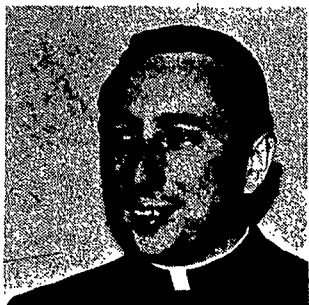


# CHURCH AND THE CITY

## Adjust Mission to People's Needs

By Father P. David Finks



Earlier this year Msgr. James C. Donohue touched off a good-sized controversy at the San Francisco convention of the National Catholic Educational Association. He called for a serious examination of priorities in Catholic education and suggested that the first priority be education in the urban ghetto. Later in the convention he was supported in his choice of priorities by Harold Howe, the U.S. Commissioner of Education.

With the prospect of one of our diocesan inner-city schools being closed next year and increasing anguish at the Pastoral Office over large subsidies paid to inner-city parochial schools, Msgr. Donohue's suggestions may deserve a longer look.

It would help the dialogue process if the protagonists could agree on a basic ground for discussion. No one is seriously questioning the future of the Catholic educational system.

The issue is whether the priority for that educational system today is still the general parochial and diocesan high school setup.

The Bishops of the United States made the parish school system mandatory in 1884 only after repeated warnings from Rome that the American public school system was a threat to the faith and morals of Catholic children. There was disagreement among our Bishops at the time, not over the need for better Catholic education, but that the separate parochial school system was the only alternative.

Today there is a much greater dis-

cussion among American Catholics of practical alternatives to the utopian "every Catholic child in a Catholic school" as the only way to achieve a solid religious education.

The Bishops seem to be moving somewhat cautiously toward a different set of national priorities for the Catholic Church in the United States today.

The present diocesan school system properly funded could develop a new set of exciting priorities over the next several years. With our freedom from much of the political and racially sensitive machinery of the public school system, we could lead the way to needed educational reform.

The parochial schools in the poorer areas could gradually become private community schools under the control of neighborhood boards of education. These would be funded initially by the diocese and have the pick of our excellent corps of religious and lay teachers. This would also remove much of the opposition to state and federal funds for private school systems.

Such community schools would obviate the growing antagonism among Black and Hispanic-American families to white-dominated, outside-controlled schools. Special programming to meet the particular needs of Black and Puerto Rican children could be more easily adopted without the administrative blocks built into the present public school system.

More money and resources could be made available for developing top-

flight religious education centers. Several parishes in an area could run such a center cooperatively with much less duplication in teacher recruitment and training, and in curriculum development.

In many areas we could implement Bishop Sheen's suggestion, made at the Council of Churches annual dinner earlier this year, for cooperative ecumenical religious education programs with shared facilities, personnel and curricula. This is already being done successfully in the ghetto areas of Rochester in the Ecumenical Church Schools sponsored by the Joint Office of Urban Ministry.

All this redevelopment of our educational priorities could free additional money and personnel for other experimental educational thrusts.

Pre-school education is at the stage where our Catholic school system could contribute the pioneer effort.

Day care centers, so badly needed in ghetto areas to permit mothers to break out of the destructive welfare system, could be set up in conjunction with the inner-city Churches.

We are no longer the immigrant Church of 1890 fighting for survival. We have a Catholic educational organization in the diocese with the leadership and the capacity to move in new directions. We have a generation of young adults searching for worthwhile areas of human service to match their desire for commitment.

Does the Catholic community of the Diocese of Rochester have the courage and the will to support new priorities in Christian education?

# ON THE RIGHT SIDE

## The Comforts of Religion

By Father Paul J. Cuddy



At a recent Legion of Mary meeting, a member told this funny story. "A friend of mine, now dead, God rest her, belonged to a very strict Evangelical church. No smoking. No drinking. No dancing. No joy of any kind. She was a wonderful person: devout, prayerful, and one of the kindest persons I've ever known. She was a real saint. But she did like an occasional nip. She never overdressed. She just took one high-ball and relaxed with her friends.

"One day she asked me in all seriousness: 'Do you think I'll go to hell for taking a high-ball once in a while? We had a sermon last Sunday on drink, and we were told we'd go to hell if we touched liquor. Do you think I'd really go to hell for that?'"

"Good heavens, no! I replied. 'A drink which relaxes can be a divine gift.'"

