

# Churches on Open Housing: From Words to Action

## A Gift For Humanity

With our modern techniques, a single American farmer needs and clothes nearly 40 of his countrymen. In the underdeveloped countries, the average farmer barely feeds his own family.

Christmas sharpens the contrast. While we shop for festive items for family and friends, half the people on earth are hungry. Surely most of us, in this season of goodwill towards all mankind, can afford to add a gift for humanity through CARE's Food Crusade.

Every dollar donated delivers a food package, in the name of the American people. The U.S. helps by donating commodities and host governments share operating costs. A total 6,500,000 packages are needed to complete CARE programs that will help feed 37 million people in 32 countries during the coming year.

The food sustains war refugees in South Vietnam and the Middle East, famine victims in India. In villages from Latin America to Africa, it brings hope for a better life. Served at schools, it helps educate children for a more productive role as the farmers and workers of tomorrow. At preschool centers, it saves malnourished youngsters from permanent mental and physical damage. Paid as wages, it feeds families while men build schools, roads, water systems and other facilities essential to economic development.

Compassion is reason enough to send a holiday contribution. But it is good to know that by our giving we also help the hungry feed themselves in the future. You can mail your check to: CARE Food Crusade, 660 First Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10016.

### Memo: For Christmas Joy . . .

Have you done your Christmas shopping yet? Let us buy your gift for the poor or, better, would you like the name of a family? Then you can buy a Christmas dinner for them and toys for the children. This is person to person charity. Please send your donation or call us—548-7220—Catholic Charities Christmas Fund, 50 Chestnut St., Rochester, New York 14004.

## Probing the Word

By FATHER ALBERT J. SHAMON

### 3rd Sunday of Advent

For centuries the Gospel according to St. John began with the Prologue, once read at the end of every Mass. Originally, this Prologue did not begin John's Gospel. Very likely the Gospel started at the verses which speak of the Baptist, verses six to eight, followed immediately by the passage read on the Third Sunday of Advent (1:19-28). This arrangement seems logical, for apostolic preaching generally began with the ministry of John the Baptist and not with the origin of the Word of God.

John was the last of the evangelists to write. At Ephesus, where he was living, there had been a sect of the Baptist's followers (Acts 19:1-7). John felt he had to say clearly that the Baptist was not the Messiah. "He was not the light, only a witness to speak for the light" (1: 8). To lend strength to his assertion, John let the Baptist speak for himself.

Priests and Levites came to John the Baptist and asked, "Who are you?" The question really meant, "What is your role?"

The Jews expected some great figure to usher in the Day of the Lord. The nationalists believed a political leader would come — a Messiah. The literalists, that Elia would come, for he had not died. The Essenes, like the monks of Qumran, believed he would be the prophet-like-Moses, whose coming Moses himself had prophesied (Deut. 18: 15 f).

How easy it would have been for John to give an evasive answer to a crowd expecting a "Yes." The ball was at his feet; the scepter within his grasp; the hermit of the desert could tomorrow have been king.

But John was no need. To each query he gave not only a resolute "No," but a "No" that grew progressively sharper and more abrupt. To the first question, there was an emphatic "I am not the Messiah." To the second, a curt "I am not." And to the third, a final, almost impatient, explosive "No!"

Having told them who he was not, he proclaimed himself to be the prophet foretold by Isaiah: "I am the voice." His role was that of herald — a role, passing like the sound of the voice though calling attention to the Word that never passes away.

Matthew, Mark, and Luke stressed John's role as baptizer and prophet. The evangelist John's concern, however, was chiefly with the testimony of the Baptist. In his Gospel, John took the great themes of our Lord's life and presented them not as one-time occurrences, but as the climax of a series of oft-repeated happenings. One such theme was the trial of Jesus. In the Baptist episode, John shows that our Lord is here on trial even before he appears. All the terms used here are legal ones, such as testimony, interrogation, confession. John the Baptist is the first witness in the great trial of Jesus which will reach its climax in His Passion.

