

# NOW HEAR THIS ... Apollo Revives Hope for Society

## THE HOLY FATHER

### Church Thrives on the New

Vatican City — (RNS)—Pope Paul VI told pilgrims here that Church reform and renewal means a return to the Gospel and not a "breaking away from the patrimony of the faith."

During his regular mid-week audience the pontiff renewed his criticism of those in the Church who he believes are seeking "revolution" rather than reform.

Rather than being afraid of the new, he said, the Church thrives on it. This is why, he explained, the Church has carried out (in the Vatican Council and since) numerous reforms of its life.

Included in these reforms, he said, is that of the episcopate, the religious orders, Catholic education, canon law and the liturgy. A greater participation of the laity in the life of the Church and the development of ecumenism were also cited as examples of reform by the Pope.

"The revolutionary mentality has already been adopted by too many good Christians," he said, and warned that "changes in the Church cannot be produced by a breaking with traditions."

"The breaking off that is allowed," Pope Paul said, "is that of conversion — a breaking away from sin and not from the patrimony of the faith

of which we are the fortunate and responsible heirs."

"Innovations," he said, "consist solely and essentially for us in a return to the source that is the Gospels." This, he added, was the message of the Vatican Council in its decree on the religious life and it also holds for all the people of God.

"Anyone who substitutes his own spiritual experiences and his own personal interpretation of the words of God for what is traditional, he said, 'certainly produces innovations, and also revolution.'"

"Whoever disdains the history of the Church and its divine mission for teaching the faith and the Christian way of life," he continued, "can create novelties, but these will be lacking in vital virtues."

Pope Paul then spoke of those whom he called "impatient contesters" who have described the Church's reliance on its traditions as a "scientism that was paralyzing Christianity in rigid and fixed formulas."

"They want living Christianity," the pontiff exclaimed. "We more than anyone else want living Christianity."

"To live a truly Christian life," he said, "we must remember that the Church renewal must be personal and interior for each one of us. That is the first true Christian renewal which each one of us must seek."

By Father Richard Torney

In the 1840's the U.S. Senate was debating a bill—to spend federal money for opening up the uninhabited frontier lands which are now our Western states.

Daniel Webster, refusing to vote any public funds "to place the Pacific coast one inch nearer Boston than it now is," asked the Senate:

"What do we want with this vast worthless area, this region of shifting sands and whirlpools of dust, of cactus and prairie dogs? Of what use could we ever hope to put these great deserts or those high mountain ranges, impenetrable and covered to their base with eternal snow?"

This week while the world was still marvelling over the scientific wonders of seeing man's first exploratory steps on a new continent, there were many voices speaking like Mr. Webster: "What good is the moon to us?"

The moon-landing increased man's range of learning and perhaps on some distant day his range of action. But it has not given him a new world where he can build a home, plant a farm, dig a mine or reap a harvest.

Practical men, like the late Senator Webster, who find satisfaction only when they can put some acquisition to immediate profitable use, have begun to minimize the importance of space conquest by complaining: "What can you do with a moon?"

"We couldn't stop the program while the goal was out of reach, but now," they demand, "let's accept this impractical triumph and get on. Feed

the world's hungry, house the homeless, fight cancer, clean up our cities, end discrimination and abolish the causes of wars." And these cries are, of course, sensible, compassionate, humane, imperative and honest.

The very fact that our nation has begun to see the contrast between what has been accomplished in space and what is desperately needed here on earth may be the greatest benefit from the Apollo Mission.

The vital essentials of success in flying to the moon have not been simply the billions of dollars expended nor the scientific genius applied nor the labor of dedicated men, but the combination of all three on a clear and wanted goal.

The moon-trip revives hope for the solution of mankind's woes if it teaches us that man can achieve marvels only dimly hoped-for by most plodders, when he puts his mind and will to work.

The famous historian Arnold Toynbee wrote in a London paper last

week: "The significance of the landing on the moon lies in its forcing us to face — and, we may hope, to deal effectively with — the ludicrous, but also perilous discrepancy between our attainments in technology and in morals . . ."

"If we are going to go on behaving on earth as we have behaved here so far, then a landing on the moon will have to be written off as just one more shocking misuse of mankind's slender surplus products."

It's easy to list festering civic needs which should be attacked with a concentrated Apollo-like program of funds, effort, skill and control. America is desperate for low-income housing, for removal of pollution, for control of crime, for uplift of the poor and education of the underprivileged. Each of these has had some attention, some funding, some intelligent suggestions.

But they have never stirred the sense of challenge and commitment required nor found the leadership with perseverance and bravery

to knock down all obstacles in the path to their solution. Yet, after Apollo 11, who dares deny that these problems ought to be tackled with that same powerful effort used in the space program.

The Church too might learn lessons from the success of Apollo Mission.

