

# Thanksgiving - While Most of the World is in Need

(By Religious News Service)

"It behooves a grateful America," President Johnson said in his Thanksgiving Day proclamation, "to share its blessings with our brothers abroad, with those who have so little of the abundance that is ours."

The past decades have seen Americans of all faiths responding in increasingly generous measure to appeals on behalf of the poor and underprivileged of other countries, especially those sponsored by various religious agencies.

Indications are that this year will be remembered as one which saw the massive flow of relief goods — money, food, clothing and medicine — to needy countries and to areas stricken by floods, earthquakes and other disasters reach unprecedented proportions.

Expected during the Thanksgiving season is a crowning outpouring of aid in response to appeals being sponsored around the country by Church World Service, overseas relief arm of the National Council of Churches, whose membership includes both Protestants and Eastern Orthodox; Lutheran World Relief; and Catholic Relief Services-National Catholic Welfare Conference.

Announcing its 13th annual Share Our Substance (SOS) appeal, Church World Service, said its goal for the 1966 drive was \$1 million for field and final distribution costs of surplus U.S. food in CW Sprograms in some 40 countries.

Meanwhile a note of caution was sounded by CWS director James McCracken. He said that because of a "serious short supply" of the surplus food commodities — long a mainstay of overseas feeding programs — the agency had established strict priorities for the first time in its 20-year history. Explaining that preferences would be given to disaster and famine victims, refugees, those most vulnerable to disease, expectant mothers and persons in food-for-work projects, he said:

"New developments forced upon us by the world food crisis include stringent priority allocation of severely reduced quantities of U.S. surplus foods, maximum utilization of available foods, leading to development of new food projects, and intensified efforts to help increase food production in countries of hunger."

According to Mr. McCracken, the creation of new foods is a daily being tested by his agency under the guidance of its nutrition committee. At the same time he noted that CWS' Christian Rural Overseas Program (CROP) was sending 180,000 pounds of corn and wheat to be used in food-for-work programs in Haiti — recently ravaged by hurricane — and other areas.

In launching another of its Thanksgiving Clothing Appeals (Nov. 20-27), Lutheran World Relief stressed a special need for blankets for programs in Brazil, Greece, Hong Kong, India, Jordan, Taiwan, Tanzania, Vietnam and Yugoslavia. Another urgent need, it was pointed out, was for children's clothing and men's work clothes.

A record total of 18.5 million pounds of used clothing, footwear and bedding material was donated by American Catholics for the needy in 60 overseas countries during the 1965 Catholic Bishops' Thanksgiving Clothing Campaign. This year, however, it is hoped that the 17,500 parishes around the country will establish a new record.

Announcing the current campaign, Archbishop Patrick A. O'Boyle of Washington, chairman of the NCWC administrative board, said a large part of the collection will be used to "assuage the acute suffering of the poor people of war-torn Vietnam."

November is also the month when the National Catholic Rural Life Conference conducts Latin America's campaign. Tools collected are distributed to destitute Latin American rural areas by the NCRLC in cooperation with CWS.

American Jews do not have a special Thanksgiving Week campaign, but it is at this time that final impetus is given to

the year-round, world-wide program of the United Jewish Appeal. This year's goal was \$73,420,000 for the needs of more than 800,000 distressed Jews in 31 countries.

While Thanksgiving Day observances focus sharp attention on the needs of the needy in less affluent lands, the plight of the underprivileged and the distressed is one that is kept constantly in mind all through the year by religious organizations.

Each year, Church World Service sponsors a "One Great Hour of Sharing" appeal to support overseas denominational relief and rehabilitation programs. Its goal this year was \$17,921,000, and the scope of its aid projects embraced Asia,

Africa, Latin America, the Middle East and parts of Europe.

Catholics subscribe to the Bishops' Overseas Relief Fund Appeal during Lent to keep up the assistance work of Catholic Relief Services. In 1965 the fund made it possible for CRS to maintain an annual program of \$173 million reaching 40 million people in 80 countries.

Lutheran World Relief also conducts an annual Spring Clothing Appeal. Other Lutheran bodies engaged in aid work are the Lutheran World Federation's Commission on World Mission, which has already underwritten more than 100 assistance projects in developing countries; and the federation's Commission on World Service, which is planning proj-

ects in 20 countries next year at an estimated cost of over \$3 million.

Many appeals for aid have come during 1966 from disaster-hit countries scattered around the world. Pope Paul VI was among the first to extend aid and sympathy in the shocking tragedy of Aberfan, Wales, which cost the lives of over 200 children when a mountain of coal slag engulfed their school. He was among the first, too, to offer assistance to the homeless and suffering in central Italy's most destructive floods in history. From U.S. Catholic Relief Services came a donation of \$100,000.

