



Problems of Intercommunion

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

Each evening during the World Lay Congress in Rome, I offered Mass with a small ad hoc group of English speaking bishops, priests, and laity. The room and the group was small enough to have the kind of liturgy one might have in a home or at a cursillo. Each evening there were new faces replacing those who had other engagements or had left Rome.

This is all background for a theological problem that I am wrestling with and which I offer to you for your views.

At the offertory lay people came forward and stood around the altar facing the bishops and priests. One evening I saw a layman across the altar from me signaling another layman who had not come forward with the group at the offertory. I was quite sure that the man calling did not know as I did that the man he was signaling was a Lutheran.

When the Lutheran did not respond to the summons, the Catholic layman who is somewhat of a theologian, and a much respected man in middle life, left the altar and went back to where the Lutheran was standing. There was a brief conference and the Catholic returned to the altar escorting the Lutheran to a place in the circle. At Communion time the Lutheran received communion under both species as did everyone else.

More and more I hear of such cases. I am not talking about a Protestant relative or friends who goes to communion at an ordinary Sunday Mass with his Catholic friends or relatives. The cases I am referring to are usually small friendship or action groups who have shared some work or experience and now the group wants to bring this fellowship in the Lord to its zenith in the Eucharistic service.

As I watched the Catholic layman bring the Lutheran to the altar, I wondered if this

practice was theologically sound and if it were not, how could it be stopped. Whether we like it or not, such actions are not being stopped by simple cease and desist orders.

The only way such laymen and priests can be stopped is to present them with a theology that clarifies the issue and makes it clear with precise theological reasoning.

Since I had reservations about the practice, that evening I sought out a theologian of some stature and put him through a long period of theological inquiry on the Eucharist. I described what I saw and asked him what was wrong with inviting Protestants to the Eucharist.

On the practical level he said that this was a patronizing attitude towards Protestants. He was not sure they wanted to be invited.

Sign of Unity

After the Council the Vatican granted permission on spe-

cial occasions to invite the Orthodox Christian to the banquet table in Catholic churches, Orthodox bishops told their congregations that they did not want their flock to receive Communion at Catholic churches. They have a keen sense of the Eucharist as the sign of unity.

My theologian friend waxed eloquent on this theme of the Eucharist as a sign of unity. It is the most perfect sign of love and union in love with each other in Jesus Christ.

It demands both an external and an internal sign of unity. The external sign is the juridic or organizational unity among the members. Since the external unity between Roman and Orthodox Catholics is relatively close, the Vatican saw where exceptions could be made. With Lutherans and other Christian denominations the juridic unity is not so obvious.

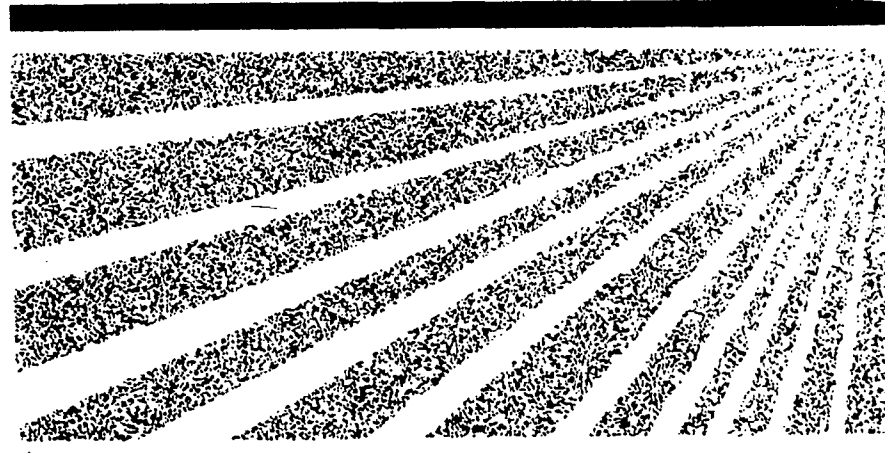
The internal unity is the love which we have for one another and for all mankind. I interrupted him to tell him that if

he insisted on this kind of unity, he would have to lock the tabernacle and throw the key away in many Catholic parishes which have a tight juridic bond among themselves, but who hate Negroes, and strangers generally. If we let bigots come to the altar rail, why not Lutherans?

I was aware that I was injecting an emotional element to a theological debate, but it was relevant. We agreed that since internal unity is never achieved by anyone, that we might at times be also satisfied with a less than perfect juridic unity.

He kept insisting on the ideal of complete unity as our measure. If the Eucharist ever ceases to be seen in these terms, we shall have destroyed the sacrament.

He was careful not to commit himself to cases when we make exceptions. He was simply giving me guidelines to help me evaluate situations. It would be helpful to hear from lay people on this subject.



