

NOW HEAR THIS ... Space Flight Proves 'God Works in History'

By Father Richard Torney

This Sunday afternoon, about 4:15, the entire listening world will hold its breath during the final minutes of the moon-landing of Apollo 11. Astronauts Neil Armstrong and Edwin Aldrin will be braking their spacecraft, dropping slowly downward and looking carefully for a spot smooth enough to land on safely.

They expect it will be a strong and level surface because the landing area, chosen months ago after it had been extensively photographed at close range, is in a safe-sounding region called the "Sea of Tranquility."

The little-known man who chose this euphoric title and named most of the rest of lunar geography we are about to explore was an Italian priest, Giovanni Riccioli, a Jesuit astronomer who published his map of the moon in 1651.

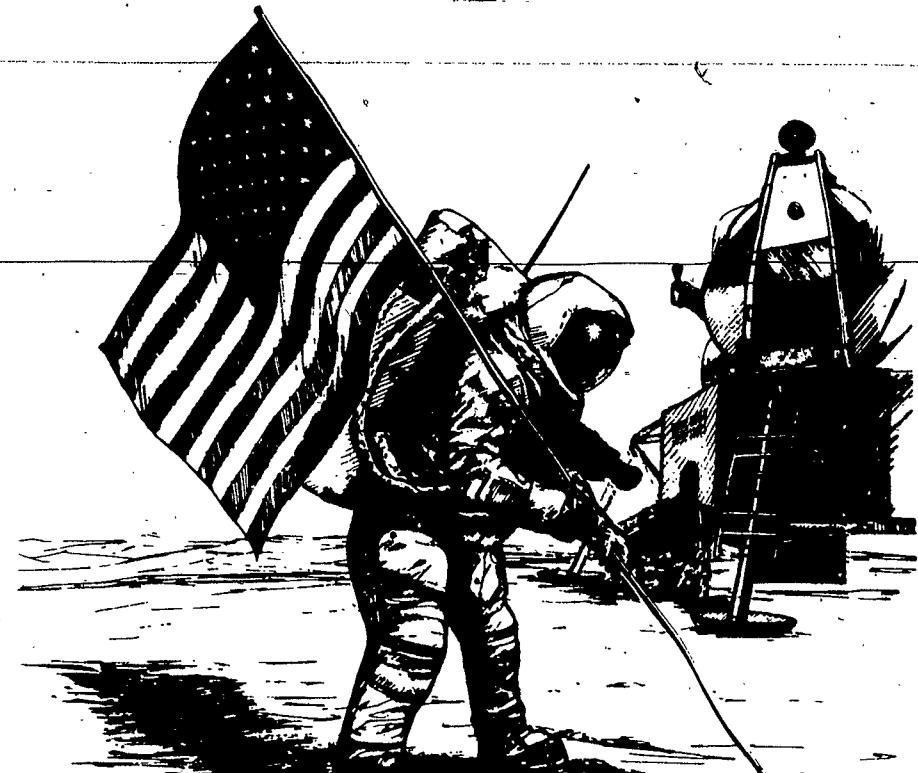
This was only 40 years after Galileo had made his first telescope and astonished the world with the news that the moon was not a perfectly smooth sphere and that it did not shine with its own light. Galileo said

the moon reflected the sun's light, that its scarred-looking surface was covered with mountains, craters and deep, dry plains.

Father Riccioli's low-powered telescope made the dark plains look very much like areas of water. He knew perfectly well they were dry but he labelled them Seas, Oceans, Bays and Marshes. Some of his more picturesque titles which are found on all maps of the moon to this day, are Ocean of Storms, Sea of Nectar, Sea of Crises, Bay of Rainbows and Marsh of Dreams.

This scholarly Jesuit priest also labelled the moon's mountains, some almost as high as the Himalayas, and put the names of 200 great philosophers, astronomers and scientists on the lunar craters he could pick out from the earth.

This weekend as we await the first foothold of man upon the moon, it's probably smug to look back through the centuries and think of the billions of humans who have regarded the moon with awe or fear or hope



but never guessed an earthling would walk on it. Today it's difficult to believe that as recently as the time of Shakespeare no one knew that other worlds existed. Though many peoples had surmised the complexity of the heavens, until the invention of the telescope about 1608, our earth was the only part of the universe that mattered.