One of our greatest testimonies to Christ can come from the sincerity of our lives. How few are content to appear just as and what they are. Not a few are ready to appear more learned, clever, innocent, and better off than they really are, provided others will think them so. But men love honesty and sincerity. That was one of the main reasons why the crowds gravitated to John and, through John, to Christ.

### Courier News Summary

Church action in the housing field took a new turn this week with the development of an all-Negro project that would bypass the integration issue.

The National Committee of Negro Churchmen, backed by the National Council of Churches, proposed that a special bank be set up for low-interest loans to Negroes out of funds supplied by the Negro community. The Rev. M. L. Wilson, pastor of Convent Ave. Baptist Church in Harlem, said the bank would promote building projects using Negro housing experts and Negro labor, and "the money that goes into housing will stay in the Negro community."

"The era of doing things 'for' people is a thing of the past," Mr. Wilson declared.

The Pennsylvania Catholic Conference, meanwhile, took a novel approach in its promotion of open-housing as an essential "conservative" concept.

In a frank appeal to die-hard enemies of open housing, the conference declared that a proposed Pennsylvania bill "frees up free enterprise, enhances the right of contract, encourages

home owning, family life and social stability."

"Conservatism stresses the peaceable society, as against the society of violence," said the conference, which speaks officially for the eight Roman Catholic sees of the state.

"Open housing legislation will contribute to a peaceable society because it will help remove the frustration and anger pent up in many of our citizens who are being denied a fair and reasonable chance to buy housing solely on account of their race," the Catholic conference stated.

Across the country, churchmen stressed housing as a key to the maze of difficulties that traps the negro.

"It is time we put into practice the advanced social doctrine we have," a Catholic priest declared as he described a plan to transform 41 inner-city acres of Newark, N.J.

Father William J. Lindner discussed a program sponsored by the Apostolic Committee of the Newark Archdiocese. It would provide 1,300 low-rent and eventually cooperatively owned dwellings, in a neighborhood enhanced by recreational facilities, a shopping center,

school and chapel. Rent for a three-bedroom-unit would be \$100, the same, Father Lindner said, that residents of this decayed area now pay for smaller, cold-water flats owned by absentee landlords.

In Grand Rapids, Mich., the Catholic Diocese and the Area Council of Churches are raising \$15,000 to help launch a ghetto reconstruction by Jan. 1. The Greater Grand Rapids Housing Corporation, an autonomous organization, proposes to erect prefabricated units it financed through FHA mortgages and contributions.

At Detroit, The Archdiocesan Community Affairs Department joined the Council of Churches in a demonstration of support pending state legislation. Father James J. Sheehan said the meeting gave "people of all faiths an opportunity to show how they feel about open housing."

**Fight Discrimination**  
The Chicago Archdiocese became involved for the first time in court action on the housing issue, when the Chicago Conference of Race and Religion charged a local community and 14 real estate firms with discrimination.

Monsignor Edward M. Egan, Cardinal Cody's secretary for human relations and ecumenism, said "The Archdiocese felt it could not remain silent on this matter." Suit was filed in U.S. District court.

In addition to the archdiocese, the Conference on Race and Religion is sponsored by the Church Federation of Chicago, the Chicago Board of Rabbis, the United Synagogue Council of America, and the Union of American Hebrew Congregations.

The suit charges officials of Hinsdale, members of the Hinsdale community relations board and the real estate firms with reaching an agreement last fall which permits the real estate agencies to avoid showing and selling property to Negroes.

Hinsdale is a western suburb of Chicago where most homes cost between \$40,000 and \$100,000.

The suit charges that real estate brokers and Hinsdale officials privately agreed that salesmen would show and sell property in the village to all qualified buyers only if the seller added written instructions to the listing contract stating the property could be shown to

all qualified buyers regardless of their religion, race, or national origin.

