

God Under the Dome

The wonders of God's creative power to be revealed inside the magnificent Strasenburgh Planetarium opening in Rochester this weekend will so enrich the faith of citizens of this area that we have happily placed its story on our front page. The building cost more than \$2 million yet its goal is modest. A plaque on the entrance is inscribed very simply: "Dedicated to the promise of a fuller understanding and appreciation of the order and majesty of the universe."

But we dare to predict that no visitor to this Star Theater will think only of the breath-taking show he has seen or of his own insignificance in the infinity of space. He cannot help but find new grateful awe for the Creator who could sprinkle so many thousands of planets across billions of miles of space and still care for him.

The viewer in the planetarium, tilted backward in a soft chair, will see thousands of stars projected on the sky-dome as no human eye ever sees them on the clearest night. Intricate projectors will even create precise astral events of the past and future. Lectures will reduce the mysteries of astronomy to each earthling's understanding. But his amazement at the orderly power of the God who caused it all will open windows of the soul never reached by catechism or pulpit.

The Strasenburgh Planetarium already dubbed the most excellent of 100 such installations in all the world, is one of the richest gifts ever offered to the people of central and western New York. Community and church, home and school will be served by this institution. We owe sincere gratitude to Mr. and Mrs. Edwin G. Strasenburgh and to all who staff the Rochester Museum and Science Center.

Excessive Authority

A respected colleague, Father Paul Cuddy, speaking this week from his usual pillar on our Commentary Page, tartly questions an editorial opinion printed here last week that a disturbing issue of our times is that authentic law and legitimate authority must learn how to live with groups who will not accept traditional forms of discipline. Father Cuddy offers a well-reasoned column presenting his case that freedom, liberty and self-fulfillment have been glorified and over-tolerated in our young to the unfortunate detriment of authority. He suggests that the Chicago police need our tears and that a few nights' of riding in police cars would make us appreciate why men cannot be left free to do what they like.

We will stand by our editorial effort of last week that "old terms of discipline must give way to change" both in the administration of the Church and the control of civil order. Authority — whether in government, or family life, universities or chancelleries — always disciplined best when it looked at both sides of the issue before swinging at the unruly, when it made no rules it could not enforce with dignity, when it prudently left itself and its inferior a graceful exit from prolonged controversy. Men have always bristled under authority which is arbitrary, in the sense that arbitrary means "based on one's own preference, notion or whim." But authority won men's respect to the degree that the superior anticipated, crisis by considering the inferior's preferences, notions and whims as well as his own.

The Chicago street riots and the Cardinal-priests' dispute in Washington remain as evidence that if "the emphasis in authority is the responsibility to do a job" (Father Cuddy's definition) the job has not been well done when the right of intelligent discussion is thwarted, the enmity of both sides is polarized and the public is poorer because students and priests have turned us off. Has the "job been done" in these two cities as well as our society needs? No one wants the end of legitimate authority's right to run its institution. But patience, justice and love must temper discipline today because young people have changed even though the principles have not.

Call Her 'Sister'?

"Since they are signs of a consecrated life, religious habits should be simple and modest, at once poor and becoming. They should meet the requirements of health and be suited to the circumstances of time and place as well as to the services required by those who wear them. Habits of men and women which do not correspond to those norms are to be changed."

Such was the dictum of Vatican II on religious garb. "The Documents of Vatican II, Page 478) and, my, how things have changed.

