

Fair Is Foul

Something is rotten in the County of Monroe—its annual fair. And the same can be said annually of county fairs in a dozen places in this Diocese.

This area is proud of its affluence, its technical expertise, its creative genius, yet a good part of the yearly County Fair is unimaginative, vulgar, perverse and almost primitive in its appeal to the baser instincts in man.

As our story on Page 7 points out, no criticism is intended for the many worthy organizations at the Fair but it is time for them, and for all of us, to take a fresh look at the yearly blight.

We realize we are leaving ourselves open to charges of naive, self-righteous and do-gooding. So be it!

If it's naive to object to girlie-displays and freak shows and a man disporting himself lowly in a pit before gaping spectators then we are naive.

If it's sophomoric to think that "games of chance" which operate within the correct legal framework are still morally questionable, then we are sophomoric.

If it's doing good to feel that every County Fair should be cleaner, and that fine agricultural and homemaking exhibits should be complemented by worthwhile industrial, scientific and educational displays, then we say let's do good.

Dissolve the Tension

The dust is slowly settling from the verbal conflicts generated by the encyclical on birth control. Learned men and simple ones have spoken and sincere people have read the full text with more concern than they ever showed for any other papal document. Opinions have polarized, it seems very few have altered their first conclusions about the decree. Now there is a period of waiting. Will there be a long stalemate; will the theologians mount an unassailable position to defend the anguished; will the Bishops back down from the papal side and call on him to alter the uncompro-mising document; will there be discreet silence? Who dares predict?

The staff of the national weekly, AMERICA, struggling as all Catholic editorialists have to avoid fostering divisions in the Church and to stand somewhere between the stern conservatives and those who reject any form of authority, this week wisely counsels a lengthy and calm discussion of the encyclical as "an advanced Catholic teaching." It says that present tensions will not tear the Church apart if the Holy Spirit animates the People of God to give prayerful study and reflection on the Pope's judgment about artificial birth regulation. It predicts that "slowly positions will change and full consensus will be achieved."

We believe that the issue of contraceptives and obedience to papal authority and personal conscience can be oversimplified. Perhaps we have erred on this score ourselves in the last two confusing weeks. So we have printed the AMERICA editorial on this page and recommend it for study and action to dissolve tensions and clarify truth.

The Bonds of Love

An elaborate Eucharistic Congress will convene next week in Bogota, Colombia, and the secular press will feature it as a "spectacular." The intended visit of Pope Paul on the fifth and sixth days has already focused international attention on the gathering. Secular commentators are predicting the religious meeting will be "an extravaganza of useless pageantry." They have criticized the just-built plazas and arenas where three-quarters of a million people will worship as a "blasphemous monstrosity" because Colombia has millions of unfed poor. Even many Catholics may miss the whole point of this eucharistic gathering.

The week of the Congress will be a prolonged act of worship of the Blessed Sacrament in which Colombians will try to show to the whole world the bonds of love which have the power to renew the face of the earth. Each day of the Congress will be devoted to exemplifying different ties of love which should bind men to one another and to God. The central bond of love will be the publicly honored Blessed Sacrament, "the living Bread which came down from heaven," the unique food which unites all who eat it into a mysterious fellowship. St. Paul said of this Eucharist: "Because the bread is one, we, though many, are one body, all of us who partake of the one bread."

Other bonds of human love which succeeding daily events will highlight are the ecumenical ties needed between Christians and between Jews and Christians, the demands of kinship with the poor and homeless, the sacred bonds of love in marriage, the concern of love which should reach out to sinners and criminals, and finally the sacramental ties of baptism and priesthood which have given men and women supernatural relationships with their Creator.

Church life today needs the visible demonstrations of faith and reverence which will mark the Eucharistic Congress. But these will be almost superficial benefits if the Bogota program fails to convince us that all Christians have a common duty to strive for higher perfection in their love for all the rest of men. Its daily events and overall impact must be studied.

An editorial writer said recently: "The only proof of God's blueprint acceptable to critics of the Christian Church is its power to produce a community of love." The liturgical celebrations and theological discussions at the first Eucharistic Congress in five years come so appropriately, in times of human misery, racial and national contention, wars, rebellions, and even church controversy, that we hope they will be a blueprint for religious men of all nations to work for a new bond of love.

Like the Pioneers

Catholic authoress and Pulitzer Prize winner Phyllis McGinley recently wrote a charming article on The New American Family in the Saturday Evening Post. After discussing the much publicized crises involving family life she maintained that the American home is in pretty good condition, "considering the brutal buffeting it has taken in this century. It has not abandoned its aspirations, merely changed society's shape and its own."