Catholic and Protestant agencies were prompt in rallying to the aid of earthquake victims

in Turkey, Peru and Central and Western Peloponnese; hurricanes in Haiti and Guadeloupe Island in the Caribbean; and floods in Argentina, Jordan and Upper Volta. In October, the German section of Caritas Internationalis, Catholic welfare organization, sent 80 pre-fabricated houses to Turkey's earthquake-ravaged areas.

In a real sense, what the religious agencies have been doing is responding — whether adequately or not is a question for consciences to answer — to the challenging fact that while the Western nations constitute less than 20 per cent of the world's people, they enjoy some 75 per cent of the world's income.



## People of God

Francis Van Leuvenhage was born on June 3, 1915, in Detroit, and died twenty-one years later, May 16, in St. Mary's Hospital, St. Louis, Missouri. Although his headstone in a Redemptorist cemetery does not tell much more than that, his life was an exemplary fulfillment of Christian youth at its finest. In 1929, "Van" was accepted as a candidate for the priesthood by the Redemptorist Fathers at St. Joseph's College, where the Christian virtue of his character became a joy to the whole community. While there, however, Van was stricken with appendicitis, suffered it in silence for days, was eventually rushed to the hospital for emergency operation. He was professed on his deathbed on May 15, and died the next day.

## Phone Service— Dial an Insult

The Rochester Telephone Corporation provided its customers with a dish of character assassination this week.

If you dialed 235-2240, this is what you got —

A recorded message charged that the National Council of Churches was "under the control of Communists" and that the Rochester Area Council of Churches, "an adjunct" of the National Council, was "pro-Communist" in some of its activities.

The recorded voice then said Monsignor John McCafferty, head of the Rochester diocesan ecumenical commission and pastor of Holy Rosary Church, and Father Joseph Brennan, rector of St. Bernard's Seminary, by taking part in events arranged by the local Council of Churches, are thereby implicated in a Communist plot "to capture the Church by subversion" and that they "support our country's enemies."

The recording is another in a series of hate messages of a self-styled "pro-American, anti-Communist" organization which provides this fare on a round-the-clock recording which changes week by week.

We traced the message's sign-off reference to an address of 354 Rugby Avenue as the residence of Julius Tabacco. We asked him if he had ever asked either Monsignor McCafferty or Father Brennan the questions raised in the recorded message. He admitted no. We asked how come he didn't have the courtesy to get the information asked before flooding the community with implications against their loyalty to both their religion and their country. He couldn't explain why he hadn't.

We hadn't expected much else from him anyway.

He may, however, appreciate an around-the-clock response to the message so he can learn what people think of such innuendo.

But then we contacted the Rochester Telephone Corporation. A spokesman there explained unctuously about the legal restrictions the company is under, the rights of free speech people have and other endless reasons why the company — vaunted for its service to the community — was helpless to halt this consistent campaign fomenting hate and suspicion.

We have the very strong suspicion that if Rabbi Philip Bernstein or Bausch and Lomb's Carl S. Hallauer or Kodak's William S. Vaughn were the targets of the "pro-Communist" insinuation, the now helpless phone company would find prompt ways to turn off the recorder.

But the present targets are only reputable Protestant agencies and two Catholic priests — so sorry!

You might also let the telephone company know what you think about their helplessness in such a situation. You probably won't really get very far with them either.

Next time you read or watch a Rochester Telephone Corporation commercial about all their splendid services, remember one of them is character assassination.

—Father Henry A. Atwell

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## De-Aristotlized Scholasticism

# Can God be 'Present' if He isn't a 'Being'

A REVIEW BY HARVEY COX

For decades Christian theologians have been guilty of the sin of sloth in the area of the doctrine of God. We concentrated for a number of years on the analysis and ordering of religious experience and on the social implementation of the Kingdom. Then came Barth and with him an enormous interest in Christology. After World War II came a renewed interest in ecclesiology, especially in ecumenism and new structures of church life for industrial society.

All this time the doctrine of God lay more or less fallow and neglected. At the same time some of the main intellectual currents of the modern world, in particular those loosed by Freud and Marx, were becoming commonplace, and with them certain devastating criticisms of the traditional Christian doctrine of God.

With the notorious "death of God" flap in 1966, we became suddenly aware that our inherited assumptions about God were all being thrown into radical question.

Here for the first time in years we have a mature, highly erudite, readable and utterly radical book on Christian theism. Dewart has assembled the criticisms of our received views of God and shown that they cannot be ignored. He has located the source of the problem in the rationalization of Christianity between Paul and Augustine, a cultural development which, although it was absolutely essential for the universalization of Christianity, created problems from which we are only now freeing ourselves.