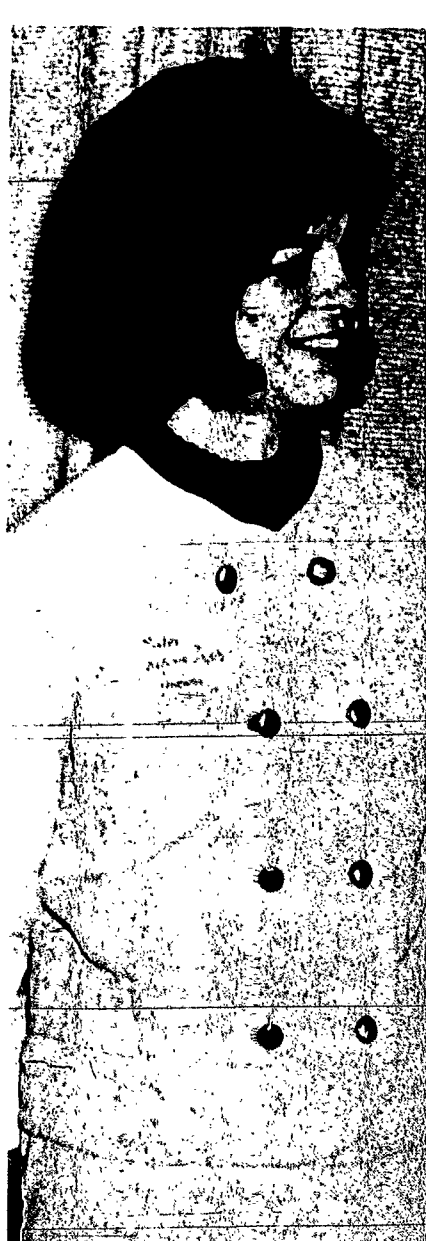
Surely most of us enjoyed a vicarious sigh of relief when many Sisters could doff the dark, heavy, floor-length garb they used to have to wear on even the hottest of days.

And most of us are probably pleased that the more up-to-date clothes worn by nuns are becoming as well as comfortable.

And all of us agree that a comfortable person probably does a better job of his work.

Perhaps Vatican II had a deeper motive — to make the vocation more enticing even in the comparatively minor matter of style, for who would deny that an eye to fashion is part of the feminine makeup.

We admit maybe Sister Regina Ann is ahead of our time and in the near future we will be revealed as old fogeys for being confused by a world where it is possible for lay people to dress like nuns and monks (recent style fads) and for Sisters almost to soar above the haute-monde in coiffure as well as clothing.



Sister Regina Ann of the Order of Sisters of St. Ignace in Toronto at the International Conference of Christians and Jews in Toronto.

We would have to force ourselves to address Sister Regina Ann as "Sister."

Sisters, we are glad you kicked the habit but not that far.

Stork and Storm

This article is reprinted from The Patriarch, the Sunday bulletin of St. Patrick's Church, Elmira, by Father Joseph M. Egan, pastor. Besides its practical clarity the writing reveals the theological mind of Father Egan who taught dogmatic theology for 23 years at St. Bernard's Seminary (1944 to 1967).

It used to be said that nobody could ever get in trouble by coming out boldly in favor of motherhood.

But the Pope did. He stirred up quite a storm with his forthright encyclical on contraception. I've been asked many questions about the encyclical in these last few weeks, and even though I may no longer qualify as "a theologian," I'd like to present my own views to readers of The Patriarch.

Q. Is the encyclical an infallible pronouncement?

A. So far as its central theme is concerned, I am not prepared to deny that it is. The Pope is here pronouncing on a matter of faith and morals, using his authority to bind all the faithful on earth by his view of God's law. I see no reason to deny that the charisma of infallibility is operative here. Certainly if the Church ever needed that gift of Christ, the time is now. And the mere absence of high-flying rhetoric is no proof that the Pope is not speaking ex cathedra.

Even if the present declaration were not infallible, it would still be binding until explicitly revoked by the present or some future Pope.

Q. What exactly does the encyclical say is forbidden by the law of God?

A. Any directly-intended interruption of the reproductive processes. Any operation, medication or procedure that is intended to render sexual activity fruitless (or to destroy the unborn fruit of it) is stamped as seriously immoral, mortally sinful.

Q. Does the encyclical forbid even the use of periodic abstinence, to limit the size of one's family?

A. Absolutely not. Indeed the Pope voices the hope that scientific research may make this method of "family planning" more widely available.

Q. Why didn't the Pope present the Biblical evidence for the position he is maintaining?

A. The Pope does not enter the arena of theological debate. He did not detail any reasons of theological or philosophical nature. His encyclical was written to present "the doctrine of the Church." The task of defending it by valid argumentation, is left to those moral theologians who profess to have the Catholic faith. As both Vatican Councils made very clear, the Catholic Church does not feel it necessary (or possible) to decide every religious issue by appeal to the Bible.

Q. What if a given moral theologian feels himself unable to defend the doctrine of the Church?

A. He should do what any other man ought to do, when he finds himself unable to do the job assigned him: he should resign that position, and take up some other line of work.