The Conference on Race and Religion asserts the agreement amounts to an "unwritten assumption" that properties whose contracts do not include such instructions will not be available to minority groups. The text of the suit said it is being filed on behalf of "all Negroes in the Chicago area who have the financial means to purchase property in the Village of Hinsdale."

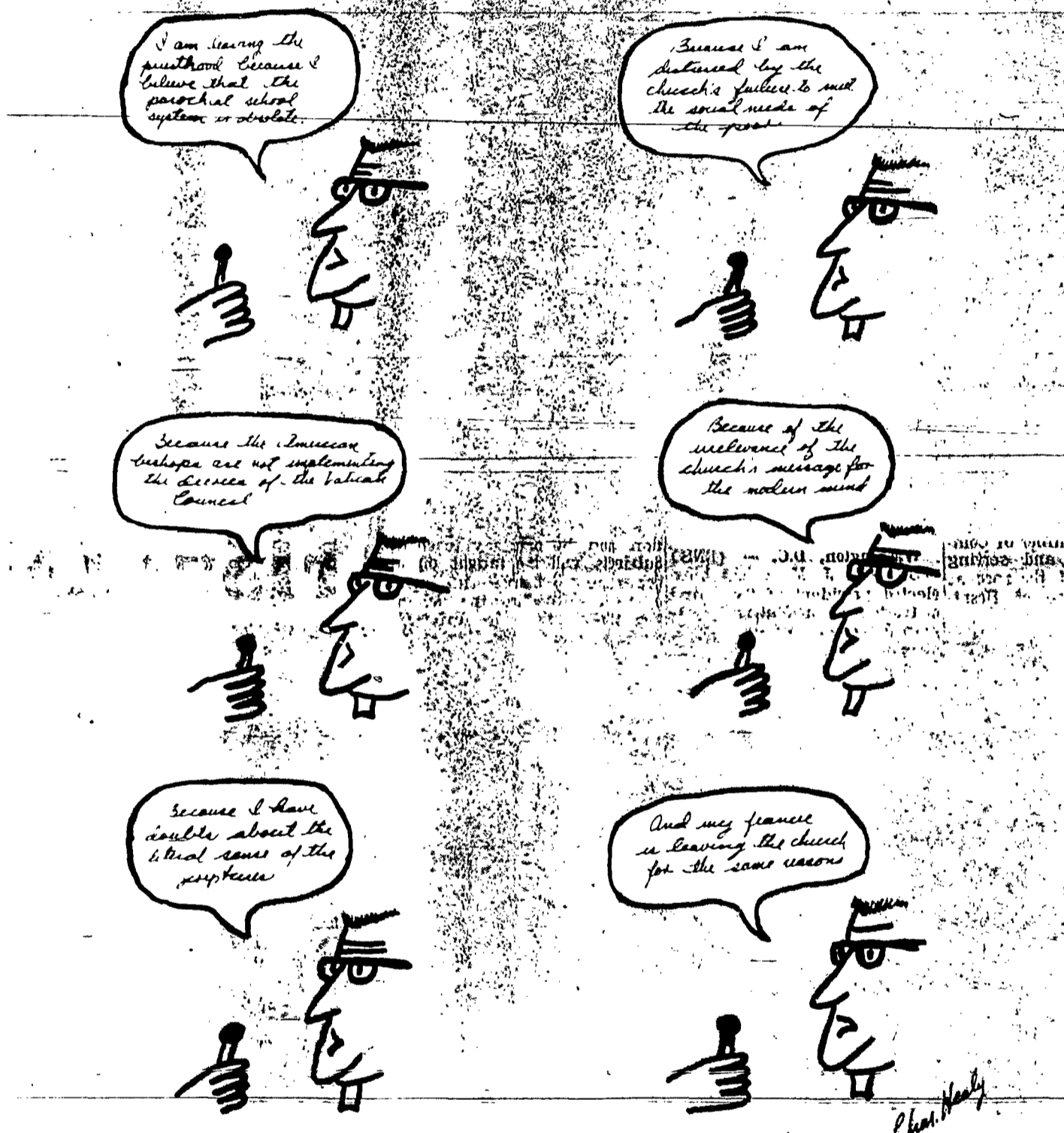
The suit has been joined by a Negro couple, John and Rose Polk, and by four white couples living in Hinsdale. The Polks claim they could not find housing there solely because of their race.