Spectrum Of Opinion

Let's Communicate . . . Any Antagonism?

Becket Hall:

How are you received as seminarians by the majority of students at St. John Fisher College? Is there any antagonism on either "side," or is there mutual acceptance and friendliness?

Mike R.

Generally speaking, it seems that both groups have adapted themselves to working and learning together. When a person is just getting to know another person there is a period of uncertainty before a real association is established. When we first came to Fisher we tended to stay in our own groups. However, everyone else was in his own group too.

Incoming freshmen are the best example of what we mean: Boys from the same high school tend to gather together until they get to know boys from other areas.

The situation at Becket Hall has evolved in the past three years to the point where most of the seminarians have many contacts with and friendships among the non-seminarians.

As with all situations in life, not everything is perfect. There are some non-seminarians who voiced the opinion that the presence of seminarians on the college campus hurts the spirit of the school; they fear that the college may become known as a seminary rather than the liberal arts college it is.

This problem can most easily be pinpointed to a breakdown in communication. Perhaps they have not made the effort to try and understand us, and perhaps we have missed our chance to "go out" to them.

It is a definite problem that some seminarians have not tried to set up communication links with the non-seminarians. This is partially attributed to shyness and fear of rebuff. These are personal characteristics, though, and hopefully will soon be remedied.

The college situation is an excellent opportunity for seminarians to overcome any shyness they may have and get to know the young men and women whom they someday hope to serve as priests. Likewise, it gives the non-seminarians a chance to see what young men who aspire to the Priesthood of Christ are really like.

Becket Hall:

There seems to be a growing movement, be it action or feeling, towards the practice of "Christianism," and consequently a shying away from involvement in any one specific religious sect such as Catholicism, Calvinism, or Lutheranism. Please comment.

Martin L.

You've made a very astute observation and parish statistics concerning attendance, the number of baptisms and converts, and financial contributions will back you up. People are becoming separated from their church for one of two reasons; possibly a combination of both. The first

reason presents the simple fact that people just don't want to worship God, at least through an established religious sect structure. This can be possibly explained by looking at the changing moral climate, the new feeling that man no longer needs God's help and guidance, and the great emphasis placed on material gain in today's American society. The second possible explanation for this growing separation involves the feeling by some that they no longer need a structure church to help them in the worship of God, in the striving to become Christ-like. There are even some who feel very strongly that their church and its practices have lost meaning and at times can even be hypocritical.

It is possible to strive to become "like Christ" without the help of a specific religion and its institutions. But in fact, how many people are capable of sustaining their own religious development? An established church has its ordained ministers, a set of religious ideals and concepts, and specific liturgical practices. However, religion involves more than that. Religion means people, people who share the same religious ideas, the same religious feelings—most important, the same goal—salvation in Christ. This is the prime purpose of the Church—to guide the layman in his search to find happiness here on earth, a life which will gain him salvation after death.

At the present some people do manage to find Christ without a formal religion; most, however, are not able to do so. To help bring back those who do need a structure the individual churches must strive to re-examine their underlying values and uplift the "meaningfulness" which they must have if they are to hold their position of guidance.

Address questions and comment to: Let's Communicate, Becket Hall, 75 Fairport Rd., East Rochester, N.Y. 14445

Family Rosary Network Grows

The Family Rosary for Peace has added another outlet to its already prolific "network," it was announced last week by Monsignor Joseph A. Cirrincione, who directs the program.

The nightly half hour program can now be heard in the AF burn area on Channel 6 through the Auburn Cablevision System. It will continue to be transmitted on the FM station in Auburn at 106.9 megacycles.

Emanating from the Parish Center of St. Francis of Assisi parish in Rochester, the Rosary program is carried by Rochester's WSAV, WMOB-FM in Auburn and on three television cable companies: Channel 8 in Elmira, Channel 5 in Hornell and on 88.75 megacycles in Corning.

Heedless Vilification

By Father Paul J. Cuddy

In 1953, I was a chaplain at Lackland Air Force Base, San Antonio, Texas. As was not unusual, our chaplains were too few for the thousands of soldiers on the base. We struggled, spread ourselves thin, did the best we could.

Along with two Protestant chaplains, I was also charged with the spiritual care of some 2,000 WAFS (Women's Air Force). Fresh from high school, most of them were in their late teens or early 20's.

April brought "one of those Sundays." I'd finished my third Mass, all in different locations. By 1 p.m., I was tired, hungry and looking forward to a restful afternoon.

No such luck—a phone call from WAF headquarters was waiting for me. A distraught WAF pleaded: "I must see you right away."

I tried to postpone the encounter, but she was excited, and her voice signalled a near-hysterical mood. Off I went.

