

# Birth Control: Charge and Rebuttal

## Leaders Hit for 'Neglect'

London — (RNS) — Church leaders were accused of "calously neglecting" Roman Catholics on the birth control issue in a strongly worded article written by a prominent American, Redemptorist.

Father Francis X. Murphy made the charge in the weekly review, *The Tablet* (May 11.), which in supporting its argument in a front-page editorial, called them a "highly reputed American theologian teaching at the Institute of Moral Theology in Rome."

The American priest began by referring to couples who have grave or even absolute reasons for not having another child, at least for the present, and yet cannot find a truly safe means of contraception that will satisfy both their consciences and their need for conjugal love.

"Their number is legion," he wrote. "It is their plight that seems to be calously neglected by the members of the Church's magisterium who have decided to hold the traditional line no matter what the cost."

"It is obvious now," Father Murphy wrote, "particularly in consideration of the voluminous literature devoted to the subject by professional moralists and involved Christian thinkers, that a substantial group within the Church feel that . . . a change in the moral evaluation of the

means (of birth control) is imperative. . . ."

"And the majority seem to be urging that the solution is to put the problem of individual means on an aesthetic and moral basis. Once it is conceded that couples have a right to control conception for grave reasons, there must be safe and irreprehensible means available in keeping with the medical and cultural dispositions of the parties involved."

Father Murphy said that no matter which way the Pope turned now he was bound to disconcert millions of people within the Church, and affect large groups outside. "Despite an apparent indifference on the part of the secular world to Catholic moral teaching," he went on, "the Pope's stand on this issue carries vitally important implications for the possible solution of the world's population problems."

Father Murphy also contended that "an increasing number" of the Church's theologians believe it is possible for the magisterium (teaching authority) to take a different approach to the problem of birth control methods than that laid down in the past and also that there were innumerable instances of changes of this type in the history of the Church's teaching.

## 'Brash Opinion' Criticized

London — (NC) — People and clergy alike are desperately awaiting the promised papal statement on contraception. John Cardinal Heenan of Westminster declared in a statement published (May 18) in all Catholic papers in this country.

But the reluctance by the bishops to take the initiative themselves does not mean they lack compassion, the cardinal said.

"Until the Pope gives the promised guidance, most bishops will continue to act with restraint. Every day their task becomes more difficult. . . . If indeed the old principles are to be adapted to the changed conditions of our times, Catholics must accept this prolonged period of suspense," the cardinal said.

He said there is a "universal confusion concerning contraception" and explained that this is the most potent reason why the magisterium seems to "have lost its nerve."

In replying to recent charges made against Church leaders by an American Redemptorist theologian, Father Francis X. Murphy, Cardinal Heenan criticized the "brash theological opinion" which he said is causing the decline of the magisterium (the Church's teaching authority). It is isolating the Pope and is making bishops unsure.

In the *Tablet*, British Catholic weekly review, Father Murphy, of

the Institute of Moral Theology in Rome, had accused the Church's leaders of "calously neglecting the plight of most Catholics by continuing to uphold the traditional ruling on birth control."

In his statement, Cardinal Heenan declared:

"Those most anxiously awaiting guidance are the devoted Catholics living mainly in the West who are troubled less by the threat of over-population than by the physical and psychological hazards of married life in modern conditions. It is these people and their clergy who desperately await the promised statement."

Cardinal Heenan said that when Pope Paul VI withdrew birth control as a topic for debate at the Second Vatican Council, he doubtlessly believed that the papal commission of theologians, doctors and scientists he had named to study the issue would give him the facts he needed for his statement.

"When their advice was not forthcoming he grew anxious and pressed them to make more haste. With the passing of months he was to learn that neither theologians nor laity could decide unanimously. . . . It would be irresponsible to attempt to force the Vicar of Christ to make a pronouncement before he is ready," the cardinal said.

# Protestant In Immac

By JOHN DEL MONTE

At first glance, the ordination of a Protestant minister in a Catholic church might seem rather unusual.

But for Larry Coppard to be ordained in Immaculate Conception Church seems quite natural to the community.

The Rev. Mr. Coppard, who is a member of the United Methodist Church, is scheduled for 8 p.m. ordination rite, has been a long-time member of the Immaculate Conception parish and has been active during that time and has been active in the parish's neighborhood outreach program in that capacity.

