

Pride Blamed For Divisions

New York—(RNS)—Calling for repentance of the "sins of pride which divide the church," the general secretary-elect of the World Council of Churches stressed here that Christian unity is a prime responsibility of all Christians despite differing theological views.

Dr. Eugene Carson Blake speaking at Riverside Church, told the congregation that "it is your Christian duty and mine to work for the unity of the church and its peace equally as we work for its truth, purity and holiness."

Dr. Blake, who takes over as head of the World Council on Dec. 1, deplored the fact that "Christians are presently divided into hundreds of separate sovereign Churches which have been in the past at least unfriendly and hostile to each other, not merely separate but have other."

One of the paradoxes of the search for Christian unity, Dr. Blake pointed out, is that "those denominations or families of Churches which claim the presence of the Holy Spirit in their midst are almost always the most divisive."

One reason for this, he explained, is that "however close to God any of us is, we never pass beyond the danger of our very virtues becoming vices and our most devoutly held convictions becoming the very sins which divide the followers of Jesus Christ from each other." The paradox is, he said, that the "nearest any man is to God the greater the possibility and enormity of sin."

Dr. Blake related this observation to the burgeoning ecumenical movement. "The nearer the ecumenical movement comes to reflecting the purposes of God in our time," he said, "the greater the danger that its aspirations will be corrupted by sin into an even greater disaster."

"This is the reason there are so many sincere and conservative Christians—Protestant, Orthodox and Catholic—who fear and resist and condemn the ecumenical movement."

The churchman noted the existence of "an important movement, chiefly American-centered, which is attempting to organize Christianity worldwide in flat opposition to the World Council of Churches and the ecumenical mission Christian councils in all nations."

"They base their position," he said, "on several charges against the ecumenical movement and they often win support for their good convictions by appealing to the worst prejudices of Christians everywhere."

Dr. Blake did not name the movement he described but most observers concluded he was talking about the ultra-fundamentalist American and International Councils of Christian Churches, headed by Dr. Carl McIntyre. For years Dr.

McIntyre has assailed what he calls the "liberal modernism" of the World and National Councils of Churches, the WCC and the NCC include in their membership most of the major Protestant and Eastern Orthodox Churches.

COURIER-JOURNAL Friday, Sept. 16, 1966

God's World

Retrorocket At Home

By DENNIS J. GEANEY, O.S.A.

I am an advocate of the right to fight. It is basic to a successful marriage. Each partner must defend to the death the other's right to join issue on each of the daily irritants of life. At every wedding service I perform I make my stand clear to the couple, the wedding party, the relatives and friends, the newly married, the long married and the unmarried.

Before the last blessing at the nuptial Mass there is a place for the priest to say a few final words. Up to this point everything might seem to delude the couple into a romanticized or fantasy view of marriage. In the bridal party are women in smart gowns and clean cut men in Brooks Brothers suits. There is music, flowers, the exhortation about the great sacrifice they are undertaking and their unity in Christ, plus the choking with emotion as the words of the marriage vows are repeated.

At the end I file my retrorocket to prepare for the reentry into a worldly view of marriage. The keynote of this earth atmosphere speech is that the giving of wedding rings is symbolic of the giving to each other the right to fight with each other until death does them part. Quarrels are as much a part of marriage as are the rings.

Some would object to the word quarrels and prefer to speak of differences of viewpoint. I prefer quarrels because it expresses not only an intellectual difference of viewpoints but our feelings about the subject at hand. Quarrel is more than words. It includes the tone of voice, gestures with hands, facial expressions, lapses of silence. The display of emotion tells what words cannot express.

At the very outset of marriage it is well that a couple relax about conflict and learn how to deal with it constructively. The battle of the tooth

paste tube is not far off. One will squeeze from the middle and the other from the end and they will find no way to resolve the conflict.

The habits of two adult lives with all their idiosyncrasies must be merged in such a way that each preserves his integrity, personality and growth is not stunted, feelings are not repressed, and the common life of the couple is enriched in such a way that through the very conflict both have come to know and love one another at a still deeper level of life. To a celibate bystander it is a mystery of the natural order how two people with cultural, religious, ethnic, and social differences, compounded with large doses of selfishness and undisciplined immaturity can ever achieve harmonious relations. What percentage of couples achieve this kind of harmony I do not know, but with couples of my acquaintance who do, I am extremely curious to find the formula.

Some of my married friends deny my thesis about quarreling and claim they never look out their shuttles and started to fight to the finish. The couples I am referring to married in their middle twenties or later and achieved a high degree of maturity before they marched down the middle aisle.

