

JOSEPH BREIG SAYS

The Dogs We Have Lived With

I had no dog as a child (grew up in a flat) and I want no dog as a man. In this matter, as in most things, my wife and I see eye to eye. And yet, through the conspiracies of our sons and daughters, abetted by Machiavellian relatives and friends, we have had, in the course of our married life, four dogs.

The first was a collie, a magnificent creature, pure white save for a touch of black at the tip of one ear. When his coat was clean, he was something for a magazine cover; but in a wink he could slip his leash and be gone through city streets like a flicker of distant lightning. When he returned, he was a sight to make a ruffian man despair.

The clandestine excursions became so frequent and so disreputable that at last there was only one thing to be done. Prince must be sent where there would be room for a respectable running and roaming. The children shed a few tears, but soon were absorbed in other concerns after their wild one was handed over to a friend who owned a farm.

Next came a cocker spaniel. What I chiefly remember about her was her reverence for property rights and boundaries. She would charge with terrifying courage when the next-door dog ventured into our yard;

and in face of her ferocity the intruder invariably fled. But when it was vice versa, it was vice versa; conscience made a coward of our cocker every time she invaded the adjoining premises.

Third was an English setter. An untimely death (what, by the way, is a timely death?) took her in her prime, but not before she had confirmed something that the family had begun to suspect—that for some mysterious reason dogs find Joe Brieg irresistible.

Lady, we called her; but there was nothing lady-like about her demonstrations of affection for me. The instant I came into the house she tried to jump-out of her skin for joy. Does the secret of my appeal lie in the fact that without dogs I can cheerfully do? Are they attracted by the challenge of my aloofness? Do they, like humans, pant after the unattainable?

We considered, of course, the possibility that Lady might be a maverick sort of dog, consumed with passion for the baser things of life such as journalists. But then came Duke.

Duke is not one of the four. He was not our dog; he was a Frequent Visitor Dog belonging to our daughter,



who by this time had a house and family of her own. He was a glorious golden retriever, all rich autumn colors, with golden-brown eyes filled with depth beneath depths of patience with life. And he was as mad about me as Lady had been.

Our fourth dog is Steed, still in the awkward leggy age. One of our sons saw him in a pet shop and would have died broken-hearted had he not brought him home. Now he preempts a corner of the kitchen, battling ferociously with a piece of old carpeting, yelping at birds and passing children, and going into spasms over Joe Brieg.

Steed is a mixture of airedale and of his Maker only knows what else. His eyes peer alertly through shaggy eyebrows in an inquisitive black face. His is the quickest canine intelligence we have known in a few days he puzzled out how to stand on his hind legs and free himself by flicking, with his nose, at his leash loop two or three times around a doorknob.

A dog with an indisputable superior brain—that's Steed. And yet he has the same strange falling as the others—he goes into ecstasies over me. Love is blind, blind, blind; or is there something about my chemistry that makes me smell like dog yummys?

ON THE RIGHT SIDE

Conservatism: Static or Stable?

By Father Paul J. Cuddy



Recently a priest stopped me and said: "I read your column in the Courier each week. It often makes me so furious that I intend to write to you. Why your articles all indicate that you want to keep everything in the Church static. You don't want to change anything. Why, we've had Vatican II."

I thought over his charge, and decided to write to him. The letter reads:

"I have been thinking of your idea that my whole writing indicates a wish for a static Church. You know that my embroilment with the ultra-liberals came from two sources: a devotion to the historic Catholic Church which I believed was being damaged by much of the Catholic Press; and a love of our loyal Catholic people who were heart sick at the weekly broadsides against the traditions, the dogmas, the authority and the religious practices of the Church.

I want not a static Church, but a STABLE Church, which continues to proclaim the Gospel. For this stability my writings reflect these consistent and insistent views:

1) The constancy of human nature and the reality of the effects of original sin manifesting themselves in our wounded nature through pride, covetousness, lust, envy, gluttony, and sloth, even after Baptism.

2) The reality of the Catholic Church as a unique and historic institution given by Christ to the world to teach, to govern and to sanctify men. (Constitution of the Church).