When Immaculate's pastor, Robert Kreckel, offered the Plymouth Avenue church as a site for his associate's ordination, he noted "the people with whom he would be working can attend."

Married and the father of small children, the 26-year-old Lutheran was graduated last year from Colgate-Rochester Community School. He had completed formal studies in 1967, but did his ordination a year to take a year-long job of community minister at Immaculate Conception parish.

When the Third Ward parished to embark on a community program last year, Kreckel contacted Larry Coppard about running it. He had ministerial student three years ago when Larry had directed a youth program for a church, Corn Hill Methodist.

The two men agreed on the cooperation in the new community work which has been characterized by these notes:

• It's ecumenical, stresses cooperation in as many areas as possible between the neighboring churches.

• It stresses lay response. "Clergy should inspire and enlighten, but not preclude it."

# Ecumenical Program In Montour Falls

Mary Reed Newland, mother of seven and well-known author of the key speaker at an Ecumenical program May 30 at St. John nary, Montour Falls.

Mrs. Newland's topic will be Ecumenical Something to Do to Teach.

Also slated to speak at the program is Atonement Father Egan. Appearing on panels are Father Donald Hoff, Elmira Neighborhood Ministry; Richard McDonnell, Montour Falls School District; Dr. Donald I. surgeon at Strong Memorial I.

Also Sister Ellen Joseph, L. chist instructor in Elmira; Mr. Collea, North Presbyterian Church; Sister Mary Declan, pri- Notre Dame High School, Elm



Mary Reed Newland

PAT

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# Salute Our Priests

Francois Mauriac, French Catholic writer, was once asked to contribute a paper to a symposium on "What Does a Priest Mean to You?" His reverent and sympathetic article contained this touching observation: "I ask the priest only to give me God, not just to speak to me of God. For me, the efficacious preaching of a priest has always been his own life. A good priest has nothing to tell me. I look at him and that is sufficient."

Mauriac has spoken words for all humanity. For the world does look for God and can find Him in various wonders from the symmetry of the planets' movements to the mystery of a baby's conception. But by God's own decision, questing humans will have their best chance to find Him in "another Christ". The priest is the answer to St. Paul's question: "But how shall they believe in Him unless some one preaches, and how are they to preach unless they be sent?"

Looking at the pictures of the young men to be ordained next weekend for service in our diocese has been a penetrating reminder to me that it is in the faces of such priests that men and women turn to seek God. The laity examine actions and attitudes and even the appearance of our priests more particularly than our brains. They love us or hate us, enjoy our presence or are uncomfortable to have us around, not on the evidence of what we know or how professionally we teach, but on the judgement of whether we are menly priests who present the Eternal Christ.

What does a new priest mean to me, another priest? He means to me a young man who in enthusiasm has prepared himself for a lifetime of bringing Christ through sacraments and the Word into the individual lives of the family of God.

His public life will shortly have some spectacular and satisfying "firsts": the first time he blesses his family, the first Mass at his home parish altar, the first reconciling of a sinner in a confessional, the first dying person he prayerfully consoles as the coma deepens, the first adult inarticulate he helps search for the truth of the Christian faith. May he enjoy these wonders and gasp at the vision of God's graces working through his life. Let no one hurt his zest by prophesying that very soon people will turn away from what he says or reject the leader he wants them to follow.

These young priests mean to me vitality and adventure poured into the company of the diocesan clerics who often grow tired and short-sighted. Their seminary-trained spirituality should edify clergy as remarkably as it may inspire the young laity.

They surely come to us having read the latest books and used their minds most recently on the wisdom of theologians many of us have never encountered: fresh intellectuality even though unbalanced by experience, is sorely needed to stimulate our church.

Their preaching, I hope, will have the fire and conviction and imagination that befits young men: may that early fervor light great fires in our congregations. Their concern for all the ills of society, of all creeds and colors, will bring a broadening to our vision of who are the brothers of Christ.

The new priest means to me one who will generously surrender his will to the orders of his Bishop and pastor, to the endless demands of his parishioners, to the opportunities of his times. He does not yet bear those scars of rebuff and frustration which in any man's life cool optimism and courage, and initiative.

In a short while he will be chagrined by his lack of virtue in temptation, by his paucity of ideas under stress, his restlessness with the trivia of a daily routine. But for now, I hope that his youthful love of His Master will keep the young priest peaceful in that obedience which is based on love of Him who has delegated all authority. I hope he long retains bubbling, youthful enthusiasm to make each tomorrow more creative, to improve the workings of the Kingdom of God no matter how badly he thinks his elders have performed.

