Fresno, Calif. — (RNS) — A national Roman Catholic official joined an interreligious group in a statement supporting striking grape pickers in the Delano, Calif., area was criticized here by a bishop of the area.

Bishop A. J. Willinger of the Monterey-Fresno Diocese, said in an article in the diocesan newspaper, the Central California Register, that Father James Vizzard, S.J., director of the Washington, D.C., office of the National Catholic Rural Life Conference, exhibited "unadulterated disobedience, insubordination and a breach of office" by involving himself in the strike controversy.

The bishop said that Father Vizzard disobeyed specific Rural Life Conference orders to avoid public involvement in the four-month-old grape vineyard labor dispute.

The Washington priest joined 10 other Catholics, Protestants and Jews in visiting the strike area in December and issuing a statement voicing strong support for both grape pickers and for clergymen who have encouraged the strikers.

He said mistake after mistake was made by Church officials in handling it, among them "the unwillingness or the inability to understand the human forces at work in the news media. . . . a mania for secrecy. . . . an overall attitude that shouts again and again, 'It's none of their damn business.' . . . a note of mystery. . . quite often equated (in the popular mind) with skull-duggery."

"How," asked Mr. Carroll, "is the world going to understand a Church that sometimes seems bent on bungling simple situations? How is the world expected to believe a Church whose officials sometimes seem to go out of their way to intensify ill will? Perhaps the answers are buried somewhere deep down in the amazing obscurity that still surrounds the case of Father Daniel Berrigan."

On "Religious Obedience and Holy Disobedience," Father Robert Stenger of the Aquinas Institute School of Theology, Dubuque, Iowa, said that the "crisis in conscience" for many a member of a religious order is increased when "he feels he must reconcile his obedience with his concern for the needs of his fellow men." Very often "such reconciliation appears to be almost impossible."

Commenting on "The Spirit of Obedience," Coadjutor Bishop Joseph A. Durick of the Diocese of Nashville, urged that "keeping the lines of communication open here on the home front is absolutely necessary today among all the people of God if we are to go forward. And I believe at the bottom of the pile is the prayerful spirit of obedience."

In an editorial, "Where do we Go from Here?", the magazine noted that the "core theme" running through the

'Traditionalist' Back in Business

A priest who thrives on the liturgical lethargy of American Catholics is now back in business after a temporary "silencing" by his bishop.

He "escaped" from his ecclesiastical restrictions by "joining" a diocese in Italy while attending the Vatican Council but he has returned to the United States to set up headquarters in New York City for his "Catholic Traditionalist Movement."

Belgian-born 42 year old Father Gommor DePauw, wants the Mass back in Latin again; he doesn't like the new Catholic translation of Scripture texts used at Mass, he says people should kneel, not stand, to receive Holy Communion and he's opposed to what he alleges is the "de-emphasis or playing-down of the Rosary."

He claims Pope Paul, Cardinal Alfredo Ottaviani, Cardinal Eugene Tisserant and "millions of American Catholics" approve his efforts to put a brake on the "aggravamento" under way in Catholic churches.

Father DePauw announced the new chapter in his checkered priestly career at a press conference in New York on Jan. 5.

The next day his bishop, Cardinal Lawrence Shehan of Baltimore, said he had not received any notice from either the Vatican or the diocese in Italy about Father DePauw's reported transfer.

A statement from the Cardinal for the press said that the "incardination" process involving the priest had not been completed. That process would involve the Bishop of Tivoli, a tiny See outside Rome, the Vatican and the Baltimore archdiocese.

Cardinal Shehan has stated that he would endorse any transfer the priest could arrange.

The priest's tenure as president of the Catholic Traditionalist Movement has been marked by controversy. He claimed that 50,000 U.S. Catholics were supporting the movement, as well as many bishops and priests, but refused to identify any. The CTM office was a postal box number in New York.

That movement, of which he is the founder, opposes use of the vernacular, asks retention of the "Latin Mass" or, at the very least, a "system wherein the worshipper could have an alternative — to attend either English or Latin services in his parish church.

While a professor at Mount St. Mary Seminary in Baltimore, he had criticized liturgical reforms, charged that

gressive extremists" were trying to "Protestantize" the Catholic Church, and held that the "English Mass" accomplished by congregational singing was "no longer the sacrament of Calvary but a songfest with the overtones of a hootenanny."

Finally, he was directed by (Continued on Page 7)

N. Y. Cardinal Denies Link To Fr. DePauw

New York — (RNS) — Cardinal Spellman of New York denied here that there is any link between the archdiocese and the priest who founded the controversial Catholic Traditionalist Movement.

And he emphasized that he has not granted permission, Father Gommor DePauw of Baltimore to establish a national CTM headquarters in New York City. The movement opposes much Vatican II action on liturgical reform, particularly the use of the vernacular in the Mass.

Cardinal Spellman's statement to the press constituted a strong affirmation of liturgical reform. A news dispatch from Tivoli tended to imply, he said, that "I like the Catholic Traditionalist Movement."

He said that his record on liturgical reform is "sufficient commentary" to correct that impression. The cardinal pointed to his early pastoral directing that liturgical changes be carried out faithfully in all parishes and to the scope of vernacular use throughout the archdiocese.

The Archbishop of New York spoke out to newsmen following publication of an A.P. dispatch quoting Bishop Luigi Favari of Tivoli. The bishop said he had endorsed Father DePauw's request for transfer from Baltimore upon the recommendation of Alfredo Cardinal Ottaviani, head of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (formerly the Holy Office).

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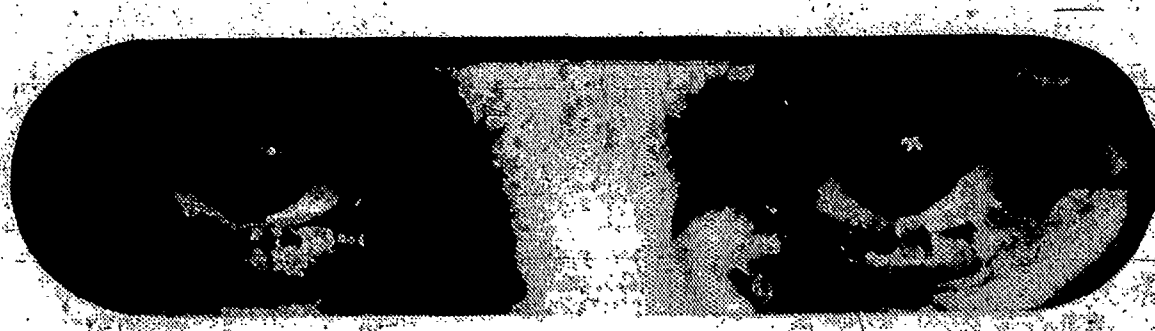
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How to face February with a smile:

Face January with money. Enough to give you a jaunty air when you walk down to the mail-box. Enough to give you the indescribable pleasure that comes from paying off all those Christmas bills in one clean-sweep.

Get it from us.

We understand. We know that holiday generosity can very often outstretch holiday budgets. That's why our loans are as free of red tape as you'll find anywhere. They come with very

reasonable bank rates, up to 3 years to pay and a superb form of insurance called Blanket Protection. This protects the loan against many income emergencies.

Come into Lincoln Rochester and let us wish you a happy February.

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