

Romans Seven and Eight

THEOLOGY OF THE WORLD
(Thirtieth in Series)

By BISHOP FULTON J. SHEEN

Man lives in a three-story house: on the ground level is the body with its feelings, tastes, sounds, sights and emotions. These bring him in touch with the environment of the universe of light, heat and food; in this man is akin to an animal.

On the second floor, is his reason, mind or his soul, which makes him above the beasts who can kill him, but man knows that he is being killed. Education, flights to the moon, spanning the ocean on wings of steel, poetry and music — these are some of the deliverances of his thoughts.

On the third floor is the spirit, which is the capacity for God-likeness. It is not a floor exactly, but a potential, an openness, an ability to hold communion with the Divine.

When a person becomes sinful, the spirit becomes imprisoned in his soul, and even degrades his body. When he returns to God, the spirit is released from prison, and takes flight to God. Human knowledge does not necessarily make a man spiritual. Does an immoral, degenerate life have any effect on the intelligence? Here one must make a distinction between the speculative mind, which knows things, and the practical mind which desires and wills and has ideals. Sin does not affect the speculative side of the mind. A morally

dom where Christ lives, moves and has His Being, and can be identified with Him in entire sanctification, so he can be born into the devil's kingdom, and be entirely consecrated to him: "Then Satan entered into him" (John 7/27). "Have I not chosen you twelve and one of you as a devil?" (John 6/70).

Heart

Sometimes Scripture uses the word "heart" in the same sense as spirit: "Watch yourselves, or your hearts will be coarsened with debauchery and drunkenness and the cares of life, and that day will be sprung on you suddenly like a trap" (Luke 21/34). Death will come when the evil spirit is in possession of the person. The common expression about being "turned off", or that certain people "freeze" you, is an indication of the diversity of spirit. A cabbage will "turn off" a man regardless of how much he may talk to its head.

When the spirit is good, and our hearts are right with God, everything contributes to inner joy, whereas, when the spirit is evil, there can be, as St. James says, an enjoyment of wealth with utter contempt of the poor (James 5/5). From the heart or the spirit of man comes either good or evil, depending upon the spirit that is in him. If the spirit be evil, evil acts will result. As Our Lord said: "For it is from within, from men's hearts, that evil intentions emerge. Fornication, theft, murder, adultery, avarice, malice, deceit, indecency, envy, slander, pride, folly. All these evil

God Gave the Universe to Man

Following is a text of Bishop Fulton J. Sheen's prayer for the American moon landing. He delivered it Monday morning at White Friars Church, Dublin.

O Holy Spirit, through the inspired word of God you have told us everything in the universe is man's. It is intended so from the beginning when God said to man, "Rule over the earth and subject it."

Before Christ comes in his glory at the end of time man must bring the whole universe under his subjection. This is gradually taking place. Man has gotten the earth into his head. Now he must get the heavens into his head by understanding and by mastering them.

There yet remains the task of man getting his head into the heavens of God which is the most important of all. May our

achievements not make us turn this flight to the moon into another Tower of Babel. But rather may we be thankful to God for opening up the universe to us in our times.

Though the moon is only a burnt-out cinder floating in the immensity of space, it is something that reflects the light of the sun. Grant that we may see that the scientific and technological light which we have is a reflection of God, the light of the world.

corrupt mathematician can be more perfect in his field than a saintly mathematician. When it comes to ideals, aspirations and noble love, however, it is here that a corrupt life affects the ability to realize these desires, or even to entertain them. In other words, the spirit of man is spoiled by grossness.

A perfect example of this is the life of Oscar Wilde. Endowed with a keen intellect, his life was rotten and corrupt; yet while in prison, after a life of unthinkable immorality, Oscar Wilde wrote an amazing poem entitled "E Tenebris" in which at last his spirit began to break free from both his body and his soul, and to cry out for liberation.

"Come down, O Christ, and help me! reach thy hand,
For I am drowning in a stormier sea
Than Simon on thy lake of Galilee.
The wine of life is spilt upon the sand,
My heart is as some fame-murdered land
Whence all good things have perished utterly,
And well I know my soul in Hell must lie
If I this night before God's throne should stand.
'He sleeps perchance, or rideth to the chase,
Like Baal, when his prophets howled that name
From morn to noon on Carmel's smitten height.'
Nay, peace, I shall behold, before the night,
The feet of brass, the robe more white than flame,
The wounded hands, the weary human face."