A priest means to me one who has freshly vowed a loving fidelity to Christ. With the grace of discipline and dedication he has an innocent reverence for chastity, not simply because of others have been chaste in the priesthood before him but because he hopes to be more like Christ. Even though he lacks the experience of assault on his vows, I hope he is sophisticated enough to know that passions will not be cooled by wearing clerical clothes, and that his loneliness will often plead for human affection.

I will kneel to ask the blessing of the new priests and kiss their anointed palms not for anything they have yet done nor in anticipation of the flames of the Holy Spirit they will bring to our diocese, but because each one has come determined and consecrated to leave an imprint of Christ in our times.

—Father Richard Tormey

# Forgive Us If . . .

Commissioners (delegates) to the 180th General Assembly of the United Presbyterian Church meeting in Minneapolis, last week asked God's forgiveness for "pasting stained glass on our eyes and ears to shut out the cry of the hungry and-hurt of the world."

At an opening service nearly 900 delegates confessed their social sins in a prayer which continued:

"Forgive us for frantic buying and selling; for advertising the unnecessary and coveting the extravagant, and calling it good business when it is not good for you.

"Forgive us for pretending to care for the poor, when we do not like poor people, and do not want them in our houses.

"Forgive us for bypassing political duties; for condemning civil disobedience when we will not obey you."

"Forgive us when we deplore violence in our cities if we live in suburbs, where lawns are clipped and churches enlarge, or in green villages where there are too many steeples.

"Forgive us for cheering legislators who promise low taxes, but deny homes and schools and health to those in need; for self-righteousness that blames the poor for their poverty or the oppressed for their oppression.

"Forgive us for turning our churches into private clubs; for loving familiar hymns and religious feelings more than we love you."

Dr. David G. Buttrick of Pittsburgh (Pa.) Theological Seminary was the author of the litany.

# Quotes from the News

## Czech Church Grows Despite Oppression

We have carried heavy burdens; we have known mockery, humiliations, defamation of character, intimidations, expulsion from Christian life, imprisonment, labor camps. We have had no contact with ourselves and the Vicar of Christ, and communication with the life and movement of the Church in the world has been nonexistent. God has not abandoned His faithful. The Church has decreased in numbers but will continue to live its interior life. — Archbishop Josef Tomasik, Apostolic Administrator of Prague.

## Very Desires of Heart Second to God's Will

In the noisy and frantic atmosphere of the modern world, it almost no longer have the possibility of collecting our thoughts and making our heart the center of our personal world. We are fugitives, alienated, as we say today, because of the continual distractions from outside. We finally say to ourselves, thinking that we are simplifying things, "I shall go after what I like." This formula which seems the easiest and most conclusive, is the one which deceives us most of all.

He who goes after what he likes, i.e. temptation, sinist, gain and self-

interest is treading a false path. We must, on the contrary, listen to the voice of the Lord, not because we like it or because it is easy, or because it is almost in full agreement with ours, but because it is the voice of God, with its authority, its mysterious preponderance over all human voices even the inner ones. Even our conscience and freedom recognize this unique authority, that of God. The very desires of the heart come after the absolute primacy of the conversation with God. — Pope Paul VI, in a sermon at the Church of San Leone, Rome.

## Pope Paul Converted A World Like Ours

If people rightly deplore a terrible moral decay today, we must not forget the dark picture the Apostle Paul drew of the paganism of his time: "Men abandoned to the lust of their hearts, in impurity . . . to passions which brought dishonor to themselves . . . a play to their perverted judgment, so that they committed immoral actions; versed in every kind of injustice, knavery, impurity, avarice and ill will; spiteful, murderous, contentious, deceitful, depraved. . . without pity. (Romans 1/24-31).

Paul, a poor, defenseless man, was to take this perverted pagan world away from the snares of materialism, sensuality, selfishness and convert it to the sublime religion of Christ Crucified. — Augustine Cardinal Bea.

# Letters to the Editor

Editor:  
 Re: Your editorial "Poor People Move" (5/10/68)

While the writer questions both the wisdom and worth of the poor people's march on Washington, there is no denying the validity of its cause, or the economic capability for its fulfillment in a land where affluence and waste are destroying moral fiber as well as national resources.