Q. Didn't the Pope violate the recommendations made by most of the experts he himself had chosen?

A. Possibly: there has been no official report of these "confidential committees." Let's remember that, in Catholic doctrine, it is the Pope, and not some committee of experts selected by him, who is guided by God for the safe guidance of the Church of God.

Pope Paul himself chose these experts, and, for the most part, he took them from the ranks of those liberal theologians who had already gained fame by calling for a change in this matter.

The Pope listened carefully to them, found their arguments unconvincing, thanked them for their work, and rejected their conclusion.

Q. Isn't it true that the Papal decision has provoked a loud chorus of dissent all over the world?

Letters to the Editor

Editor:

We are among those Catholics who do not share the "enthusiasm" (Courier-Journal, Aug. 23) of Fr. Daniel Brennan and his fellow-deputies of sex education in our parochial schools. Nor, interestingly, does Dr. Gordon Drake, a Protestant educator, who laments how some Catholic schools have gone along in keeping up with the pagans by instituting sex education courses under the influence of a philosophy and literature characterized by a loss of the sense of the sacred.

In his article "The NEA and Sex Education" (Christian Crusade, July 1968), Dr. Drake comments: "Fr. Brent agrees that sex education is the parents' responsibility, but insists that parents do no better," he will. Parents, therefore must "deliver" before the children begin school, for in any case the school program will be used. He stated: "We'd much rather you got there first, in which case what the school does will just be supplementary and a reinforcement." Under such a program, parents are forced to introduce their child to adult information — they are left no choice."

It is indeed incredible that this type of educational totalitarianism should be fostered in Catholic schools. We seriously question whether these diocesan school officials and permissive parents who insist on organized, formalized sex education in the schools are really thinking with the "mind of the Church." The wisdom of Catholic philosophy has always stressed that the chief task of sexual education was not to attract the attention of the young to sex matters, but as far as possible to distract them from it.

Plus XI in his Encyclical on Christian Education long ago warned against public sex education and, indeed, any method of education that is "founded wholly or in part on the denial or the forgetfulness of original sin and of grace." In the pages of the sex education curriculum we have perused, original sin and grace are not even mentioned.

Why repeat the same old errors of the 1920s when the garbage of "Sex Education" propaganda similarly inundated the nation? Rhoda L. Lorand, noted child analyst, has minced no words about the sordid assault on the virtue and sensibilities of children today through sex education in the schools: "How far is this folly going to go? They're repeating the same mistake the Freudians made years ago. The rationale then was that since repressions may cause neuroses, get rid of all repressions. Cramming sex knowledge down kids' throats does not promote healthy growth. The likely effect is more anxiety, not less." ("The Truth About Sex Education" in Saturday Evening Post, June 29, 1968).

Fr. Brent's formalized "Sex Education" Program should be strenuously opposed, not only as scandalously emasculating and enervating parental authority and prerogatives, but also as a radical departure from the accepted norms of sex education laid down by Holy Mother Church.

—Mr. and Mrs. James Likoudis
Watkins Glen, N.Y.

Editor:

Please permit a simple layman to encourage those sincere souls whose spiritual anguish must have been intensified by Father Shamon's injudicious letter in the Courier-Journal Aug. 30. In his letter, Father Shamon pronounces this haughty anathema:

"If a man says he is following his conscience and his conscience is diametrically opposed to Papal teachings on faith and morals, let him follow it, but do not let him call it a Catholic conscience."

For the comfort of those whose travail Father Shamon obviously little appreciates, let me suggest they are in good company. For with them under Father Shamon's bitter interdict

ought to go such episcopal luminaries as Cardinal Suenens, Cardinal Leger, Cardinal Alfrink and Patriarch Maximon IV Saygh of Antioch. May I humbly suggest that Father reread their addresses to the recent Council. May I also call his respectful attention to the recent statement of the Dutch Bishops on the encyclical itself. May I quote for him the sympathetic and shepherding statement of John Carmel Cardinal Heenan, Roman Catholic primate of England:

Those who have become accustomed to using methods which are unlawful . . . must not despair. Above all they must not abstain from the sacraments . . . and must find strength to obey His (God's) word law, however often they fail.

