

## Theology Affects History of the Church ... and Vice Versa

(Continued from Page 88A)  
 presentation of—the “errors of our adversaries.” (Incidentally, high on the list of our “adversaries” were those whom now in ecumenical embrace we are referring to as our “separated brethren.”)

Then there followed a presentation of Catholic belief proved from Sacred Scripture, the Fathers of the Church and reason. Finally, we rounded off the thesis with a strong-armed refutation of the afore-mentioned “adversaries” (who were never given a fair opportunity of explaining or defending their positions).

Our approach was frankly apologetical and polemical: we wanted to prove that in the interpretation of the Gospel we were right and others were wrong. We were still living in the period of the Counter-Reformation and our theology expressed its mentality.

Finally, theology in the decades that followed Vatican I was largely intra-mural in its concentration. Its chief concerns

were internal matters. The problems it faced were for the most part “church” problems rather than “secular” problems. It was a theology that effectively insulated the Church from much that was happening in the “outside” world.

The forces of modernism, the application of the newly developed historical-critical method to Scripture studies, the rise of the new discipline of experimental psychology, the growing commitment of science to the theory of evolution, the developments of science in general—all these events outside were most often fought off from behind the barricades erected by the Counter-Reformation. Catholic theology remained a “safe” theology, untainted by these outside movements, but at the same time unstimulated by them.

Vatican II has brought an end to the Counter-Reformation and the mentality that engendered it. The theology stimulated by Vatican II differs in significant ways from the theology

that preceded it. It has three characteristics: It involves the layman. It is ecumenical. It reaches out to the secular world.

Under the influence of Vatican II, theology is ceasing to be an exclusively clerical enterprise. The door has been opened to a theology that will be more broadly based—a theology that will draw on the reflections of the whole people of God.

The Fathers of Vatican II called for the development of a lay theology. It invited laymen to become theologians and to make their distinctive contribution to theological studies. The *Constitution on the Church in the Modern World* expresses the hope “that many laymen will receive an appropriate formation in the sacred sciences and that some will develop and deepen these studies by their own labors.” (*Gaudium et Spes*, par. 62).

Laymen have not been slow in responding to this call. A respectably large number of laymen are now engaged in theological studies and are obtaining theological degrees. The rosters

of Catholic colleges, universities and seminaries show an increasing number of laymen and lay women. In the diocese of Rochester, for example, the combined theology faculties of Nazareth College and St. John Fisher College total ten teachers; four of these ten are lay teachers.

Post-Vatican II theology has also stimulated an unprecedented and widespread interest in theological studies on the part of laymen who do not have the professional desire to become theologians or theology teachers.

The program of adult theology, inaugurated in our diocese two years ago by Bishop Sheen and conducted under the direction of the Capuchin Fathers of Geneva, has attracted wide participation. More than 2000 laymen have already been enrolled in these courses.

The theology that has grown out of Vatican II has moved away from the polemical mentality of the past and has become strongly ecumenical. It has shown a greater sensitivity to the thinking and the beliefs of other

Christians and a sincere desire to enter into dialogue with them.

Ecumenicity adds an important dimension to our theology. It is not built on compromise or a wavering commitment to one's own belief. Rather it combines loyalty to one's own tradition with a genuine openness to the traditions of others.

Ecumenicity enriches our theology, because it forces us to re-examine our position, not in order to conform to the beliefs of others, but in order that, using the insights we receive from them, we may be more faithful to the Gospel and to Jesus Christ.

Finally, Vatican II theology is a theology that is no longer in retreat from the world. It acknowledges that the secular order has its own intrinsic values that must be respected. It sees the process of secularization, not as something to be feared and rejected by Christians, but as the legitimate fruit of biblical faith.

## The Inner City . . . Its Problems Overrun Its Borders

(Continued from Page 95A)  
 this six-week program this year provided remedial and enrichment instruction and experience for nearly three hundred children and provided jobs for many poor teenagers.

The city granted \$7000 of a requested \$63,000 for a five-center operation, and so the program was confined to two centers: one at Immaculate Conception School, and one at St. Michael's and St. Bridget's Schools. Most of the cost was borne by the staff who worked for a nominal salary.