Yet even as scientists slowly push back the apparently fundamental limits to knowledge about astral

places man could not travel to, mankind stayed rooted here until October '57 when the Russians launched the first orbiting satellite.

Thinking how much our generation has learned about outer space since Sputnik, the mind trembles at the possibilities of fairly immediate interstellar exploration from bases man

may now be able to build on the moon. We will need more than another Father Riccioli to map the terrain.

It once seemed idly academic to wonder about the possible existence of life and intelligence on other planets. Some scholars guessed that the Creator who made other places in the universe must have populated them with other species of "beings" perhaps far more advanced than ours.

Will our space explorers in succeeding planet-trips find evidence of cultures that predate our world or actually meet rational creatures who will need our teaching even while we learn from them? Do they know of the God who made them? — could our generation, or the next, take the Gospel to the stars? — has there ever been a manifestation of God's love like His Son living among them out there, an idea expressed once by Alice Meynell in her poem "Christ in the Universe":

... in the eternities
Doubtless we shall compare together, hear
A million alien Gospels, learn in what guise
He trod the Pleiades, the Lyre and the Bear.

Whatever the possibilities of future explorations in space we may be sure that it will certainly not

diminish the glory of God.

Man's ingenuity and courage has built the Apollo 11 and carried it 250,000 miles. But man had to borrow from the mind of God the science of astronomy — how the celestial bodies move by laws unchanged since time began — to find his way across space.

Even the rocks the astronauts bring back for scientific study will be pursued like pages out of history, scattered in a divine pattern on the moon's surface. The Creator will let man learn for himself, from evidence He has planted, how the moon was born and perhaps even how in conception it was related to the earth.

Space and its dusty marvels hold no terrors for the Christian faith.

Even though Apollo 11 marks a major turning point in man's intellectual as well as physical history, it repeats an ancient truth: "God works in history." By His own timetable man's talents have grown to this week's soaring level. By the imperative lust for learning which He planted in man our generation will leap out of earthy bonds to walk on the moon.

Who dares question that God clearly intends man to use the means he has found of exploring hidden truths. Any path to knowledge is a path to God.

COMMENTARY

Courier-Journal — Friday, July 18, 1969 13

ON THE RIGHT SIDE

Suskind's Peeping Tom Show

By Father Paul J. Cuddy

When visiting Father Walter Caron left at 11 p.m. Sunday, July 6, I thought: "Get the 11:00 news and go to bed." Instead of the news which didn't look promising, I switched to the David Suskind Show which I expected to be relaxing. It was nauseating.

Whenever I got the idea the Suskind Show was a kind of NBC Commentary, or a William Buckley "Firing Line" type of thing, it surely was false.

The July 6 program presented six bachelors, around 35 years old. The point was to find out how six healthy, normal, good-looking males with good jobs and education got to be 35 years old without being married, and for the most part without the intention of marrying.

The show turned out to be just another of those sex revolution things that are setting the example. The performance was mostly about sexual relations, using the usual jargon of present day superficiality.

Listen to the words of these 35-year-old goats: "You don't have to be married to have an affair. All kinds of 17, 18, 19-year-old girls are available. They're fun. They're more relaxed. The 25-year-olds are too serious. They're not as much fun, not relaxed."

And another: "I can have a meaningful relationship without marriage." And another: "Women are a lot of fun. I keep a stable, oh, 4 or 6 at a time." And another: "You can score anytime that you want." And another: "There's more to a meaningful relationship than sex. In fact, sex can stand in the way. Sometimes it's better getting sex out of the way. Then you are relaxed and can enter into a real relationship just to start off the evening by interpersonal relationship."

relationship than sex. In fact, sex can stand in the way. Sometimes it's better getting sex out of the way. Then you are relaxed and can enter into a real relationship just to start off the evening by interpersonal relationship."

The Suskind Show was no one-man Peeping Tom affair. It was a full blown verbalization of sexual degeneracy, i.e., sex without reverence, not through a single domestic window for one Tom, but through hundreds of thousands of picture tube windows, for a curious, a puzzled, an aghast or an entertained millions. It seemed right to express my feelings to Channel 5, which was unhelpfully the source.

