

Think Our Inner City Problems Are Bad?

Jesuit Leader On Race Crisis

The recent letter of Father Pedro Arrupe, General of the Society of Jesus, on the need for Jesuits to enter more fully into the apostolate for racial justice is a ringing statement of Christ-like concern. For our Courier-Journal readers, we are reprinting certain excerpts which speak to us all in these days.

The gravity of the current racial crisis in the United States and its serious impact upon Christian doctrine and practice impel me to address this letter to you.

In the presence of such a crisis, the resources of upright men must be marshalled to insure that the rich potentialities of the movement for human rights be not squandered in destructive conflict. At this moment of desperate human need what is the role of the Society of Jesus in her service to the Church and in her fidelity to the spirit of the Second Vatican Council? Is it not to inspire her sons so to labor, in cooperation with men of good will, as to make all phases of American institutions and practices an environment in which the human dignity and rights of all will be acknowledged, respected and protected?

Race relations and poverty are not necessarily and everywhere two aspects of the same problem. But, as a matter of fact, in the United States the problem of racial discrimination can hardly be considered apart from the problem of poverty.

Because the Negro minority is the largest and most tragic victim, and is at the center of domestic concern, I will place special emphasis upon Negro-white relations, conscious of the fact that much of what I say is applicable to other groups victimized by discrimination and poverty.

Certainly it is unnecessary for me, in writing to my fellow Jesuits, to dwell at length upon the teachings of the Church concerning interracial justice and charity. These teachings are well known to you. Pope Paul VI, on October 29, 1967, stated: "The Second Vatican Council clearly and repeatedly condemned racism in its various forms as being an offense against human dignity, 'foreign to the mind of Christ' and 'contrary to God's intent'."

Concerning racial conditions in the United States, the American Hierarchy in its 1958 statement on Discrimination and the Christian Conscience emphasized the fact that "The heart of the race problem is moral and religious."

The truths of our Faith, the teachings of the Second Vatican Council, the statements of the American Hierarchy, are clear and compelling. Wherefore a critical question immediately arises: has the historical reluctance of American citizens to implement the Declaration of Independence, been sadly paralleled by a corresponding reluctance of our Society to implement the fullness of Christian doctrine?

It is true, of course, that many Jesuits have distinguished themselves in laboring faithfully and effectively with many minority groups. We in the United States have a long and proud record of work with the American Indian, and with the Irish, the Italian, the German and the Slav immigrants of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. At the present time Jesuits are prominently identified with the Puerto Rican apostolate in the New York metropolitan area, and Jesuit activity for the Mexican-Americans in El Paso is worthy of special commendation.

Nevertheless, our record of service to the American Negro has fallen far short of what it should have been. Indeed of recent years, there have been great pioneers like Fathers John LaFarge and John Markoe, and others who followed them. These American Jesuits, despite misunderstanding and even opposition, sometimes within the Society itself, have accomplished heroic things in their work with the Negro.

But unfortunately our apostolate to the Negro in the United States has depended chiefly upon individual initiative and very little upon a corporate effort of the Society.

We must look to the future. First of all, our apostolate must be soundly predicated upon our personal and collective testimony to the real poverty of Christ. The needs of the world and the condition of the poor constitute a mandate and an incentive to remodel our own living standards.

All our younger brethren should be thoroughly trained, from the novitiate onward, in the principles of social justice and charity. Accordingly, with proper regard for the demands of their academic formation, priests, scholastics and brothers should be given the opportunity to gain personal experience in confronting the practical problems of the inner city and of racial discrimination.

Negro vocations should not only be conscientiously fostered but, if necessary, special opportunities should be given to Negroes to prepare themselves for entrance into the Society.

In explaining Christian doctrine, we should teach inter-racial justice and charity as an integral and vital part of our Catholic faith and commitment.

In our parishes we should earnestly strive with our parishioners to make the Negro genuinely welcome, and to help him participate in every way in the fullness of parish life.

In the signing of contracts for the purchase of goods and services, we should take particular precautions to patronize only those business firms and construction companies which have adopted, and actually observe, the canons of fair employment practices.