He then goes on to sketch, in what can only be called a thrilling way (although that adjective is seldom used in theology anymore) a possible future course for the further development of theism.

Dewart is in many ways more radical than the death-of-God theologians. They are concerned to publish the word of the death of the God of Christian theism. But the God they inter is precisely the hellenized theism we have inherited from the hellenic phase of Christian history. Dewart wishes to overcome not only what he calls the "absolute theism" of historical Christianity, but also the whole speculative ideological metaphysics from which it stems.

He suggests a thorough and uncompromising "de-hellenization" of Christian doctrine. He does not believe that the hellenic period of Christian development was in itself mistaken. Indeed he holds that it was necessary. But he insists that it is wrong for us to cling today to this particular cultural period of Christian history. Dewart moves far beyond hellenic metaphysical categories, and far beyond their medieval scholastic successors. He moves beyond, however, as one who is wholly and unapologetically at home with these categories.

He exposes the weakness of scholastic philosophy in its own

terms, indicates his gratitude for what it has contributed, but then moves into an exciting and contemporary intellectual orbit. Dewart relates his work to modern currents in philosophy and science.



—Wood carving by Michelangelo

"What manner of man is this . . . ?" The question first asked centuries ago in Galilee still nags theologians today.

But his main objective is to respond to what he takes to be the most devastating critique of traditional theism, that posed by the Marxists who claim that belief in the Christian God holds man in immaturity and prevents him from taking full, free and complete responsibility for the course of history and for the future of the universe.

Dewart is not defensive. He agrees to most of the Marxist critique, (as I think we all must) and then goes on to show that Christian theism not only has "developed" (a category used with brilliance by both Newman and Adam), but that it must continue to develop, and that we must in fact discard many of the components of our traditional views of God in Christianity. We discard them, however, not for atheism, which has its own problems as Dewart shows, but for a type of theism which makes man even more responsible for the future of his world than Marxism does.

For Dewart, the problem with Marxism is that it does not take

man's freedom to fashion history seriously enough. It still operates within the categories of hellenic metaphysical Christianity, albeit to reject its God as a threat to man. So for Marxism, the openness of history is equated with man's openness, whereas for Dewart, history has a radical openness and contingency which is not exhausted by man's freedom.

It is this transcendent openness which man encounters in his historical experience that Dewart identifies with God.

Some people will feel that Dewart's theological proposals are blatantly heretical and that his effort to justify them on the basis of traditional Christian theology represents a colossal distortion of the tradition. I disagree. Dewart rightly insists that orthodoxy not only allows for but requires the continuous development of dogma.

He shows how the traditional doctrines of the trinity and of the hypostatic union, though they served useful purposes at one time, today actually mislead and confuse the faith. He then demonstrates how the truths they sought to convey must be expressed today in markedly different form.

Dewart's main strength is that he takes the contemporary philosophical discovery of the historicity of human thought, including theology, with the full seriousness it deserves. He rejects those notions of the incarnation which depict God as coming into terrestrial history on some sort of a slumming jaunt. God, Dewart insists, has taken up permanent residence in history. In fact for Christian theism of the sort Dewart is projecting, God becomes the very substance of history itself. The last supratemporal, extraterrestrial residue of Greek metaphysics is abolished and we have a God who is totally and unreservedly "with us" in the human enterprise.

This final position, suggesting that God is that presence within history which is not a part of history, links Dewart to the great school of eschatological theologians in the 19th century, such people as Gerhard Saxler, Johannes Metz and Jurgen Moltmann.

Like Dewart, they see God as the presence of maturity and responsibility exerted on man by an "uniquely open future. Since history is so unconditionally open, both hell and the Kingdom of God become real possibilities. Hell is the possibility of the real and irreversible failure of human history. The Kingdom of God is the possibility of that history's fulfillment. Nowhere is Dewart more eloquent than on those pages where he is describing the possibilities man faces in a future kept genuinely open by the presence within it of a transcendent God.

Dewart's book is not easy reading. He reaches astonishing conclusions by a process of careful and qualified reasoning. He does not toss out spectacular asserions but constructs them with meticulous respect for the clarity of the argument. But this cautious style of writing makes the results even more breath-taking.

His book could be epoch making. It avoids side issues and plunges into the very heart of the matter, the question on which our faith lives or dies, the reality of the living God.

From my point of view we either move along the road Dewart has marked out, or we abandon any pretense of a viable doctrine of God for our time. He is right that atheism is the constant and most winsome alternative for the modern intelligence. But Dewart's is a theism that includes atheism, the only possible theism for today.