Her most interesting point was that today's families resemble "the pioneer clusters at the start of our country's history. Like the pioneers they face a wilderness where few trails have been blazed. The wilderness is moral and psychological rather than geographic." Among the similarities between family life today and in the pioneer days are "a lack of permanence, services and ordinary housing space, early marriages, the crumbling of established mores, the necessity to forge new cultural values, invent a different civilization."

Miss McGinley believe that the most hopeful protection for the American family and its place in contemporary society is the modern concern for the rights of human beings. She wrote: "No group can survive without an ideal. The name of that ideal now is civil reform."

Encyclical Ferment Can Be Resolved, Magazine Declares

The following is an "Editorial Statement" from AMERICA, 7/17/68, (somewhat shortened for space requirements) which expresses clearly that in responding to the encyclical "Human Life" there is a middle position between those who lend "unqualified assent to all that the Pope has written" and those who "maintain a discreet, respectful silence." — The Editor

Paul VI will clearly be remembered in history for his part in at least three great movements: Vatican II, world peace and development, and church unity. With the publication of Human Life, it seems certain he will also be remembered for his part in another great movement, difficult to name, which centers on the dignity and sacredness of family life and love.

As a statement of the Dutch hierarchy declares: "Although this papal letter is not an infallible, dogmatic statement, it nevertheless is a real defense of the dignity of life as well as an appeal for responsibility in sexual relationships and marriage that is of the utmost importance to our society. May the discussion of the papal letter contribute to a better and better functioning of authority within the Church."

In view of the enormous interest and debate provoked by the Pope's encyclical, four points need to be explored: the right of the Pope to speak; the right of Catholics to agree and disagree; right and wrong ways to resolve the tension within the Church; and the proper development of the Church's doctrine on life, love and birth regulation.

In the final analysis dogmas are few and far between. Even in the case of dogmas our knowledge is subject to growth. In the area of the Church's teaching on the natural law, we are still more inescapably tied to a system of development. Whatever else is clear about Human Life, it is certain that Paul VI did not intend it as the last word on life and love. For anyone else to claim the last word would be the essence of "theological" or "journalistic" folly.

The right of the Pope and bishops to speak on morals is self-evident to most Catholics. Nevertheless, there are some within the Church who experience difficulty with Human Life on procedural and substantive grounds. Although these objections are confined to a limited number of Catholics, they illustrate an extremely important aspect of the encyclical.

The most serious theological problem it raises is not the problem of artificial birth control. It is the problem of the Pope, that is, an understanding of the exercise of teaching authority within the Church.

For our part, we have no doubt that tradition fully vindicates the right of the Pope and bishops to speak on family life and conjugal love. Indeed, it does much more than that; it est-

ablishes the duty of all Catholics to listen.

The right of Catholics to express disagreement with their leaders is a right as old as Peter and Paul, though dissent from papal teaching is obviously not the normal posture of the Catholic. But dissent is possible when the teaching in question is still in state of development, and when those who dissent have listened with open minds and hearts to what was said, and in the end have found grave, solidly grounded reasons for disagreement. As Vatican II put it in the Constitution on the Church (8:25):

"This religious submission of will and mind must be shown by the faithful in a special way to the authentic teaching authority of the Roman Pontiff, even when he is not speaking ex cathedra. That is, it must be shown in such a way that his supreme magisterium is acknowledged with reverence, the judgments made by him are sincerely adhered to, according to his manifest mind and will."

