

Catechism Hassle Airs Faith Teaching Renewal

Agnes Albright Requiem Offered

Funeral Mass for Mrs. Agnes Albright was offered by Father Elmer McDonald at St. Augustine's Church, Saturday, August 26. Monsignor John M. Duffy was in the Sanctuary.

Mrs. Albright of 94 Farragut St., wife of John Albright whose death occurred August 4, died August 23, 1967.

Surviving are: one son, Nicholas Rossiter; a daughter, Mrs. George (Ethel) Hastings; four grandchildren, three great-grandchildren, one sister, Mrs. Nora Cottrell, Ulton, N.Y.

She was a member of St. Augustine's Rosary Society and the Legion of Mary.

Blessing at Holy Ghost Cemetery was given by Father McDonald. Arrangements by Joseph A. Murphy Funeral Home.

Chicago — (NC)—Nine years ago, as the European catechetical revival was beginning to have its strongest impact on American Catholic schools, Msgr. William McManus, superintendent of Chicago's Catholic schools, thought it was high time seventh and eighth graders had a new religion textbook.

The decision led not to publication of what might have been called the "Chicago Catechism," but to publication of an eight-year religious educational program called "Word and Worship," by Benziger Brothers of New York. (The series is not in use in the Rochester Diocese.)

It has also led to a noisy hassle over religion in the nation's largest Catholic school system.

And, as a by-product, to the recognition of laymen as an important element in the administration of the Church in the 20th century.

The hassle started last Janu-

ary, when a Chicago couple, Mr. and Mrs. Richard White, objected to the third-grade catechism which had just arrived for use in their son's school.

It was less than six months after Martin Luther King had led a series of open housing marches in the city and suburbs — all greeted by jeers, bricks and bottles — and only two months after Chicago's politicians had felt the first sting of the "white backlash."

The catechism — from the Word and Worship series — spoke kindly of Dr. King, pictured him in the Selma-Montgomery march. Its single paragraph on the civil rights leader ended: "Rev. King is a brave Christian."

A series of meetings, small and large, extended over the next four months. Dr. King, while a prime objection for many, turned out to be a minor one for most, including the Whites.

Father Weber has been concerned with that kind of communication for more than two decades, ever since he and Father James Kilgallon — another author of the series — became involved in the beginnings of the Christian Family Movement and the Cana movement in Chicago.

"It wasn't long before we realized two things from this work," said Father Weber.

"The way the Faith had been taught to these apostolic people had had no effect on their lives.

"The Scripture did have a strong effect."
THE DIAGNOSIS: too many books had been written by people who had no contact with people and how they live.

THE CURE: The two priests decided to apply the knowledge gained from their pastoral experience — both have served in suburban, working-class and poverty-stricken parishes — to a new kind of Scripturally-based religious education. The method wasn't really new; it was that idea upon which the Europeans had based their catechetical renewal.

THE RESULT: The 1958 publication of their manual for converts, "Life in Christ," which

has now sold more than 1.2 million copies.

Not long after publication of "Life in Christ" Msgr. — now Bishop — McManus asked the priests to write a seventh- and eighth-grade religion book for Chicago's Catholic schools.

But before they started, Benziger Brothers asked Msgr. McManus what he thought of an eighth-grade series. He thought well of it, and Benziger promptly enlisted the services of Fathers Kilgallon and Weber.

They were joined by a New Orleans Dominican nun, Sister Mary Michael. The three were named general editors of the series, and together they wrote the upper-grade texts. A team of Sisters from the New Orleans Dominicans, the Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary from Monroe, Mich., and the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet of St. Louis wrote the lower-grade books.

The team apparently worked well together.

"We wanted a man's hand in the upper-grade texts," said Father Weber. There, the boys are gun-shy of that female influence, and feel a need for a strong masculine hand. The Sisters' feminine influence was more necessary in the lower grades.

They worked well in other ways, too.

"Father Kilgallon and I are doctrine men," said Father Weber. "Sister Mary Michael has a doctorate in psychology. She was able to show us how to present the material."

There were also problems. Like the Vatican Council.

"When the Council came along we had to throw out the fifth-grade book—which teaches the liturgy—and rewrite it completely."

And there was sadness. Sister Rose Therese of the Sisters of St. Joseph died half-way through the fourth-grade text she was writing. A new author was assigned, who had to start from scratch.

When the project was finished nine years later, there were the inevitable "bugs" — they were all printed and brought out within a couple of months," said Father Kilgallon, "and

there are a lot of typographical errors."

Then came the praise, and the approval of more than 120 dioceses.

There was approval, too, from unexpected sources: the sixth-grade teachers manual has become regular spiritual reading in many convents, and is used as a Scripture text in some novitiates.

Then came the criticism from Chicago's conservatives, and with it some good.

It prompted the priests to begin work on a companion book for parents explaining the new catechetics. That is "right here on the floor," said Father Weber. But it will be in print soon.