3) The embracing of the defined dogmas of the Church, including the divinity of Christ, the Divine Presence in the Blessed Sacrament, the primacy of the Pope in jurisdiction as well as in honor among his brother bishops; the physical resurrection of Jesus; the efficacy of the Sacraments as taught by Trent and Vatican II; the loving place of Our Lady in the Church.

4) The practice of traditional devotions, including the liturgical devotions of the Mass as a sacrifice as well as a banquet, the community prayers of the Divine Office and sacramental rites. But included in the devotional life of the People of God are to be preserved the individual

and private devotions of the Blessed Sacrament, the rosary, mental prayer, and the musical treasures of the Church.

Regarding progress in the Church, I ask you what true progress you think I would impede? Vernacular? I had introduced that to the men in the Air Force a quarter of a century ago, and to Sampson collegians over 20 years ago.

Liturgy? I have always distinguished between true liturgy which is rooted in Community prayer, dogma and charity, and ritualism which equates worship with accidental externals.

Ecumenism? Before the word was used in the Catholic papers, I was practicing it a quarter century ago, and continue to do so within the limits set by Vatican II. (Decree on Ecumenism.) My concept of ecumenism is in a real sharing of what can be shared, and a sincere recognition of what cannot, including the Eucharist which is the Sign of unity, and about which Cardinal Bea is open, honest, and non-sharing of the Eucharist.

THE HOLY FATHER

More Priestly Vocations Urged

Vatican City (RNS) — Pope Paul VI, in a special message issued for the World Day for Vocations, April 28, called for an increase of priestly vocations because "the need for their activities is rising steadily."

Among the reasons why priests are now specially needed, he cited "the spiritual condition of the modern world."

"The more secularized it becomes," he said, "the greater is the necessity for the presence of those who are consecrated in the mystery of the Word, specialized and qualified to be dispensers of the mysteries of God."

Some persons have turned away from the Church because of "atheism or hedonism," others because the Church is "a world almost incomprehensible to the psychology of the younger generations," he said.

He urged Catholics to pray for more vocations and the clergy, families and teachers in particular to "discover, support and guide the vocations coming to life in young hearts."

The Pope also said: "The Church is Catholic. In other words, it is universal and if the Church wishes to remain faithful as the instrument through which the kingdom of God will come for all mankind, it must remain in continuous diffusive activity. Therefore, it has need of new and ever more numerous ministers."

Added to this institutional need today, is a functional need; today the ministers of the Gospel are not sufficient in number, for the reason that their statistical charts are diminishing and the fields open to their work are increasing.

The Church has need of ministers. The destinies of the Church, and so of the Christian salvation of the world, cannot be judged as being founded on charismatic phenomena or movements. They are founded on persons offered and consecrated, vested

with authoritative powers, who live and perpetuate in themselves the sacrifice of Christ.

How will the Church continue today to receive the offering of young lives that consecrate themselves to its service? The world of religion no longer has the stimulating attractions of previous times. It is a world rendered also incomprehensible to the psychology of the young generations.

Nevertheless the Church, gripped, as we were saying, by its characteristic need, awaits, asks, calls. It calls particularly the youth because it knows that youth still has a good ear to understand its voice. It is the voice which invites (one to do) difficult things, heroic things, true things.

It is the voice which implores understanding and aid for the countless needs of the brethren deprived of Christ and of God; of the brethren who are little, suffering and poor; of brethren who are launched in the great, though equivocal, scientific, technical, economic, social, political conquest of the temporal world, who are likewise in need of comfort, of light, of ideal transfiguration.

It is the humble and penetrating voice of Christ who, today as yesterday, and more so than yesterday, says: Come.

We believe there are today strong souls, capable of "hearing what the Spirit says to the churches" and our message addressed principally to them. But, not to them alone.

We address it to the Christian families — to which it is, yes, a sacrifice, though so worthy, so honorable — to contribute the offering of a son, of a daughter, to the Church and to Christ.

We also address it to the shepherds of souls and to educators, that they may know how to discover, support, in the hearts of the youth.

Russian Jews Face Cultural Extinction

By GARY MACOIN

As Jews the world over celebrated the Passover recently, recalling their many deliveries from bondage, most of them have done so in a situation of goodwill with their neighbors such as they have seldom known in the course of their long history.

