

Martin Sheen — he was Ramon Estevez from Dayton.

The Catholic COURIER

Journal

THE NEWSPAPER OF THE ROCHESTER DIOCESE

78th Year

ROCHESTER, N.Y., FRIDAY, JAN. 13, 1967

Price 15 cents

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Changing Image
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A Boy Named Sheen Makes Good on Broadway

New York — (CP) — Not many actors turn a bishop for assistance in making a name for themselves, but that is what Martin Sheen did.

The 26-year-old performer, who has starred in the Broadway and touring companies of "The Subject Was Roses" and "The Subject Was Roses" on some of television's leading dramatic programs, took his name from famed Fulton J. Sheen, new bishop of Rochester.

"I wasn't likely to get anywhere with my real name, Ramon Estevez," the actor explained. Growing up in Dayton, Ohio, where he was one of 10 children in the Estevez family, he had often admired Bishop Sheen on television. When Ramon was looking for a stage name, he adopted the bishop's.

"I considered him a great actor, in the way he handled material," actor Sheen said. Besides, I needed an Irish name, since I looked more like

my mother, who is Irish. She was a Phelan."

But the similarity between Martin Sheen and Bishop Sheen goes a little beyond their last name. Both owe their success, in part, to their ability in speaking on Scriptural topics and both have contributed greatly to religious telecasting.

The young actor got his start as an actor by performing scenes from Scripture. "In the summer of 1958 I appeared on a local amateur television show in Dayton, something like the 'Amateur Hour,'" he recalled. "I did excerpts from the Bible, enacting a number of scenes. I won the first week I was on, so I was invited back to compete the second week. I ran the gamut of five weeks and won the grand prize."

That grand prize was a trip to New York City and an audition at CBS-TV. The casting director there, who was helpful in getting the young man his

first acting job, was Robert Dale Martin.

"That's who I took my first name from," Sheen said of Mr. Martin, who is now also a vice president of the Catholic Actors Guild.

Sheen's contributions to Catholic telecasting have been through his many appearances on "The Catholic Hour" television series. He was star of one of the series' most successful dramas, "The Prophet," in which he played a young man who abandons a comfortable suburban life to work—and die—for the cause of equal rights. The drama won top prize two years ago at the International Catholic Television Festival and has been shown often by parish organizations and other Catholic groups.

Sheen's latest effort for "The Catholic Hour" is "A Bad Day for the Marchers," in which he plays a fiery seminarian who leads a march to protest slum

conditions. (It is scheduled by NBC-TV for telecasting Sunday, Jan. 22, at 2:30 p.m., EST).

Now starring on Broadway in a Gunter Grass drama called "The Wicked Cooks," Sheen developed an interest in acting while he was a student at Dayton's Chamade High School, operated by the Marianist Brothers. In his senior year (1957-58) he was a regional finalist in the National Catholic Forensic League competition in Chicago, where he competed (but did not win) with a 10-minute monologue from Eugene O'Neill's "The Iceman Cometh."

In New York he joined the Living Theatre, working mostly backstage ("You might say I was a janitor"). But he did work up to one of the leading parts in the off-Broadway production of "The Connection," also appearing in the film version of the play.

But his big break came when

he was selected by playwright Frank Gilroy to portray the returning Bronx GI in the starring three-character play, "The Subject Was Roses."

In preparing for his audition (60 young actors were invited to read for the part), Sheen learned that Gilroy had served with the 89th Infantry Division during World War II. Since the role was autobiographical in part, Sheen went to a library and did research on Gilroy's old army outfit in order to bring a little more perception to the part.

However, Sheen clinched the part when Gilroy saw him in a "Defenders" TV episode. Richard Walsh, producer of the National Council of Catholic Men, saw Sheen in "Roses" and offered him the lead in "The Prophet." Since then, the young actor has regularly been putting a sheen on both the stage and television. (Catholic Press Features)

The Church: Sign of the Times The Sacrament of Mankind's Unity

This is the second in a series of articles on the teachings of the Vatican Council by Father Albert J. Shamon, pastor of St. Patrick's Church, Victor. Father Shamon is the author of many articles and books many of which were published in the Courier in previous years. In this series he will present in popular terms the documents of the Council, particularly those that pertain to the Church and its role in the modern world.

Perhaps the greatest achievement of Vatican II was its document on the Church titled *Lumen Gentium*, from the first two words of the Latin text. In translation the text begins, "Christ is the Light of all nations." To refer to Christ as the light is biblical. To begin the Constitution on the Church with "Christ," "light," and "all nations" served notice that the document would be Christological, biblical and optimistic in tone and universal in its concern.

The very first question Vatican II asked herself was, "What is the Church?" For the purpose of the Council was to reform and renew the Church. But self-reformation and self-renewal are impossible without self-knowledge. So the Church asked herself: "What am I supposed to be? What am I supposed to do in this world?" In answering this question the Council forged the magnificent *Dogmatic Constitution on the*

Church, the second longest conciliar document, (16,200 words).