# Catholics Want Work in Church, Not Hand-outs

by GARY MACDON

I find both in newspaper reports and among my friends that the recently formed Institute for Freedom in the Church is already the center of acute controversy. By what right can a group of Catholics without official standing or mandate assume to themselves the authority to review, and on the basis of their judgment of the fact to disapprove publicly, actions of Church officials?

Before the historic day in 1963 when Cardinal Frings of Cologne listed for the Council Fathers in St. Peter's the violations of basic human rights being committed by the Holy Office, such a development was unthinkable in the Church.

The discussion that ensued, however, established beyond doubt that institutional procedures surviving at all levels in the Church were not in keeping with today's understanding of justice and equity.

It does not automatically follow, of course, that the Institute for Freedom is the answer. The Church is not a democracy in the political sense. It would, consequently, be inappropriate to intro-

duce institutions simply because they serve a useful purpose in democratic societies such as ours. But it is now agreed that neither is it a totalitarian or even an authoritarian regime in the political sense of these words. With equal logic, therefore, it is inadmissible to retain the forms which never should have been introduced and which today are repulsive alike to those within and those without.

But must we wait until those exercising authority operate on themselves to excise the offending institutions and substitute becoming ones? This, I think, is the crucial question. Again, the "traditional" answer, meaning the answer that would automatically be unthinkingly have been given in the years between the two Vatican Councils, would be that only those in authority were entitled to initiate.

The entire message of the second Vatican Council, however, challenges that answer. At every level and in every context it calls on the whole people of God to be concerned about and involved in everything that affects the life and health of the Church.

One friend raised for me a very im-

portant but (I believe) basically fallacious argument about the Institute. "Here in the United States, the type of conflict in which it will become involved will ordinarily be one between a priest or a member of a religious order and his or her superior."

In our open society, the interference of ecclesiastical authority in the life of the layman is minimal. But the priest or religious already has his remedy. He chose his state freely. If he doesn't like it, he can leave it. The religious is today dispensed from vows on request. Even the priest is no longer denied the so-called reduction to the lay state, and even freedom from his commitment, to celibacy."

I think the flaw in this argument is that it conceives the Church in the excessively individualistic pre-conciliar fashion. It may solve the problem of the individual (though it may sometimes aggravate it by forcing him to abandon the only life for which he is suited), but it ignores the rights and needs of the community.

Under such a formula, we could en-

visage all the Sisters who want the schools to reach the same standards as the neighboring public schools leaving a teaching order. We could envisage all the priests who saw the need for witness in a racially disturbed diocese abandon their parishes. We could easily reach the absurd extreme demonstrated recently in Colombia by a priest (or "ex-priest") as the phrase is used) who joined a bandit group as the only way left to him to express the charity of Christ.

Another friend has offered me the additional thought that the Institute might be concerned not only with the exercise of authority over priests and nuns, but with the lack of exercise of authority over the laity.

"The freedom of the Catholic laity in the United States is primarily negative," he said. "It is license rather than liberty. They can go their own way as individuals, but as Christians they lack the freedom to play their part in the building of the Church, a part to which, as the Council insisted, they were called by Christ in baptism. What we want is work, not hand-outs."

## At St. Agnes

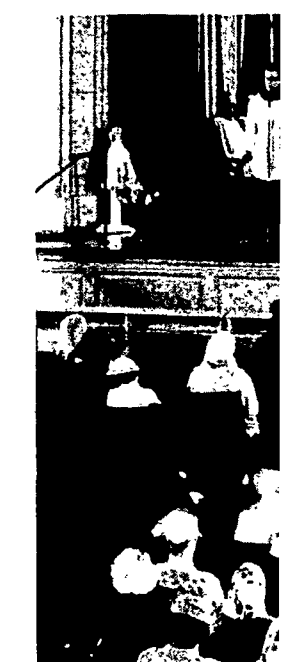
## Religion

What has been the of the Vatican Council teaching of religion in schools? Do students stigate their religion out the category of endless tion?

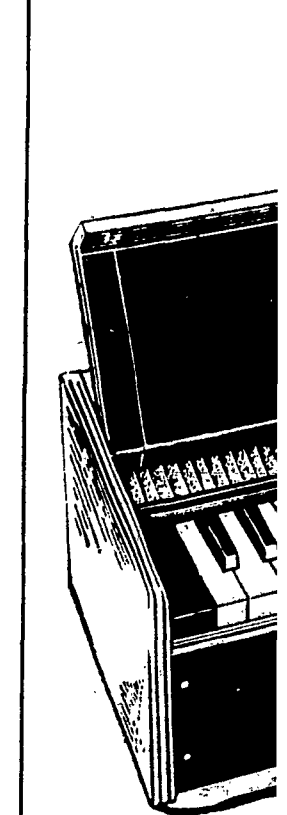


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