

A LAYMAN'S VIEW

Why Pope Stresses Unity Obstacle

By Robert Doty

Rome — Near the outset of his address to the World Council of Churches in Geneva last week, Pope Paul VI said, "Our name is Peter."

He thus frankly and honestly redefined the principal obstacle to reestablishment of Christian unity in the foreseeable future. The words mean, unmistakably, that Christian unity must await one of two equally important developments — relinquishment by Rome of the principle of papal supremacy and infallibility or acceptance of that principle by the Anglican, Protestant and Orthodox churches.

This is not a new position. Pope Paul said publicly in April, 1967, "The Pope, we know it well, is without doubt the most grave obstacle on the road of ecumenism."

But some observers asked why he had found it desirable to make a new, blunt assertion of his claim to exclusive leadership of true Christianity, through apostolic succession from St. Peter at a meeting that he had sought with representatives of churches that reject that claim.

Experts here suggest two explanations, one of principle, the other of tactics.

He has inveighed often in the past against a "sentimental" ecumenism that would brush aside profound doctrinal and disciplinary differences and establish de facto unity of worship and sacrament.

He may have feared that the dramatic quality of his visit to the citadel of non-Roman Christianity, on his own initiative, would tend to encourage hopes of instant unity among many in his own and other churches.

This would explain his desire to make it clear, again, that the principle of papal supremacy was not negotiable.

At the same time, the Pope was aware of discontent among Roman conservatives with the whole project of his visit to the World Council. One right-wing Rome magazine, reflecting the views of the Emperor Henry IV to Canossa in 1077 to stand in snow, barbed in the sackcloth of penitence, before the castle sheltering Pope Gregory VII.

It may have seemed tactically expedient to the Pontiff to indicate to these still powerful, conservative and basically anti-ecumenical forces, that he had not gone to Geneva to turn over the keys of the kingdom to the dissenters.

The pontiff went on to soften the remainder of his apostolic claims by recalling that his chosen name, Paul, was that of the "Apostle to the Gentiles" and was a guarantee of his own sincere desire to seek the path to unity in a "ministry of communion."

This meant that Roman Catholics and other Christians can continue to work together in half a dozen ways

for practical ends, that Rome may even be represented one day in the World Council and that the suspicion and recriminations of many centuries between Rome and the "separated brethren" can be permitted to diminish or disappear.

This process of conciliation, almost nonexistent 10 years ago, has gone forward impressively under the liberating impetus of the Ecumenical Council Vatican II, 1962-1965.

Nine Roman Catholic clergymen are full members of the Faith and Order Commission of the World Council. This body studies the theological aspects of the problem of unity, commissions research projects to clarify and, perhaps, eliminate points of controversy.

The Vatican and the Council have formed a joint Committee on Society, Development and Peace, with a common secretariat, to coordinate Christian action for social justice and aid to developing societies.

Since 1965, a joint working group of 12 members from each side has met frequently to review relations between Rome and the council.

Similar joint committees have been formed with several of the individual Protestant, Anglican and orthodox churches of the council for more detailed and specific examination of differences and possibilities for surmounting them.

(New York Times, June 13, 1969)

CHURCH AND THE CITY

Prayerful Wishes for Priests

By Father P. David Finks

It is not easy to be a priest today. It is not easy to be a Pope or a bishop or a religious sister. But neither is it easy to be a parent, a taxpayer, a young adult nor a president of the United States, Cornell University or the FIGHT Organization.

Our world is in a crisis of growth — tense, boiling, anxious — full of promise and full of problems. Barbara Ward, the English economist, talks of seven simultaneous interlocking revolutions. Gibson Winter, the theologian, writes of the complexities of contemporary life within the metropolises that surrounds us all.

"A new society is taking shape before our eyes. This is a society full of promise; it signifies the possibility of life and education on a truly democratic basis. At the same time, the hope of this new society is clouded by the threat of world wide holocaust, and the promise of its production is darkened by alienation between social classes and racial groups. We are experiencing the hope and the anxiety that characterizes great turning points in history."