"My friend sighed: 'Oh, dear. You Catholics have such a comfortable religion.'"

This story stirred up my recollections of certain agitators in the Church. So many have a self-complacent annoyance with those who derive comfort from ancient and beloved devotions, e.g., to the Blessed Sacrament, the rosary, litanies, the sacramentals.

So many have a greater petulance toward us who love the visible Church. This is strange because they claim they are following Vatican II which states:

"They (the People of God) are fully incorporated into the society of the Church who, possessing the Spirit of Christ accept her entire system and all the means of salvation given to her; and THROUGH UNION WITH

HER VISIBLE STRUCTURE are joined to Christ Who rules her through the Supreme Pontiff and the Bishops. This joining is effected by the bonds: 1) of professed faith, 2) of the sacraments, 3) of ecclesiastical government, and 4) of communion." (Dogmatic Const. on the Church — No. 13)

A special reason for this impatience with our love of the Church seems derived from the genuine comfort and security which we have from the Church: in her doctrines, her sacraments, her motherhood, her stability.

At a Pastoral Institute held a couple of years ago I listened to an imaginative priest at supper speaking with exasperation and intolerance. He was ventilating his hostilities against those who were neither involving themselves nor willing to be involved in his particular Hang Up. Now, what he was Hung Up on was an excellent project. But there is no one exclusively good thing.

Indeed, he has never shown any interest in the 150,000 Bulgarian Gypsies who are one of my personal enthusiasms.

His deepest resentment came from the fact that many Catholics were taking comfort in their religion. He said: "It makes them unresponsive and disinterested in the needs of the down-trodden and the disadvantaged."

Since I considered this lop-sided and unjust I remarked: "But Father, if a man works all day to care for his family, and a woman works day and night to keep that family happy and good and secure, don't you think such people are fulfilling their vocation? And if they are happy with their families and if they are happily

practicing their religion in prayer and adoration and charity, what do you want them to do?"

He replied: "I want them to stop being so snug and get involved with the poor. As long as they are comfortable, they aren't concerned about the poor!"

When a man is so steeped in his own concerns that he is blind to the goodness of good fathers and mothers; who would so unsettle homes and families to promote unhappiness; whose self-involvements made him indifferent even to my Bulgarian Gypsies, then I refuse to take him seriously.

I suggested: "Father, if everyone is constantly agitated, unhappy and insecure, we would have a nation of people full of neuroses. Why, we'd all be going to psychiatrists!"

He shot back: "That's right. And we'll be needing more and more psychiatrists!" And he meant it!

Karl Marx wrote: "The first requisite for happiness of the people is the abolition of religion. (Critique of Hegelian Phil.) To paraphrase this demand of the man who would have cheerful, stable people become gullible, to wit: "The first requisite of religion is to make people unhappy and emotionally agitated." No, I reject this utterly. This is not the teaching of Christ.

Like the lady who took the nip and thought the Catholic religion such a comfortable religion, I rejoice that the Church is the living Christ, compassionately continuing His invitation: "Come to Me, all you who are exhausted and weighed beneath your burdens, and I will give you rest." (Matt. XI 28 — Barclay translation.)

# THE PROGRESS OF PEOPLES

## Instruments of Social Justice

By Barbara Ward



What are the positive arguments of channeling a greater proportion of funds for economic development through international agencies — through such institutions as the World Bank and its subsidiary, the International Development Association (IDA), through the International Monetary Fund (IMF), or the United Nations Development Program (UNDP)?

The first argument is the variety of approaches to the provision of development funds which these agencies make possible. With the guidance of an exceedingly expert staff, the World Bank makes loans, at commercial rates, for basic needs like roads and power, and is increasingly interested in agriculture. Although it has been in the lending business for more than 20 years and has a volume of loans of about \$1 billion a year, there have been no defaults on its lending and its financial rating is held to be first class.

This fact shows the care with which cases are chosen. Otherwise commercial interest rates could not have been afforded. It also offers a remarkable contrast with much development lending in the 19th Century when, again and again, loans for "internal improvements" in the United States or loans for Latin American Development ended in bankruptcy.

In the 1840s, for instance, 9 out of the 25 state governments in the

United States were in default on their loans (largely for development) and British bankers, who had, in the main, lent the money, talked about Americans the way Americans now talk about "wasteful, unreliable, developing peoples."