In meeting this challenge we will bear living and visible witness to the validity, the integrity, the credibility and the relevance of the Christian message, in a world increasingly skeptical of the sincerity of Christians, if not of Christianity itself.

Madras, India—She was made wordless by a metal stick which punctured one cheek and came out the other, like a huge hairpin. The violated cheeks were further mutilated by another metal device—shaped like a large wishbone—whose ends held her face just beneath the hole in each cheek. She had obviously learned to thrust the tip of the wishbone into a bystander's face, a grotesque prod to persuade people to buy her flowers.

She was about 12 years old and she was hawking flowers to bus passengers in Madras, a sore of a city on the southern coast of India, touching the Bay of Bengal.

Madras is India's fourth largest city and the little girls is one of the innumerable children variously mutilated to scratch sustenance from its groaning streets.

If it isn't the girl with her flowers it's a small boy waving his stump of an arm (probably amputated to create another beggar) in a stranger's face. Or a pile of leperous bones lifting itself from the pavement in another gasping supplication.

The slums of Madras are worse than those of Bombay or Calcutta, a Madras newspaper wrote recently, quoting Mother Theresa, founder of the Missionaries of Charity. Members of the order are 'slum sisters' who bring the human refuse of 23 cities in Indian into their leper homes, dispensaries, homes for the destitute and dying, homes for crippled, orphaned, unwanted children.

Mother Theresa recently visited her mission in Madras to fortify the ten sisters there, fighting "the misery of the seacoast."

Mother Theresa is 57—her order is 16 years old; she has been in India for nearly 40 years. She looks at least ten years older than she is; she has never acknowledged illnesses by resting. "I've never been so sick I missed a day," she said.

On a recent afternoon Mother Theresa explained her remarks on Madras: "There are more people in Calcutta," she said, "but the streets are broader than in Madras, where housing is worse. More people starve in Calcutta; those in Madras live worse."

No Comparison

Mother Theresa doesn't really like comparisons of suffering. She spent part of September in Tanzania, preparing to open a dispensary there for Africans. She agreed that Africans live 'better' than people in India "because of the terrible numbers in India. But for those people in Tanzania, for them, their suffering is the worst."

At the children's home, only open since January, the youngsters must have no one to care for them before they can be admitted. They are left at the door by despairing mothers or slum residents, or sometimes found on the streets by the sisters and brought in.

The home is in a sparsely furnished building donated by a local archbishop. Some of the youngsters playing with the few toys on the porch utter uncertainly hands groping, without coordination—polio victims or mentally retarded, sometimes both. Other children are well, but malnourished, bereft of care without the Missionaries.

There are babies there about five and six months old, said Sister Priscilla, who operates the Missionaries' Madras charities. She pointed to bundles of brown twigs, who seemed barely five days old.

Past these cribs, in the backyard, Madras women lined up to receive a week's supply of powdered milk. More waited outside the gates. The sisters' activities are becoming known; daily they are pressed to take more children, fill more pallets with destitutes, feed more, patch more, travel farther.

Their tenacity survives depressing drawbacks. "We go into slum daily," said Sister Priscilla. "We show mothers how to wash their children and keep their places clean. Next day when we return the homes are filthy again." The youngsters at the Missionaries' home



A sister inoculates one of the men at the home for destitute and dying. There are only ten sisters to attend the various projects in Madras.

should grow up with a more purposeful attitude.

Aid from the Pope

Mother Theresa said that Pope Paul VI has helped her order by donating six VW buses and a luxury car, which was raffled and the proceeds used to begin a children's home at Agra, home of the Taj Mahal. The slum sisters still need much. Sister Priscilla is teaching typing to young girls on three unsatisfactory portables, for instance; she desperately wants standard typewriters. And the children have almost no toys, let alone clothing.

Mother Theresa remains cheerful despite the wretched

scenes she has entered daily, all these years. She and her nuns spend their lives amid squalor which wrenches the stomach of visitors to their projects.

Mother Theresa's kindness and joviality attracts many young women to her novitiate—now numbering 345, mostly Indians.

"No, I don't think it's hopeless," she said, replying to a query about healing the destitute who return to life on the streets, and nearly half the Missionaries' patients do recover.