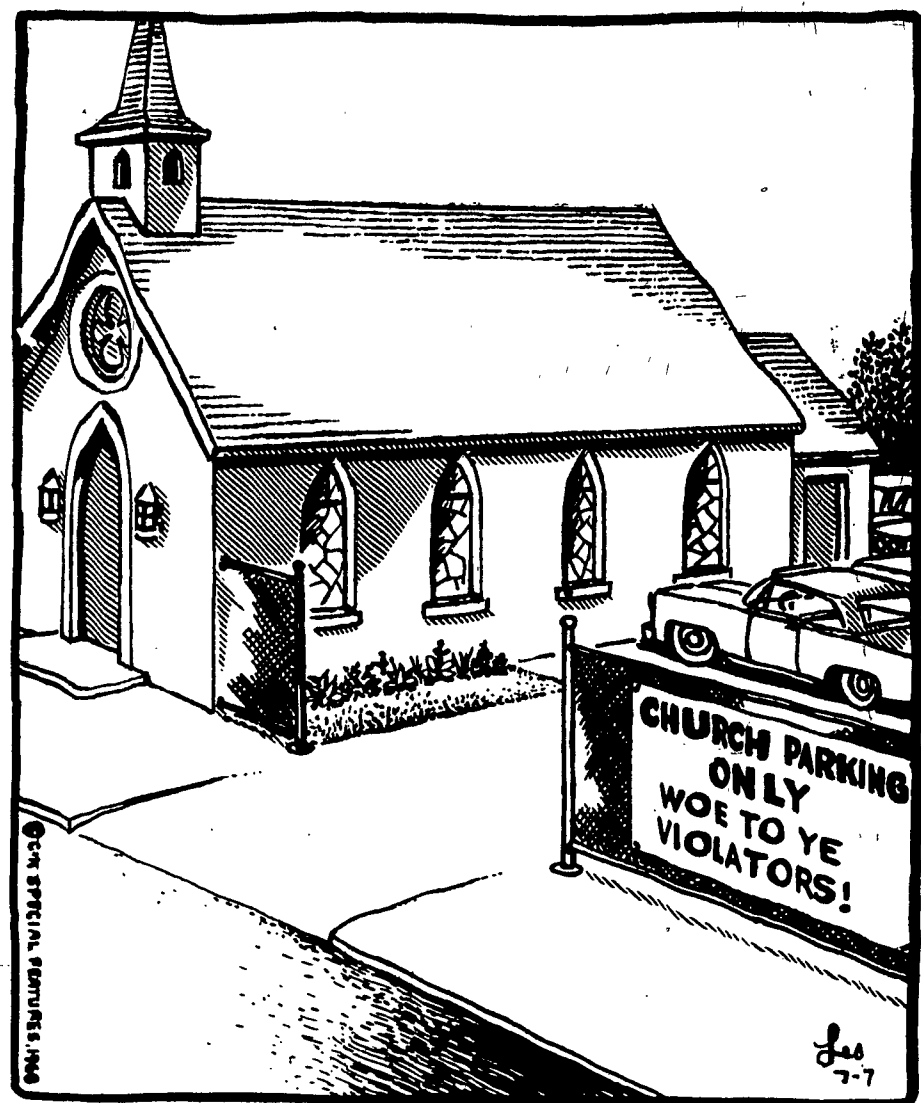
In accordance with this doctrine of the Council, Catholics owe a "religious assent of soul" to the teachings of the Holy Father on faith and morals. The right and duty of Catholics, therefore, to agree with the Pope and to rely on him as a moral guide cannot be questioned.

Neither, however, despite the apparent absoluteness of the Council's language, should one deny the right to disagree, humbly but ultimately, on a matter not proclaimed with the Church's guarantee of infallibility.

Theologians and married couples who are convinced, after careful study, that other conclusions than those drawn by the Pope are possible for them are not only free to follow their consciences, they must do so. No one can account to God for his talents simply by pleading that he acted as an agent of Peter. The addition of personal moral responsibility has never been a doctrine of the Church. "Conscience is the most secret core and sanctuary of a man. There he is alone with God, whose voice echoes in his depths" (Church in the Modern World, 8:16).

If there were only a few Catholics who conscientiously disagreed with the Pope's blanket condemnation of artificial birth control, Human Life would not have precipitated wide tension. In addition to many of our more respected theologians in the United States, a large number of lay Catholics well-versed in philosophy and theology presently find themselves unable to assent fully to the encyclical's absolute rejection of artificial birth regulation, and are conscientiously convinced that such regulation may be legitimate and even necessary in certain special circumstances.

Their position would seem to follow lines suggested by the recent statement of the Dutch hierarchy: "A



Roman Catholic owes respect to the authority and pronouncements of the Pope. The personal conscience cannot pass over an authoritative pronouncement such as a papal letter. There are, however, many factors which determine one's personal conscience regarding marriage rules, for example, mutual love, the relations in a family and social circumstances."

There are right ways and wrong ways to resolve this tension. The worst possible way would be for dissenters to leave the Church, abandoning among other things their responsibility to participate in the development of the Church's doctrine. A close second in disastrous consequences would be for dissenters to be forced out of the Church.

Agreement with the Holy Father on birth control is narrowly conceived of as a "loyalty test" for Catholics, dissent in some could be coerced into defiance. The issue must not be falsified by oversimplification in any direction. If there is a question of obedience involved, there is also issue a root question of the search of the whole Church for truth.