Of all the documents proposed to the Council none underwent such drastic changes as this one *On the Church*. The first Schema proposed was the standard textbook treatment of the Church. It emphasized the visible and structural nature of the Church. It was defensive and reflected the pre-conciliar siege mentality spawned by the Reformation attack that the Church of Christ was not meant to be a visible, hierarchical society. The Council Fathers, however, would have none of this. For them the Counter-Reformation had ended. So the Schema was remanded to committee to be re-drafted.

A year later (1963), the re-written Schema was again presented in the second session. Even though it now proffered a vision of the Church that was biblical, historical, vital and dynamic, still the Council Fathers balked. They debated it, revised it, amended it and then tossed it back into the hopper for the committee to re-draft along the suggested lines of revision. So for another year the Schema was worked over.

In the third session a third draft was presented; and this time, on November 21, 1964, it was approved, 2,151 to 5. The change from the first draft to the third was so drastic that future historians will wonder how so great an evolution could have taken place in so short a time.

This document *On the Church* is called a "dogmatic" Constitution, not that it defined a new dogma; it merely set forth what the Fathers of the Council understood the nature of the Church to be at this present moment of history. It is called a "dogmatic" Constitution to denote that this was the most solemn utterance a Council could make. Yet it was not definitive. The very first chapter of the document is titled "The Mystery of the Church." A mystery is a truth about which we cannot know everything; it is a truth that defies exhaustion, like being unable to drink a well dry. Therefore we cannot say about this pronouncement of the Council on the Church: "New this is it! This is the last word on the subject; the case is closed. No more can be said." No, instead the Council left the door wide open for further developments. This is not a final achievement, it is a stepping-stone, a beginning, not an end.

And what did the Council say the Church was? She did not define the Church as the Mystical Body of Christ. She carefully avoided this medieval phrase. Instead she used a startling new word. The Council said the Church is "a kind of sacrament or sign of intimate union

"We must count among the worst evils of our time the fact that the churches are separated from one another."

That statement certainly is true today... just as it was when John Calvin said it four hundred years ago.

There is now, however, a difference.

For the first time in four hundred years there is now a glimmer of hope that the chasm of separation might at last be bridged.

Convinced that this hope is more than fantasy, Christians in increasing numbers are turning, as Christians could be expected to do, to pray — and to pray together — for a healing of their divisions.

This conviction will be dramatized in churches around the world and throughout the Diocese of Rochester during the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, beginning Wednesday, Jan. 18, extending to Wednesday, Jan. 25.

More than 35 series of church services are scheduled during that time throughout the twelve-county Rochester Diocese.

Members of at least 150 Catholic and Protestant parishes will attend one another's churches to pray and ponder the steps still to be taken to win God's gift of ultimate unity.

In Rochester, a city-wide ecumenical service will be held Pentecost Sunday, May 14, at the Eastman Theatre, rather than during the up-coming week. The Diocesan Ecumenical Commission and the Rochester Area Council of Churches, in a statement, said the emphasis for January is at the local parish level.

A listing of the unity week services as reported to the Commission and the Council is published on page three of this issue of the Courier.

Parish bulletins should be consulted Sunday for possible additions or revisions.

The eight days prayer for Christian unity was begun in 1908 here in New York State, at Graymoor, a few miles north of New York City, by the then Episcopal clergyman Father Paul Watson who later became a Roman Catholic. His spiritual family, the Franciscan Friars of the Atonement, continued to promote what was called the Chair of Unity Octave for the conversion or "return" to the Roman Catholic Church of all who are not Catholics.

The octave received encouragement from Popes Pius X, Benedict XV and Pius XI but its orientation toward understanding and little acceptance in other than Catholic churches.

Unity hopes were, however, stirring at that time in other ways in Europe.

A series of conversations between Catholics and Anglicans was held at Malines, Belgium, with the blessing of Pope Pius XI, in the early 1920s. The conversations, arranged by Cardinal Desire Joseph Mercier and England's Lord Halifax, pioneered the practice which today is termed "dialogue."

At the time the conversations concluded in 1925, a Benedictine monastery was established at Amay-sur-Meuse by Dom



New York — (RNS) — Protestant and Catholic ecumenical leaders discuss distribution of 1.5 million copies of

the common prayer leaflet prepared for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, Jan. 18-25

Lambert Bauduin, a friend of Cardinal Mercier. The monastery's special goal was to study and pray for a rapprochement between Catholics and Orthodox.

The Abbe Paul Couturier of Lyons, France, spent a month at Amay in 1932 and returned home convinced of the need to stir up a widespread desire for Christian unity.

Priests Vote On Diocesan Leadership

Priests of the Rochester Diocese are currently voting for the clergy who will be Bishop Sheen's chief executive assistants.

The unprecedented action to have priests vote for the diocesan officials rather than have them appointed by episcopal fiat was announced in a letter to the priests from Bishop Sheen.