The suit charges that the plan worked out with the real estate firms "promotes the maintenance of what is virtually a segregated, racially exclusive village" with segregated "parks, schools, and other public facilities."

It asks that the agreement be declared void and that the real estate companies be enjoined from practicing discrimination.

# THE CRITIC

DECEMBER, 1967—JANUARY, 1968



## Simple Answer to Complex Problem by 'Critic'

New York — (RNS) — "An Up-Dated 'Critic' Answers A Modern Priest" might well be the title of the Felfer-like cartoon which serves as the December-January cover for The Critic magazine, published by the St. Thomas More Society, Chicago. For those with less than 20-20 vision, the words in the balloons above the cleric's head are as follows: "I am leaving the priesthood because I believe that the parochial school system is obsolete. . . . Be-

cause I am disturbed by the Church's failure to meet the social needs of the poor. . . . Because the American bishops are not implementing the decrees of the Vatican Council. . . . Because of the irrelevance of the Church's message for the modern mind. . . . Because I have doubts about the literal sense of the Scriptures. . . . And my fiancée is leaving the Church for the same reasons."

## Living Liturgy Needs Experimentation

By GARY MacEOIN

One of Rome's significant "happenings" during the Synod of Bishops was the experimental Mass in the Sistine Chapel, Oct. 24. It illustrated some basic problems involved in finding liturgical forms meaningful to contemporary man.

The most important liturgical question given the Synod was whether the parish Sunday Mass with active participation of the people should become the "normal" or "standard" Mass. Since the Council of Trent, the low Mass celebrated by the priest in private with a server to assist him has been "normal." Other Masses (High Mass, Sung Mass, etc.) were developed from this basic type.

The Synod readily agreed with the Council for the Liturgy, headed by Cardinal Lercaro of Bologna, that the Sunday Mass for the parish community should, in terms of the decrees and the spirit of Vatican II, be made the norm. The reaction of the Fathers was, however, considerably different when they attended the proposed new Mass in the Sistine Chapel.

It was a special performance for them alone. The language was Italian, except for a short section in Latin. An experimental "eucharistic prayer" replaced the

canon of the Roman Missal. The double Confiteor at the beginning was omitted in favor of a brief expression of sorrow, followed by a minute's silence and the usual form of absolution. After three Scripture readings came a 7-minute homily. The entire service occupied 45 minutes.

Two reasons for the widespread negative reaction of the Synod Fathers were gradually isolated. One was the artificiality of the situation. The Fathers were not a parish community assembled for worship. They had come as a committee to study the pastoral impact of a new type of service on an average parish congregation. And no such congregation was present.

The second reason was that the texts and ceremonies had been prepared on theoretical rather than experimental bases. The drafters were excellent liturgists, but they could only offer a formulation which—on the basis of their scholastic knowledge—the people should like.

This approach overlooks one simple but important rule. The only way to establish consumer taste is to test the market.

The conclusion will not surprise students of liturgical reform. When Latin

replaced Greek as the vernacular in the third and fourth centuries, it took hundreds of years of free experimentation to produce the glory of the Latin liturgy and the Gregorian Chant. The Carolingian reform in the ninth century, imposed from above without regard for the changed situation of the people, prove sterile. Its end result was to make the liturgy the preserve of the clergy.

Hopefully, today's instant communications and literacy levels will shorten the period of experimentation. But they increase the need for it.