The two major exceptions are Israel itself, whose 2.3 million Jews have still failed to find a basis for co-existence with the surrounding Arabs, and Russia's 2 million Jews, victims of a no longer bloody but always ruthless policy of cultural genocide.

World Jewry has recovered numerically from the "final solution" plotted by Hitler. The total of 13 million is back to approximately the level of 50 years ago. Today's geographical distribution, however, is significantly different. Whereas formerly four-fifths of five lived in Europe, the proportion now is only one in four. The two Germans have 60,000, one survivor in ten. Poland's former 3.5 million figure is down to 40,000, one survivor in 90.

The only major unchanged group in Western Europe is Britain's 450,000, a community with a centuries-long tradition of peace, respect and respectability. France, down from 300,000 in 1939 to 180,000 in 1945, has grown to 530,000 with an influx of North African Jews from Egypt, Tunisia and Algeria. Most of these are factory and office workers or civil servants, changing the traditional image of the Jew operating his own business.

Although less than 3 per cent of nation's population, the 5.6 million Jews in the United States form the biggest Jewish community anywhere in the world, a pole of gravitation comparable to and in many ways complementary to the state of Israel. Its universities, research institutes, publications and many other manifestations of its culture, wealth and dynamism exert an influence on the 275,000 Jews in Canada, on the 750,000 in Latin America, and even on the 190,000 in South Africa, Australia and New Zealand.

The steady improvement since World War II of relations between Jews and the diverse peoples among whom they live, an improvement for which Vatican Council II can be accorded some non-triumphalistic credit, has not reached the Soviet Union in any significant way. Russia of the Czar gave the word and the reality of the pogrom to the world. Russia of Marx, Lenin and Socialist realism has added ideological motives to support the prejudice to which it is heir. It provides no example of reparation for past wrongs to parallel the community of Lutheran nuns in Germany who perform daily penance and prayer to the memory of the gas-chamber victims.

The Jews, like other Russians, are today spared the deportations, tortures and assassinations of the Stalin era. But the entire weight of totalitarianism is directed towards the destruction of their ethnic identity and of the Bible-centered religion so closely tied to it.

Restrictions on religious practice are applied more harshly against the Jews than against most other religious bodies. The Orthodox were allowed to send observers to the Vatican Council, and their contacts with the World Council of Churches and with the Orthodox in the West have become steadily more frequent. The Moslems are authorized to visit Mecca. But it is almost impossible for a rabbi to attend any kind of religious meeting beyond the Soviet borders. The ban on contacts with Israel is particularly severe.

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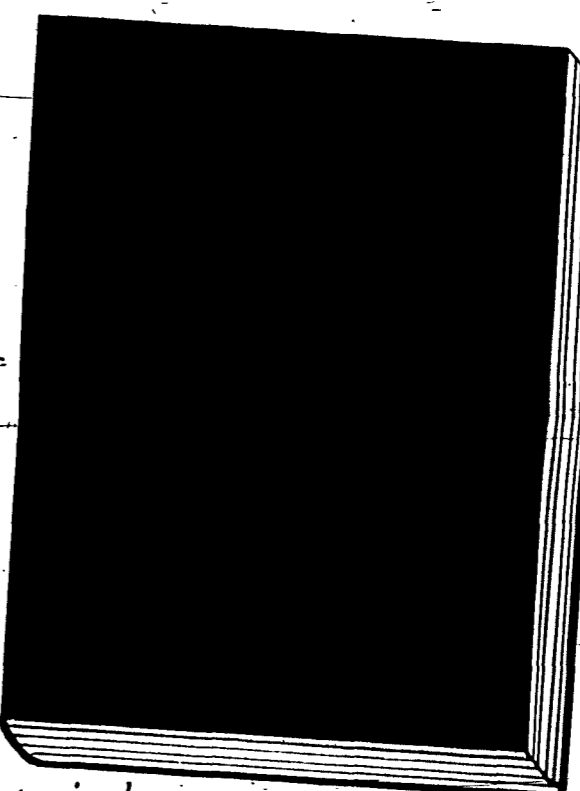
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This cartoon by Martin Murphy appears on front cover of the April-May issue of The Critic. (Religious News Photo)