It also brought:

—A promise from John Cardinal Cody to increase the lay membership in the archdiocesan school board; to open the board's meetings to the public and to give laymen a greater voice in the archdiocese's policymaking, all aimed at giving responsible laymen a chance to voice their support, or criticism, through valid channels.

—A new program of cooperation with the Catholic home and school associations. "We plan to recruit a team to go to their meetings and discuss changes in the Church, the social factors underlying change, and explain to parents how to participate in religious formation in the home," said Father Weber.

—The series will stay in the schools.

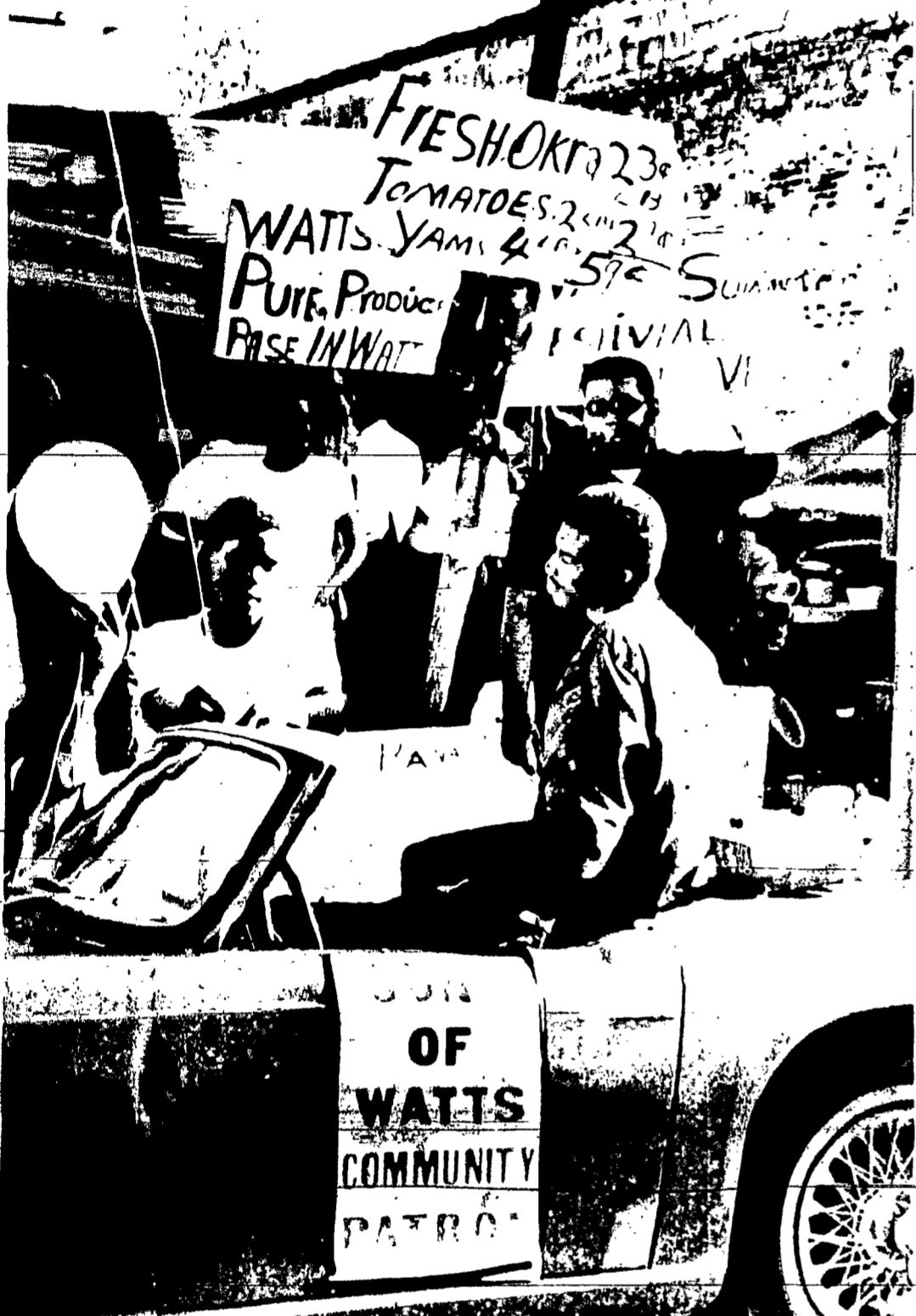
Was the hassle all bad?

"Certainly not," said Father Weber. "A friend of mine told me 'there's been a lot of this kind of static in the air for a long time, but you two have been the lightning rods that collected it.'

"It has brought home to us how people have only been aware of the superficial changes in the Church—like the liturgy

—but haven't become aware of the deep implications of these changes."

"Now we have to get to work and make them aware of these changes."