Accordingly, St. Paul's plea for unanimity among the Christians in Corinth, to which Pope Paul refers in Human Life (8:29), ought not to lead to terminate discussion within the Church on the legitimacy in some circumstances of artificial birth regulation. The Pope himself made it clear. What is reformable is discussable.

Indeed, if discussion of birth control was ever necessary in the Church, it seems supremely so now. It is a mistake to think that Paul VI has merely reiterated what Pius XI and Pius XII have said. Human Life presents an advanced Catholic understanding, especially in concepts of conjugal love and parental responsibility. The plans of more than one national hierarchy to meet for joint

study of the encyclical make this clear.

In order to further discussion in a responsible way and to carry out the directives set forth by Pope Paul in Human Life, it may be expected that bishops will promote local and regional conferences of the clergy and laity, to accurately inform them of the Pope's position and reasoning. Colleges and seminaries should organize seminars and symposiums to bring the full resources of theology, philosophy, the social sciences and medicine to bear on the fundamental issues and insights presented by Human Life. Our American bishops have already called the priests and laity of the country "to receive with sincerity what [Pope Paul] has taught, to study it carefully and to form their consciences in his light."

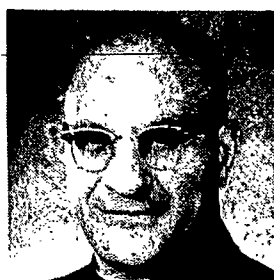
Unfortunately, there may be some who will say that the laity (and perhaps the clergy) do not need to study, much less evaluate, the Pope's position. If there is any need, such a view would hold, is that the Pope has totally banned artificial birth regulation. This is precisely the moral "infantilism" that well-instructed Catholics know cannot be tolerated. They are thoroughly familiar with the teachings of Vatican II on personal responsibility and the formation of conscience. Moreover, they recall a passage from the Constitution on the Church in the Modern World (16:2): "All the faithful, clerical and lay, possess a lawful freedom of inquiry and of thought, and the freedom to express their minds humbly and courageously about those matters in which they enjoy competence."

Though they know that these words are directed primarily to those engaged in scholarly work, they sense that the Council is here also speaking of a spirit that must inspire every Catholic.

If, after prayerful study and reflection on the Pope's judgment about artificial birth regulation, large segments of the clergy and laity are still not interiorly persuaded, tension will continue in the Church. The Spirit, however, who animates the People of God, will not permit tension to tear the Church apart. Slowly positions will change and full consensus will be achieved.

Msgr. Lambruschini in his role as official spokesman in Rome for the encyclical declared, in fact, that conceivably the change could be quite radical. It is, however, much too early in the life of the Church to speculate on what the final word will be. It could turn out to be substantially what Paul VI has said in Human Life. It could also turn out, as we have thought more likely, to be something close but not identical.

Meantime, Catholic couples of childbearing age must shoulder the burden of the affair. Whether they agree or disagree with the Pope, the position of very many will be difficult. All we think, will find consolation in the Pope's inspired descriptions of conjugal love and parental responsibility.



More Letters on Papal Encyclical

As for promoting adultery, however, he has the wrong culprit; it is rhythm that can and does drive men to adultery. Rhythm in its own way destroys man's dignity, and it violates the spiritual rhythms of married love.

The ideals of which he speaks are seldom fully realized under rhythm, yet are more frequently attained by persons using birth control. He does not allow for Christian witness, for the Holy Spirit working in the Church.

—Deirdre M. Hetzler
361 Augustine St., Rochester.

Editor: It seems to be that with all these arguments about birth control people are missing the point entirely.

As Catholics we recognize the Pope as head of the Church. If we want to stay in the Church we follow him; if

Word for Sunday

Controlling the Tongue Not Easy

By Father Albert Shannon

The man in next Sunday's Gospel was deaf and dumb and perhaps feeble-minded. Often the world ridicules and neglects such a person. But our Lord, He came to save all; he cured diseased bodies to show he would cure souls.

Of course Christ could have healed the man with a single word. But he seldom did this. To dispose a person for his favors, he generally enshrined each miracle, as the Church does her sacraments, in a beautiful, ring of ceremonies.

Thus Christ took the deaf and dumb man apart from the crowd. What consideration! The poor man could have been utterly confused with so many people standing about. Then Christ communicated to the man in the only human way at his disposal: sign language.

He touched the man's ears and tongue to show he intended to do something about those organs. Next he looked upward toward heaven, to indicate that help could come only from God on high. Then he pronounced to stir the man to desire his cure. Finally he blurted out the command, "Ephphatha!" (that is, "be opened"). The cure was instant and complete.