As various Synod Fathers observed, too rigid control has driven some to make their own tests in an atmosphere of challenge to authority. Bishop Clement Inard, for example, told the Synod that progress in Brazil was excellent because people were let implement their ideas, whereas some countries had created unnecessary problems by denouncing as abuses what the Liturgy Council would shortly approve.

The problem here, as Archbishop John Dearden of Detroit correctly noted in a Synod intervention on behalf of the U.S. bishops, is to fix the relationship between liturgical experimentation and ecclesiastical authority. The Sistine Chapel exe-

rience suggests, nevertheless, that undue concern with this theoretical issue may be self-defeating. The human condition imposes the need for trial, even if trial at times involves error.

Pertinent are the comments of a distinguished American liturgist at a round-table debate in Rome while the Synod Fathers were debating the issue. Archbishop Rember Weakland, O.S.B., of St. Vincent's, Latrobe, Pa., blamed the liturgical malaise in the U.S. primarily on bishops and pastors who delayed all action until the period of experimentation should end, combined with a lack of pastoral education of both clergy and laity, and "an uncertainty of what the liturgical experience is exactly about."

Such attitudes, he said, made underground experimentation inevitable. "We hear more and more often that there will never be a true liturgical reform in the United States as long as Sunday Mass is obligatory and the Church is full of those who come only to keep from committing mortal sin."

The problem of "rites and books," he concluded, is trivial compared with that of creating "an experience liturgy that corresponds to twentieth century cultural patterns."

### Pope Paul

## Feast Day Homage To Mary

Vatican City — (RNS) — Pope Paul ventured out into a cold, rainy Rome on the Feast of the Immaculate Conception (Dec. 8) to conduct a traditional religious ceremony at a Marian statue in the Piazza di Spagna.

It was the first time he had left the Vatican since his operation on Nov. 4, and unusual large crowds lined the streets as his car passed by to cheer him and receive his blessing.

In his address, the Pope praised Mary as "an exceptional creature who offers us the picture of woman pure and perfect."

"We must honor her," he said, "as a type and example of primeval humanity as God wished it to be before the fall of man. We must venerate her, pray to her, realizing that the higher her majesty the nearer she is to us, for each of her privileges was conferred in view of our redemption."

The statue, near the Spanish Steps well known to tourists in Rome, was erected to commemorate the proclamation of the dogma of the Immaculate Conception by Pope Pius IX in 1854. It is traditionally visited by Popes on the Feast of the Immaculate Conception.

Despite a cold drizzle, the Pope had the top of the convertible car put down so that he could stand up to greet and bless the crowds en route. He prayed under an umbrella. Observers said he looked well and smiled often.

### 'Flying Creche' Launched

Assist — (RNS) — A Christmas creche encased in a plastic sphere will be launched into the air here on Christmas Eve to fly across Europe bearing a message of peace.

The mode of transportation used will be a balloon. The same group of enthusiasts which will launch the crib sent a Christmas tree into the air in 1950. It was reported that the tree flew more than 1,200 miles over Austria, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Germany and Denmark before coming to earth in Sweden.

VISITING THE Communion to Bruce Ammer

On (Continued from P especially through and the Priests' Co Besides Father F other vicars have t new fields of respo Fathers Raymond V burn and Bartholom of Horseheads are vicars, to provide a ison between Bishop the far corners of t

Father Wahl head em vicariate which i counties of Cayug Seneca, Ontario and ther O'Brien guides em Vicariate which counties of Chemung Steuben, Tioga and

Vicar for Religious is Father Albert J His job, as outlined Sheen, is to "supervi fy" religious educat Diocese. His resp touch "wherever the God is taught" in t in parochial school cal centers, Newm lates, Confraternity ( Doctrine efforts and formed Adult Edu gram.

Long range Pastor is under the care of new Episcopal Vice thier Joseph W. D tions, are to make, sive surveys looking care and projects, be submitted to t pastoral council for tion and action.

Bishop Sheen has to implement Vatic rective to establi Councils. An elect Council has been fi in the past few mo as a clerical grassro board for the Bisho

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