The mind, or intelligence is never primary from God's point of view regardless of how much store we put on education: "If any man will know My Doctrine, let him do My Will" (John 7/17). This is not the point to develop a philosophy of education, but it must be pointed out that filling the mind with knowledge without infusing the will with ideals, leaves a man incomplete. His soul has expanded, but his spirit has been left undeveloped.

Manner of Spirit

The difference between the soul and the spirit, knowledge and the love of the Divine Will, was shown in the attitudes of James and John when the Samaritans refused to receive Our Lord into the city.

Our Lord was then on His way to the city of Jerusalem to undergo His Passion in obedience to the Divine "Must". He tried to initiate His disciples into His secret, but they would not understand. So the disciples wished to destroy the inhospitable Samaritan village. The Lord, Who was to suffer death at men's hands without any protest or resistance, is now expected to burn a village because of a mere act of discourtesy. His answer was: "You do not know what manner of spirit you are of" (Luke 9/55).

Implied was their ignorance of what was going on in His mind and heart, and how utterly out of tune they were with Him. These were the very men who, a little while afterwards, asked that they might sit "one on the right hand, and one on the left in His Glory." Later on, one of them whose spirit unfolded after Pentecost, was sent down to Samaria where he realized that the fire that God was to send was actually the fire of the Holy Spirit (Act 8/18).

The spirit of man can either be for good, or for evil. It is the wicked, revengeful, hateful spirit which is close to the demonic possession. The evil spirit gives fellowship with the devil, and the good spirit gives fellowship with God: "You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons. You cannot take your share at the table of the Lord, and at the table of demons" (1 Cor. 10/21).

Just as a man can be born again into the king-

dom where Christ lives, moves and has His Being, and can be identified with Him in entire sanctification, so he can be born into the devil's kingdom, and be entirely consecrated to him: "Then Satan entered into him" (John 7/27). "Have I not chosen you twelve and one of you as a devil?" (John 6/70).

It is the inward that purifies, it is the inward that defiles. The terrible chemistry of the evil heart, or spirit, distills poisons which sometimes allow people to look at major sin as minor matters, for they make up the news of the daily press. In the list of the Lord, however, they are major sins.

Mini-Infallibilities

It seems that the world can never be without infallibility. The denial of the papal infallibility often brings within its train the countless infallibilities of little egos whose declaration of independence is: "I will not be bound by any law except my own". The evil spirit, or heart resents God's law, and will have nothing to do with it.

Ezekiel tells of the ruler of Tyre who had exalted himself as a god, but the Lord spoke to him saying: "Being swollen with pride, you have said: 'I am a god; I am sitting on the throne of god, surrounded by the seas'. Though you are a man and not a god, you consider yourself the equal of God... no, you are a man and not a god in the clutches of your murderer! You will die like the uncircumcised at the hands of foreigners."

Thus, there are two alternatives: the spirit, or the heart may center in the Divine Rule, making us one with His thoughts and purposes, or it may be the center of the Devil's rule, making us one with the Prince of this world, which barters the spiritual for the carnal. Then the spirit is taken away, as it was in the case of Saul, and the heart becomes darkened: "They knew God, and yet refused to honor Him as God, or to thank Him; instead, they made nonsense out of logic, and their empty minds were darkened. The more they called themselves philosophers, the more stupid they grew" (Rom. 1/21).

This is not the darkness which comes from the intensity of light, it is the refusal to allow any light at all, or the loving of darkness rather than light (John 3/19). This must not be interpreted that God hardened a man's heart, and then condemned him for being hard. It means, rather, that God's Law does not alter, and if any man refuses to obey it, he will be hardened away from God, and that by God's Decree. No man's destiny is made for him; he makes his own, but the imperative necessity that a man must make his own destiny is of God.

