

Trying to Make Religion Relevant in Secular Age, An Urgent Task

"Honesty demands that we recognize that we must live in the world as if there were no God," wrote the Lutheran minister Dietrich Bonhoeffer in his prison cell shortly before the Nazis killed him in 1945.

Atheism, according to French Father Ignace Lepp, once an atheist, is now "the common lot of at least a considerable portion, if not of the majority" of people today.

Thomas J. J. Altizer in his recently published book, "The Gospel of Christian Atheism," begins with the statement that "we are now entering a period in which Christianity must confront the most radical challenge that it has faced since the time of its beginning."

And Father Charles Davis, noted Catholic theologian of Heythrop College, England, in this week's Jesuit magazine America admits, "I have met young people to whom the faith has become meaningless."

All this was brought close to home this past week when the Lance, student newspaper of McQuaid Jesuit High School, published a poll of 145 students about to be graduated—3 per cent said they didn't believe in God, 19 per cent said they never prayed any more, 24 per cent said they didn't consider themselves as Catholics any longer, 45 per cent said they didn't believe in organized churches and 84 per cent said they didn't

agree with the Catholic Church's stand on birth control.

If such statistics hold true of graduates of Catholic high schools—it would be interesting to see the results of a similar poll in other Catholic high schools—what must be the erosion of faith in graduates of schools where religion is not taught at all?

Can we really deny what seems to be the clear fact—that increasing numbers of people are just unable or unwilling these days to accept the theology taught them in childhood?

Several theologians—including not the least among them Pope John XXIII and his Vatican Council—have tried to rewrite the essentially unchanging message of the Gospels in words that will be "meaningful" in an essentially changing world.

Pope John, in his typical straightforward way, said, "The substance of the ancient doctrine, contained in the 'deposit of faith' is one thing; its formulation is quite another."

Catholic spokesmen and authors are still trying to get started on this new "formulation" of which the Pope spoke but theologians of other denominations have anticipated the Pontiff's directive and they range from the late Paul Tillich to Rochester's very much alive "God is dead" William Hamilton.

Certainly one of the most widely read authors of the new theology is Harvey Cox of the Harvard Divinity School. His "Secular City" book is still one of the nation's top selling religious publications—a somewhat anomalous situation since he "celebrates" the age of the secular city, an age of "no religion at all"—an age which "no longer looks to religious rules and rituals for its morality or its meanings." He confidently states that our old "religious and metaphysical versions of Christianity... are disappearing forever" so we might as well "let go and immerse ourselves in the new world of the secular city."

He will be in Rochester next Friday, June 10, to speak at the annual meeting of the Rochester Area Council of (Protestant and Orthodox) Churches so we should expect to find him extensively exposed in press, radio and television interviews.

What seems so shocking on the part of many of the currently articulate spokesmen is their anxious desire to be done with "religion."

For them, "religion" is really what we too admit is worse than rubbish—that sterile counterfeit of true religion, a self-comforting piety which thrives on devotions divorced from any realistic concern for day to day life, a "churchy" faith that revels in ecclesiastical trivia.

In an earlier book, "God's Revolution and Man's Responsibility," Cox wrote, "There is always one section of Time magazine each week devoted to religion. I am sure this is the last section God reads, if in fact he reads Time magazine. God is much more interested in the world than he is in religion."

This is his thesis in the book of three years ago and his 1965 Secular City—that "God has created a world and we have messed it up." He says, "God's activity in the world today is a call to us to become the kind of Christians whose witness and discipline are relevant to what is going on in our century." And elsewhere he says, "God is always one step ahead of man... He is always ahead of the church, beckoning it to get up to date."

The Church has come a long way since Nicaea and Chalcedon, just as it came a long way to get there, but there's still a long way to go until all of us catch up with Pope John and the recent Vatican Council, and then there's still a long way to go after that too.

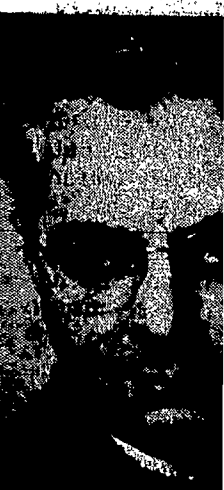
That's task enough for the whole crop of theologians of all the present day denominations and they need to be encouraged to try all the new techniques and terminologies or we'll wake someday to find that God has simply gone on without us.