Admittedly, it is far harder to concentrate the faithful on perfecting the nature of the Family of God and creating a just and decent society than to assemble the brains and machinery needed to rocket to the moon. Human nature cannot be controlled like metals and fuels. Free spirits and independent minds cannot be held in formulae like the mathematics of electronics and astronomy.

But leadership and organization and inspiration from the Bishops to the clergy to the laity and back again are woefully lacking in our church. We need clear vision, a precise set of goals and even a deadline to put our Family in order.

## ON THE RIGHT SIDE

### Pray ... But Be Relaxed

By Father Paul J. Cuddy

For over ten years Father John Merklinger has arranged the use, for a week in July, of a cottage on the St. Lawrence River near Clayton for a group of priests only. Since priests are celibates, their families are the people they serve. That is one reason they are called "Father." Since priests are very human beings, they need and enjoy the companionship of their fellow priests who form a special family. Bishop Sheen has referred to the priesthood as "the strongest fraternity in the world."

It has been my privilege to join these priests for many years. It is always a week of jovial, energizing relaxation. The priests swim, fish, play cards, golf. They also pray: alone and together. They celebrate Mass at a Convent Center outside Clayton. The Center is a vacation house for bilingual Canadian Sisters of the Holy Cross in the summer.

For many years in Clyde I used to watch the late Father Curtin and Fathers Adamski and Doran play pinocle with an intensity which, if it could be converted into chemical energy, might send an astronaut to the moon. So, on Wednesday of vacation week I said to my conferees: "Who will teach me how to play pinocle?" Teaching a dud-novice is no fun, but in their charity, Fathers Wuest, Lintz and Kress volunteered.

Now the counting of points in

pinocle is complicated. The sorting out of the values of different cards and combinations was brain-wearying. But the die was cast — or more accurately, the deck was spread, and gradually the counters or points began to dawn with some comprehension.

Each night after supper and dishes done (we did them ourselves) the priests sat on the porch facing the river and prayed the rosary together. The rosary is a good private devotion of love for Our Lady. The rosary is a great community devotion binding together families, groups, religious communities.

I think the religious communities and seminaries which have discarded the rosary are spiritually hurt by their disregard of a devotion blessed by the Church and tested and proved sanctifying in the lives of canonized and uncanonized saints for centuries. St. Thomas More said the 15 decades of the rosary every day.

Thursday after supper, we priests sat on the porch, praising God in His creation of the great river and the Thousand Islands (actually there are 1794 of them), and praying the rosary together. During the second mystery, the Visitation, as the leader led with the Hail Marys and we responded with the Holy Marys, I found my mind calculating: "Jack of diamonds

and Queen of spades is a meld worth 40; four aces worth 100, four kings worth 80, 9 of trump worth 10."

Then with a smile I returned to Our Lady's charity, the Visitation, recalling the solitude of Mary for her cousin St. Elizabeth.

Many good people are distressed that they have distractions in prayer. Nonsense! Our minds are not like hardened concrete. They are more like weather vanes. Read the Scriptures, sing a hymn, listen to a sermon, yes, even preach one; receive Holy Communion; with every one of these holy actions, distractions breeze in, whistle about a bit, and depart. But God's love abides. God sees the good will of the heart, and loves us for our love.

The Trappists at Piffard have a sign: "Smile, Jesus loves you." We may well be troubled if we neglect to pray. But we need not be disturbed if we are distracted in prayer.

Underlying prayer, even including the involuntary distractions, is the thought expressed by St. Francis de Sales. In his TREATISE ON THE LOVE OF GOD, so earnestly recommended by St. John Fisher professor Father William Morneau, CSB, St. Francis wrote: "He who prays fervently, knows not whether he prays or not, for he is not thinking of the prayer which he makes, but of God to whom he makes it."



## COMMENTARY

### ALL IN THE FAMILY

#### Rules Your Mother Never Told You

By Sarah Child

Some rules about bringing up children my mother never mentioned:

1. Never give a child a choice. The question, "Chocolate, vanilla or strawberry?" can only lead to trouble.
2. A child crying at the top of his voice can be stopped if you'll register amazement at his range and urge him to try it even louder.
3. Never wash a sleepy child's face just before putting him to bed. It's easier to launder the pillowcase than put up with a greatly refreshed youngster.
4. Forget your 2-year-old's shoes when he's playing outside during the summer. If he's barefoot, you should be able to run almost as fast as he does.
5. Never hang more than one ironed dress at a time in your little girl's closet. From the age of 3, she'll change outfits every half hour if they're available.
6. Don't cringe when your offspring wish out loud they had a prettier Mommy. They'll reverse themselves in five minutes and then hit you with an outrageous request.
7. It may be mentally healthier to teach your toddler the correct anatomical terms, but you'll be embarrassed less often in public if you stick to cryptic labels known only to the family.