GENTLEMEN:

May I give a few reactions to your July 6 Suskind Show, which presented six bachelors. Since I rarely see your show, I was expecting some entertaining banter which such a group might present, and perhaps some sane healthy ideas. I was unprepared for a verbal enlargement of a Peeping Tom Show.

In 1945 I was stationed with the Air Force in France. One day over coffee, an airman in his early twenties said gloomily: "Chaplain, when I was 15 I did something—I never forgive myself for it. I took out a girl—a nice girl from a good family. I used her. She had never been touched until I took her. I introduced her to some friends. Today she's a prostitute. I made her that!"

I had completely forgotten the conversation until 30 minutes into your show. Then it surfaced, propelled by

the fact that the Suskind Show was teaching—I suppose to millions—that adultery and fornication are accepted facts of life for meaningful relationships. Purity and chastity are antiquated hang-ups.

Only God knows how many teenagers and others went to bed that Sunday night with the seedlings which your show implanted, namely, that it is accepted morality for male to be able "to score any time you want," and presumably for girls to think they are expected to give themselves "relaxedly" in order to be desirable fun.

There was a goodness in the airman who recognized he had destroyed a good girl and crucified her family. I have a feeling that the Suskind Sex Morality Instructors have neither remorse nor regret, but a glee that they have "entertained the public."

Probably you did entertain many people. Regrettably you educated many, to their own harm, and the hurt of society.

What is done is done, and cannot be undone. May I at least ask you to consider that every TV viewer is being influenced, usually for good or for bad. Mr. Suskind interpolated the suggestion that he did not agree entirely with the fornicating panelists, but his words came out about as strong as a child's whistle blown next to an ambulance siren.

TV is the great modern teacher. We are told that broadcasting stations and advertisers want the reaction of their viewers. With healthy helpful programs you can do great good. Will you?

ALL IN THE FAMILY

You Never Heard Such 'Fustian'

By Sarah Child

"Hey," I remarked casually to my young sister the other day as she showed off a new dress, "you're going to set the ton on its ear."

"Huh," she answered politely.

"You know," I explained, "set the ton on its ear, set the social circle awahrl, stun the elite."

"Oh," she said, comprehension dawning slowly, "you mean turn 'em on."

"Sure," I said, unaware for the moment just how deep a generation gap I was creating.

I had just put down the 18th Century historical romance I'd been reading. Talk about getting carried away by a book.

I first ran into Georgette Heyer, the English author, on a book counter long ago where a variety of new, hard bound books had been marked down to 50 cents a copy.

Ordinarily I don't patronize such sales (not much) but the cover bore critical praise from such sources as the New York Times, The Saturday Review and the Chicago Tribune.

The unlikely title of the book is "Sylvester: Or the Wicked Uncle."

I did not read it through in one sitting. Instead I found myself going

back over a page I'd skimmed too quickly and then rereading it in order to chuckle all over again.

There was intrigue, the kind of dashing romance that barely let the hero and heroine exchange a kiss, lulling dialogue and marvelous word pictures of an era I knew so little about.

Ten years and some 30 titles later I am an avid fan of this latter-day Jane Austen who handles Britain's Regency period so realistically that days after putting down one of her books I'm still talking like one of her characters.

When my husband, for example, asked me if I had seen our new neighbors I said I hadn't, but told him that I felt we would deal famously together.

"They are," I added as his eyebrows went even higher, "to be felicitated upon acquiring a house of the first water."

"I didn't know the cellar leaked," he puzzled.

"Don't talk such fustian," I admonished him glibly and then warming to my style directed our conversation into other channels.

"Understand your friend Joseph is contemplating marriage with the fair Mary Jean," I said conversationally.

"Ummm, what got into Joe after all these years. I'll never know," he admitted.

"I suppose you do not think the divine Mary Jean worthy of so signal an honour?" I inquired haughtily.

"Well, there goes his Tuesday night card game right down the drain for one thing," he pointed out.

"I never heard such farrago," I said sternly. "Gaming in any form is to be regarded with the utmost abhorrence."

"And," I added, "better Mary Jean entering the familial circle than that Friday-faced creature he engaged in dalliance a fortnight ago at the al fresco party."

"Mary Jean," I pointed out, "puts her to the blush."

Then I noticed that my husband's face was becoming overheated and he appeared capable only of one-syllable repetitiveness.