—Father Henry A. Atwell

Work Pastor

A 7-day Pastoral scheduled for June 10-16 at John Fisher College rolled 150 priest reg. date, its chairman week.

Four visiting lecturers discuss topics of past, ranging from religion to parish structure.



'Commo At Ecur

Hornell—On recently which persons from congru the 10 churches part the unique inter-faith

The panel of clergy opened the meeting Moore-house consist the John L. Conant of St. James Mercy Dr. Richard E. Has of First Presbyterian and Rev. W. Lee I curate of Christ Church.

Divisions and must not interfere united Christian effort the problems which moon to all, was the consensus.

The clergymen discussed three major points:

Christ the central Holy Bible, and the Christian life.

Our understanding which is made possible the gifts: the Holy revealed and made way we treat our Father-Connan said.

In the Scriptures with the Sacraments

Fr. Cameron To Observ 45th Anniv

Father Ignatius X pastor of St. Bridge East Bloomfield and St. Joseph's Church, We field, is observing the 45th anniversary of his ordination to the priesthood on July 11, 1921 in St. Rick's Cathedral, Rochester.

Father Cameron was born in Auburn, Gene and Ontario. Father became pastor of 1 field parishes in July 1921, his birthday.

A quiet observance anniversary will be Mass at 8:30 p.m. at the Center will be held until 8 p.m. for the priest and friends.

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NEW GIVEN A TR SHOWS WITH TI Society. Mrs. and Mrs. Joh

Catholic Devotion to Bible a Spur to Protestants

Dayton — (NC) — Catholic devotion to the Bible and the "centrality of Jesus Christ" in Catholic worship won high praise from a Protestant observer at the Second Vatican Council.

Dr. W. Barnett Blakemore, dean of the Disciples of Christ divinity house, University of Chicago, told some 2,000 delegates at the Ohio Disciples of Christ convention here, there is "more Scripture in the Mass in English on any Sunday morning" than is found in any Protestant service.

Catholic liturgy for the Mass is in the vernacular and now the "ordinary Roman Catholic on Sunday morning is being recalled to the centrality of Jesus Christ," he said.

"WHAT KIND of shepherds are we if in our worship we do not equal the Roman Catholics?" he asked.

Recalling the Vatican Council, Dr. Blakemore said he was "constantly impressed" by the emphasis on the Gospels there. Every morning at Vatican II, the Bible was carried in procession the length of the nave of St. Peter's basilica "as a sign of the presence of Jesus Christ in the Council," he said.

"When I found out the meaning of this ceremony, I learned the Latin hymns and joined in."

Although there has been a great resurgence in biblical scholarship in the Catholic Church, there is even a greater

biblical renewal to come, he said.

"There wasn't a single decree coming out of the Council that wasn't influenced by the great interest in the Bible," he said.

Dr. Blakemore said Catholics and Protestants are "coming to the rediscovery of one another in many ways." He cautioned Protestants to "stop stereotyping the Roman Catholic Church."

The Catholic Church embraces great variety and individual members differ in their devotional attitudes, he said.

He expressed the conviction

that "God is in this historic moment of change" in Christianity when all Christians are beginning to look at one another with sympathy and understanding. The split in the Christian West produces a "deep hurt" in those who are serious about the ecumenical movement, he said.

"ANY CHRISTIAN in the West today is like someone who has divorced parents and has lived with only one of them and has known virtually nothing of the other," Dr. Blakemore said. "The lack of unity, particularly in the Western world in the last 400 years, has

been terrible. It has hurt the children, even though they haven't known it. Now suddenly they discover that there was another parent, and the ache begins. But somehow you know that God has been working to renew and revive and to bring together as one His whole family."

The "spectacle" in Catholic ceremonies and customs, often criticized by Protestants, "is not the central thing," he said.

"A lot of it is just the accumulation of the ages. Any of us who has lived in a house for 10 or 20 years knows that there is all kinds of stuff that accumulates and that you just can't control it. You just don't like to throw away those multi-colored uniforms that grandfather and great-grandfather wore. Suppose you have lived in a house 2,000 years," he asserted.