My own objection here is not so much to the substance of the late encyclical; it is rather to the oversimple castigation Father Shamon makes of Catholics of earnest conscience. I find it scarcely in keeping with Pope Paul's own counsel in the Pastoral Directives of the encyclical, where he urges priests to an "eminent form of charity for souls" which "must ever be accompanied by patience and goodness, such as the Lord Himself gave example of in dealing with men. Having come not to condemn but to save, he was indeed intransigent toward evil, but merciful toward individuals."

Can his priests afford to be less merciful?

—Clarence A. Amann
98 Caroline St., Rochester

Editor:

Christians should be aware of the workings of the Holy Spirit as they search out the answers to the pressing problems of life. In the Vatican Council's Decree on the Missionary Activity of the Church, this Spirit tells us that "each and every one of the Christian faithful needs to be

Word for Sunday

Humility an Aid to Ambition

By Father Albert Shamon

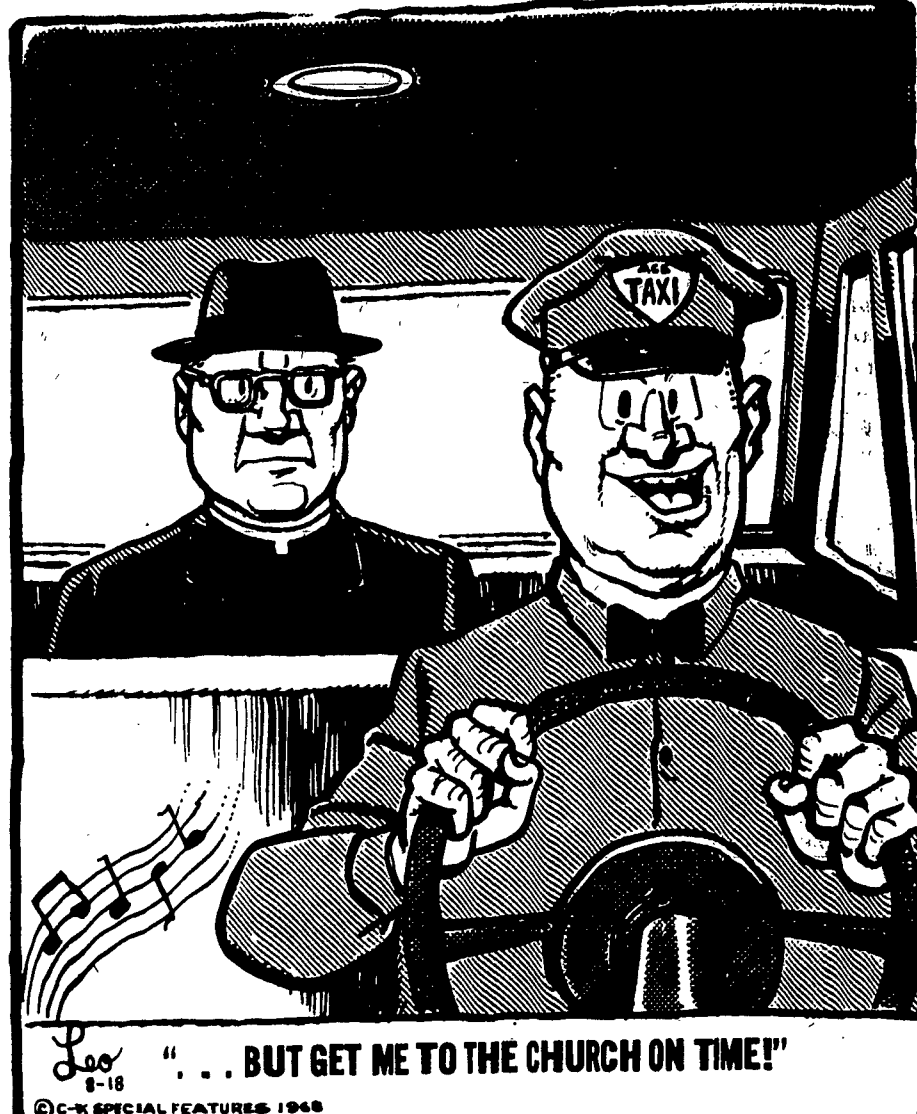
A very common occurrence prompted the parable of Sunday's Gospel. Our Lord noticed how the invited guests "were trying to get the places of honor at table." A maitre d'hotel remarked he never worried how he arranged dignitaries at table, for "those who mattered didn't care where they sat, whereas those who did care didn't matter."