Near Those with a Smile
She does not see their work

as an exercise in pure altruism. According to Mother Theresa: "The dying have a right to die better, near someone with a smile."

In another part of Madras, far from the children's home,



A sister and a volunteer bathe a malnourished child at the children's home.

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Pope Paul Comes Out for 'Black Dignity'

By GARY MacEON

Rome—In political terms, the timing of Pope Paul's "Message to Africa" was superb. It came just after the Conference of the Seventy-Seven had unanimously adopted the Algiers Charter on African soil and just before the plenary meeting of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations.

The Algiers Charter, described by one delegate as creating a "tradition of the world's poor nations, is a declaration of the economic rights of the underdeveloped world, a dignified but blunt warning to the rich that we swim or sink together. The FAO's gloomy agenda reviews the failure of the Decade of Development, the intensifying reality of worldwide starvation.

In a specific application to Africa of the principles of Populorum Progressio, the encyclical on world development of last March, Pope Paul ranged the Church unequivocally on the side of the "most underdeveloped," as the Africans have been called.

There is a very special tone to this document. It stresses in particular the

new role the Church envisages for herself since Vatican II as a helper of the world, a modest helper with no monopoly of wisdom but simply a desire to contribute her special dimension to the work in which mankind is already properly engaged.

Concretely, the Pope urges that economic progress must be kept within a framework of spiritual values and of the development of man in all his complexity.

The Message to Africa, however, has a profound historical as well as an immediate political significance, and it is this that makes it particularly valuable to us in the United States at the moment when internal racial conflict threatens to destroy us. In novel and daring terms, and with a self-assurance which reveals the high quality of those who helped in drafting the Message, it challenges us to shed our myopic prejudices and see Africa and its peoples as they really are and have been.

American Negro intellectuals were largely responsible for the development early in this century of a concept of Black Dignity which the poets and philo-

sophers of French-speaking Africa subsequently refined as *negritude*.

Pope Paul boldly espouses this concept as his starting point. He stresses the solid evidence that all the civilizations of Africa are branches of a single tradition and derived from a single source. He points to the antiquity of African culture and specifically its contribution to the growth of Christianity.

Its heritage, linked to Saint Mark the Evangelist, represented "an intense Christian life from the second to the fourth centuries, a position of leadership both in the field of ideologies and in that of Christian literature."

The Pope expresses his "profound respect" for the Christian Churches "with which we are not in full communion" which have worked and suffered to keep the Christian name alive always in Africa. He also pays tribute to the Moslems, "who have elements in common with Christianity on which we are happy to pin our hopes for a fruitful dialogue."

The meaning of all this for the Western world is obvious. It is a call to stop think-

the dying lie on cots under large thatched shelters, supervised by typically cheerful, competent members of the order.

"Look! he's giving you a nice smile. She's happy you're greeting her today," said Sister Priscilla. The nun motioned to one of the emaciated patients now sitting up and folding her hands together in a Hindu greeting.

In Bad Taste

"Just bundles of humanity," remarked Sister Priscilla. The sister, 32, was raised in a moneyed family in northeast India. "It was in bad taste to even discuss poverty in my youth," she revealed. Only after Sister Priscilla began teaching at a Catholic college and eventually met Mother Theresa did the horror of life for many Indians move her to join the slum sisters.

She walked on, between rows of pallets. "This woman is uncharacteristically chubby," she said, pointing to a stout woman lying motionless and wied-eyed. "But she's completely paralyzed and blind."

In the men's ward another patient also lay unmoving, with his emaciated fingers pointing rigidly upward.

Such patients are the nearly dead and cannot benefit from a recent move of Sister Priscilla's to brighten the destitutes' existence.

"Those who can now work in their little garden for an hour in the morning and string rosary beads for an hour at night. You've no idea how this little bit of activity picks them up."

Probing The Word

By FATHER ALBERT J. SHAMON

Starting this week, the Courier-Journal will carry a brief thought-starter on the coming Sunday's Scripture reading. We trust that it will be a helpful remote preparation for Sunday Mass, and help our readers in their task of relating the Word of God to their life in the world.

At the beginning of the New Year we think of time; at the beginning of the Church Year time is uppermost in the Church's mind.