Dr. Blakemore said the idea that the perspective of time is needed to make a solid judgment of an historical event is not necessarily valid. The view of some historians that it is impossible to make a sound judgment of the significance of a contemporary even has been wrong twice in modern times. The first was Hiroshima, and

everyone knew "that history had gone around a corner and that we had moved from one era into another." The other was Vatican II, another "turning point" in history.

He called on Protestants to take a greater interest in the historical general councils of the Church. The Protestant heritage must appreciate more the 1,500 years of Christian history prior to the Reformation, he said. The Second Vatican Council was the 21st general council of the Roman Catholic Church, he reminded. Eighteen of these councils were held before the Reformation and they belong to Protestants as much as to Catholics, he added.

Father John J. Kelley, S.M., University of Dayton theologian who is active in civic and ecumenical affairs, said that in the Catholic Church the question of authority is a "key issue, dividing Christian from Christian, Protestant from Catholic."

"In the Catholic Church its nature and exercise are related to the question of infallibility, a subject certain to evoke controversy," he indicated.

"If I understand the mood of the Council correctly, the Fathers recognize that in a sense the Church has been paralyzed by an excess of authoritarian measures, by a sense of paternalistic dominance," he said.

If Vatican II documents are examined closely, he continued, there is no question about the establishment of divine authority by God, but there is a question about how "authority exists and is exercised." The Council seemed to recognize the right of the "responsible initiative of the people who don't have authority to participate in the Church in a dynamic way in greater freedom," Father Kelley said.

RSV Bible Now OK for Catholics

New York — (RNS) — Cardinal Cushing of Boston has given his imprimatur—official ecclesiastical approval—to the Oxford Annotated Bible with the Apocrypha which uses the Revised Standard Version (RSV) as its text and has commentaries by Protestant scholars.

The imprimatur does not appear in the volume, but an introduction by the publishers states that it was given by Cardinal Cushing.

Approval of the Bible commentary for Catholic personal use and study—not for religious worship—was announced here by Wilbur D. Ruggles, editor of the Bible and religious book department of Oxford University Press.

No changes were made in the volume's introductory articles, set of maps, or the RSV text. A few minor changes were made in the annotations, such as adding a brief explanation to certain phrases or verses to indicate where the Catholic interpretation differs from the Protestant.

Oxford first published the Annotated Bible, with the RSV text, in 1962 and three years later added the Apocrypha, in a combined edition of about 2,000 pages. The Apocrypha is not accepted by Protestants as canonical because they are not in the Hebrew Bible, but are in the Greek Bible which Catholics accept.

Conscience Leads Cleric To Be Catholic

Toronto — (RNS) — An Anglican priest, Father W. R. Crummer, 60, has resigned as rector of St. Mary Magdalene church here and is reported to have become a Roman Catholic in Montreal.

Anglican Bishop Frederick H. Wilkinson of Toronto said the priest wrote him a letter which expressed regret and said he had been thinking of the move for two years.

"Now" Father Crummer wrote, "I'm following my conscience."

A member of St. Mary's congregation here said Father Crummer had been disturbed for some time about the possible union of the Anglican Church of Canada with the United Church of Canada. St. Mary's is regarded as a "high church" parish.

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Time to Put Council Reforms Into Practice

Vatican City — (RNS) — Pope Paul VI in praising the work of the Central Post Conciliar Commission for the coordination and interpretation of Vatican II's promulgated documents, stressed the time has come for the "gradual introduction" of Catholic Church reforms.

"It is therefore necessary," he said, "to change habits, to adapt Church institutions to the demands of the contemporary world, to put order into mutual relations and to intensify dialogue between the bishops and their flocks so that everything might be duly renovated and rebuilt."

Observing that the Council was "like a second descent of the Holy Ghost," the Pope expressed hope that with the approach of Pentecost (May 29) "the Holy Spirit will give every one a Christian determination for renovation."