To keep the body in order, one must keep the soul in order, but to keep the soul in order, one must have the right spirit, or the right heart. Physical death is the separation of the soul from the body, and spiritual death is the separation of the spirit from God. In fallen man, the spirit no longer dominates him; it ceases to function separately. When a man is regenerated, however, the Word of God divides the soul and the spirit, and the spirit is rescued from the lower level into which it has fallen; it is brought back into consciousness with God. It is worth quoting the words of the Apostolic Constitution: "The soul is as the chariot of the spirit, and the spirit is its charioteer."

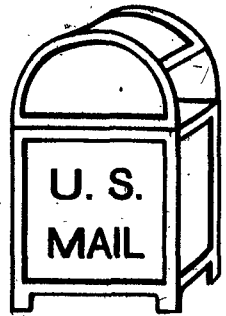
Psychoanalysis before Freud

Another way of depicting the difference between the person who lives only in the realm of human consciousness, and the person who thinks, moves and lives in the Divine Consciousness, is to psychoanalyze one and the other. In this way, the difference will appear between two kinds of humans: on the one hand, the unredeemed man, the psychological man, the humanist, or just plain Joe Doaks who has not yet fully related himself to the Divine; on the other hand, there is the redeemed man, the spiritual man who has allowed his spirit

(Continued on Page 11)

LETTERS

to the editor



Celibacy Issue

Editor: It perhaps may seem to be a case of "fools rush in" but I wish to comment on Father Edward Kowalski's letter on celibacy (Courier-Journal, 7/18/69) especially his phrase about "chosen celibacy" as contrasted with "imposed celibacy."

I was under the impression that even a callow youth entering the seminary for 12 years of study realized that celibacy was to be his offering to his Creator. During this long period of preparation he would be able to determine whether he was big enough to walk in Christ's steps.

How can a man who has made his choice and sealed it with a vow suddenly feel as though this burden is too heavy for him to be expected to bear?

Outside the priesthood unmarried men and women are bound by the law of chastity. So what should be so unsettling about an ordained priest standing firm on his commitment?

If in the future a candidate for the priesthood will have the option to marry if he desires, then we should also consider the role of the nun. If she decides she wishes to marry, will she have to leave the order, or will motherhouses of the future have apartments for married nuns?

—Miss Olive LeBoo, Rochester.

Back Article

Editor: Father Kowalski's article (Catholic Courier, 7/18/69) represented the sentiments of an ever-increasing number of people. I felt that his approach to the question of priestly celibacy was a blend of respect and realism.

In our rapidly changing society, the Church has been confronted by many serious problems which must be faced with consideration to the man of today and tomorrow, as well as with consideration to the traditional Church.

I believe that there should be a place in the Church for the man who chooses marriage AND has the desire to serve God as His priest.

How many more "defections" will we, the laity, be forced to face as our priests find themselves unable to live celibate lives?

—Dorothy P. Gilmarth, Rochester.

Another View

In reply to the Editor's note of July 18, many thoughts come to mind. I strongly agree "Chosen celibacy makes a man a beautiful priest", but a few simple suggestions to help the overcrowded problem of priests marrying may be:

1. Accept and enlarge the possibility of married men to become priests.

2. Allow deacons and subdeacons to hold this office for a ten year period. This time should be spent in the rectory, living a life of a priest with all the duties possible. After this period he should practically realize the priest life affording him with superior foundation to accept ordination and celibacy. Thus eliminating the imposed celibacy causing too often the ugly priest.

Church Humor

3. Allowing more independence and freedom in rectory living, along with decision making.

Understanding the immensity of celibacy, one cannot help wondering: if it were otherwise what would happen to the Church:

1. Which comes first Church or family?

2. How many of these priests who leave to marry, would also leave their families under equal marriage and family problems?

3. If vows for a priest are dissolvable under problem areas, why not melt marriage vows under equal pressures?

I am not convinced that simply allowing priests to marry is the answer.

—Doris DeFraine, Rochester.

School Issue

Editor, In the article "Time to Secularize Catholic Colleges" (Courier-Journal, July 11), Mr. Peter Goodsell sets forth an argument for the secularization of Catholic schools based on assumptions which he fails to prove.

Vatican II gives us an inkling into the purpose of the Catholic school when it reminds us of our duty to give our children "the kind of education through which their entire lives can be penetrated with the spirit of Christ." How effectively is the Catholic school achieving its goal of instructing its students in the secular subjects, while at the same time imbuing them with the spirit of Christ?