There was also something about their temperaments so that they had no emotional need for a scene to get something out of their system. They have some kind of built-in radar which gives them insights into the other's thinking and feeling, plus a gentleness that seems to work out solutions in such a way that there never seemed to be a problem in the first place. There are the exceptions and we should not spend time trying to be like people we are not and never will be like.

One wife told me in the presence of her husband that there is nothing like a good old fashioned fight when you are really mad at your partner. I do not know whether or not they throw things, but the language sparks with poisonous gems. This couple has no guilt feelings about the fight. They both recommend this to other couples and also have asked me to pass the word along. They hold to the theory that the family that fights together stays together. They are a lively pair and enjoyable company.

At the nuptial Mass I tell the couple, although it is an obvious exaggeration, that the only couples who do not quarrel are those who lie beside each other in Holy Sepulchre Cemetery.

It's increasingly clear that Catholics are going to be hearing much more about the Bible in the years ahead.

Jesuit Father Francis J. McCool, recently in Rochester to speak at St. Bernard's Seminary to priests of the Diocese, said the Bible eventually will be "the heart and center of Catholic theology and piety." He admitted the process will take awhile.

"Minds and attitudes do not change in a short space of time," he said, but he thought directives of the Vatican Council "will work as a leaven, slowly and gradually helping to form priests and people" in this new biblical orientation.

Another recent visitor to Rochester who spoke on current trends in this subject was Passionist Father Richard Kugelmann who opened the Convent's Wednesday evening series "Where in the World Are We Going?"

It should be obvious even to those who aren't sure of the direction we're going that the pace is certainly accelerating.

—Father Henry A. Atwell

Revised Method for Confession Under Debate

St. Louis — (RNS) — A Liturgical Conference speaker's remarks about the Sacrament of Penance which were disputed by his own archdiocesan newspaper found support from another specialist in the field of penance.

Father Peter Riga, theology professor at St. Mary's College in the Diocese of Oakland and author of "Sin and Penance," said he saw "absolutely no problems from a dogmatic viewpoint" on the possibility of giving absolution without individual confession and enumeration of sins.

The Washington priest said that "one of the areas of future development most widely discussed and theologically unresolved is the question of giving general absolution without the private confession of sins on the occasion of a community celebration of the Sacrament of Penance."

Not only would such ceremonies demonstrate the social dimension of sin, Father Corrigan said, they would "underscore that the most important aspect of confession is not the exact accounting of sins or even our contrition, but the forgiving action of Christ in His Church."

Father Corrigan is a board member of the Liturgical Conference, sponsor of the Week, and is nationally known for his studies and writings on confession.

The Catholic Standard, in an article accompanying a news account of Father Corrigan's talk, said that theologians in Washington, including some who were experts at Vatican II, "disagreed strongly" with some of Father Corrigan's points. The newspapers did not name the theologians.

The article said that the Church teaches that Penance is "administered after the manner of a judgment."

In the case of mortal sins, it said, "they must be confessed according to the nature, number and circumstances. . . . This

is an article of faith from the Council of Trent."

A different interpretation of Trent's use of the phrase "divine law," the article said, "is opposed to the Church's centuries-old interpretation of the words of Trent."

The Catholic Standard article challenged Father Corrigan's idea that mortal sin might be "a rarity in Christian life." It said that "certainly there is no proof."

The St. Louis Review reported that Washington sources said that Father Corrigan's bishop, Archbishop Patrick A. O'Boyle, had asked for a text of Father Corrigan's talk to be sent from Houston and this was done. The commentary article later appeared in the Catholic Standard.

In asserting that he found no problems from a "dogmatic viewpoint" concerning absolution without individual confession, Father Riga stated, according to the Review:

"If there are problems then how do we explain eight centuries of church life in which this was not practiced?"

"For the first four centuries there is no record of this and

for the next four, we find public and private Penance existing side by side."

Public Penance, including general absolution, was often a special feature of Holy Thursday celebrators, he said.

"I would certainly agree with both Menden and Father Corrigan that much more research needs to be done on Trent's meaning of divine law," Father Riga said.

On the Catholic Standard's article, Father Riga said he also agreed that "Penance involves a judgment."

"But the principal judgment must be formed by the penitent himself," he stressed. "This goes back to St. Augustine, without question. St. Thomas makes the same point and these are the two men whom we rely on most for the study of Penance."

Father Riga said any questions he would have on Father

Corrigan's points "would have to be in the realm of pastoral theology, not in the realm of dogmatic theology."