People of God

EXEMPLARY YOUTH... Tony Peake, on being named Outstanding Catholic Young Adult of 1965, said: "The trouble with awards is that they pinpoint one person for all the credit. There have been hundreds of people working on the project, and the award is just as much theirs as mine." The "project," supervised by Rev. Ralph Betting, is known officially as the Christian Appalachian Project, Inc. CAP's aim is to provide homes and jobs for parishes in an area of four counties roughly the size of Rhode Island. Tony is a senior at Bellarmine College in Louisville, Ky., and was one of CAP's first volunteers. With church funds, the project purchased nearly 600 acres of land, which were then split into farms, each specializing in its own particular product. The farms are supervised by three managers who assign jobs and distribute wages. Farmers are guaranteed a minimum of \$500 per day and a share in the profits at the end of the year. Despite Tony's long hours and hard work in Appalachia, he has been on the Dean's List of scholastic excellence four times in seven semesters. Father Betting says of CAP and Tony Peake, that "the challenge is great and the resources small, but with a few more people like Tony, we can win."

Bringing The Aggiornamento to Montevideo

By GARY MacEON

Montevideo, Uruguay, has just had a radical but happy ending to a conflict which threatened irreparable damage to the Church in that city of more than a million Catholics. Rome has bowed to the publicly demonstrated demands of laymen active in the leadership of Catholic Action, and replaced a bishop opposed to aggiornamento with one clearly on the record as an enthusiast for spiritual, social and economic updating of practice and institutions.

The story opened in 1964 when Auxiliary Bishop Antonio Corso was given complete control of the Archdiocese as Apostolic administrator, the ailing Cardinal Antonio Maria Barbieri retaining only his titles. Soon rumors began to fly that Bishop Corso and the papal nuncio (Archbishop Raffaeleorni) were blocking the implementation in Montevideo of the reforms voted by the second Vatican Council.

This became evident when the other nine dioceses of Uruguay organized regional programs of pastoral renewal, lead-

ing to three important meetings ("Little Councils") of bishops, priests and laity, while nothing was happening in Montevideo.

June 1965 saw two major steps. The sub-secretary for Foreign Affairs of Uruguay asked the Uruguayan ambassador in Rome to transmit to the Vatican a note listing the criticisms being made against the nuncio. And some 200 militant Catholics, most of them members of Catholic Action, demonstrated publicly against the nuncio at a ceremony held to honor the pope. Earlier, the gospel words, "Blessed are the poor," had been scrawled on the wall of the lavish palace in which the nunciature was installed a short time previously.

Bishop Corso was furious, and he threatened to excommunicate the demonstrators. But more moderate counsels prevailed. In August, the Vatican sent Archbishop Giovanni Ferrolino, who had been nuncio in Haiti, to report. In November, Nuncio Foral was recalled to Rome for reassignment. Archbishop Alfredo Bruniera was transferred as nuncio from Ecuador

to Uruguay, and Archbishop Ferrolino replaced him in Quito.

With what must surely be described as a breakneck speed in Roman terms, the next step has now been taken. Bishop Carlos Partell of the neighboring diocese of Tacuarembó has been named apostolic administrator. Bishop Corso has been put in charge of a diocese specially created for him. It includes the small beach resort of Punta del Este famous as the site of the signing of the charter of the Alliance for Progress. To give Bishop Partell full freedom, Auxiliary Bishop Miguel Balaguer of Montevideo has gone to replace him as bishop of Tacuarembó.

Who is Bishop Partell? Made a bishop in 1960 at the age of 50, he won wide acclaim within a few months by his first pastoral on the rural problems of his homeland. His first statement to the press as head of the archdiocese of Montevideo equally reflects his thinking. It is my intention, he said, "to try to implement the decisions of the recent Council, particularly by stressing the place of the laity.

Appealing to all Catholics to recognize

that they are not only members but responsible members of the Church," he urged them "to understand better the importance of the Church, and to involve themselves more completely in the historic process we are living, a phase in which the Ecumenical Church had left much to be desired."

What is most gratifying is the extraordinary unanimity with which Montevideo has welcomed its new bishop. Evidently, much of the prurient interest has been articulated and some important publications viciously anti-Catholic. But even this segment of opinion, reflecting the universal impact of the spirit of Pope John, handled the conflict of the past few years with reserve and goodwill, and now lauds the solution.

A typical comment is that Bishop Partell brings to Montevideo the new mentality which the Vatican Council wanted to extend to every part of the Church. Others praise the Vatican's recognition of the wishes of the laity, as well as its desire to give to Latin America bishops who are concerned about its economic and social problems.