At the WAF chapel office, a tearful 19-year-old was waiting for me. To calm her, I asked quietly and paternally, "What's the matter?"

The dyke broke—a flood of tears, and an incoherent story followed. Four girls and her lady sergeant had bundled her into a car, driven out to the country, pulled her out and given her a verbal lashing which lasted 30 minutes.

"Did they strike you or beat you up?" I queried.

"No, but they all screamed at me at once, and it was just awful."

"You must have done something to one of them."

"No, not a thing."

"Think back," I pressed, "can't you recall anything you said about the Sergeant, or any of the others?"

"Well — I did mention to some of my friends that our Sergeant looks like a . . . (She used a slang word for a sexual deviate.) I didn't say that she was one, just that she looks like one!"

I was reminded of this story as I followed the rhubarb between AVE MARIA and other ultra liberal Catholic publications, and the Catholic Relief Service (CRS). AVE MARIA et al criticized the U.S. Bishops for allegedly restricting their Vietnamese relief efforts to South Viet Nam. (AVE MARIA suggested that American Catholics concerned by this make their contributions to Caritas instead of CRS — which would cripple if not destroy the work of the Catholic Relief Service. (Our own Father Robert Meng is doing CRS work in Africa. Address: CRS — B.P. 518 — Cotonou — Republic DuDahomey — Africa. He is a specialist in dietary problems. Send him a note of encouragement.)

CRS Bishop Swanstrom blew a fuse. He wrote to the Editor of AVE MARIA this information:

1) Ave Maria states CRS refuses to join the efforts of Pope Paul and Caritas in helping the needy of North Vietnam. Caritas has no general program to aid the needy of North Vietnam. 2) CRS was expelled from N. Vietnam years ago. 3) CRS gives great support to special charitable endeavours of the Holy Father — without strings attached. 4) CRS is the largest single contributor to the administrative budget of Caritas. 5) CRS program help the needy people in 74 countries. It has but one criterion, and that is need, without distinction as to race, color or creed. (Our Bishops Clothing Drive contributions go to the CRS for distribution to the needy of the world.)

Abbe Dimmet's book, THE ART OF THINKING, has this: "Introspection, looking inwards, while the mind is active, will always disclose similar things." (P. 18)

Somehow, my introspective faculties found a great similarity between the WAF's innocent faith that she had done no harm by her thought provoking innuendo against her Sergeant and Ave Maria's editor's bland expression of gratitude for Bishop Swanstrom's "clarification."

How much of the harm done can be undone?

Some one has said: "So many of these peace doves must be crossed with vultures. They sure can rip apart and destroy those whom they do not consider sufficiently dovey."

Joseph A. Breig

'Time' and the 'Underground Church'

This is the second of my columns on the question, "Considering the growing interest of the general press in religion, are Catholic publications any longer necessary?"

In the first article, I quoted Father Andrew Greeley, University of Chicago sociologist. Father Greeley testified that the secular press—specifically the New York Times and Time and Newsweek magazines—"distorted beyond all recognition" the findings of a \$250,000 survey of Catholic education on which he and a colleague, Dr. Rossi, labored for two years.

Let me turn now to something concerning which I happen to have personal knowledge.

In the "Religion" section of Time magazine, Sept. 29, 1967, page 53, there appeared an article headlined "The Underground Church."

The article began by referring to the Christian Laymen's Experimental Organization (CLEO) in New Jersey, which—whatever else it might be—was certainly not "underground." The article described CLEO as "typical" of "countless" secret and semisecret organizations which "add up to an underground Church."

This "Underground Church," we were informed, consists of "dedicated, intellectual Christians who meet in each other's homes to study the Bible, discuss contemporary issues and worship together at informal, often improvised Masses of their own making."

If Time's reporters had done any real investigating, they

would know that "informal, often improvised Masses" are rare.

As for the rest of Time's bated-breath sentence, what it describes is about as new as Calvin Coolidge's collar style. For nearly 40 years I have been not only a member, but a prime mover, in various groups of "dedicated, intellectual (pardon the term) Christians who meet in each other's home to study the Bible and discuss contemporary issues."

Never has there been anything in the least secret or semisecret about these groups.

Let us go on to another matter about which I have personal knowledge. Time's writer said that some of the "underground" groups operate "with quasi-official approval." Among these, he singled out one which calls itself (with great good humor) Vatican II½. It is in St. Philip Neri Parish on Chicago's South Side.

"The cell," said Time magazine (note the word "cell") "conducts its own baptisms—the whole contingent turning out to sing hymns over the baby."

It happens that Vatican II½ was organized in the home of my son-in-law and daughter, then living in St. Philip Neri Parish, and that I attended a couple of the meetings, plus the baptism of a baby of one of the member-couples.