"My dear," I murmured soothingly, "there is no need to indulge in fruitless ejaculations. It doesn't signify."

And with that I swept grandly into the kitchen to start supper, having misplaced my chief cook, to say nothing of my abigail, the coachman and the upstairs maid.

AND ON THE OTHER SIDE

Priest Answers Father Cuddy on Celibacy

Dear Father Cuddy,

In the June 27 issue of the "Courier," your column was sub-titled: "Argument for Priestly Celibacy." I agree with every word of that column of June 27.

I do feel that what is hurting so many priests (of every age) is the unspoken conclusion of your article, namely, that celibacy should continue to be imposed on every individual who is called and chooses to become a priest.

In conversations with priests over the past several months, I have discovered that age ("young" and "old") are deplorable terms in this connection) has little to do with the Church's current problems. The only difference I can see with regard to age is a matter of "awareness".

A younger priest who is having extreme difficulty living the celibate life is conscious of the problem with a view of possible change in Church legislation. An older priest who is having this extreme difficulty does not foresee any possible change, largely because of his training and background, but perhaps more because he fears the future if he should admit that celibacy is his real problem.

Even the younger priest goes through a great deal of agony before the realization "surfaces" in his mind (I am here speaking of the cases where celibacy is the actual problem).

When I became a priest, I imposed celibacy on myself. None of the "new" thinking priests who has any sense is blaming the Pope or other Bishops for the "forced celibacy" that is now our way of life. The thinking of the whole Church has been that Roman Rite priests do not marry. I do not believe that the present thinking of the whole Church is quite the same.

There is a great deal of statistical data to show that lay people, in large percentage, are sympathetic to the idea of allowing priests to marry.

It would be a terrible mistake to go away with celibacy in the Church. I remember reading an article similar

Father Edward M. Kowalski, although offering his personal judgment on the subject of priestly celibacy as recently discussed on this page by our regular columnist, Father Cuddy, is an elected member of the diocesan Priests' Council and serves on that council's Personnel Board. He is assistant pastor of St. Casimir's Church, Elmira. We solicit other readers' observations on this topic, particularly the laity's.

—The Editor

to yours about ten years ago, and I was then in complete agreement with the ideas (as I am now). But vast numbers of priests and people, by reason of change in social living conditions and attitudes, have added something to your thoughts over these past years.

It would boil down to this: chosen celibacy makes a man a beautiful priest; imposed celibacy may (and often does) make him an ugly priest and one who spreads bitterness in Christ's Church. This was not so generally true ten years ago.

I agree with you (and St. Paul): the Church is best served when a man's love is "undivided." And yet, your column implicitly leaves room (it was so good to see those words "some" and "many" for men to serve the Church who are "divided" by human love) can we not let some of them do so?

This is the point that hurts so many of the "aware" priests in the Church, young and old: that the Church you and I love must suffer through this thinking-out process, that many priests must suffer while the thinking goes on, and that the greatest suffering is caused by the closed minds of those who give old answers to new problems (they are new to us as flesh and blood people, and to give the answers of the past is like speaking to the dead).

How many "defections" (I prefer the word "victims" for most of them) must we suffer before there is an awakening in the Church?

I realize that this is God's "department." It is He who is putting us through this agony. But I think it is important to recall that it was Christ, the man, who had to resolve the agony. Jesus is "divided." You and I are each called "another Christ," yet we do not think the same.

The evidence is growing too strong to show that "things are different," and that the "old Church" must give its will to the Cross of today. If we wish to retain so many of our most talented and holy priests.

My personal reasoning goes like this: "Is it possible that there is at least one priest in the world who hears the words of Christ, 'Let him who can take it, take it,' and who finds that he cannot 'take it' after ordination?"