The church among its other attributes is an institution enmeshed in this contemporary society, and the church feels all the tensions of radical change. We are not unlike the church of the Acts of the Apostles. The risen Jesus seems again to be sending His Spirit to push us out of the Upper Room into the vital and turbulent city full of highways and byways that Jesus knew so well.

A few priests today may seem to be content to carry out ecclesiastical housekeeping and ignore the times and tensions. But, more and more are anxious and searching for new ways to serve God's people. They are serious about new priestly ministries for a new day.

Others are deciding, most often with reluctance, that the unresponsive ecclesiastical monarchy will not be changed in their lifetime and they are leaving to find a new role in the community.

Whatever new shapes the reform develops, the church today needs at least a small force of dedicated, creative, sophisticated priests: lovers of men and agents of change.

The priest of our times must be willing to be thoroughly human, open and sensitive to the ever surprising voice of the living Christ. An honest lover of the complicated world of people he is to serve. He does not know all the answers, and cannot pretend that he does. "Taken from among men," as the epistle to the Hebrews

Best Wishes, Father Finks:

For nine months, Father David Finks' weekly column, "The Church and the City," has graced this Commentary Page. This week, praised by the Rochester community and the Diocese, he moves to Washington to offer his rich talents and personality to the nation's Bishops in their country-wide concern for urban problems.

His deep theological imagination, and generous dedication he has shown in his priestly work for the Diocese of Rochester will be welcomed and effectively used by the national Catholic Conference.

Father Finks' articles will be sorely missed by this newspaper; the crispness of his style and brave honesty of his views deserve the thanks of all our readers. He brought a special quality to this page, giving us a needed editorial balance and stimulating readers to face subjects not often mentioned in pulpits.

We are grateful for his writings, for the sacrifice he often endured to make a deadline, for the solid content he always made lucid and provocative.

With appreciation and respect, Best Wishes!

Father Richard Torrey, Editor

states, still he cannot be separated from the men he serves in Christ's name.

The good priest must be a listener and learner with the humility that makes him open to the creative word of God coming to him from many men and varied situations, and even from his own failures.

The prayer of the priest cannot be an escape. His prayer must be a regular reflection upon the world around him and upon his active participation in the affairs of men.

His mortifications are to be found not in pious extras, but in the suffering of trying to find God's will and obey it in the every day situations in which he finds himself.

The priest must not expect as his due any more deference or special treatment than did His Master in the narrow streets of Jerusalem or Paul among the Romans of his day.

The service of the good priest must be a full ministry to all the people

surrounding him. He will work hard to proclaim the living Word of God in terms of the concerns of 1969. He will share the warmth of the Eucharistic Assembly with those who come. He must also find and give opportunities for worship to those who have been turned away by dead liturgical forms or who have never had a chance to participate.

Increasingly the priest must be content in the role of theological adviser and strategist to groups of laymen who come to him with whom they work and live more fully than he ever could alone.

Above all the priest must know his community with its struggles and weaknesses, and be a part of its struggle to grow and better serve all its citizens.

His virtues are to be above all the human virtues so esteemed by men: kindness of heart, sincerity, strength of soul and constancy, assiduous regard for justice, and urbanity.

It is not easy to be a good priest in our rapidly changing world. We do not know what new forms the priesthood will take even in our own lifetime. But this uncertainty and risk cannot hold us back. The winds of change, however violent, are so often the Spirit of God awakening us and strengthening us to play our part in the New Creation.

Our faith is that the Lord of the Easter appearance is alive and among us today. He knows that many of us are anxious, many questioning the faith, some are paralyzed, wanting to stay huddled together in the Upper Room.

If we look hard we can see Jesus coming into our churches and neighborhoods blinking and rubbing His eyes a little as I imagine people do who have just risen from the dead. He notices again the fear and tightly drawn shutters and once more He says:

"Why are you weeping?"

