

By FATHER ALBERT J. SHAMON

The Temptation of Christ

(First Sunday of Lent)

Parents, do you want to throw your teenager into a trauma? Do you want to make him climb a wall? Just preface your remarks with, "When I was your age..."

Yet God's prophets constantly recalled for Israel her desert stay of forty years. "When you were young, O Israel," they said, "When you wandered in the desert... those were the days!" The prophets implied that if Israel were ever to be "saved," rebuilt as God's people, she would have to act out again her whole history as a people.

Matthew wrote his Gospel to prove that his prophetic implication was fulfilled in Jesus. He was the new Israel. Deftly, Matthew drew the picture. Jesus' baptism proclaimed Him to be the new Israel. That was why the Spirit appeared as a dove, not in tongues of fire—the dove was the symbol of Israel (Ps. 68:14).

Next, like Israel, Jesus was led into the desert: to be tested. But where Israel failed, Jesus triumphed. Do you get the message? Matthew is saying this is the turning-point in Israel's history.

Matthew portrays the temptation of Jesus as a single incident. Very probably he was describing a struggle that was always with Jesus. St. Luke tells us the devil left him only "for a while" (Lk. 4:12).

What do you think Jesus' constant temptation was? Whenever Superman of the comics is confronted with a problem beyond human solution, what does he do? He throws off his disguises and solves the problem superhumanly.

In the desert, the devil tried to get Jesus to do something like that. But this was the temptation of Jesus' entire life: to solve His problem in a divine, not human, way. How tempting to change stones to bread or to come down from the cross: He could have, you know! But had Christ resorted to this, then He would have in effect rejected His Incarnation. For to be truly man meant to accept all the limitations imposed by a human nature; it meant not "to pull rank" needlessly; it meant His divinity being straightjacketed until it could break out of its bonds by death. This was the humility of Christ; to be all the way what He had become.

Sometimes we think humility is a horizontal virtue, comparing oneself with one's neighbor. Actually humility is a vertical virtue: it means becoming what God made us to be—accepting the limitations of our being.

The great temptation of our lives, too, is to play a role God does not intend us to play. Humbly accepts the place appointed us by God, whether it be the first or the last. Christlikeness is blossoming where God has planted us.

Diocese Sets Up Retirement Plan

Richmond, Va. —(NC)—The diocese's offices, schools, institutions Richmond diocese has installed and parishes. a comprehensive retirement program, which went into effect Jan. 1, will be met by group life insurance and medical insurance plans, for the diocese with no expense to nearly 1,000 lay employees.

Keep School System, But Develop Other Channels

Courier News Summary

Washington, D.C. — A "blueprint for the future" of American Catholic education, representing the views of more than 100 experts, was issued here last week.

The 3,500 word manifesto plunks down strongly in the side of maintaining the Church's commitment to the established Catholic school system, but opens the door wider to developing other avenues of Christian formation.

"The Church will always maintain an institutional base for educational service," the document declares.

The document reflects the consensus of a November symposium sponsored by the National Catholic Educational Association in Washington. The original, lengthy position paper was turned over to a 13-member editorial committee for revamping. The report just issued represents three months of discussion and re-editing on their part.

The social action role of Catholic schools, the public function they serve and the principle of free choice that they embody are factors highlighted in the summary.

120 persons took part in the symposium, among them Monsignor William M. Roche, superintendent of schools in the Rochester Diocese, and Father Daniel Brent, associate superintendent.

Some Dissenting Voices  
The statement was criticized by several of the original participants, however.

Auxiliary Bishop Mark J. Hurley of San Francisco said the published report failed to reflect the "truly free spirit" of the discussions, which "repudiated doctrinaire and facile solutions to sophisticated problems."

Writer Mary Perkins Ryan, dissociating herself from the document, said she found in it evidence that Catholic educators are more interested in justifying their system than in a fair spread of the Church's educational resources.

