

A Need to Start from the Other End

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old forms of worship and instruction and activity will "touch only a minute fraction of the people," he said, "the people who are already there."

In this he reveals himself as considerably different from the image publicity has given him.

Bishop Robinson is, when you get to know him, a very pastoral prelate, concerned for people who are in a spiritual bind. He is a deeply Christian man who wants to hang on to the remnant that's staying with the Church and at the same time to reach out in sympathy for those who are walking away from it.

This is also evident from the liturgy he has devised in his diocese which is near London, a format that is remarkably similar to the directives of the Vatican Council for Roman Catholics.

He described his "normal Sunday liturgy."

"I go to one of the parishes for baptism, confirmation and Communion—which we do as a single liturgical whole, sort of contracted a bit but a very meaningful service."

He said he regularly "concelebrates" at his Cathedral with the clergy assigned there as well as when he goes to parishes, there with the rector and neighboring clergy.

ASKED IF HE would be willing to be "Honest to Catholics" and comment on the Vatican Council and the Church of the aggrornamento, he prefaced his reply by saying he had visited

the Pope John XXIII Seminary at Weston, Massachusetts, just before coming to Rochester — "there's a gale of fresh air blowing through there," was his wry observation — where he met Father Richard P. McBrien who has just won his degree from the Gregorian University in Rome, writing his thesis comparing Bishop Robinson's writings on the Church and those of the Vatican Council, a comparison that indicates far more similarities than differences.

Concerning the Council, Bishop Robinson said, "The really significant thing, as far as I judge it, is the movement and the momentum which, I would say, is irreversible."

It is the task of councils — such as the Vatican Council and the meetings of the World Council of Churches, he said, to express "a consensus of inadequacy" on various subjects and to spur the Church to get on with its study and work in these areas.

He said he thought many of the decisions of the Council fitted into "a stream of thinking which goes back to Rahner and Congar and their concept of the servant Church, which has strong affinity to Bonhoeffer, and is being worked out in the kind of experiments as the priest-workers in France and the spirituality associated with Michel Quoist and Charles de Foucauld."

He said he thought one of the greatest needs of churchmen these days is to get to know what the other side is saying — "until a year or two ago we just weren't reading each other's stuff at all."

AND TO TURN the coin, what is a Catholic's evaluation of the British prelate?

Certainly he is what a pioneer thinker of our era described as so needed today — "a gracious neighbor," as was his host Dr. Hamilton, both of whom shared their less-than-a-day with each other with us so we could get this story for Courier readers.

In coming to visit Dr. Hamilton, Bishop Robinson showed he was putting into practice a recommendation Pope Paul made in his first encyclical, *Ecclesiam Suam*, in which the Pontiff said, "Let us stress what we have in common rather than what divides us" and the only way we can discover which is which is for churchmen to "enter into dialogue," a dialogue characterized by "clearness, meekness, trust, prudence," and what he meant by prudence, the Pope said, is to strive "to learn the sensitivities of the hearer and to adapt ourselves and the manner of our

presentation in a reasonable way lest we be displeasing and incomprehensible to him."

The Anglican prelate seems to be farther along the road to this goal than are some Catholics.

What about the seemingly radical terminology Bishop Robinson and Dr. Hamilton use?

The Bishop himself admitted he was sorry that "labels" get stuck on them "by the press" but thought such hazards were incidental. "What is interesting to me is the questions that lie behind these things."

Pope Paul in his encyclical *Mysterium Fidei*, while directing Catholic scholars to hold on to the traditional terminology, also said, "It must be admitted that these formulas can sometimes be more clearly and accurately explained," and he termed the efforts of theologians who try to express the "lofty mystery" of faith in such a way that it will have "meaning to the men of today" as a "praiseworthy effort."

Again he would appear to be in good papal company.

The Jesuit Father Hugo Rahner, referred to by Bishop Robinson in his conversation, in the book "Our Lady and the Church," says there is a danger that some people may think churchmen may sometimes seem to be in contradiction as they approach a subject from different viewpoints.

Father Rahner says that "a deeper understanding of both together" will usually result in "progress in the spiritual life" — certainly the mutual goal of all churchmen of all denominations.

Somewhat to summarize Bishop Robinson's goals and methods, since he cited Michel Quoist, we can quote a prayer from "this French priest." His book of prayers, available in most book stores, published in 1963, illustrates Bishop Robinson's efforts at "starting from the other end" — from episodes and experiences of daily life to lead people to prayer and meditation.

