

'Death of God' Theology Sign of Men's Loneliness

Providence, R.I. — (RNS) — Today's "death-of-God" theologians are witnessing to an "experience" more common in an "over-civilized" society than Christians are ready to admit, a Roman Catholic theologian declared here.

Brother Gabriel Moran of Manhattan College, New York, described this experience as a feeling of "emptiness, loneliness and abandonment."

Proponents of the "God-is-dead" theology, he said, witness to the conclusion that "there are no longer any religious questions which belong to a special province of supernatural faith" and to the "uneasy but inescapable conviction that religious beliefs, practices and devotions are embarrassingly naive."

Brother Moran told the Catholic Theological Society of America at its annual meeting that Christianity has always been in a state of crisis and that whether that crisis is any worse today than in the past is debatable.

He traced the origin of the "death of God" idea to Christianity itself and as well as to the advance of science.

"For centuries Christian apologetics kept just one step ahead of an advancing science that was giving better answers than religion could," he said. "A place was always found for God, but He became the God of the interstices, the one Who filled the gaps in scientific explanations."

While scientific progress has meant a steady retreat of faith from each succeeding position taken up, science is no closer today than in the past of disproving God, he said.

Undoubtedly, however, science "has made man feel less and less the need for God," said Brother Moran. "He died by inches, by the successive qualifications, by the ridiculous looking rear guard action fought in His name."

Besides the advance of science, Brother Moran continued, there is the difficulty of Christian faith itself which has never been able to present a united front to rethink its position in a scientific world, and which from the beginning "was a destroyer of gods and a depopulator of the heavens."

In destroying all the non-Christian gods, Christian faith introduced a unique conception of God, "a God beyond all earthly dreams and desires," said Brother Moran.

"Never had the world possessed such an exalted notion of God as the one which Christian faith presented. The question one might pose is whether this notion was too exalted to live with. God was so high, high above the heavens He was beyond being. He was so much to be that He Himself no longer existed."

Brother Moran said, however, that the experience of the absence and silence of God is "a most heartening reaction," because it presupposes creation, faith and redemption.

Brother Moran, speaking on "Crisis of Faith and Youth," then turned to the problems of adolescents. He said that they need "someone they can trust, someone they can be sure is not making a business out of them, someone who trusts them enough to desire the full ex-

panation of their human potentialities."

When young people pass through a death to childish faith, he said, "they need the help of a mature Christian who will not try to push them back into it, but rejoice with them, urge them forward and wait patiently while they find God on the other side of disbelief."

Any kind of religious revivalism among adolescents "is a highly risky and doubtful business," he declared.

"There is a certain kind of salesmanship of religion that plays upon young people's feelings without bringing to bear human understanding and control."



Notre Dame Bridges Iron Curtain

Notre Dame — (RNS) — Among speakers from both sides of the Iron Curtain addressing an international symposium on "Marx and the Western World" at Notre Dame University were, from left: Prof. James L. Adams of Harvard University; Father Gaston Fessard, S.J., noted French authority on Marxism; Prof. Gajo Petrovic of the University of Zagreb, Yugoslavia; and Prof. Karl Kosik of the Institute of Philosophy, Prague. Extreme right is Prof. Nicholas Lohkowitz of Notre Dame, who organized the symposium held under auspices of the university's Committee on International Relations.

Brooklyn Bells Toll for Jews

Brooklyn — (RNS) — A Tower of Bells in the new \$1.2 million Saints Simon and Jude Roman Catholic church in the Gravesend section of Brooklyn will be dedicated "to our Jewish brethren" in the community, according to an announcement by the Rev. Stephen F. McGrail, pastor.

Father McGrail, calling for an all-out effort to erase anti-Semitism, announced the plans to more than 25 leaders of the Brooklyn Jewish community at a breakfast in his rectory. He said that with 960,000 Jews, Brooklyn is the largest Jewish community in the United States.

The new edifice will adjoin one built in 1898.

Invited to the breakfast were five rabbis: Philip Harris Singer of Congregation B'nai Isaac; Emanuel Schenk, Beth Shalom; Benjamin Morgenstern, Congregation Sons of Israel; Charles Kahane, Congregation Shaarei Tefillah; and Benjamin Kreitmann, Brooklyn Jewish Center.