Bishop Kearney's Appointments

JUNE

- 3 Friday—Sheraton Hotel—First Friday Club Luncheon—12:15 p.m.
Sheraton Hotel—St. John Fisher College Chancellor's Dinner—6:30 p.m.
- 4 Saturday—Sacred Heart Cathedral—Priesthood Ordinations—10:00 a.m.
Academy of the Sacred Heart—Commencement—4:00 p.m.
- 5 Sunday—St. Joseph's Church—Preside and preach at Golden Jubilee Mass of Rev. Joseph W. Necki, C.Ss.R.—9:00 a.m.
St. John Fisher College—Commencement—3:00 p.m.
- 7 Tuesday—Vil a Maria Academy, New York City—Commencement Address—3:00 p.m.
- 10 Friday—Our Lady of Good Counsel Church—Preside and preach at Golden Jubilee Mass of Msgr. Leo Smith—7:30 p.m.
- 11 Saturday—St. Mary's Hospital Chapel—Graduates' Mass—8:30 a.m.
- 12 Sunday—Mercy High School—St. Mary's Hospital Nurses' Graduation—3:00 p.m.
Corpus Christi Church—Preside at Solemnity of Patronal Feast Mass—5:00 p.m.
- 14 Tuesday—War Memorial—Bishop Kearney High School Commencement—7:30 p.m.
- 15 Wednesday—Mt. Carmel High School, Auburn—Commencement—8:00 p.m.
- 17 Friday—Sheraton Hotel—St. Andrew's Seminary Senior Banquet—6:30 p.m.
- 18 Saturday—Sacred Heart Cathedral—Preside at Ceremony of Reception of Habits of Sisters of St. Joseph—3:00 a.m.
Eastman Theater—McQuaid High School Commencement—8:15 p.m.
- 19 Sunday—St. John the Baptist Church, Elmira—Preside and preach at Centenary Mass—12:10 p.m.
St. Ann's Church, Hornell—Mercy Hospital Nurses' Graduation—4:00 p.m.
Sacred Heart Cathedral—Golden and Silver Wedding Anniversary Mass—8:00 p.m.
- 22 Wednesday—St. Agnes High School—Graduates' Mass—9:00 a.m.
Notre Dame High School, Elmira—Commencement—8:00 p.m.
- 23 Thursday—Eastman Theater—St. Agnes High School—Commencement—8:15 p.m.
- 24 Friday—Mercy High School—Graduates' Mass—9:00 a.m.
St. Andrew's Seminary—Commencement—3:00 p.m.
Eastman Theater—Mercy High School—Commencement—8:00 p.m.
- 25 Saturday—Eastman Theater—Cardinal Mooney High School—Commencement—3:00 p.m.
- 26 Sunday—Holy Sepulchre Cemetery—Annual Knights of St. John Field Mass—10:00 a.m.
DeSales High School, Geneva—Commencement—3:00 p.m.
Eastman Theater—Aquinas Institute—Commencement—8:15 p.m.
- 27 Monday—Nazareth Academy—Graduates' Mass—8:30 a.m.
Eastman Theater—Nazareth Academy—Commencement—8:00 p.m.
- 28 Tuesday—Sheraton Hotel—Nazareth Academy Senior Banquet—6:00 p.m.

U.S. Catholics Pour Relief into Vietnam

New York — (RNS) — Catholic Relief Services, overseas aid agency of American Catholics, has been commended by two U.S. Army medical advisers for its shipments of medical supplies aiding the armed forces' civilian welfare programs in South Vietnam.

The commendations came in separate letters from Capt. David A. Gehlhoff and SFC Stanley W. Yefko, Jr., who are serving in the South Vietnamese districts of My Tho and Thui Duc, respectively.

Both letters were sent to Lawson Mooney of Somerville, Mass., CRS program director in Vietnam with headquarters in Saigon. He is responsible for distribution of the agency's supplies.

Capt. Gehlhoff wrote that through CRS help "we have been able to treat each month between 50,000 to 60,000 patients in the 7th Division Tactical Area. Our own channels of supply, unfortunately, have not improved to keep pace with these figures. But your help has enabled the medics at the subsector level as well as the Med Cap team from My Tho to treat more patients each month and to give them a better quality of medical treatment because of the variety of drugs which you have provided."

SFC Yefko observed that CRS "has supported our programs in a manner truly deserving of high praise. Without the cooperation we have received from Catholic Relief Services, our medical program would only be partially effective."