Mrs. Ryan has been an outspoken critic of what she asserts is the practice of deploying most of the Church's massive educational effort into the schools while neglecting other avenues of Christian formation, including adult education, the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine and the educational power of the liturgy.

Dr. Francis L. Broderick, dean of the college at Lawrence University, Appleton, Wis., said the symposium was a "tremendous assembly of talented people who came up with a tame re-statement of familiar material."

"The central question should have been priorities over the next 25 years," Dr. Broderick stated. "But there was none of the hard thinking that would establish a list of priorities."

Bishop Hurley said the document neglected the role of school superintendents, of the schools themselves, and their teachers and students. He said the attention given to higher, special and adult education, and to "special pleaders" produced an "imbalance and distorted perspective" that would lead to misinterpretation.

"The section on the financial support of schools purports to rely on 'the documents of Vatican II,'" Bishop Hurley noted. "A careful perusal of the text, however, reveals an affirmation for the right to appeal for aid to urge support, but not the right to true freedom of choice in education."

"I trust, however, Bishop Hurley stated, that my disassociation from the document will not be understood as a rejection of the text in all its segments, much less a disassociation with the NCEA. Rather I would affirm my support of NCEA as a necessary professional organization in support of Catholic education."

The document takes note of criticisms of the parochial schools — including the charge that their operation puts a disproportionate amount of money and manpower at the service of less than 50% of Catholic students — but concludes that "it would be premature to urge massive redeployment of Catholic educational resources into new patterns of Christian education."

Specific Recommendations  
The statement acknowledges, however, the "evident need for well designed programs of research and experiment aimed at obtaining reliable data to guide decisions about the most productive use of resources."

The report says many methods now employed to provide financial support for Catholic education are "regressive," and recommends that support of education and welfare activities be based on parishioners' ability to pay, and be levied to meet a budget developed by the people themselves.

It advocates the use of tax funds for educating parochial school children in the so-called secular subjects "since such education serves a public purpose."

The document also calls for more financial help for parochial school children from industry, foundations and other segments of the community. It cites the principle that "in a free, open society parents should have freedom to choose a specific value-centered education for their children."

The document warns, however, that "full fiscal accountability" to the public sector will be required from Catholic school administrators before significant financial support from non-Catholic sources is forthcoming.

At a press conference, Father C. Albert Koob, O.Praem., executive secretary of the NCEA, called the document a "historic" one which highlighted a basic unity of goals among those interested in Catholic education. He said it was significant that

the document emphasized the importance of the present Catholic school system despite participants might advocate shutting down the present structure.

Father Koob cited a "remarkable parallel" between the NCEA document and the statement issued last year by the American bishops. The bishops called Catholic elementary and secondary schools "indispensable," and said "we will do our part to continue, improve and strengthen these schools."

The NCEA document puts strong emphasis on the social action role of the schools and says Catholic education seeks

to foster... "an overriding commitment to social justice at every level of the human community."

It calls for the creation of a National Commission on Catholic education that would initiate research and serve as a clearinghouse of ideas.

It gives strong support for the growing trend in U.C. dioceses to the formation of boards of education and calls for specialized training and retraining of teachers in the field of adult education, according to Father Koob.

Academic freedom for Catholic

universities should be at the "creative center" of educational innovations the report says.

Competence and ability are seen as the only criterion for teaching and administrative jobs at all levels of Catholic education.

Father Koob said NCEA will attempt to implement the symposium recommendations chiefly through publication of manuals for educational leaders, and through regional meetings. It will also be the focus of attention at the NCEA annual convention in San Francisco in April.



Hitch-Hiking Priest

Miami—Father Freddie Kunz, a Canadian priest of the Catholic Sons of Charity, is on a three-month hitch-hiking tour of South America to visit missionaries working there. He is shown packing his 30-pound duffel bag while in Miami, where he boarded a plane for Recife, Brazil. Father Kunz said that for the last three years he has specialized in speaking at retreats on world problems and wanted to get some first-hand knowledge of "conditions of hunger and revolution" in underdeveloped Latin countries. (RNS Photo).