Watts Festival -- Instead of Riots

Los Angeles — (RNS) — A Watts Summer Festival, with gaily decorated streets, commemorates the anniversary of racial rioting, looting and fire that tore apart this predominantly Negro section of Los Angeles. In this photo, members of the Sons of Watts Community Patrol park their car in front of a neighborhood stand during preparations for the festival.

God's World

Celibacy Topic Stirs Discussion

By Dennis J. Geaney, O.S.A.

Before the Pope's encyclical on celibacy, someone in jest, said to a 73 year old pastor: "Monsignor, the law of celibacy will be wiped off the books in two years."

With a pause for quick calculating and with a twinkle in his eyes, he replied: "I don't think I would be around for my silver wedding anniversary." His 80 year old retired pastor friend said gently: "If they don't do something soon, it will be too late for some of us."

I remember distinctly when the subject became living room conversation. It was about four years ago. I had just finished a retreat at major seminarians in a Canadian seminary. A group of seminarians and myself decided to go downtown to see a movie.

Dressed in casual attire we climbed into a cab outside the seminary. The young cab driver had hardly put the meter flag down when he asked if we thought priests would marry. We were purposely vague and unresponsive, hoping that he would see we were not in the mood for such a discussion.

He was insistent. Did we think marriage was good? That was his experience. It should help a man be a better priest.

Again he asked what we thought about it. We agreed that marriage was good, but we kept hedging all the way to the front of the movie house. It was a new experience to be bugged by a cab driver about celibacy, but I knew the subject was here to stay and I had to do some re-thinking if I wanted to relate and make sense to cab drivers and others who would confront me with the subject.

Treating the Subject

The next day I met one of Canada's outstanding theologians. Immediately I told him about the cab driver and asked him how he handles the subject.

I told him that at the seminary retreat I gave a confer-

ence on celibacy based on the eschatological argument, that is, the celibate or the virgin is a sign of the kingdom of heaven, where there is neither marriage nor being given in marriage.

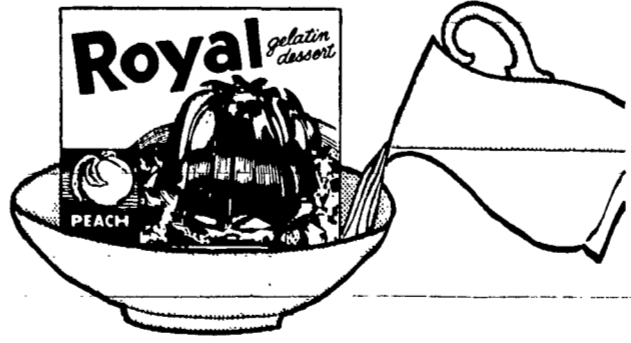
I gave what I considered the New Testament basis for celibacy. I told my theologian friend that I did not think the cab driver would appreciate it.

He replied that he did not use the eschatological argument himself. His defense of celibacy of the clergy was based on practicality, that is, the effectiveness of a celibate ministry.

He argued further that the spread of the gospel was more important than the preservation of celibacy, so that if in a particular country it was impossible to find candidates for a celibate clergy, the urgency of the gospel would demand that we accept married men for holy orders.

Protestant Clergy Comment
He further spoke of his experience with Protestant clergy at a gathering in which celibacy and marriage was the chief point of discussion. He was surprised to find that the ministers, whom he considered happily married arguing for celibacy and the ones whom he judged less well-mated to be arguing against it.

He thought that the happily married ministers had reached the point in maturity, that they could conceive of living without hood than I.



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Recent Film Ratings

Following are the title of films reviewed recently by the National Catholic Office for Motion Pictures:

Class A, Section I
Nobody's Perfect
Ballad of Josie, The
Enter Laughing
Frozen Dead
What Am I Did?

Class A, Section III
(Morally Unobjectionable for Adults)
The Love-ins
Happily Every After
Rose
The Tiger and the Pussycat

Class A, Section IV
(Morally Unobjectionable for Adults, with Reservations)
Bonnie and Clyde

Observation: Reworking the elements of the traditional gangster film, with comment on the personal and social world of its main characters, this film, by combining "folksy touches" with scenes of brutal crime, appears ambiguous in its treatment of these characters. In addition, scenes of strong violence would indicate that the film is questionable fare for the young or sensitive viewer.

Hawks and the Sparrows, The
Observation: The allegorical character of the film offers unusual difficulties of interpretation.

Class B
(Morally Unobjectionable in Part for All)
Queens, The
Observation: This film tends to be dehumanizing in its one-sided, negative view of women.

Seminary Head

Cincinnati — (NC) — Archbishop Karl J. Alter has appointed Msgr. Robert H. Tensing rector of St. Mary's major seminary. He succeeds Msgr. Joseph J. Schneider, who retired in May after 18 years in that post.

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