A word must be added concerning the Rochester Diocese's involvement with these ministries. At the organizational level, this involvement consists chiefly in cooperative leadership of Father Finks who is Bishop Sheen's Vicar for inner-city and in the services of his forty-six member Urban Ministry Council, four fulltime staff members and one fulltime secretary.

All other involvement is at the grass roots level of local ecumenical ministries. Some funding is provided by individual member churches active in these ministries.

The unique strength of the Urban Ministry Council lies in the breadth of expertise repre-

sent by its members. The Board for Urban Ministry, on the other hand, while lacking in similar breadth, possesses from its member denominations the power to bring its concepts of urban ministry into existence in the practical order. Thus, each group's strength and weakness serve the Joint Urban Ministry in a complimentary fashion.

What lies in the future for the Church in urban-ministry? Perhaps we should ask ourselves some pertinent questions as a prelude to some conjectures:

Why are there fewer young people in our churches? What is the impact of our traditional training? Why are so many of our clergy still afraid of cooperative effort in this post-Vatican II era? Why can the church no longer serve in an administrative role in helping settle urban problems? We could also ask: Where are the real needs in education and what new forms should be looked at? How can new directions be found for our existing structures?

With these ideas in mind, we turn to some suggestions made by experts and published in *Guidelines for Development of Strategy for Metropolitan Mission* by the Board of National Missions of the United Presby-

terian Church of the United States.

As metropolitan mission strategy develops, we will be seeing a church structure which spans and relates to a whole metropolitan area. This includes ecumenical action on the part of the churches, with leadership on urban issues in many areas carried by Negro denominations.

More interfaith action and cooperation, and cooperation with secular agencies and programs will be indicative of the church if it is to be relevant to modern society.

Ministry to groups of people (occupational groups, residents of new and growing suburbs, residents of high-rise apartments, youth, minority groups, unemployed, etc.) will take precedence over more traditional ministries.

Identification of issues will be made to determine which are most crucial, and steps taken to redirect resources into meeting these issues, such as racial injustice, housing, pollution, inadequate health care, traffic; the church will support efforts of non-church groups seeking solutions, church structure will be so flexible that churches will be able to engage in direct action

on short notice, to mobilize financial and personnel resources on an emergency basis.

Effective contact will be maintained with city government, professional health and welfare agencies, organized business and labor. Provision for continual review, change and recommendations will be kept, with a critical independence of judgment.

Metropolitan churches will suffer the pain of racial segregation and injustice through taking as their own the struggle for racial justice, as they support blacks in achieving full participation in democratic political and economic structure.

Small inner city congregations with single pastors, operating with a subsistence budget, will no longer constitute a viable form for urban ministry. The question for mission strategy is not “How do we keep our inner city churches alive?” but rather “What are the ingredients for an effective parish church institution in the inner city and how can we provide them?”

Although new congregations will continue to be formed for communities of residence in areas of growing residential population, many more new congregations need to be organized in


metropolitan areas for preaching the word, administering the sacraments, and seeking faithful forms of Christian nurture and action in urban communities defined by occupation, involvement in issue or structure, or involvement in voluntary activities.

Some metropolitan churches may be affiliated with more than one Christian group on the basis of several different communities to which they may belong.

There will be an enhanced consciousness by congregations and by individual church members of their participation in a ministry in which each has a part in carrying out a metropolitan mission program. A fuller understanding of the unity of mission must involve all congregations in sharing whatever resources a congregation may have at a particular moment in history, with those places where the need for resources is most compelling at that moment.

We have made a beginning in the Joint Urban Ministry for the people of Rochester. In the words of Jim Rice, community minister in the southeast area:

“I'm an evangelist in reverse: instead of getting people to join the Church, I try to get the Church to join the people.”



Congratulations to the Rochester Diocese for one hundred years of spiritual guidance in our ever-growing and expanding community.

**COMPUTERS UNLIMITED INCORPORATED**  
 318 EXECUTIVE OFFICE BLDG.  
 36 MAIN STREET WEST  
 ROCHESTER, NEW YORK 14614  
 AREA CODE 716 454-4100

software development • systems studies  
 computer time-sharing