



People of God

Mother Aloysius of the Blessed Sacrament, nee Alice Teresa Rogers, left her home in Billerica, Mass., at the age of 24 to enter the Carmel of Boston in 1906.

Hope Can Halt Erratic Efforts

Cardinal Joseph Ritter of St. Louis has called halt to experiments going on in his diocese in possible new ways to say Mass.

His ban came as a surprise to many because he was one of the chief spokesmen for the progressive viewpoint at the recent Vatican Council.

His restrictive order doesn't mean he's against Mass in English, laymen as lectors, congregational singing — a chancery official explained — nor is he trying to stop Masses in homes for shut-ins nor guitar music for teenagers.

What Cardinal Ritter is opposed to, it was said, is "unauthorized experimentation" — such as saying the Canon of the Mass in English, "indiscriminate" distribution of Holy Communion in both forms, and Masses other than in churches or chapels "without permission."

The latter reference is a hint of a practice rumored to be growing — "shirtsleeve" Masses — where a priest with a small group in a private home conducts the Mass rite without vestments and ad-libs the prayers.

John Mannion, executive secretary of the U.S. Liturgical Conference in Washington, D.C., reported in Commonwealth magazine this past August: "One hears of all sorts of illicit celebrations, liturgically good and bad, fashioned by clergy, laity and nuns seeking a better liturgical experience than their usual routine provides."

Mannion, in his article titled "A Dull New Day," told how liturgists literally cheered when the proposed but then still secret Vatican Council document on the liturgy was read to them in late 1962 — "Here was pure gold and it was to be given to all God's people."

That was 1962. "What happened?" asked Mannion in his article. "Where is that bright new day? It has been down for several years and the dim glimmer in the east isn't getting any lighter. Or is our Sunday morning experience what the shouting was all about? This is it?"

There's Mass now in English, and altars face the people and people are roused to sing a hymn or two or say the prayers together — "but underneath all the changes," Mannion wrote, "there seems to be lacking a spirit, an enthusiasm born of understanding. Sunday mornings don't look the same but the dullness is discouragingly familiar."

And that's why some clergy and lay people are going off in the directions Cardinal Ritter now warns them about — and Mannion's comment in August seems applicable now in November. "There is a lesson to be learned in the rise of these unauthorized experiments: the Church cannot afford to neglect the confidence and good will of its more advanced members. The rear guard is tolerated — sometimes pampered; a place must also be acknowledged for the avant-garde."

Hope that such may become reality came this week in the announcement that the U.S. bishops, at their meeting this coming week in Washington, will consider pushing the liturgical revision another step forward. If the bishops do provide evidence that further progress is in the offing under their official auspices, then perhaps the avant garde group will be a bit more patient and less likely to go off in unauthorized directions.

— Father Henry Atwell

'Unconventional Apostolate' to Up-date Church

Pittsburgh — (RNS) — A Jesuit priest associated with the School of Divinity at Harvard University suggested here that Roman Catholic dioceses establish some sort of bureau "for the unconventional apostolate."

Father Joseph H. Fichter, S.J., said that "in all parts of the Church, room must be made for the charismatic, the personal, the voluntary, for freedom of expression and experiment." He spoke at the Inter-American Congress here of the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine.

"There must be room," he continued, "for the peace protesters, the Catholic Worker Movement, the Friendship House, for experiments in storefront and street-corner ministries, for the missions to the poorest. There must be initiative allowed to both the clergy and the laity."

"If these forms of apostolate must be regularized in some way, there ought to be perhaps a diocesan bureau for the unconventional apostolate. We have to get over the idea that the parish or the diocese has to be run like a tight ship."

Father Fichter's point was that "the modernization, or updating of the Church will be a failure if it simply substitutes a new set of institutional rigidities for the old one."

The tendency of church people is "to seek order and stability, and to be somewhat afraid of change and flexibility," he charged. "Because we have been brought up in a routinized and authoritarian religion, we worry about innovations and about people who don't go along with the new rules or improvements. For too long we have lived with the notion that penalties must be visited upon the recalcitrant."

"We don't hear much about public excommunications any more, and the Index of Forbidden Books has been abandoned. Yet, there is still pressure to conformity within the Church. A priest gets suspended for speaking his mind in disagreement with his bishop; another gets sent out of the country for making statements that are judged 'impudent' by his superior."

Father Fichter saw at work in the Church a counter-pressure, however.

