

# WORDS: Realities or Dry Bones

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

At the beginning of the summer riots, a leader in Spanish Harlem was being interviewed. He explained the feelings of his people that exploded in riots and rumbles thus: "Words, words, words. That is all we get. We get a lot of nice talk from people who say they are concerned, but no one does anything."

Spanish speaking people love words. One of the tests of a Castro speech or a Spanish curio conference is the length. They are measured in hours rather than minutes.

A friend from the academic world, however, told me that words have had their day. People, she said, have lost confidence in words as a means of communication. Her niche in academia is poetry and she tells me that the difference between the Beats and Hippies is that the Hippies are not interested in poetry or words like the Beats. The Beats produced a literature.

**Words in the Balance**  
I began to wonder what would happen to Western civilization which has used the word to communicate its heritage from one generation to another. I asked what would happen to the church that believes that the word gives life, that the very proclamation of the message renews the Church.

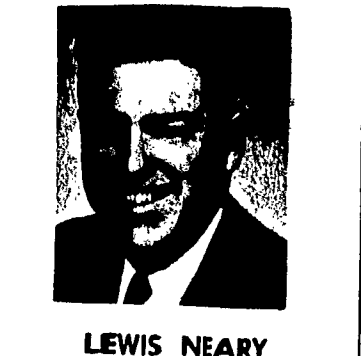
The crisis is clear in our northern cities. Words come easy to the man who seeks votes; to the committee that meets in a rooming house to discuss the causes of poverty; to the social worker who insists that everything will work out if we apply to the proper agency and fill out the proper form; to the priest who tells the poor about God's Providence which has assured him a membership in a Country Club; to the nun who promises to pray that everything will work out as she closes the convent door to the neighbors.

When words fail the poor, they use Molotov cocktails. This happens when Congressmen are not concerned about rats biting babies and cities and states as well as white citizens say, "yes, we believe that should have the right to vote but not to live next door, the poor buy, borrow, or steal guns that are more powerful and destructive than words.

**Words of the Council**  
The crisis of words is in the church. The Council after four years, has produced a beautiful volume of words. Words for everybody. Words for people interested in better liturgy. Words for priests who want a better relationship with their bishop. Words for bishops who want better relationships with

## Seton Groups In Action

- 47TH BRANCH of Seton Workers of St. Mary's Hospital will meet at home of Mrs. Raymond Weich, 8 Mareeta Road, Tuesday, Sept. 26 at 8 p.m.
- 77TH BRANCH was to meet at home of Mrs. Sanford Stockhouse, 9 Town House Circle, Wednesday, Sept. 20.
- 43RD BRANCH met Sept. 14 at home of Mrs. Joseph Walther of Sherbourne Rd. to work on Seton Sale project.
- 50TH BRANCH to meet in the home of Mrs. Neil Mahoney, 27 Huxley Drive, Webster, Thursday, Sept. 28 at 8:30 p.m.
- 14TH BRANCH annual fall luncheon at Spring House, Tuesday, Sept. 26 at 12:30 p.m. Plans for the year's activities to be discussed.



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the pope and curia and with each other.

Like a political platform there are words for everyone. We have words for Protestants, Jews and other non-Christians. The words are not cheap words and for the most part were not thrown together by committees, but neatly chiseled and generally coherent.

The words were signed and sealed by the bishops of the world and proclaimed most solemnly by the Holy Father before the Council adjourned, with delight over their words. They had produced words in

abundance, good words, wise words. They would be translated into every language, but they would still be words: Italian, English, French and Spanish words.

**From Word to Deed?**  
Would the words become deeds as the Word took Flesh? Catholics lay and clerical want to know why the words about experimentation in the liturgy are not operative. They want to know why permissions for what the Council agreed are reluctantly given or not given at all.

They want to know why the words on lay responsibility are

not taken seriously and made operative. Priests want to know why the words on initiative, responsibility—collaboration—with their bishops and fellow priests and pastors are still dry bones.

Increasingly young people are less concerned about the crisis of words in the Church. They would rather chuck it than engage in the painfully slow way of reform. They are not going to throw rocks at the rectory and convent windows. They don't need us the way we think they should.

This is all very sobering to a journalist whose work is words. Does anyone want to buy a used typewriter?

## KC To Fete Capuano

Fellow Knights of Columbus of Joseph P. Capuano, Assistant Postmaster, will honor him at a testimonial dinner in Rochester Council Knights of Columbus clubrooms, 513 Monroe Ave., Saturday, Sept. 23.

The knights and ladies will attend a reception at 8:30 p.m. Dinner will follow.

Grand Knight Harold L. Knauf of Pope Pius Council 4891, Irondequoit, former supervisor and presently Monroe County Legislator will be principal speaker at the dinner.

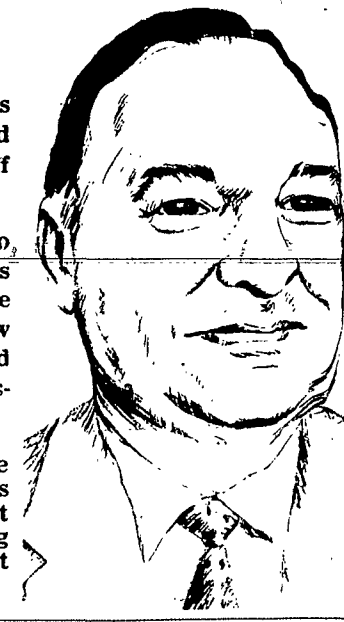
Bernard Murphy, president of Branch 210, National Association of Letter Carriers and member of the national association's Life Insurance Department will preside as toastmaster.

The committee in charge is headed by Harold Doyle and Gerald Schutties, members of Rochester Council.

Tribute is being paid Capuano for his efficient handling of his office, his personality, and the esteem felt for him by fellow postal workers and business and professional people in Rochester.

Tickets are \$5 each and are being obtained from members of the ticket committee or at the Council Office by calling C. Orrin Ochs, secretary at 244-4340.

Deputy Grand Knight F. Robert Ridley's membership committee is cooperating.



JOSEPH P. CAPUANO to be honored

## Area Students At Good Counsel

Three area girls are among those enrolled as freshmen at Good Counsel College, White Plains, N.Y. They are Patricia Kehoe, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Howard Sullivan, 47 McGuire Road, a graduate of Cardinal Mooney High School, Miss Virginia Gottermeier, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. John B. Gottermeier, 35 Rhinecliff Drive, a graduate of St. Agnes High School and Miss Linda Fleckenstein, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Lorenz Fleckenstein, 1218 East Lake Road, Webster, who graduated from Bishop Kearney High School.

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Father Bart his counterpart Tier, is a so who seldom even in stres 53-year-old pa Our Mother heads is a we m a s t e r, w books and a d discrimination.  
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