By College Prexy

Gregory's Style Panned

San Antonio, Tex. —(NC)—The president of St. Mary's University here has criticized the "tactics and language" used by Negro comedian Dick Gregory when he spoke on civil rights to a group of students.

Father Louis J. Blume, S.M., said Gregory "abused his privilege as a guest of the university and I deeply regret his breach of good taste and judgment."

Father Blume called a press conference after Gregory's appearance triggered a wave of criticism directed at the university. One local daily paper speculated that as a result of the comedian's appearance many contributors were withdrawing their support from St. Mary's.

Father Blume said he "didn't have any information" about any loss of income, and he denied that civil rights was an issue in his denunciation of Gregory.

After hearing a tape of the comedian's 2½-hour speech Father Blume said he was "greatly shocked" by both the content and the language of presentation.

"His vilification of our American system, our President and our flag I found particularly objectionable."

The right of free speech has never been construed as a license to use foul language or to make indiscriminate attacks on such highly regarded institutions and personages as the flag of our country and our chief executive."

During his talk, Gregory

aimed several jokes—some off-color—at President Lyndon B. Johnson. But most of the reaction to the speech was directed at his comments on the flag: "The American flag is nothing but a rag. I don't care how patriotic you are, a flag is a rag," he said.

"I'm not interested in rags—I'm interested in people and in the day we can respect one another as human beings. On that day we can salute one another as humans, that's the day that our rag will be safe."

Among his other comments: "—This is what you young kids are going to have to do. You are going to have to build an America that you won't be ashamed of—an America you don't have to worry about."

"—Basically, black folks don't hate white folks. We hate your stinking system. That's what we're going to change. When men hate a system—that's revolution."

"—The No. 1 problem of America is 'not air pollution—it's moral pollution.'"

"—America is the 'No. 1 racist country in the world, including South Africa because South Africa doesn't have a constitution pretending all men are created equal.'"

"—Of the debate over fair housing bills: 'We are sick and tired of your insults, telling us, if we behave ourselves, we can live next door to you. These insults are what we are upset about.'"

Father Blume said the ma-

jority of St. Mary's students—whom he described as conservative and responsible—"rejected the many and insulting statements."

Lesson from the Hippies: Love Needs Discipline

New York —(RNS)—Possibly the most valuable lesson of the "hippie" movement was that it showed that love without discipline won't work, according to a prominent psychiatrist.

"Some say that the alienated youth of today are trying to transmit an important message to our generation," wrote Dr. Graham B. Blaine, Jr., in the January issue of the Academy of Religion and Mental Health magazine.

"But it seems to me that it has been a peculiarly half-backed one so far—their only solution to the injustices of today's world is to distribute flowers and to suggest that the intelligentsia give up and drop out."

"This is a message it seems to me we can well afford to forget along with most of the other paraphernalia of psychedelia."

Dr. Blaine, chief of psychiatry at Harvard's University Health Services, pointed out that some observers have noted "striking similarities between the flower children and the early Christians" and that some have labeled Christ as the

"original 'hippie' because he urged his fellow men to tune in on another world."

"More sensible," Dr. Blaine declared, "has been the equation of the love philosophy of the flower children with the concept of Christian love and here perhaps is the only truly valuable lesson we can derive from 'hippiedom.'"

"Their attempts to live by love alone led not to some glorious Nirvana, but instead to bitterness, rivalry and finally violence... the hippies found that a world without discipline led only to chaos."

He also suggested that "proponents of situation ethics" might look "more cautiously at their suggestion that absolute standards deprive man of desirable freedom."

"The main difference between the short-lasting philosophy of the love-in generation and the long-lasting Christian religion," Dr. Blaine concluded, "is the presence in the latter of absolutes which provide the structure that seems to be essential for the existence of a relatively harmonious society."

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