

CHURCH AND THE CITY

Grape Workers Merit Support

By Father P. David Finks

The United Farm Workers (AFL-CIO) deserve our fullest support in their efforts to organize farm workers to bargain collectively with the grape growers in California. To those of us who can barely remember the great organizing efforts of the CIO against the industrial giants of yesterday, the fact that anyone would question the farm workers' right to organize is hard to imagine.

An ad hoc coalition of Rochester human rights groups, chaired by Father Paul Brennan of Metro-Act and Immaculate Conception Church has raised a boycott of tablegrapes against Wegman's Food Stores, Star Super Markets and other large food chains to support the United Farm Workers.

Some of the arguments heard locally against the efforts of the United Farm Workers and the grape boycott leaders are fresh out of the early "chirlires", like the late show on television.

1. "You can't get involved, you don't understand the other side, viz., the growers' side."

The issue is clear. Farm workers, the lowest paid workers in the United States, are organizing to obtain rights guaranteed to other American laborers since the Wagner Act of 1935. The growers oppose this because it means that they will have to pay higher wages and other basic benefits taken for granted by industrial workers for decades.

2. "The farm workers in California are better paid than those in other parts of the country."

This is akin to the arguments of those "concretized conservatives" who instruct American Blacks to be content because their income is higher

than their Black brothers in Africa.

The workers in California are better paid than those in South Carolina, who averaged 89 cents an hour in 1967 and are slightly above the national farm workers average of \$1.33 an hour. But this is little comfort to people who know that industrial workers with union contracts averaged \$2.87 an hour and construction workers \$4.09 an hour in 1967.

3. "The Church and clergy have no business getting involved in political disputes."

The workers right to organize and bargain collectively is a matter of human dignity, not politics. Karl Marx argued for this basic right in 1848; Pope Leo XIII in his encyclical, *Rerum Novarum* did likewise in 1891. Pope Pius XI in 1931 answered any lingering doubts in *Quadragesimo Anno*.

Because of their poverty and lack of organization and a well-financed growers' lobby in Washington the farm workers are excluded from national labor relations and minimum wage legislation.

For churchmen to remain neutral in the workers' struggle is to vote for the status quo. Our New Testament based tradition instructs Christians that when the chips are down we must stand with the poor against the exploiters.

4. "The whole thing is a drive for power on the part of Cesar Chavez, who was trained by Saul Alinsky."

This argument is as familiar as an old shoe because we heard it so often in Rochester during FIGIT's negotiations with Eastman Kodak. Just insert the name of Franklyn Florence in place of Chavez and you will recognize it, too.



ON THE RIGHT SIDE

Every Christmas is the Same

By Father Paul J. Cuddy

At Christmas time we all look back to other Christmases. My own super-celebration took place nearly 25 years ago in France, where I was serving as an Air Force chaplain.

It was the year 1944 in Bretigny, Oise, France, about 20 miles south of Paris. I had made arrangement with M. le Cure Alphonse Krijn (rhymes with "fine"), a young Dutch Pastor of Morelles-sur-Oise, to use his church for our soldiers' Midnight Mass, and with 409th Bomb Group Headquarters to transport the men in trucks to Christmas Eve Mass. . . . Then the Battle of the Bulge began.

German spies began to infiltrate the Paris area, including ours. Dressed in uniforms of American officers, they spoke perfect English and were thoroughly trained in American ways and information.

Our military intelligence began to panic, rightly. All movements of the Base were cancelled — and on the morning of Dec. 24, we had orders to switch all Christmas preparations to the Base.

Instead of the lovely ancient French church, we used a huge room in Headquarters Building. Instead of a majestic High Mass sung by a trained village choir, we had a Low Mass with the responses well made by the congregation of soldiers. (We anticipated congregation participation and the vernacular by the people 20 years before Vatican II.)

Instead of a long, rhythmic procession of soldier altar boys, we had two acolytes, two servers, a cross bearer and myself. Instead of sitting in pews, the men stood jammed together like matches in a match box. Instead of the church altar with a beautiful tapestry background, we used a makeshift table. The windows were covered with blackout cloth to keep the light invisible to enemy bombers.

Nevertheless, the rough, easy unaffected piety of the soldiers at Christmas Mass under these crude conditions was an inspiration.

Similar things are happening in Viet Nam, Korea and other military bases this very Christmas.

Captain Bill Holmes was a pilot in our Group. He was cheerful, en-

ergetic, devout. Every time the Group was transferred to another station, he made a point to find where the Blessed Sacrament was reserved, for his own devotion. Today he is raising a fine family in Auburn, and running a successful milk business.

Sgt. Charlie Farrell of Providence was an unofficial assistant—a military fusion of St. Aloysius and St. Thomas Aquinas. Today he is a priest, and is the spiritual director of the Dominican seminarians at their House of Studies in Washington.

And as I think of all the other wonderful men—and women, too—in the Air Force I think to myself: "How could these young people be so thoroughly good under the crude-

ness of military life, especially in combat conditions? It is a great tribute to their own characters, to their parents, and to zealous chaplains who served these young men as if they were their own sons."

Christmas in Europe or Asia or in the Diocese of Rochester is in its essential, the same:

Christ comes to the altar through the powers of the priesthood, and renews again that for which He came: to give Himself for you and for me and for all mankind that we may be one in Him and by Him and through Him. "O come! Let us adore Him."

A blessed Christmas and peaceful New Year.