One of the major causes for discontent in the world today is that so many are in jobs and places where they ought not be. What too often puts them there is ambition: seeking promotion and places of honor independent of ability or capacity.

To seek honor and achievement is praiseworthy, provided it is in accord with one's true ability. No one blames the acorn for wanting to become an oak, nor a forget-me-not for wishing to be the flower for Memorial Day. Nor is any man to blame who seeks an opportunity for his abilities.

The fault is that so many seek promotion with little thought of service or capacity. How many in the "political field" aspire to high office — not for what they can do for their country — but for what the office can do for them, honorwise and financially!

The bad thing about ambition is that it indulges self-love to the point of trampling on the rights of others. At the wedding feast some were "sitting in seats" that belonged to others. The result was a shameful retreat to



A. Certainly this is true of those non-Catholic circles which held that "the pill and the loop" would be the salvation of mankind.

It is also clear that even within the Church there were priests, Sisters and laymen who had imprudently and disobediently declared that the traditional Catholic teaching was weigh all the reasons for and against being a Catholic in this twentieth century. These were understandably chagrined to find they had bet on the wrong horse. And some of them had bet rather heavily.

Let's not forget that hostility toward the Catholic Church is by no

means dead in the world. Such circles will amplify and gloat over reports of dissension within the Church.

Q. What if an individual Catholic finds that he cannot accept the teaching of the Catholic Church on this point?

A. If we are going to become religiously strong, we must go through these times of tension. Such a person should calmly and prayerfully re-assess himself to see if a re-assessment would be either (a) a faith that has been so strengthened that he is in contact with the living God, or (b) so solidified an attachment to contraception that the Catholic faith is given up.

Father O'Brien writes about our Latin-American missions from two year's experience near La Paz, Bolivia. He has volunteered to publicize diocesan missionaries in Bolivia, Chile and Brazil for an October article in the Courier-Journal so that our lay and clergy may be "awakened and aware" of the apostolate of 28 diocesan priests and Sisters in South America. — The Editor.

fully acquainted with the present condition of the Church in the world, and to hear the voice of the multitudes who cry: Help us!

The Decree also says: "Every means of social communication should be used to furnish the kind of mission information which will make the faithful feel that mission work is their very own, will make them open their hearts to such vast and profound human needs, and enable them to come to the relief of these people." (No. 36)

Recently I came home from the Rochester Bolivian mission project which encompasses the very basic human wants of 45,000 Aymara Indians. I began to ponder the strong and disputed words of Ivan Illich, Director of the Center of Inter-cultural Documentation (CIDOC), in Cuernavaca, Mexico, that the foreign cleric should not be in South America, that this "pharmacist's pill" will both stop the patient from seeking a surgeon's advice and addict him to the drug."

Maybe, just maybe, as a priest and prophet, there is a greater role to play for South America away from the suffering, depressed, culture-starved Bolivian people. There is much awakening to be done among the American faithful.

Money, the great American binder

of all wounds, is not the question. When people ask me: "What can I do for the mission project in Bolivia?", I reply with an appeal for an awareness.

When your children complain about their food, let them know about the millions who have nothing to eat. When they moan that Suse's house is better furnished than theirs, tell them about the people who have no homes. When they fret about which clothes to wear to school, how about those who walk naked?

Your four Rochester priests working in La Paz, Bolivia, are not engaged in expending the structures of a dying church. But they're there. We recognize that mission is first a "being there" — a servant presence in love on behalf of Christ.

Through our presence we believe will grant to each community the charisms and services necessary for its development and expansion. At this appointed time, we will be able to leave.

Let me say a word about the already progressing mission awareness on the part of the Rochester people. Under the leadership of two laymen from St. Lawrence parish, Greece, Norbert Jagodzinski and Dan Cannan, a program to arouse lay interest and economic support has been initiated. This is not a give-away program, but is aimed at repairing the unjust form of living of so many millions of human beings. The money being raised will be set up as a fund, from which needy people will be able to borrow interest free. With this borrowed money, industry is being born to give work to the poor on a cooperative basis. These Christian endeavors help to form true community, men working together for their common welfare.