To the pagans, time was cyclic. History was simply life going around in circles, following the pattern of nature — daylight dying in darkness and darkness rising in sunlight. The same pattern, day in and day out. Winter is followed by spring, spring by summer, summer by fall, fall by winter. The same pattern, year in and year out. To the pagan life was a circular prison — birth, life, death — the same old thing. Living and dying, but going nowhere.

Then one day God broke into this circle of time so that man could break out of the pattern. God pointed to a Saviour, promised One in whom all nations would be blessed. So for the Jews time became linear. History became forward-looking: stretching forth to a Saviour. White-winged hope, as a consequence, shot through the history of Israel — the hope of a Saviour who would bring salvation.

In the fullness of time, the Savior came. With Him came the end-time, "the last days" spoken of by Joel the prophet. To the Christians, therefore, time became the day of salvation. "Raise your heads, for your redemption is near at hand."

Christian time is a perpetual advent. It is not a time in which Christ has come, but a time in which Christ does come in grace and in sacrament, and a time at the end of which He will come "on a cloud in great power and glory."

Because there is an end, a goal, something to look forward to, Christian time fills life with adventure, romance. How dull a bowling game would be without pins to bowl at; how monotonous golf, if there were no greens to shoot for. Without a goal, life too becomes boring, frustrating — no wonder so many do seek to end it. Who wants to go around in circles! That gets no one anywhere.

Years ago books used to end not with the word "The End," but with a picture. One book ended with a midnight scene, with moon and stars lighting up the darkness hovering over a graveyard. On a tombstone more prominent than the rest were written the words "The End."

But is that the end of life? The tomb is only the end of working, of learning, of doing. It is the night when no man can work. If St. Paul could write "the day is far gone," it is now later than we think—"It is the hour to wake up." Dare we then live in carousing and drunkenness, in sexual excess and lust, in quarreling and jealousy?

So often we worry about what the world thinks of us, but what do we think of the world? Do we look upon it, as now the acceptable time, as the day of salvation?

St. Ma To Me

Old St. Mary's Church fronts on Washington St. Rochester's business district also in the shadow of sky-high Xerox Tower. The new building is crowded with more than 2,000 people daytime residents of the tower.

With this trend at Mary's Church this week a noontime Mass, scheduled 12:10 p.m. Monday through Thursday, to its daily Mass. The Mass will be presided

Two Aquin To Be Or

Two Rochester men Aquinas Institute group will be among eleven Fathers ordained next

Angelo D. Bovenzi, C.S.B. Norman H. Kolb, C.S.B. ordained to the priesthood in Bishop Sheen in Sacred Cathedral on Saturday. The ceremony will begin at 8 a.m.

FATHER BOVENZI in Rochester on Jan. 1969. The son of Mr. & Mrs. Dominick Bovenzi, 30 Lane in Gates, he attended Apostles school and Aquinas Institute. In 1956 he entered Basil's novitiate in Rome and was professor of Basilian Fathers in 1957.

He obtained a B.A. in 1961 from the University of Windsor. Three years later at Assumption High School, Windsor, followed. After at St. Basil's seminary onto, Father Bovenzi went to the Grand Seminaire Sulpice in Paris, France.



FR. ANGELO BOVENZI continues his theological studies. He returned to Toronto to prepare for ordination.

The newly ordained will sing his first Solemn Mass of Concelebration in Holy Church on Dec. 10 p.m. A reception will be

Nazareth Building F

A former Rochester Indian stand taller in ligation through music

Sr. Marian, at one time member of St. John's parish, has been composing and recording songs as a bringing the often descendants of the Mayans and Western closer together.

Sister Marian, or L. O'Brien, as she is personally called, is under church rules, belonging to the Indian Maryknoll Order, which voted to foreign missions.

For the past two years she has served as a professor at Collegia Mor in the city of Guatemala, commutes in her spare weekends to the Indian of Santiago Atitlan, miles west.

Gathers Folk So

There and at other missions she has been folk and popular songs of the Indians' culture project sponsored by American republic.

So that the Guatemalan more readily identify



Priests of St. S. Irondequoit, construction of new church to structure. Comm from parishioner