8. If you must resort to using psychology on your 4-year-old, don't be surprised when it comes back to wing you between the eyes.
9. Never forget that having television in the house from birth has given your children tactical advantages you can never hope to equal simply by reading.
10. Avoid letting your child know there is a flavoring called chocolate until he is 15. It may do away with those birthday supper requests of seven courses all featuring you know what.
11. Don't try to teach your youngster the difference between aunts and ants until he is at least 2½. It will only confuse him.
12. Never get involved in spats between your children and their friends. There never was a childish battle that could equal the furor created by two intelligent, sensible, well-meaning, gentle-voiced mothers.
13. Don't get in a flap if your toddler wants only kosher dill pickles for breakfast. Save your strength for more important things — like saying no to marshmallows and stuffed olives for his supper.
14. Avoid letting your toddler see you use an old toothbrush to clean crevices in the woodwork. It's not so bad when you catch him using your new one. It's when you don't catch

15. If your children watch you and your husband having a fight, make sure they're around when you make up. It sounds better when they report the whole thing to the neighbors.
16. Try not to go so accustomed to your children's night light that you have nightmares when they forget to turn it on.
17. Never discuss a long-lost relative unless you can say something nice about him. Guess who will show up next week and guess which child will remember to ask him about his aforementioned distant way?
18. Taking children to the supermarket is almost as financially debilitating as to let their father do the shopping. Promise him and then a surprise, but don't take anybody with you.
19. If the garage mechanic doesn't know you're afraid of heights and suddenly raises the car on the grease rack with you still in it, try not to cry or hold your breath. It will frighten both him and the children.
20. Never tell your child prodigy that he takes after you. He'll turn right around and tie his shoe laces together, spill his milk on his father's trousers or swallow the Indian head penny that rounded out your collection.



## A LAYMAN'S VIEW

### Can Laymen Distribute Communion?

By Carmen Vigiucci

John Milton wrote: "They also serve who only stand and wait."

But when it comes to distribution of Holy Communion mightn't they (meaning laymen) serve better if they stood and served.

At our church (St. Joseph's, Penfield) four priests help with Communion at most Masses and still it takes an inordinate time.

But it is even more of a problem in parishes where there is only one priest. At such a church in Pennsylvania I recently asked the priest as he greeted the congregation after Mass what he thought of it.

"Well, it's physically rough," he conceded, "especially if you do it two or even three times in one morning."

And this priest is an avid outdoorsman and in good shape. Think of the poor cleric whose exercise is limited to tearing up copies of Father James Kavanaugh's latest book.

"Well, what's the answer?" I asked him.

"Get me two or three assistants for Sunday duty."

What with the shortage of priests, that is really not a practical answer. All of which leads to the crux of this issue: Just why can't laymen distribute Communion?

Too far out, you say? We're not ready for that? There must be canon law forbidding it?

Well, how about this?

In Muenster, Germany, nuns have been given permission to distribute

Communion if there is a shortage of priests and deacons. The Vatican has granted this permission for a period of three years.

Still, you say, they are nuns who have taken religious vows.

But Sisters do not have consecrated hands as a priest has from his ordination. And they do not have the theological training about the Eucharist which the priest gets in his seminary years.

When you get right down to it, why should a broad knowledge of theology be a requirement for touching the Sacred Host?

Just recently the Vatican's Sacred Congregation for Divine Worship has given permission to the hierarchies of France, Belgium and the Netherlands to allow the reception of the Eucharist in the hand of communicants rather than on the tongue.

The U.S. Bishops, have not been given such permission but the Congregation says that national hierarchies may take a vote on it and, if favorable, submit it to the Vatican, which will "weigh the matter with care."

Religious News Service reports that this way of distribution has become widespread in experimental lay groups in the U.S. many of which have at least implicit episcopal approval.

So, if it is permissible, even though in limited areas, for a layman to touch the Host while receiving it, what logical argument is there against touching it to distribute it?

Still, just shooting off my mouth? I'm not alone.

The St. Cloud (Minn.) Visitor, the diocesan newspaper, has editorially urged just such a step.

Describing the distribution of Communion in one-priest parishes as a "physically exhausting experience," the editorial said: "Time, too, becomes a factor. And we do not refer to the fact that people are going to be held for a few minutes longer in church. We speak of the definite liturgical factor where mere distribution takes so long compared to the time for the other elements of the Mass."

Noting the European trend of placing the host in the hand of the receiver, the editorial discounted this as a time saver. It also rejected the idea of having the people help themselves from a ciborium or dish because of the absence of contact between consecrator and communicant and the "minimal prayer between the two."

The St. Cloud paper noted that the ordination of a lay deacon just for the distribution of Communion would be an "unnecessary multiplication of Holy Orders" because in one-priest parishes there would be little else for the deacon to do.

The editorial concluded: "Four or five laymen in each parish could easily be trained and theologically prepared for the work. They would not have to commit themselves to a permanent state of life. The only requirements would be ones which guarantee reverence and expediency in the distribution of the Eucharist."

Well, maybe? A strong maybe? Now, about more of a part for women in the liturgy, don't you think . . .



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