I hasten to add that redress is impossible as long as wealth is garnered (unearned) and concentrated via an unjust and oppressive monetary system that fosters gouging and unethical practices in politics, business, labor, and the professions; while the devil takes the hindmost — the underprivileged, the unorganized, the

honest, the conscientious.

Many devoted Christians are sacrificing their all in a battle against effects, without the slightest recognition of the basic cause—the selfsame cause that culminated in savage proletarian revolutions in France, Mexico, Germany, Russia and Cuba; in which the Church was identified with the oppressors, and purged along with them.

Will the Church Hierarchy heed the warnings of the humble but tough Galilean who never missed an opportunity to castigate the oppressors of his time.

—Edward A. Veith  
 464 Lake Rd., Webster, N.Y.

## The Word for Sunday

### Two Nuns Gone but Their Spirit Lingers On

By FATHER ALBERT SHAMON

Yesterday the Church celebrated Christ's ascension — His going away last week. I was told of the going away of two Sisters from our diocese — Sister Teresa Mary and Sister Natalie of the Mission Helpers of the Sacred Heart at Fairport. I cannot let the occasion pass without paying tribute to them, their Order, and Father Leonard Kelly of Fairport who brought them to our diocese.

Their presence in our diocese, like Christ's on earth, has been a benediction. They, with Father Kelly, pioneered CCD here.

They showed us how the Church must and can go out to adults, to parents, pre-schoolers, and the many, many children in our public schools. They proved that the Catechetical Center must stand with the Catholic school on each side of

the Apostolic Church like the two angels of the ascension.

Christ did not ascend to heaven until "he had spoken these things" (Acts 1:12) — that is, until he had finished his work. Sister Teresa Mary and Sister Natalie have finished their work.

They laid solid foundations for CCD in this diocese. The seedling Teacher Training Courses sown in Fairport have blossomed out all over the diocese — graduating more than 3,000.

When Christ went up, angels came down and took their stand beside the desolate apostles and cheered them as they hovered around till the Holy Spirit took their places. So Sister Teresa Mary and Sister Natalie go away, but they leave their spirit behind, and for our comfort other Sisters, wonderful like themselves, and a Catechetical Center which is the showpiece of the diocese.

St. Luke ends the Gospel with the ascension, and he begins the Acts of the Apostles with the ascension. It is as if Luke is telling us Christ's going away is both an end and a beginning.



Sullivan

# Papal Delegate Hails Jews for 'Conscience'

Manchester, Eng. — (RNS) — In a tribute to the "integrity of the Jewish conscience," Archbishop Ignace Cardinal, the Apostolic Delegate to Britain, declared here that Christians owed a greater debt of forgiveness to Jews than to Christians.

The Pope's representative addressed the Manchester Council of Christians and Jews on the 25th anniversary of its foundation. He declared:

"Over the centuries Christians have

coerced the Jews into conversion at the cost of humiliating disabilities," he declared. "Unscrupulous politicians, many of whom were Christians only by name, have added the horrors of persecution, the gibbet and the ops chamber to those shameful measures. Such cruelties have always aroused the indignation of authentic Christians.

"Today, after Vatican II, we all join in deploring most corditely this disgraceful conduct of the past and humbly implore forgiveness from the God of Israel and from our Jewish brothers for any complicity of our own and of our people in the making of anti-Semitism.

"We recognize the unpayable debt we owe the Jews for our Hebraic heritage, which in the liturgy of the Church continuously nourishes our spiritual life.

"We are persuaded that in God's plan for history, Jewish survival — and the Jews are among the most ancient of surviving people — is fraught with mysterious significance.

"We realize that God has a purpose in permitting religious pluralism till the fullness of time and in moving the hearts of men meanwhile to communicate with one another as brothers. . . ."

"We regard with sacred reverence," he added, "the integrity of the Jewish conscience and resolve to treat the Jews — as Pope Paul has said — 'in such a way that they are neither reproached nor mistrusted but are shown respect, love and hope.'"

Archbishop Cardinal also said that unless Christians and Jews accept one another in an integral and frank expression of their inner self, "dialogue is killed off at the very outset and a self-judging monologue stealthily creeps in" and renders the meeting both hopeless and sterile.

"Christians and Jews have expounded far too much monologues of this kind. Such a soliloquy is responsible for the forging in each community of a much distorted image of the other. But the hour is now struck — after almost 2,000 years — to straighten things out again."