Before losing the man's tongue, Christ groaned. Why did he groan? He was apprehensive of the man's future, of what use he would make of

his tongue. One tree can make a million matches; yet one match can destroy a million trees. The tongue is a fire (James 3:6). It can destroy. Or to quote St. James again, it is like a bit in a horse's mouth or the rudder of a ship. The tongue can steer the course of a man's life. "For by thy words thou wilt be justified, and by thy words thou wilt be condemned" (Mt. 12:37).

Once a convert came to an old priest and asked for further instructions on how to grow in the love of God. The priest opened the Bible to

the book of Psalms and read: "I said, 'I will watch my ways, so as not to sin with my tongue; I will set a curb on my mouth'" (Ps. 38:2). After the priest had finished that verse, the man stopped him and said, "That's enough; let me go home and try to learn that lesson."

Months later, when the man did not return, the priest asked him why. The convert replied, "I have not yet learned the lesson." The control of the tongue is a lifetime endeavor: "If anyone does not offend in word, he is a perfect man" (James 3:2).

There's

See Editorial, Page 1

The following commentaries were made about any of the 12-county Diocese but it would seem Monroe County is particularly negligent because it has the financial and intellectual wherewithal to do better.

By CARMEN VIGLUCCI

Even before Michael Henrich his wife at the West Fair, and wife and child to a sailor Hardy's "The Mayor of Bridge", there were strange going on at county fairs.

One gets the feeling when 1968 Monroe County version fair, much as the bludgeoned, vived the enlightenment of once again we are on the move with perhaps knights before us.

That is easier to believe spectacle of Space Age citizen under a tent gawking at a 6-foot box constricted around his neck.

Of a contemporary of Churchill and John Kennedy, ing crude double-enders, dience including many children.

There is Serpentina the I ber girl who curls up in a by shafts of plywood, then tra quarter spectators can platform and look at her. M the hawkler lures the young "If cloth were \$3 a yard her would cost 17 cents."

A matronly woman asks probably her pre-teen grand "Did you see her? Was it go

A well-dressed Negro hole little daughter so she can ter view of midget Pete snake.

More than anything the fa adoxical. An inter-religious sets the stage.

In one corner there is grooming her calf for show the midway is a sign "see 65-pound rat, 20 cents." It's the Cardiff giant again for

Perkinsville Uses Church For Needy

Perkinsville — Perkinsville comes the first parish in the to turn its facilities complete service of those in need, to a recent bulletin, of St. Patrick's Church.

The Sunday bulletin refers on Sheen's paper, "The Shape of the Church to Come," in which church buildings are to as "a place for service, mission, caring for everyone who the church..."

Perkinsville parish has a school into a medical center, migrant day care center, store and food program well as educational building to Father Timothy G. W. rectory houses eight VISIT for their REACH project.

"No doubt Bishop Sheen inspired by what he sees in Perkinsville, in the Christian community, we are surely the Shape of the Church to Come," the bulletin stated.

PAT

Do you have questions bag you? The famous PAT ANSWERS! ... Write in your concerns ... Address: PAT ANSWERS — or of the Diocese.

Q. Is a Protestant minister to attend a Catholic funeral? A. Yes, if the minister is a member of a family who wanted to minister to the bereaved in the cemetery but was told not to be proper for him to p

A. There is no impropriety in a minister-friend of the share the graveside ceremony. Protestant ministers are welcome to participate in Catholic ceremonies these days surely it is gracious to invite one of our priests at graveside rites for

Q. I have read that in some churches Catholics themselves Communion by Host into their own hands. Is this a new custom approved?

A. It is not a doctrinal matter. The Eucharist is distributed in traditional or local. The Bishops of an area have the right to permit or forbid liturgical usage of this the early church it was the priest to hand the Host to the communicant. This until around the 10th century changeover to placing the tongue was decided because of growing awe of the sacrament. The trans- leavened to unleavened bread (delicate wafers) occurred a Recently in the Diocese of Ontario, a synod of priests men legislating on the Eucharist gested to the Bishop leavened bread and reception

Q. I know you've written women's head-coverings. But I fear that the casual custom of wearing son the head at Mass helps the

COURIER-JOURNAL BISHOP-FULTON J. SHEEN President MSGR. JOHN S. RANDALL Managing Editor CARMEN J. VIGLUCCI Associate Editor REV. RICHARD TORREY Editor ANTHONY J. COSTELLO Advertising Director