"The new, dynamic, vibrant Catholic Church in America is made up of human beings with

a new sense of self-direction and dignified accountability," he remarked. "The emerging lay men and women in the American Church... are being matched, and perhaps surpassed, by the emerging priests and Sisters and Brothers. The New Frontiersmen in the Church, the post-conciliar people of God — and I would include clergy and religious among them — are exerting a liberal pressure that is characteristic of the American culture."

"They are willing and eager to accept leadership, but not dictatorship; counsel but not coercion, directives but not mandates."

Women Priests, Church's 'Ultimate Weapon'

Milwaukee — (RNS) — The Roman Catholic Church could consider ordaining women and married men to overcome a shortage of priests, a noted Jesuit said here.

Father Joseph H. Fichter of the Harvard School of Divinity addressed the National Conference of Diocesan Vocation Directors. More than 100 vocation directors, representing more than two-thirds of the U.S. dioceses attended.

He remarked that if the idea of ordaining married men was explosive, his suggestion about women in the priesthood "is nearer to the eruption of a nuclear weapon."

The Jesuit told a reporter he thought bishops now had authority to ordain women although, he said with a laugh, "99 per cent of the priests probably disagree with me."

Father Fichter said there was an articulate minority of Catholic women asking for equal status with men in the Church. He also said there were probably many married Catholic men who would like to be priests.

"The question is," he said, "how far are the bishops ready to go in changing a mere structure so that the number of priests can be increased?"

Father Fichter also listed three other relatively untapped sources for seminarians: children of lower economic classes, Negro and Catholic children enrolled in public schools.

Referring to Catholics in public schools, who outnumber those enrolled in parochial schools, Father Fichter said they often were treated as "second class citizens," especially in those parishes having parochial schools.

The priest said Negroes still were underrepresented among clergy, Sisters and Brothers as a consequence of an era when seminaries and convents were segregated and Negro candidates were not accepted.

Father Fichter also said he suspected that ethnic groups other than Irish and German were not well represented in seminaries, although there were no figures to prove it.

The Catholic Church faces a period of great change, he said, and the issue is: "Are we going to meet the crisis in a successful way this time instead of the way we met the Protestant Reformation?"

Father Fichter said a nationwide survey showed that 7 per cent of priests questioned said they would not be priests if they could live their lives over. The figure was not alarming, he added, because 22 to 28 per cent of the respondents in other occupations also said they would have changed their professions.

Daniel Callahan, associate editor of Commonwealth, national weekly magazine published by laymen, told vocation directors that current reforms under way in the Church would take years to achieve, and that the only thing that would change an unfavorable image of religious life in the eyes of youth is a change in the reality.

He said that "many who imagine themselves perfectly amenable to change bridle when it takes place right under their noses."

"For all their votes at the Council in favor of greater communication between priests and bishops, nuns and superiors, few bishops and superiors seem willing yet to stand any straight talk," Mr. Callahan declared.

"For all their votes in favor of documents which commended the right of respectful dissent, few seem willing to tolerate any opposition or criticism from those subject to them."

"More priests have been publicly batted down by their bishops and superiors in the last year since the Council than in the whole four years while it was in session. Deep seated reform, in other words, is a slow and wobbly business."

"Only the blindest young person could fail to note this, whatever he or she might read about changes in seminary curriculums or in the length of the hem on nuns' skirts."

Mr. Callahan told the vocation directors, who provide information on religious careers for young people that they might better spend their time the next few years talking exclusively to bishops, seminary rectors, mother superiors, and heads of orders.

"Tell them why you have a problem," he said. "Tell them there is only so much pamphlets and ads and vocation talks can do. Tell them that the real problem is the kind of life young people think they will

have to lead as priests, brothers or nuns. Tell them that the only thing that will change their image of the religious life is a change in the reality."

Calling for some "candid thinking," Mr. Callahan questioned whether the purported crisis in vocations would really exist if laymen were trained to take over many of the tasks now reserved for the religious.

"How many priests would a parish need if laymen kept the books, ran their own organizations, took charge of the building and grounds, raised the needed parish money and helped with some of the counseling and guidance work?" he asked. "Far fewer than they now have, I suspect."

Now A Book on the 'New Spirituality'



"He hath reconciled in the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unspotted, and blameless before him" (Col. 1:22).

We have been created in the image of God, and after the fall that image was restored to us by and in Christ whose death and resurrection is the source of our recreation. If we fully realize this great gift of God our lives must become a continual act of praise and thanksgiving. "If thou didst know the gift of God" (John 4:10).

But in what way can we best do this uninterruptedly? What practical means can we use which will keep us conscious of the purpose of our life and being in all that we do, in all the many varied activities and circumstances of our daily lives?