A Chat Between Nuns

St. Louis — (RNS) — Sister Mary Luke, head of the Sisters of Loretto (right), and Sister Marie Augustina Neal, sociology department chairman at Emmanuel College, Boston, chat at the Institute of Religious Life in the Modern World at St. Louis University. Both addressed the meeting. Sister Mary Luke is chairman of the National Conference of Major Superiors of Women and was the first American woman named an auditor at the Second Vatican Council.

Golden Jubilee For Johnsons

Mr. and Mrs. Everett Johnson, 48 Buckman Rd., Breece, Cottage, Hotel, marked their fiftieth wedding anniversary on June 21.

A Mass of Thanksgiving was celebrated at Holy Name of Jesus Church, offered by Father Thomas Reddington. A breakfast followed at Island Cottage Hotel.

They were married in St. John the Evangelist Church, Greece, in 1916 by the late Father Sebastian Englert.

The couple has five children, thirteen grandchildren.

8 COURIER-JOURNAL Friday, July 8, 1966

GOD LOVE YOU Most Reverend Fulton J. Sheen

The first word of our Lord's public life was "Come." His last word was "Go." First, we come to Him, then we go to the world; first we lean on His breast in prayer to learn the secrets of His Sacred Heart, then with His love enkindled, we go out to inflame other hearts. The present tendency of the Church is to be all "Go Go" with little or no "Come Come." We yell about the necessity of "adaptation to the world," but rarely whisper the need of "attachment to Christ." We play the guitars of the world to make every day a Palm Sunday, without having learned the music of Good Friday. Ecumenism thus becomes indifference to making converts; surgical reform hardens into shifting the Eucharistic bread to an out-of-the-way corner and we define freedom as contempt of authority with a dose of brashness.

Why are we deluged with books about the "secularization of Christianity"? Because the world cannot see any great difference between the way we act and the way it acts. No one can influence the world who is too identified with it. Paul tried the Go-Go method in Athens by secularizing his speech with pagan, poetry, but he had sense enough when he went to Corinth to say that, from then on, he would know only Christ and Him Crucified. It was a Come Come Church which showed the scars of Christ in the beginning of Christianity. Today, not even the devil is afraid of a Christ without scars. A Go-Go Church, and a missionary Church is one who, like Peter, "has been with the Galilees." During the year 1964, Catholics closed 102 churches in the French colony of Tunisia, among them the massive Cathedral of St. Louis, and left open only seven. Why? The French moved out and the Church had not been sufficiently missionary so as to influence the mass of Tunisian society. If we care only for our parishioners, what will happen to the lonely crowd who stumble in the darkness, which neon lights only make darker.

Christ redeemed humanity and it is to humanity, in all its phases, that the Church must Go Go. Go to the teenager who is in rebellion against the world — and rightly so! He would go mad if he did not react in a mad way against a mad world. What are we doing for the millions who stomp and squeal as de-tribalized and disheveled young elephants in protest against their frustrations and loneliness. They are unhappy because they lack mission. The teenagers who write to us, sending their odd-job money and allowance for the poor, are happy and normal teenagers. They have a mission. They are serving, which is the condition of happiness. May we hear from others?

Finally, lest we become a truly Go Go Church, will there be a sufficient number of our readers who will try to redeem our times with a double "Come Come." Come daily to Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament to atone for the loss of faith in this "mystery of faith," and to beg God to raise our priests to greater holiness. Come away from the table, the snack bar or your pleasures after denying yourself something little such as an extra cigarette or a cocktail and, at the end of each month, send us the equivalent to help feed the poor and give the love of Christ to those in mission lands. Write to me. God Love You!

GOD LOVE YOU to the 11 Garrow children for \$5 to M.R.S. for sending her paycheck of \$38.03, a week's wages for the poor of the world... to E.C. "We are a family of farmers and in our long day's work it is very difficult for us to fast during Lent so we send this \$100 instead."

Cut out this column, pin your sacrifice to it and mail it to Most Rev. Fulton J. Sheen, National Director of The Society for the Propagation of the Faith, 366 Fifth Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10001, or to your Diocesan Director, Rev. John F. Duffy, 50 Chestnut Street, Rochester, New York 14604.

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