Father Quoist once watched a bricklayer at work and later wrote "The Brick" —

The bricklayer laid a brick on the bed of cement. Then, with a precise stroke of his trowel, spread another layer. And, without a by-your-leave, laid on another brick. The foundations grew visibly. The building rose, tall and strong, to shelter men.

I thought, Lord, of that poor brick buried in the darkness at the base of the big building.

No one sees it, but it accomplishes its task, and the other bricks need it.

Lord, what difference whether I am on the rooftop or in the foundations of your building,

as long as I stand faithfully at the right place?

A conversation with Bishop Robinson enforces one's determination to "stand faithfully" during this present time of transition and turmoil.

—Father Henry Atwell



Jesuits Honor Astronauts

Tokyo—(RNS)—American astronauts Frank Borman and Walter M. Schirra, Jr. answer questions of a student (left) during visit to Sophia University, a Jesuit school in Tokyo. With them is Father F. X. Oizumi, S.J., university president. The university presented citations to the astronauts for distinguished contributions to space science. Col. Borman and Capt. Schirra were on a goodwill mission to Asia. They were the command pilots of the Gemini 7 and Gemini 6 space rendezvous last December. A model of the Gemini spacecraft was presented to Father Oizumi by the astronauts.

World's Poor Await Us

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Thanksgiving Clothing Campaign — about 2,000 tons — were earmarked for immediate shipment to Vietnam for distribution by Catholic Relief Services.

In addition to helping alleviate the immediate needs of the poverty-stricken by providing food, clothing, medicine and other relief supplies, and rendering supplemental aid in emergencies and disasters, the American Catholics' overseas

aid agency is also concentrating on self-help projects designed to improve socio-economic conditions among the economically backward countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America.

With an American supervisory staff of 150 program directors stationed around the world, seconded by hundreds of local employees and volunteers, Catholic Relief Services is providing technical knowledge and leadership training, sorely lacking in underdeveloped nations, in order to channel the energies and talents of the millions of unskilled, unemployed and underemployed into useful civic improvement projects.

Catholic Relief Services was also a pioneer in developing the "Food for Work" concept — an offshoot of the U.S. Food for Peace plan. Under this ingenious volunteer work program, wages are paid to impoverished workers in the form of milk, wheat, cornmeal, fats and oils, and flours as well as clothing and medicine — all donated by the American people. Under this plan, volunteer work groups have been organized for the construction of roads, village schools, recreation centers, airstrips and docks and for irrigation and reforestation project.

Significantly, Catholic Relief Services works closely with local inhabitants, staff members and volunteers in local charity and government organizations, thereby affording the indigenous an opportunity to take active part in correcting their own social ills.

Almost all of the non-governmental counterpart charity organizations were established at the instigation of Catholic Relief Services. The development

of social welfare agencies and the stimulation of local social action in other lands is one of the proudest achievements of the Bishops' Overseas Relief Fund agency.

The future stability and success of the emerging and underdeveloped nations lie dormant in their poverty-stricken populations. But people with empty stomachs, undernourished, twisted or diseased bodies cannot fill their minds with the education and training they need to break their chains of desolation and deprivation.

Hence, even though more and more attention is being given to self-help projects that will stimulate the desire in poverty-afflicted people to overcome permanently their economic handicaps, the major task for Catholic Relief Services is still the daily struggle to feed the world's hungry, to clothe the millions of naked and ill-clad bodies, and to treat the sick and infested.

The 1966 Catholic Bishops' Overseas Relief Fund Appeal will be conducted March 13-20, culminating with a special collection in the more than 17,500 Catholic churches throughout the United States on March 20, Laetare Sunday, the fourth Sunday of Lent.

The Appeal goal has been set at a minimum of \$5 million. Last year, the special collection made it possible for Catholic Relief Services to maintain a global program valued at almost \$132 million, an unbelievable return for every dollar invested.

This global program of mercy is a dynamic answer to Pope Paul's plea to build a better world by performing the "works of peace."

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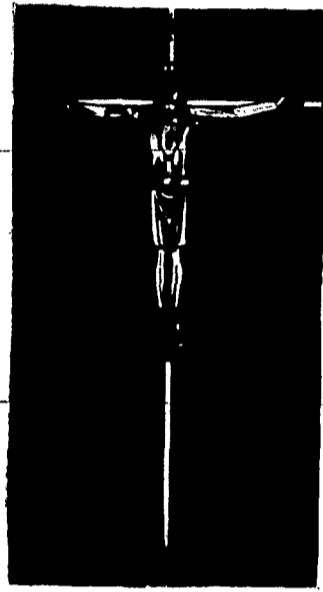
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