Prayers for House

Lord, Help

Catholic Press Features

Gladwyne, Pa.—Busy housewives and mothers who think they can find neither the time nor the inspiration to pray every day are just not paying enough attention to their bathroom scales, the supermarket check-out line, the skin cream, the shoe polish the 4-year-old spilled on the rug, that broken string of imitation pearls, and over-stuffed closets.

Jean Reynolds Davis, wife of



Pr

President Johnson re from the Catholic Co massive" assistance t president, Father Edr Mass. Looking on are ter Wanda of Alberni Duqu

Will Benefits Three Colleges

St. Bernard's Seminary, John Fisher College and Nazareth College will share equal bulk of an estate valued \$341,773 left by Elizabeth A. Sweeney, 82, who died Mar. 1968.

Mrs. McSweeney, who lived St. Ann's Home, 1550 Portle Ave., was a retired social worker for what is now the Rochester Catholic Family Center.

Fourteen organizations will receive a total of \$14,000 in specific bequests, and relatives and friends will get a total of \$34,500. The residue will go to the educational institutions.

CHRISTMAS SHOW

All the delights of "Christmas on Grandfather's Farm" will be seen in the film on the Farm Program at Rochester Museum and Science Center on Sunday afternoon, Dec. 22 at 2:30 p.m. and again at 3:30 p.m.



NOW HEAR THIS . . .

Rescue Marian Piety

By Father Richard Torney

Devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary has declined within the past decade because of several sociological facts and theological trends.

If a parish, a diocese, or an individual, is concerned (as was noted in this space last week) lest all love for her vanish from our public and private lives, we must try to understand now these factors have generated the indifference, confusion and controversy which have separated us from the Blessed Mother.

Then we may come to the steps of renewal and experimentation required to restore her in our devotional lives.

1. These are times of change, an era of evolution, revolution and challenge to traditional ways. We have accepted changes in the liturgy, have learned to live with challenges in family relationships, have marvelled over the new manners of dress and conduct in religious and priests, have been excited about ecumenical friendships never dreamt of ten years ago.

But Mary hasn't changed. There are the same prayers, same hymns, same statues and pictures, same pietistic literature to hold us in affection for her.

Our times need a new "frame of

reference", new treatment of the basic and eternally lovely Mary-story in our own idiom and style.

Somehow our scholars, poets and preachers must show us how Mary whom Christ never intended to be Mother to only one age reflects the individual and social joys of our times. Her life-story must be probed to relate her experiences, sorrows and dilemmas to our own hangups and fears.

2. As the education of the laity has progressed, devotional exercises originated when the majority of the faithful were less literate or sophisticated no longer seem meaningful and satisfying.

Prayer repetitions, and cloying phraseology have made modern self-conscious as much as these devotions tinged with superstition or the emphases on miracles at shrines.

Four years ago the Valicain Council (The Church VIII, 4) said that devotion to the Blessed Mother should be treasured but that "theologians and preachers should carefully avoid falsity of exaggeration on the one hand and excess of narrow-mindedness on the other. . . . True devotion consists neither in fruitless and passing emotion nor in a certain vain credulity."

The world's Bishops thus opened the door to new manners of devotion. But who has yet come forward with the imaginative ways to emphasize meditation during the Rosary instead of mumbled words, to compose new tributes instead of phrasing out the Memorare and to formulate an interesting substitute for a novena?

3. The life of women has been so transformative in the past 25 years that the traditional image of the Blessed Virgin as "the model of womanhood" is totally irrelevant to moderns. She was a woman of her times and of her people — but not of ours, it seems to so many people today.

Recently a Marian scholar, Abbe Rene Laurentin, said of Our Lady: "She was a psychological model of a perpetual minor living in the shadow of men in an underdeveloped civilization". He said her declining effectiveness as a model with whom young people could relate was due to her image as a housewife, set in the quiet shadows of domestic work, submissively bound to her home.

4. The theological factor which has hurt the Blessed Mother in our times is that young scholars are continually saying, to the intellectual consternation of the faithful, that the traditional picture we have been given of Mary is "probably not accurate".

Some mind-shaking Scriptural studies have focussed on beloved but simplistic images we have long held about the Annunciation, the virginity of Mary (no other children but Jesus) and even the Christmas story. Many Catholics are left apprehensive about the future of piety for a woman of doubtful history. They loyally feel it would be wrong to desert her abruptly, but their old forms of devotion have cooled because even their spiritual leaders seem to reflect diffidence about her status.

A solid fact in the history of Christian living has been: If a practice that previously procured an essential element in the Christian spirit slowly dies out, another appropriate and effective way of reaching out to God and fulfilling our yearning for values to live by must be found.

Our spiritual leaders, writers and preachers (and probably editors, too) must face the facts set down here and use renewal, innovation and experimentation to rescue Marian piety from creeping decline.

St. Louis Priest Named Auxiliary Bishop

La Paz, Bolivia — (RNS) — An American missionary, one of the first priests of the Archdiocese of St. Louis to be assigned here, has been named an auxiliary bishop by Pope Paul.

Bishop-elect Andrew B. Schierhoff, 46, who arrived here in 1956 with two other priests from St. Louis to initiate the archdiocesan missionary project will serve as an auxiliary to Archbishop Jorge Manrique Hurtado of La Paz. The new Bishop is superior of the 14 St. Louis missionaries here.

CHURCH HUMOR



"I don't know. It's either experimental liturgy or else someone saw a mouse."