He asked them to nominate three priests "whom I may appoint to preface their vote by a visit to the Blessed Sacrament and after invoking the guidance of the Holy Spirit."

The Bishop assured the priests, "I personally and alone will count the ballots and will be guided by your decision."

Bishop Sheen At Brockport

Bishop Sheen will launch centennial observances of the State University College at Brockport Tuesday evening, Jan. 24.

Charles H. Lang, centennial coordinator, said tickets are still available for the dinner at which Bishop Sheen will speak.

The Bishop's talk will be videotaped for students unable to attend the centennial dinner.

Lecture Open to the Public

'New Morality' at McQuaid

"Situation Ethics — the New Morality" — once banned by a Vatican decree in 1956 — will be the topic of a talk by an Episcopalian author-lecturer at McQuaid Jesuit High School Tuesday, Jan. 17, at 3:30 p.m.

Dr. Joseph Fletcher, currently professor of social ethics at the Episcopal Theology School at Cambridge, Massachusetts, will outline his ideas on ethics which have been described as "explosive" and "as contemporary as tomorrow."

Pope Pius XII issued a warning against "situational" ethics in 1952 and four years later the Vatican's Holy Office banned the theory from Catholic schools and seminaries.

Advocates of the "new morality" as well as Catholic moral experts have both come a long way from where they were a decade ago, however.

Fletcher's conviction boils down to this: "Every man must decide for himself according to his own estimate of conditions and consequences, and no one can decide for him or impugn the decision to which he comes."

HIS IDEAS have been given wide circulation through a paperback book published by the Westminster Press of Philadelphia for \$1.95 with the same title as his scheduled McQuaid lecture.

He voiced his thoughts in a French magazine in 1935 and gave the American octave a new name — "The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity" — and a new slant, praying for unity "when Christ desires it and as Christ desires it."

Many other churches promptly responded enthusiastically and when the World Council of Churches was organized in 1948

the "Week" was given worldwide encouragement.

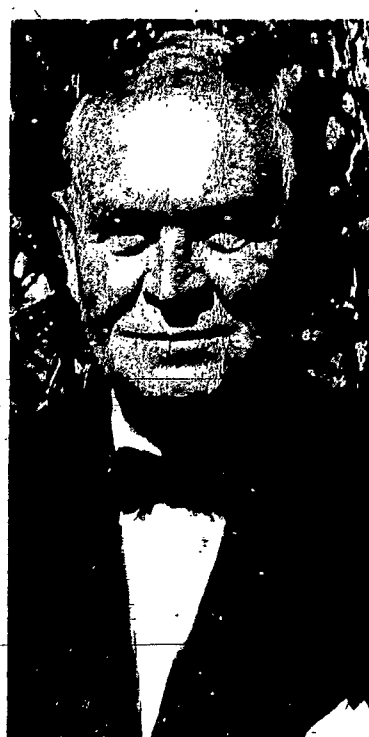
The most recent major impetus came from the Vatican Council which thrust Catholics once and for all without reservation into the ecumenical movement with official recommendation to Catholics to join other Christians in both private and public prayers for religious unity.

pared in any situation, to compromise them or set them aside in the situation if love seems better served by doing so.

The book "Situation Ethics" is becoming a major text in many collegiate theology and philosophy courses. Jesuit Father John G. Milhava, in his review of the book in the magazine "Theological Studies" stated: "The book (is) a welcome and substantial contribution to present-day ethical discussion. It will have served well indeed even if it does nothing more than curb the current inflation in ethical absolutes and hasten the review of the process by which the absolutes are determined."

A question and answer period will follow. Dr. Fletcher's address tickets are available at McQuaid Jesuit High School, 1800 Clinton Avenue S., Rochester. Further information is available through Rory Cuhane, 473-1130.

Fletcher, in his book, says Rochester's Father Charles E. Curran, now on the faculty of the Catholic University at Washington, represents a Catholic slant toward the "new morality" idea. Father Curran's thoughts on the subject are contained in a recently published paperback book titled "Christian Morality Today: The Renewal of Moral Theology" from Fides Co.



JOSEPH FLETCHER prepared to compromise

Concerning situation ethics, Dr. Fletcher states: "The situationist enters into every decision-making situation fully armed with the ethical maxims of his community and its heritage, and he treats them with respect as illuminators of his problems. Just the same he is pre-

A Revision Of Indulgences

The Vatican announced another step to update the Catholic Church this week. Partial indulgences, it was reported, "will no longer be counted quantitatively in days or years" and there has been "a considerable reduction in the number of plenary indulgences," limiting them to one a day.

An exception to this reduction, however, is still authorized "for the hour of death" when a plenary indulgence may be granted even though another one was gained earlier in the day.

Dominican Father Luigi Ciappi termed the revision "a legislative act of great importance."

Another announcement in Rome said Pope Paul would send the Golden Rose, annual Laetare Sunday gift, to the shrine of the Immaculate Conception of Aparecida in Brazil. This year marks the 250th anniversary of the shrine there.

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