—Rev. Thomas M. O'Brien
Colebrook Rd., Rochester



Humility is not an enemy, but an ally. For humility keeps ambition from becoming absurd; from going up, for instance, and sitting at the head table when you are just one of the invited guests.

Ambition uses the elbow and elbows its way through life; humility uses the knee and puts us where we really belong in relation to God and to fellowman. Humility is not timidity; it is not "putting off the old man to put on the old woman," as Francis Thompson phrased it. Humility is the acceptance of the place appointed us by God, whether it be at the head table or at the last table. Humility holds its breath of truth before our eyes and walks by its light.

Lay Bo At McQu

A board of 33 Rochester laymen will soon take over responsibility for McQuaid Jesuit High School, the New York provincial of the Society of Jesus, Father Robert A. Mitchell, S.J., announced this week.

The transfer of control to a Board of Trustees will probably involve a gradually reduced Jesuit staff according to Father Albert P. Bletsch, S.J., rector of the McQuaid community.

He indicated that the Rector Principal of the school and two of Jesuit Fathers of the faculty would be associated with the Trustees' Board and share the operation of the institution for the Society. McQuaid presently administered by the Jesuits and a lay board assembled 3 years ago acts in an advisory capacity.

The unexpected announcement of the transfer of responsibility for 14-year old high school is the re-

Eyewitness Account

The Ho

By PINCER LEAVEN

Father Sean Horrigan has brought Rochester the story of a neighbor grocer to death in starvation and The Holy Ghost missioner to Bi-cleached his hands around a cup of coffee as he spoke of the atroc being committed in the "fairest f-er of the missions."

The photographs which he brought show children whose stomachs are extended from rickets they are equal the remainder of the body in Other children, dead in the arm their mothers, are merely skel wrapped in a thin tissue of skin. ther Horrigan's massive shoul squeeze and shrink.

He said that just as he was entering the general advance of Niger federal troops, he secured his mission, only later to learn that the sacred vessels and vestments had been looted.

"Ciboria and chalices are being in the public markets," he said. Even with the plagues of death violence in their nation, "the mo of the Biafran people is as high t as it has ever been." Father "They will die from starvation the fighting rather than surrend

He told a story about 15 Biafr ambassadors on a troop supplies p. When the captain told them that would have to jettison the cargo cause of overload and low fuel, an ambassador said: "A man resolve jump out rather than to derive fighting forces of the needed sup. The captain had to persuade i that their weight would not mak appreciable difference in the p. They landed safely but without plies.

In recounting his escape from war zone, Father has very warm lectures of the deputy principal cer to the American consulate an wife at Luanda, Angola, Mr. and Kenneth N. Rogers.

"Fifty of us arrived at Luanda only 15 pounds apiece, (about American dollars). We called Rogers and told him of our p. Both Mr. and Mrs. Rogers immedi ly arranged with Washington fo passages out of Africa. They st with us night and day seeing to needs until we had all left."

Discounting reports that the erment of Biafra has hired a lic relations firm in Los Angeles, the Horrigan said: "The situa erment is simply too poor. Al work is being done by these wo ful young people who have volun ed — some have even left their — to work for starving Biafra."

Father Horrigan who is pres stationed in New York, acceptin vitations to speak on the Biafr sue, came to the city at the request Emergency Relief for Biafra, a unter group headed by Patrick ren, former Peace Corps volun Africa. He spoke last week at a on the University of Rochester pus.

PAT A

Do you have questions about PAT ANSWERS? . . . But don't write in your concerns and answers will not necessarily — or of the Diocese.

Q. My grandmother raised suggestion that I should be "ch ed" on the Sunday when we our new baby-girl to be baptiz never heard the word before. does it mean?

—N. H., Elmira

A. The "churching" of a wom the blessing given to a mother childbirth. It is a brief ceremon prayers of thanksgiving for del and petitions for the welfare of and mother. Not obligatory, b lovely tradition.

Q. Recently I attended a wed at which the priest gave his of to the bride and groom to drink consecrated wine. Is this a litu innovation and does it have sp significance?

—C. V., Pen

A. The privilege of a bride groom to drink the Precious l from the chalice at their wedd. Mass is only a few years old, permitted to them (and to co having Masses for a wedding ju and people at an annual retrea emphasize the full sharing of

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