First of all, we must be aware of the source from which his life flows into us each day more intensely, and by which our ever growing conformity to the Son makes us more worthy as the members of his living mystical body to offer him and ourselves in him to the Father.

This source is the Mass, the supreme and ever present manifestation of the eternal act of praise and thanksgiving of the Word clothed in our humanity. It is like the sun which comes each day to penetrate the earth with its light and heat which give it life. In the Mass it is the Son of God whose life-giving act is re-presented each day sacramentally on our altars to penetrate us with the light and love which is his life, in order that he may offer us to the Father with and in himself, as a part of himself, buried with him and re-created in his sacrifice.

The Mass is usually presented to us as the unbloody sacrifice of Calvary. This terminology, though perfectly correct, is in a sense, too confining. We are prone to think of it too much in its external of place and time and manner.

The Mass is the mystical and sacramental expression of the eternal act of love of the Word Incarnate. It is the Word Incarnate embracing the Father at the peak of intensity, so to

Dominican Sister M. Catherine Wolfe is the author of "Abba Father," a book just published by Alba House of Staten Island. The book has been described as "biblical-liturgical spirituality at its best." Sister Catherine is a nun at the Dominican monastery at Elmira and is the daughter of Mr. Frank Wolfe and the late Mrs. Wolfe of Rochester. Her book is available at religious book stores. The accompanying article is an excerpt from the October issue of Eucharist magazine, a monthly journal "for today's layman" published by the Blessed Sacrament Fathers of New York City.

...speak, of that loving embrace. It is also a memorial of the saving events of history, a memorial of our re-creation through the passion, death, resurrection and ascension of Christ.

The light and life of that infinite Being who is love will so completely penetrate us in heaven that all will be pure joy in our perfect fulfillment. But on earth, this same love makes us suffer because of the present obstacles to its penetration. These are due to the imperfec-

tion and disunity in our nature consequent upon original sin. "The word of God is living and efficient and keener than any two-edged sword" (Heb. 4:12).

This perversion and disunity vary in degree on souls. Nevertheless each person has a bearing and an influence on every other because it is the same divine life which flows, or is intended to flow, through all; for we are all potentially "one" in the Word Incarnate. It is for this reason also that Christ embraced and offered

himself to the Father through his Spirit of love in suffering; for he bore, not our sin in himself which would be an impossibility, but all its consequences. He magnifies and embraces the Father in love from all eternity in one ceaseless act which is pure joy. But when he unites this same act, in time, to our warped nature, the necessary and accompanying result is suffering. This suffering reaches the greatest intensity possible because of the infinite perfection of his eternal act of love. The cross itself signifies this for us.

This divine and human nature are crossed, they are in conflict; they are not in unity and harmony at present, the human, subordinated and merged into the divine. The Word Incarnate, possessing the divine nature and taking to himself a human nature came to accomplish this task. "Who though he was by nature God, did not consider being equal to God a thing to be clung to, but emptied himself, taking the nature of a slave and being made like us into men. And appearing in the form of man, he humbled himself, becoming obedient to death, even to death on a cross" (Philippians). His very nature drove him to this supreme task, for he is love, and love must draw all things to itself. "And if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all things to myself" (John 12:32).

Love must envelope all, that all may participate in its life and activity.

Irish Sermons 'Holy Water'

Dublin — (RNS) — Sunday sermons preached in Ireland's Catholic churches are often only "so much holy water over a duck's back," a television commentator complained in an interview here.

Sean MacReamoinn was interviewed by Father Maurice Fearon, O.P., in the Dominican magazine, "Irish Spotlight."

He said the Sunday sermon had "over and over again fallen down in not taking a stand on essentials, in not being sufficiently rooted in Scripture, and not being sufficiently in tune with the real mind of the Church."

Does the Habit Make the Nun?

by GARY MacEONIN

I used to (and could again) make a lot of money in public relations. Far more than I'm making. But I'm not tempted. It's not that I despise PR, it plays an important function in our society. Even the Church is involved and becoming more involved, as it has to be.

I can, however, give two reasons why it's not my dish. It attracts more than its share of glib talkers. And I find it boring. It often functions on a stock of propositions so simple as to be worthy of simpletons.

All of which prolific introduction is, I suspect, my subconscious reluctance to get to grips with a topic which I fear will bring only brickbats from all quarters. Yet the introduction is not wholly irrelevant.

What proposition is more basic to the theory and practice of the PR world than that repetition of a slogan brings conviction? Say something often enough and everyone will believe. The cynical formulation is: "287,000 assertions make a truth."

