

## CHURCH AND THE CITY

### Nuns' Workshop a Good Start

By Father P. David Finks

Saul Alinsky says that religious sisters are the most effective radicals in the U.S. Catholic Church today. A recent all-day Urban-Suburban Workshop for 200 area sisters did nothing to weaken that Alinsky assumption.

The workshop was the first cooperative training effort sponsored by the Joint Office of Urban Ministry and the local congregations of religious women. Post Vatican II nuns met head on with "urban church types", the interfaith band of clergy and laymen who from a church base are developing new ways to minister to people in a rapidly changing urban environment.

The workshop seemed as relevant as today's TV news with a brilliant audio-visual "experience", a free swinging dialogue with FIGIT's Minister Franklyn D. R. Florence, and a broad spectrum of small group discussion sessions.

The agenda was built around the need for revised forms of mission of the Church and included sessions on the urban crisis, the Black point of view, suburban involvement, organizing communities and ministries to youth.

Religious women who came for enlightenment on the needs of the "inner city" came away with a broadened frame of reference. The discussions

made it clear that we are all living in a new world, caught up in an "urban crisis", and that this demands new life styles for all.

Congregations of sisters busy with teaching and nursing are not just being asked to shake loose several women for "urban ministry" as a new category of service. The issue is far beyond that. Forms of mission developed in a world that was rural, small-town, immigrant and one-dimensional must give way to life styles adapted to the urban, technological, complex, pluralistic society of the present.

The same professional competence that religious women have brought to parochial education in the past must now tackle the problems of urban living. The consensus beginning to emerge at day's end was that if education is to remain the chief focus of the religious congregations, they must determine professionally what are the actual priorities of urban education at present.

Our ghetto schools must lead the way for public school reform they are to justify their continued existence. They will require the best teachers, much larger financial subsidies for experimental programs, school boards preparing for local community control. A status quo school in the urban ghetto no matter how "Christ centered" is destruc-

tive of the self-determination process.

There was however, strong feeling that closing ghetto parochial schools to allow sister-teachers to take to the streets was considered ill-advised. The Black leaders especially made it clear that more low budget service or evangelistic efforts are definitely not needed or wanted.

Outside of ghetto schools and education of specialized groups (pre-school, retarded or autistic children) the focus seemed to be shifting toward adult education.

Sisters were seen fulfilling professional roles on university campuses, in the communications-media, specializing in parish religious education, helping to develop ministries to industries and the arts.

The hope of most participants at day's end was for the Urban Suburban Workshop to continue. Many suggested that a basic course in urban issues should be offered several times a year. Advanced sessions were also projected to develop task forces to probe rural and small town priorities and help develop specific forms of urban ministry.

Subsequent evaluation sessions with staff people were very positive and fervent hopes were expressed for similar workshops with clergy and lay people.



## ON THE RIGHT SIDE

### A Book Worth Reading

By Father Paul J. Cuddy

A legionnaire of our Legion of Mary praesidium handed me a paperback a couple weeks ago, saying: "Will you read this and tell me what you think of it?" It was entitled: "Is It the Same Church?" by Frank J. Sheed.

The author is an Australian by birth, a lawyer by education, an author and a publisher by vocation. He and his wife, Masie Ward, have been explaining the Catholic faith for 40 years.

The title was intriguing: "Is It the Same Church?" So many good people, both Catholics and non-Catholics, watching the televised hostilities by Catholics toward their bishops, reading the published defiance of Catholics against the Church, puzzling over the patient tolerance of most bishops, have expressed the wonderment in exactly the words of the book title.

I read the book. I think it will be read with enthusiasm by the faithful, and with relief by the worried. It will probably be read snottily by bishop-baiters and authority rejecters. Mr. Sheed, whose mother was a strong Catholic and whose father was a fanatical Marxist, has that incisive kind of mind which cuts through wordy vagaries to present comprehensible ideas.

For example: "Think of the Church as Christ's Mystical Body. The purpose of a body — any body — is not the health of its cells, but the service of the one whose body it is: the cells and their health are a means to that end. If Christ had not needed a body for the work He still had to accomplish in the world, there would have been no point in founding the kind of Church He did." (P. 10)

How different from the effusions of an ex-nun on TV last Tuesday, who emoted before a group of cute college girls and the tremendous TV audience which we Catholics generally fail to use: "I awoke at two o'clock in the morning and had an epiphany. It was simply an epiphany. I discovered: I didn't belong to the Church. The Church belonged to me!" Considering the doctrine of the Mystical Body I thought the lady's exhilaration sheer nonsense. Give me the logic of Mr. Sheed.