"Whom do you seek?"

"Have you believed only because you have seen?"

"Was it not necessary to suffer these things and so enter into glory?"

Hopefully the message of hope and mission will be heard, but especially by priests young and old who seem a little harried at present. If I remember the rest of the Resurrection-Pentecost story, the Apostles soon cleared up their crisis of faith and astonishing and wonderful things started to happen.

Examples were given of total dedication by U.S. priests who have left a deep imprint in the lives and faith of thousands of the Latin American faithful. But also mentioned were a few cases of "colonial" or "superficial" performance.

An attitude noted among the Latin American delegation was to ask Catholics in the United States to try to influence policy making by government agencies and private concerns regarding Latin America, and build among these leaders an international social justice approach, not a political or financial profit motivation.

Bishops Outdo Rocky in Caracas

(NC News Service)

Caracas, Venezuela — Venezuela, which turned away one recent Latin fact-finding group from the U.S., gave a warm welcome to another that included top-ranking leaders of the Catholic Church in the United States.

A committee of U.S. bishops met with counterparts from Latin American nations here at the same time as the scheduled visit of Gov. Nelson A. Rockefeller of New York. Fears of student and guerrilla activity led the Venezuelan government to ask Rockefeller to postpone his visit.

But the ample press coverage of the bishops' meeting produced only favorable reaction from public commentators.

Choice, training and performance of foreign personnel for the Church in Latin America were among the main subjects of study during the three-day meeting. The personnel includes priests, Brothers, Sisters and laymen. Nearly 5,500 from the United States are working in Latin America

and more are expected in the near future.

The meeting touched on wide problems in inter-American relations, such as the question of social justice in trade practices, foreign investments, and aid programs. This discussion, however, was reported as turning quickly back to specific areas in which the Church leaders felt they could make a practical impact.

Attending the meeting were, besides Cardinal Cody, who is the treasurer of the NCCB, John Cardinal Dearden of Detroit, its president, John Cardinal Krol of Philadelphia, vice president, and the general secretary, Bishop Joseph Bernardin.

Training of U.S. personnel, it was asserted by the conferees, should follow three stages: first probably at Washington, on language and general orientation courses; second at Mexico City, at an institute being established now for that purpose, on specific courses on pastoral work related to the general region to which the missionary is assigned; and third

at a national training center in the country involved.

The consensus was that it is the obligation of the Latin American bishops to provide pastoral centers for local training, for a closer "integration" of the foreign missionary to the people he intends to serve. A permanent attachment, not a passing visit, is the key to the missionary's contribution to the Church in Latin America, it was stated.

ON THE RIGHT SIDE

Renewal Is a Lifetime Work

By Father Paul J. Cuddy

The word renewal has been much in the forefront since the beginning of Vatican II. But what renewal means has been interpreted in many ways. Some of the interpretations are the logical opposite to what the word means.

Renewal logically presupposes the past. Renewal properly intends "a restoration of freshness or vigor." Renewal means that the spiritual inheritance of doctrine, of morality, of virtue and piety are not to be destroyed. They are to be developed and invigorated.

When a man comes to the hospital with ailments and pains, he comes to be renewed; to be rid of his ailments; to be restored to healthy life again. The procedure for his renewal of health is not to shoot the man dead; incinerate his remains, and start him anew from nothing. When a ship comes to port freighted with barnacles and rust and rot, the ship is not renewed by sinking it, but by repairing it.

In 1967, after Vatican II, Dr. Albert C. Outler, a well known Methodist theologian and an observer at the Council, warned Catholics against ex-

tremisists who would destroy the renewal in the Church. He spoke of two forces at work: the Immobilists and the Arsonists. The Immobilists would reject all change or renewal, the Arsonists would burn down the Church, the institutional foundation, in order to completely rebuild, to purge all that is imperfect, or not to their liking.