At no time was Vatican II½ secret, semi-secret or "underground." In organizing it, the members drew upon my 40 years of experience with "discussion clubs." Anybody could

join, and a mimeographed description of Vatican II½ and its objectives was anybody's for the asking.

The baptism I attended was in no way clandestine. It took place in St. Philip Neri parish church, half a block from the home of my son-in-law and daughter.

The baptizing priest was a curate of St. Philip's. Present, singing hymns (is there something subversive about that?) were members of Vatican II½ and many of their children.

The priest used the occasion to instruct the youngsters about the meaning of baptism. Afterward, there was a social gathering in the nearby home of the nearby home of the baby's parents.

When Time was preparing its "Underground Church" article, its editors queried their Chicago correspondent. When he got in touch with members of Vatican II½ for information, he was given a copy of the group's 10-page description of itself. Also at his disposal was an accurate article about II½, published in the Chicago Daily News July 22, 1967, and signed by News staff writer David Mead.

After Time's preposterously distorted article appeared, my son-in-law wrote to the magazine's religion editor, giving the facts once more. Time ignored the letter.

As Father Greeley observed, some journalists seem to be "not interested in the truth unless it fits their preconceptions."

ND Student Mag

A Second Look At A Swan Song

Editor's Note: Father James Kavanaugh dramatically announced that he was leaving the priesthood during a recent talk at Notre Dame University. Newspaper accounts mentioned that he was given a "standing ovation" when he finished his address.

The following editorial, reprinted from The Notre Dame Scholastic, a student magazine, indicates that student approval of the much-publicized farewell address was hardly unanimous:

A Modern Priest Looking

By G. R. BULLOCK

Father James Kavanaugh's recent lecture at Notre Dame was as unsophisticated as a Huey Long harangue: repeatedly emotional, continuously negative and consistently gross.

He claimed to be in search of a more authentic Christianity, but not a single grace note of Christian joy relieved the torrent of vindictive hatred that poured from his lips for more than an hour. Somehow the ugly engineering auditorium seemed a strangely appropriate place for the whole sad tale.

The speaker did more than castigate the institutionalized and impersonal Church, mock old bishops and cardinals, and ridicule celibate priests and nuns. He also chose this drab and public occasion to expose some of the most personal decisions of his life: he has decided to reject basic dogmas touching even the Real Presence and the Trinity itself, he has determined to cut himself off from the Church and the priesthood.

His remarks found some echo in the titters and applause of his overflow audience, but he failed to win their unanimous approval.

Perhaps it was the shock of his naked hatred, perhaps it was revulsion from uncalled-for vulgarity, and perhaps it was perception of continued contradiction, but something kept a third of his hearers from ever catching fire.

The liberal Kavanaugh was curiously absolute on many points, including the avowal that there are no absolutes. He exemplified his desire to love people by hurling insults at people, Popes and reporters. He accused most contemporary theologians of intellectual dishonesty, offered to debate them anytime, and then admitted that his own theological formation was ridiculous.

He accused Pope Paul of making an arrogant statement on celibacy, and then made several himself. He claimed that he had previously been a dedicated celibate, but had never met a man who gave up marriage for the Kingdom of God. He insisted that the institutional Church will never change, and then asserted that the Bishops had finally accepted ideas which he had proposed in his book.

He demanded that dogmas like the Trinity be verified by an echo in the being of man, and yet seemed sadly deaf to the message of that trilogy of husband, wife and child reflected in the very sexuality that constantly preoccupies his mind.

The more Father Kavanaugh talked, the more he sounded like an authoritarian liberal. We can sympathize with his frustration, but not with his public self-defrocking before a group of students.

There are more fruitful means of reforming the Church.

Parishioners Reject Remodeled Church

Steuan, Peru—(RNS)—Two American Carmelite priests, Father James Geaney and Father Mark Liska, were attacked by a mob of angry parishioners in a church being remodeled near here.

The mob, estimated at 800 men and women, broke into the church and struck the priests with wood and stones from a pulpit which is being removed. They demanded the restoration of the pulpit and also of a set of church bells which were removed.

A strong contingent of police escorted the priests from the church to the parish house and ejected the mob.

After the incident, the Carmelites were quoted as saying, "apparently the people did not understand the church building reforms."

Redemptorists Elect New Head

Rome—(NC)—Brazilian-born Father Taracisio Ariovaldis Amaral, C.S.S.R., 47, procurator general of the Redemptorists, has been elected rector major of the more than 5,000 Redemptorists throughout the world.

The Redemptorists were founded in 1732 by St. Adolphus Ligouri at Nocera dei Pagani near Naples to care for the poor and abandoned. Today their work includes both home and foreign missions.