Sheed continues: "So we must think of the Church not as a service station to which we must resort from time for fill-up or repair. It is a society of men with a vast work to accomplish, and in this work every one has a part allotted. Unless there is authority the work must suffer. This rule is the same for every society."

"Laws may not always be wisest or best in the circumstances. It is the sign of immaturity to expect perfection in our rulers and be indignant at not finding it." (P. 11)

On Page 187, the author writes what many of us hear around us: "Some spoke of the daily anguish of being in the Church as it is now governed. One spoke of being able to keep going only by a species of 'double-think.' Personally I am conscious neither of doublethink nor of this special anguish."

"As to the first, I have never been called upon to say anything I

didn't think, or to hold anything I don't hold. I am called upon to fool neither myself nor anyone else . . ."

I am so enthusiastic about the book I wrote Al Walz at Trant's: "Please send me 40 copies." (The price is \$1.75 — less than the cost of a pint of Scotch.) He wrote back: "We have sold out two large orders quickly. Another is on the way. Will be glad to to honor your order."

Vatican II declares: "Christ established and ceaselessly sustains here on earth His Holy Catholic Church, the community of faith, hope and charity, as a visible structure . . . This is the unique Church of Christ which in the Creed we avow as one, holy, catholic and apostolic . . ." (The Church No. 8)

If you want to cheer a soul troubled by the internal attacks on Christ's Body, do give him a copy of "Is It the Same Church." It will be a great charity.

## Bishops Said Reserved On Joint Divinity Schools

Vatican City — Plans aired in various countries, particularly in the United States, for joint Catholic-Protestant divinity schools encounter "noticeable reserve" from bishops, according to a report of the Vatican Secretariat for the Promotion of Christian Unity.

The story was first carried in the Long Island (N.Y.) Catholic by its Roman correspondent, Robert R. Holton. Its main lines are confirmed by Secretariat officials.

The doubts of the bishops were expressed in answers to a questionnaire sent out to 50 national hierarchies. The questions were based on suggestions for ecumenical cooperation originating with a mixed commission which met at Malta last Spring. It was made up of representatives named by the Vatican and by the Anglican Worldwide Communion.

The idea of common seminary instruction has made special headway in the United States. Several American Jesuit theologates have made plans, with the approval of the Roman superiors, to share facilities and instructions with Protestant divinity schools.

These include Woodstock College, which has decided to move from Maryland to New York City in the vicinity of Union Theological Seminary.

Alma College in California expects to move next year to Berkeley to be near various theological schools already situated here. In Massachusetts, the Jesuits' Weston College had already begun to move to the neighborhood of Harvard in Cambridge and envisages close cooperation with non-Catholic theological institutions.

## NOW HEAR THIS . . .

### Chicago: A Bitter Lesson

By Father Richard Torrey

This week America relived that frightening August week when police battled crowds of young people in the streets and parks of Chicago. A documented report on the bloody events of the Democratic convention week, submitted by the staff of the National Committee on Violence, brought back the lurid facts of a dreadful human spectacle where two vital rights conflicted.

In principle, democracy-minded Americans acknowledge the right to dissent. And in principle most dissenters on any subject accept the right of a city to protect itself. "But," said the report, "what happens when these undeniable rights are brought — deliberately by some — into conflict?"

The initial response to the street-violence, seen in millions of living rooms by TV, was universal condemnation of the Chicago police and their civic officials for apparently unwarranted ferocity.

A quick-rising counter-response, however, was that the demonstrators probably got what they deserved, for no city should tolerate the threats of 10,000 allegedly unwashed, rock-throwing young people shouting obscenities and bent on disturbing the peace.

This week's report carried such sickening testimony from witnesses and victims of the melee that most Americans will now accept the commission's judgment that it was a "police riot", "not a gallant battle against dangerous revolutionaries" but "unrestrained and indiscriminate police violence."

But beyond the indictment of a minority of the policemen there was much more disturbing material in the report: challenges and lessons America must ponder.

The report said bluntly: "The physical confrontations in Chicago will be repeated elsewhere, until we learn to deal with the dilemma they represent . . . This is not the last time that a violent dissenting group will clash head-on with those whose duty it is to enforce the law." The dilemma — the case "dissent" and "public order" co-exist in America's streets?

When will police departments learn that when human issues are restless in the heart of demonstrators they flare quickly and often violently? Racial ferment in the ghettos, insecurity on the campuses, an identity-search anywhere, by their very nature, cannot be repressed by force.