On the first count (academic), the scientific-oriented Greeley-Rossi Report of 1966, "The Education of Catholic Americans," states that "noth-

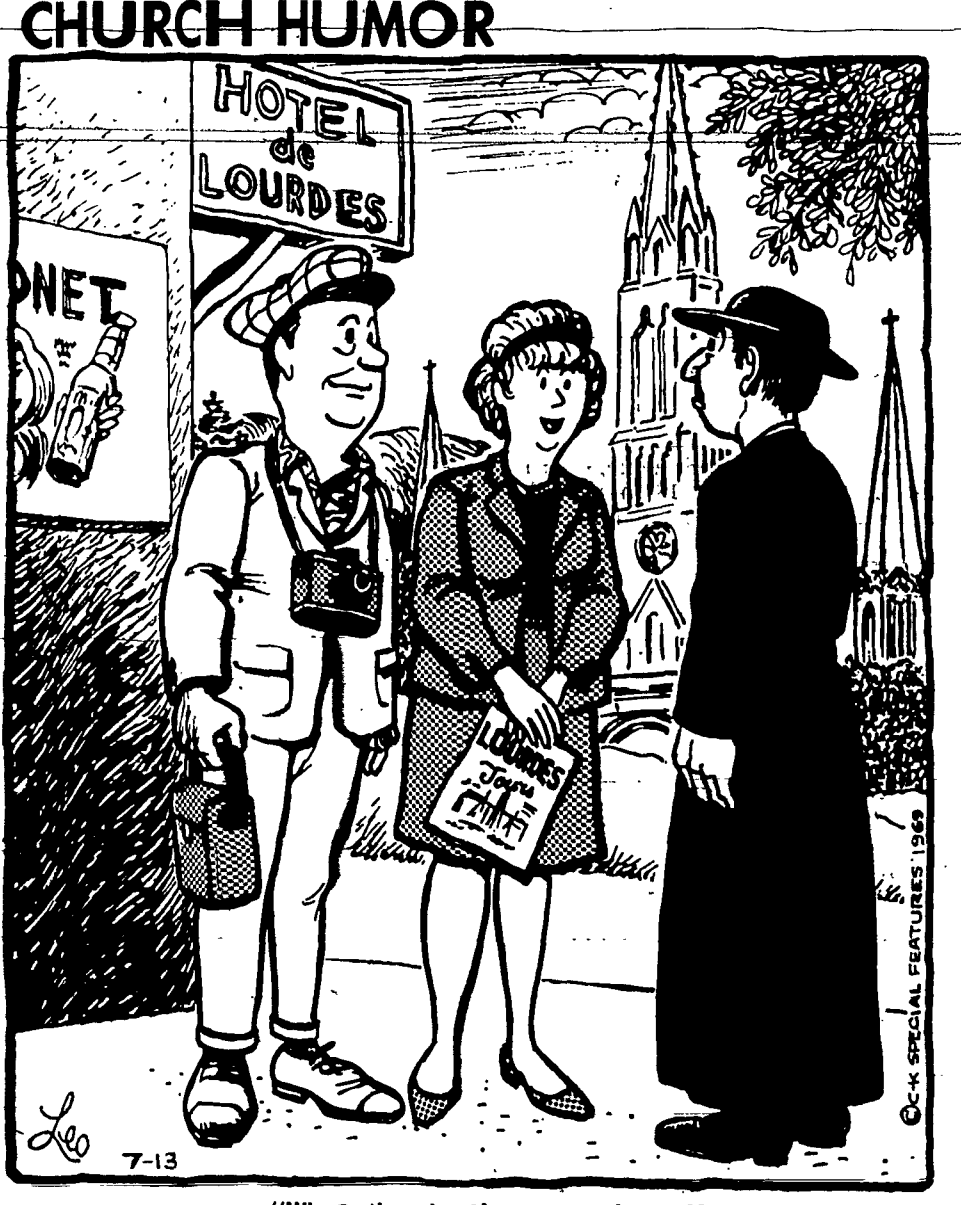
ing in the data indicates that Catholics need feel ashamed of the academic prowess of their schools." Having seen that the Catholic school has been successful in its academic endeavor, we must then consider whether or not it has properly engendered in its students the spirit of Christ.