The same staff and the same expertise are used by the World Bank to assess credits made available to developing countries through the IDA. Governments contribute the funds to IDA as grants; their IDA lends this money to developing countries for 50 years at only three-quarters of 1 per cent a year in interest. The loans are thus very "soft" but the examination of the projects and proposals for loans is very "hard" — in other words, very thorough.

Developing lands carry an increasing load of debt these days. They pay back about \$4 billion a year to the rich countries (a sum which might well be put in a revolving fund and lent to them again). So IDA's easy terms are very necessary and very welcome — so welcome that IDA's funds are virtually exhausted and still wait on a congressional decision to provide \$160 million fresh funds. This figure is small in itself, yet it will spark a further \$720 million from other wealthy governments, a fact which makes Congress' delay incomprehensible and inexcusable.

The advantage of UNDP funds is twofold. They are given as grants.

And as a condition of receiving them, governments have to put up matching funds. The program has tried to concentrate on creating the pre-conditions of development — surveys for undiscovered mineral reserves or water supplies, training in public administration, pilot projects in new crops and so forth. In terms of the need for its services, it, too, could quadruple its programs if more funds were made available by governments.

The IMF is sometimes forgotten in this context of development funds. But it already has a useful program for offsetting any short-term losses made by developing countries when their export earnings, for no fault of theirs, fall away. In a sane world, any addition to the IMF's reserves in the way of fresh credit, for instance the proposed "Special Drawing Rights," would be made available first to the poorer countries who desperately need more working capital in their conduct of international trade.

The international community thus includes a whole spectrum of lively, experienced, increasingly efficient organizations. They do not have to be invented. They were set up in the creative wave of institution-building which followed the Second World War, when, for a time, the nations realized that they could not create a peaceful society unless they went beyond the total claims to sovereignty of the separate states.

# The Schillebeeckx Case

## He Answers Critics with Counterattack

By FATHER ROBERT A. GRAHAM  
Special Correspondent

Vatican City — (RNS) — Amid a flurry of rumors and charges the Vatican confirms that the writings of the Dominican theologian and writer, Father Edward Schillebeeckx, are now being examined by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, formerly the Holy Office. But there is no question of a "trial," strictly speaking.

The Congregation, it is said, is simply carrying out its assigned mission of keeping abreast of contemporary theological thought.

"It is normal," said the Vatican spokesman, "that the Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith should keep up to date on everything. The theologians retain the greatest freedom of research and also of interpretation of doctrine, provided, naturally, that these interpretations do not denature the doctrine but help to explain it."

He denied that there is any attempt to create an atmosphere of persecution or to return to methods unavailing for our times.

The Schillebeeckx case is therefore only in an exploratory stage. But what comes later? If, in fact, his writings should be found to contain

error, he would be asked to correct them. His refusal could lead him to be "outside the Church." But, assured the official spokesman, this eventuality is not possible or imaginable. "Today," he said, "in the Church there is no climate favorable to such a development."

Naturally, Father Schillebeeckx is nervous. The Belgian Dominican, who has for years taught theology in the Netherlands and is now dean of theology at the Catholic University of Nijmegen, reacted to the first report of his "trial" with energy and a barrage of counter-accusations mingled with threats of his own.

In public statements he charged that five or six cardinals were out to get him and that these are the ones who are really destroying the Church; that the three theologians assigned to prepare his dossier were the same who acted against Dutch Catechism and hence the new move is an attack on Dutch Catholics; that the Pope is a prisoner and hears only one side of the story.

Father Schillebeeckx added what some may regard as an open incitement to rebellion when he predicted with confidence that Rome would not move against him in the end "because the students of Nijmegen would stage a revolt."

At the moment the signs do not herald any drastic action by the Congregation. It seems unlikely to go further than it did in the case of the Dutch Catechism. It formulated its objections and communicated the

need for revision to the parties responsible.