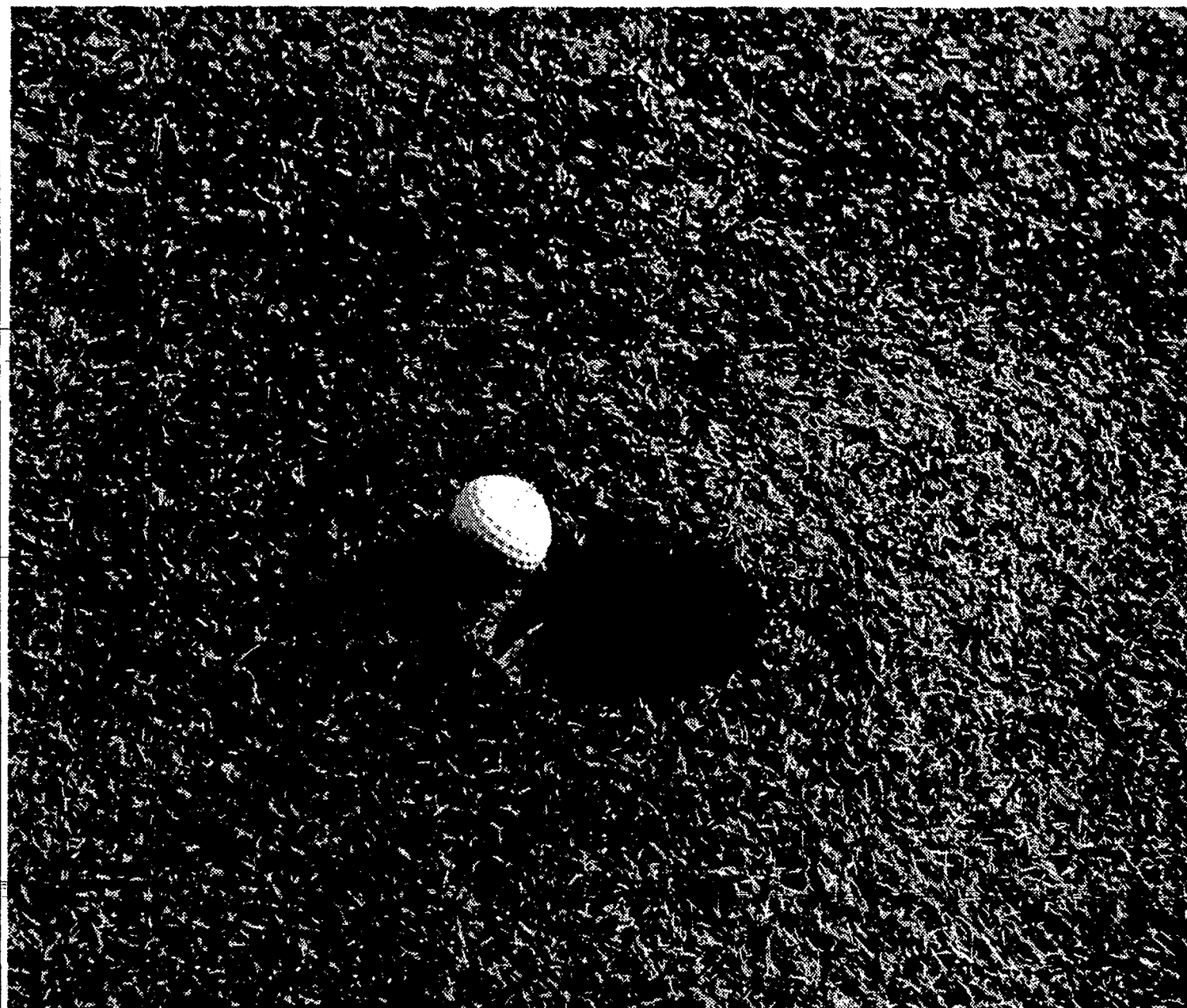
Presuming this possibility, "why must every priest be treated close to a criminal when he decides to take the step that will make him a better human being... and a better priest?"

The answer I give myself to these questions is that the thinking of the whole Church has not yet "surfaced" in its own mind. The burden on our Holy Church is great. He continues to "hold the line" on celibacy for all. Yet he is not being followed in a growing number of individual lives of his priests.

The subconscious reality is slowly growing clear in the mind of the whole Church: Celibacy for all priests is impossible (if we are to have enough priests to go around). Human emotions and tradition keep the awareness from coming quickly to the surface: that the total celibacy rule is an evil (if we are to have enough priests to go around).

The burden of the Pope and other Bishops is most difficult. But perhaps they could start preparing people now for the inevitable: married priests in the Church. A gradual understanding is much better than a shock... there is little time left.

Your brother in Christ,
Rev. Edward M. Kowalski.



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