Over the past several months I've come

to the realization that this basic principle of PR simply ain't so. Not only will an infinity of assertions not make a truth, but more disturbingly, an infinity of repetitions of a truth will not necessarily bring conviction.

Let me explain how this disturbing realization dawned. Circumstances have recently brought me considerably more dealings with nuns than at any previous time. It is not that I had avoided them. They just used to move much in my circles. I am the gainer by this change, very definitely.

When nuns are around, what is the inevitable topic of discussion? The habit, of course, what else? To retain or shorten, to simplify, to smarten, to scrap.

Now no Madison Avenue cigarette claim has been repeated as often as the basic truth about the religious habit. "Habitus non facit monachum" — The habit doesn't make the monk? Or the nun, either. It is the most commonplace in all the commonplace devotional books of religious formation. It is true, yet it hasn't sunk in.

There are no statistics, but the mysterious — to themselves, also — processes which give newsmen answers to everything, in-

form me that not one in a hundred of our 181,821 U.S. nuns (Official Catholic Directory, 1966) accepts that proposition. To scrap the habit would be to scrap the institution. So they seek compromise. The Council said they should modernize. So how about mid-calf-length, drop the blinkers, halve the pleats? Or let's be daring, have Schiaparelli design a clerical airline-stewardess effect.

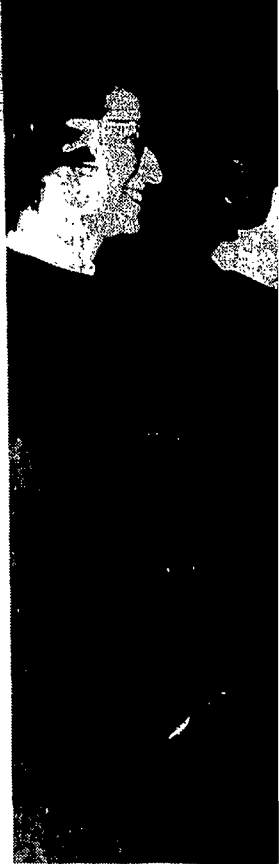
It just won't work. The Schiaparelli approach is, I fear, the worst of all the compromises. It equates aggrornamento with being a regular joe (or jane), a true 100 per cent American, right-up there with tomorrow's fashion. It locks the American nun more tightly than before into one particular socio-economic group of one particular country, or affluent suburbia. It conflicts with the poverty she professes, blocks contact with the poor in our own country, is a scandal if her mission is to the masses of Latin America, Africa or Asia.

But any compromise, any identifying dress, is an obstacle to the nun, wherever her work. Mike Novak, whose perceptiveness grows rarer than his years, recently pinpointed the primary reason. The habit creates an insuperable block to communi-

cation to most people, Catholic or not, in our society. You never get to know the person. You exchange formalities with a stereotype.

Even if, as can occasionally happen today, you meet her in street clothes and establish a human rapport, the moment she dons the habit, the atmosphere changes. As Mike put it, you just can't help "paying respect to the habit." But it is respect bought at an excessive price. And I see only one solution, the substitution of simple, modest, non-identifying, non-uniform dress, what would look right on one's mother, one's wife, one's sister, or one's daughter, according to age and situation. If a nun has virtue, it will still show. If she hasn't, better that she's not identified.

If what I suggest has any merit, it applies equally to the clergy, of every rank and condition. But one must be realistic. On this issue, the women in their thinking are a full generation ahead of the men. So let's concentrate on what is possible, if the nuns can find a way around the roadblock of the all-time Congregation of Religious. And from what I hear, like all women, they will find a way to have their way.



Open I

ECUMENICAL Catholic, Protestant making a tour of president, B'Rit 'El Sisterhood; Women; Mrs. R lie Women; Mrs.

Nun V Unit C

Diocesan efforts to bring understanding of the m of religious vocations v strengthened Wednesday 16, when St. Agnes School's Theresian Unit r its charter of members the national lay organizat the promotion of religio cations.

Monsignor Elwood C founder and national o of the Theresians of A will present the charter local group at a dinner



MONSIGNOR VOS

Agnes' sixty Theresian their mothers, and other bers of Rochester's formed adult Theresian

Monsignor Vos cur r serves as superior of schools in Pueblo, dioce rector of the Propagation Faith, chaplain of Serra Club and the Set tulatory, and is diocesan sultor.

Since his ordination burke, Iowa in 1949, also been rector of St. Preparatory Seminary eblo, diocesan vocation o and principal of Pueblo lic High School.

The Theresians of A an organization of lay

You Really Should

CHECK before you