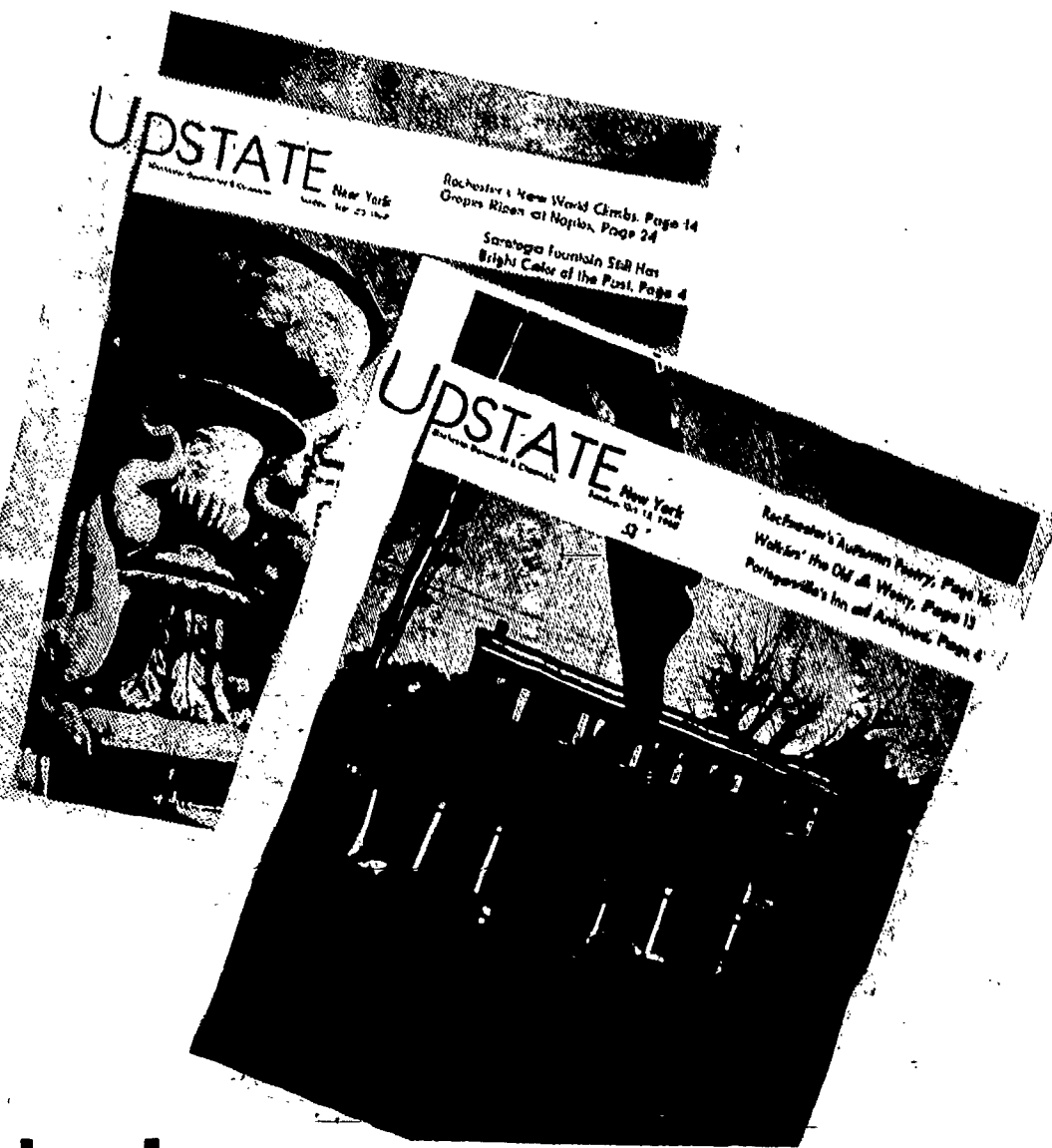
Then it let the matter ride. It is content to put itself on the record without proceeding to any enforcement measures. It is presumed that the points raised against the Dominican priest are related to the same controversial points of the famous catechism.

(In the case of the innovative Dutch Catechism the Congregation criticized its phraseology in the first edition. Dutch bishops then changed the wording but withdrew their imprimatur from all editions in languages other than Dutch.)

For outside observers less emotionally involved, the new procedures followed by the Congregation command attention. It was once regarded as a maxim of due process that the accused should be given a hearing. Now even the accused have second thoughts on this matter. They don't want a hearing by the Congregation.

Father Schillebeeckx, to judge from his counter-assault, would reject an invitation to explain himself at Rome.

The solution to this dilemma adopted by the Congregation was to invite not Father Schillebeeckx but his friend, German Jesuit Father Karl Rahner, not as a "defender" but as one thoroughly acquainted with the Dominican's thought and able to explain it. In this way the Congregation sought to diminish the impression of unilateral and preconceived judgments.



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