For example, he said the current practice of community Penance and contrition after individual confession might be more effective than a return to the early practice of having general and private penance exist side by side.

Father Corrigan, who had planned a trip to Mexico after the Liturgical Conference, could not be reached for comment on the reaction to his talk, the Review reported.

It added that at Washington's Christ the King parish, where Father Corrigan is a curate, fellow-priests recommended at all Masses one Sunday that parishioners read the account of Father Corrigan's talk as well as the accompanying article in the Catholic Standard. At one Mass, the celebrant included Father Corrigan's intention in the Prayer of the Faithful.

Celibacy, a Symbol Of 'Openness' to Christ

St. Louis — (RNS) — "Celibacy within a religious community is not an end in itself; it is something of great symbolic value, it is a direction of that which is most profound in man — his potential for love toward Christ, fellow Christians, and all mankind," Father Bernard Cooke, S.J., chairman of the department of theology at Marquette University said here.

Speaking on "Religious Chastity," Father Cooke, author of the recently published "Christian Sacraments and the Christian Personality," addressed some 300 Roman Catholic religious at an Institute on Religious Life in the Modern World at St. Louis University.

Father Cooke said celibacy has as its significance the dedication in universal openness to Christ and to the fulfillment of His redemptive mission in human history. "As such it is meant to be a manifestation of the outward directedness of Christianity, a sign of the church's internal thrust toward the formation of community."

Of the three vows by which a religious is committed to community existence, he said, the vow of celibacy is the most deeply and totally involving.

"While poverty controls the community's relationship to material possessions of the group, the vow of celibacy is a dedication of man's effective life in its total range to a specific kind of expression," he said.

Father Cooke discussed celibacy from the point of view of its being a religious vow, and, as such "directed to the establishment of community."

"Obviously, it functions to make possible that society which is a religious community," he said, "but the religious community as constituted by the life of the vows is itself an effective sign of the wider Christian community and beyond that, of the community of all mankind."

Jews Deplore 'Mushrooming'

Miami — (RNS) — "Commercialization" of the Jewish High Holy Days was condemned in a statement issued by the Rabbinical Association of Greater Miami.

The growing practice here of organizing "mushroom" synagogues just for the High Holy Days was opposed along with "blatant advertisements" of such services which "violate every propriety and religious sentiment of our people."

The High Holy Days, the most important religious season in the Jewish year, will begin Sept. 14. With their approach, the rabbinical agency called upon "all Jewish citizens to refrain from organizing, supporting, providing facilities for, or attending any 'mushroom' synagogues."



'Graduates' for Home Missions

SAN ANTONIO, Tex. — (RNS) — Archbishop Robert E. Lucey of San Antonio presents pins to two of 200 lay Extension Volunteers who "graduated" from a three-week training course for home mission assignments in 25 dioceses. The volunteers are Cathy Crescenta and Ana Bruno. The pins were presented at departure ceremonies in St. Mary's University chapel in San Antonio. Training courses for the volunteers included Scripture and theology, Negro and Spanish culture, and field work in San Antonio parishes. The program is sponsored by the Catholic Church Extension Society.



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Noted Catholic Educator Dies on Trip to Italy

Washington — (RNS) — Msgr. Frederick G. Hochwalt of Washington, noted national Roman Catholic spokesman on educational affairs, died at the age of 57 on Sept. 5 while on a vacation cruise to Venice.

Since 1944 he served as director of the National Catholic Welfare Conference's Education Department and as executive secretary of the National Catholic Educational Association.

Ill for many months from an intestinal ailment, he had resigned from the NCWC post on January 1.

As spokesman on educational matters, Msgr. Hochwalt often testified at Congressional and state legislative hearings. He also was widely known as a speaker on educational topics, appearing at many Catholic and other meetings around the country.

A priest of the Cincinnati archdiocese, Msgr. Hochwalt was born in Dayton in 1909 and was educated there, receiving his A.B. degree from the University of Dayton in 1931. Following study at St. Gregory Seminary in Cincinnati and at Mt. St. Mary of the West Seminary in Norwood, Ohio, he was ordained in 1935. He earned masters and doctoral degrees from the Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C.

From 1940 to 1944, Msgr. Hochwalt did college teaching and youth work in the Cincinnati area, serving as chaplain of the Newman Club at the University of Cincinnati, as archdiocesan director of the CYO, and as a professor at the Teachers College Athenaeum of Ohio.

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He uses the "fellow" term — as do the King James version and the Revised Standard version, including its Catholic edition.

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