Mr. Goodsell would have us believe that the Catholic school "makes no lasting contribution to the student outside of impressing incomplete notions of subservience to spiritual and secular authorities and a set of moral strictures against which he later rebels."

Is his statement universally true? Is it true that all products of Catholic schools are in favor of what Pope Paul calls an "easy Christianity"; that is, a "Christianity" which rejects traditional dogmas, is devoid of authority, and openly shows contempt for asceticism and moral principles? An honest inspection of the products of Catholic schools shows that many do not espouse this doctrine of ease. I contend that the espousal of this pseudo-Christianity by some reflects a failure on their part and not the failure of an institution or a system. In Christ's day, many refused to accept His doctrine; it is not surprising that many refuse to accept it today.

The Catholic schools have been doing the job they were intended to do, and I therefore favor their continuance. If we abolish them, we will be playing into the hands of those who would destroy the Church from within, those who would fashion a Christianity according to their whims, and those well-gifted and often young scholars who never were "penetrated with the spirit of Christ" and are hopeful that the Church of God will concede to them and their consciences be soothed.

—Arnold B. Morrison Jr., 373 Grand Ave., Rochester.



Word for Sunday

Jews Are Christians' Brothers

By Father Benedict Ehmann

Buchenwald and Auschwitz are too close to the nerve of the modern conscience for us to claim with any assurance that Christians are no longer hostile to Jews. Even in our sunniest mood will there may be clouds of distrust. And in the depths of our minds we have to face up to dark shadows of prejudice.

It is very easy for the followers of Christ to suppose they are doing Him a service—passing judgment on the Jews. The idea is deeply imbedded that the Jews are a condemned race. The loud cry of the Good Friday crowd: "His blood be on us and on our children" seems to drown out for us Jesus' cry on the cross: "Father, forgive them...". So we urge the curse, but forget the pardon, and think we are Christ's champions. Like James and John, ready to call down fire and thunder on the Samaritan town for rejecting Christ, we need to be told by the Lord, that we "do not know of what spirit we are."

Jesus, weeping on the Mount of Olives as He beheld the fair city of Jerusalem on the opposite slope, shows Himself a lover, not a judge. It is not as a judge that He addresses Jerusalem: "How often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings and you would not!" The followers of Christ must not be judges of the Jews, but compassionate brothers.

To be condescending to the Jews is also un-Christian. This would be to fall into the same trap as did the men whom John the Baptist warned: "Do not begin to say to yourselves: 'We have Abraham for our father'; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise children to Abraham."

The Church of the Apostles had to cut the umbilical cord which joined it

to Judaism. The Acts of the Apostles and the Epistles of St. Paul vibrate with the tension of that ordeal. But it is surely a mistaken reading of the evidence to conclude that salvation is not for the Jews. Turn to chapter nine of the Epistle to the Romans and ponder what St. Paul writes there of the New Testament hope for the heirs of the Old Testament, — and especially about the Christian debt to the Hebrews.

The infamy of Christians toward the Jews through 19 centuries reads like an apocalyptic nightmare. Father Edward Flannery's book, The Anguish of the Jews, documents it with harrowing thoroughness. Each person who thanks God for the grace of Christ is called upon to repudiate this tragic scandal. It need not, nor cannot, be denied. It must be abhorred. The unholy crusade has no warrant from Scripture nor from the doctrine of the Church.

To remove all doubt and hesitation

on this extremely touchy subject, Vatican Council II came out loud and clear:

"Mindful of her common patrimony with the Jews, and motivated by the gospel's spiritual love and by no political consideration, the Church deplores the hatred, persecutions, and displays of anti-Semitism directed against the Jews at any time and from any source." (Declaration on the Relationship of the Church to Non-Christians, 4.)

A new era of Christian-Jewish relations was graphically spotlighted by Pope John XXIII when, in welcoming a group of Jewish rabbis, he used his baptismal name and greeted them in the words of the Torah, "I am Joseph your brother."

(Father Albert Shamon is Ill. Various diocesan priests will write this Sunday homily until his return.)

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