Actually, the Immobilists are few. And they do not possess the avenues of public communications. This has become even more so since early 1967. The Arsonists are bold, impatient — and uncharitable. They recklessly attack tradition, custom, the Hierarchy and the whole ecclesiastical set up. Some of their ideas have value, but the solutions they offer often leave an emptiness devoid of spirituality. They can tear apart — but they are unable to rebuild, to reassemble, to renew.

At Woodstock College, the distinguished Protestant theologian, Oscar Cullmann, warned that "it is for the friends of true renewal to mount the proper counterattack on false renewal."

What is the root of true renewal?



Charity: love. Cardinal Heenan wrote: "Since the Council there has been too much talk about loving, but too little love. The priest, nun, or layman who lovingly serves the sick and the poor is too tired to keep talking of love... Suspect those who talk constantly of love. Love, like freedom, is easily prostituted. Since the Council there have been made many attacks on the Church by men with love on their lips and hatred in their hearts." (Dialogue—The State of the Church Today, Houghton, Heenan, pp. 151-152)

St. Paul described love thus: "Charity (love) is patient, is kind... (1 Cor. xiii) All true renewal begins and continues right there: in charity or love. It includes a patient, faithful endurance during the attacks of the Arsonists, a vigorous counter-attack against those who, in the name of Christ, would destroy the Church of Christ.

Msgr. Martin Hellriegel wrote: "True renewal consists not in turning altars around, but in turning hearts around." True renewal is a daily and a life time work for all of us, for we are the children of Adam as well as the children of God.

An 'Expansion' of Humanae Vitae?

By Robert Holton

Courier-Journal Special Correspondent

Vatican City — Many ranking Vatican officials say Pope Paul will issue to the bishops attending the October synod either a written or an oral statement on his birth control encyclical.

A few claim to have intimate knowledge of such plans, but most say they are basing their claims on "logical thinking."

A rash of reports about an impending "addition" to the controversial document have been circulating in Vatican and other circles at an unprecedented rate of flow and intensity in recent weeks.

In an unsigned article last week in L'Osservatore Romano, the Vatican daily denied that Pope Paul has any intention of "reversing" the stand he took in the encyclical Humanae Vitae.

However, those claiming a first-hand knowledge that a document under preparation already say it will in no way take the form of a correction or retraction of the pontiff's earlier teaching.

One source close to the Vatican Secretariat of State said the Pope plans to issue "a corollarium" to his encyclical in which he will list

specific cases in which contraceptives may be used.

"It will merely be an expansion of his original document," the source told a Courier-Journal representative. "It will be brief and in it he will take advantage of the door he left open when in his encyclical he called for continued study of the matter of birth control.

"I understand that his addition will be based on medical findings made since he issued the document."

It is no secret that the Pope has been under considerable pressure from such episcopal conferences as those in France, Holland, Canada and India to relax the ban against contraceptives.

It would also follow that he would have something to say to the bishops on the matter when they convene here for their extraordinary synod in October.

However, as several sources pointed out, the pontiff might just answer the interpretations given his document by many theologians and other priests and laymen.

As one official in the Secretariat of State said:

"It is true that the problems this papal document touches upon continue to be studied, but nothing new

has come to the fore, also in the scientific sphere, to validate the hypothesis of a second document.

"Therefore, the encyclical reflecting the conclusions arrived at by complex investigation and studies in every field, which lasted for six years, it is quite out of the question to submit it to a substantial revision only one year after its publication."

L'Osservatore Romano said in its article:

"The principle that was asserted in the encyclical's paragraph 24 on the usefulness of continuing and deepening the studies on the subject of birth regulation must not be confused with contention or dissent as regards the questions that have already been defined by the encyclical, nor with the possibility of the Pope reversing through amendments that which has already been defined."

Those forecasting some change in the papal stand argue that even the L'Osservatore Romano denial left the door open for an addition.

"In that article it specifically notes against 'reversing' and 'contestation and dissent,'" one source pointed out. "The addition of which I speak is not a reversal or a contestation or a dissent from the original document. It is merely an expansion of that document and nothing more."

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