The get-tough policy in Chicago, which refused to allow the demonstrators safe places for public expression, which cut off escape for those who had no stomach for brawling, which refused to sort out the innocent from the trouble-seekers, will not work today.

The Chicago disaster showed that beating up young Americans who are alienated from the society of their fathers will not make them give up their beliefs nor make them respect the authority which clubbed them.

I think it will not be enough to shakeup police departments with warnings that violence sparks violence. Nor does it seem satisfactory to accept that all dissent must be given full license lest it become violent.

Dissenters must follow leaders who know that their cause will be respected only when they conform to rules of conduct that serve the general welfare. And law-officers must acquire learned patience with political and social dissent that will make them more responsible protectors of the peace.



Another lesson we all must accept is that sweeping social effects from the generation gap will continue to threaten our peace until both sides recognize and adjust their attitudes. The gap between the beliefs and backgrounds of the police and demonstrators in Chicago was part of the reason for the violence.

The Chicago report said: "There were, of course, the hippies — the long hair and love beads, the calculated unwashedness, the flagrant banners, the disdain for the constraints of conventional society . . . But to characterize the crowds as entirely hippie-Yippie, entirely new-left, entirely anarchist or entirely youthful political dissenters is both wrong and dangerous."

"The stereotyping that did occur helps to explain the emotional reaction of both police and public during and after the violence that occurred."

What happened when the police faced the young crowd who rejected much of what each patrolman stood for "didn't have anything to do with police work," one police officer testified. It had to do with attitudes and feelings and values.

Policemen exploded not simply because the demonstrators hurled obscenities as painful as bricks or bottles, but because the rabble represented a contradiction of the conformity, the law and order, the civic decency which each policeman had grown up with and believed was solely right for human conduct. Facing this "enemy" and provoked beyond control, some of the police force threw away training and discipline and "was reduced from a dispassionate professional to a hysterical man giving vent to his personal resentment, frustration and outrage."

## THE HOLY FATHER

### Press Cautioned on 'Contestation'

By FR. R. A. GRAHAM, S.J.  
Religious News Service

Vatican City — (RNS) — In two addresses in successive days Pope Paul VI used the term "contestation" to describe current unrest in the Church.

This term, developed in the writings of the German-American philosopher Herbert Marcuse, has come into common use in Europe since the student riots of last Spring.

Pope Paul applied it to the Church situation when addressing Catholic journalists and also in his usual brief Sunday homily to the faithful in St. Peter's Square.

The Pope said that while the press must report the facts, the Catholic press has another particular duty in addition. Because of the delicacy of its subject, it must exhibit discretion in its way of presenting the life of the Church. And this, even at the cost of some loss of standing.

"Your professional conscience makes it a duty for you to report irregular initiatives which take place here and there in the ecclesial community."

"But your conscience also imposes on you the duty to reduce these episodes to their right proportions, with-

out exaggerating them and especially without giving the impression that you approve them or are trying to justify them, when the magisterium along with the whole tradition of the Church disapproves them.

"Is it serving the Church to insistently be the complacent echo of the single 'contestation' with the danger of disturbing and confusing the immense mass of the good faithful?"

### More Media Work Urged

Vatican City — (NC) — Pope Paul told a plenary meeting of the Pontifical Commission for Social Communications that although the Church has made strides in inserting itself into the big picture of radio, movies, news and television, it still has a long way to go.

The Pope addressed himself to the problem of how the Church is making its presence known and felt within the broad field of communications today. But he also noted that in the past churchmen and Catholics had been slow in appreciating the importance of movies, radio, newspapers and television.

A realistic view demands that Catholics realize that what has been done

The Pope went on: "What we have a right to expect from the Catholic journalist, especially in these times, is that he refuse to harden oppositions, that he work to promote mutual understanding among the parts of the ecclesial body, and that he help his readers to acquire, little by little, the sense of the Church which may guide their judgment in the midst of so many discordant opinions."

so far is "insufficient and in any case disproportionate to the vastness of the field to be sown," the Pope said.

At the same time he quickly pointed out that he did not want to minimize the good work already done in many sectors, singling out Vatican Radio and special projects in Colombia and the Philippine Islands.

"We ask ourselves sincerely where is the echo of the word of God in the tumult of these human voices? What place does our Catholic conception of the world and of man occupy today in the immense network of social communications? What place, for instance, does it occupy in films, in film production, in film criticism?"



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