

Did ABC 'Slant' TV Documentary on Church?

The American Broadcasting Company's television program on opinions and trends in the Church aroused heated discussion in many homes last Tuesday. The following is an unselected review by one viewer who was disturbed by the program's slant:

TV network ABC dropped an over-ripe egg Aug. 4. It was a freighted job, with issues and persons strategically planted to present the Church as irrelevant to today's problems.

It was entitled "Ferment in the Catholic Church." Here are examples from the screen:

1. Father T. Kerwin (white) from a mostly Negro parish: "The Catholic Church must be a place for responsibility to blacks." Commentator: "There is only one black priest in Detroit, so responsibility must be taken over by black laymen." Next, a venerable looking Negro pronounced: "The structure must go. It must die. And I hope to bring it about." There was no suggestion what was to be present after the destruction.

To balance the black Catholic, an innocuous elderly white woman of the same parish spoke. She was "confused by what is going on. The total destruction of all our tra-

ditions." "Changes have produced an unhappy people."

2. By contrast to the ghetto, the camera moved to a suburban parish. Affluent Catholics were televised, significantly bursting cocktails. These included those who were concerned about their own problems as well as the ghetto and the Missions; those who were hostile to parochial education and some for it; those who embraced situation ethics.

3. Next came Father Gomard De Pauw who protested "the total destruction of all our tra-

ditions." "Changes have produced an unhappy people." The fact is that the followers of Fr. De Pauw are hard-nosed extremists. Ordinary Catholics have gladly accepted good changes.

He concluded: "Priests should leave social problems to specialists and do their work as priests." Without forgetting the social encyclicals and episcopal pastorals, Father De Pauw has a point. Have you noticed the number of untrained and over-confident priests who have assumed the role of sociologists, economists, etc. What are their qualifications as Holy Orders? Who use their priesthood for a platform? Who would not be heard if they were not priests?

It was a vast desert of ABC to present Fr. De Pauw as spokesman for the traditional Church. The fact is that he is suspended by his bishop.

4. The rest of the program was a kind of soap opera. Ex-priest Pat and spouse ex-nun Joan who quit their vows for love of one another, revealed how more meaningful life has become for them in their conubial nest. Ex-Father George and spouse ex-Sister Julie declared their "new dimensions of peace in their new complete giving." (Have we been so naive as to believe that normal priests and nuns and Brothers have not been holding back on their complete giving of themselves to Christ and the Church?)

A sad finale. Cardinal Dearon of Detroit permitted himself to be the Fall Guy for ABC. He spoke kindly about the pastoral mission of the Church in this age. The changes have been healthy and good. The Cardinal was speaking from the context of Vatican II.

not from the shenanigans of ABC's ferment.

The voices of ex-priests, ex-nuns, suspended priests, aggressive seminarians are not the voice of the Church, which declares:

"God's people accept not the word of men, but the very word of God. (1 Th II). It clings without fail to the faith once delivered to the saints (cf. Jude III), penetrates it more deeply by accurate insights, and applies it more thoroughly to life. All this it does under the lead of a sacred teaching authority to which it loyally defers." (Dog. Const. On the Church, par. 11)

When will our shepherd Bishops use TV and radio to present the Church as the harried, laboring, loving Christ, which it truly is?

Father Paul Cuddy
Mercy Hospital, Hornell.



Two Capuchin priests — Father Leopold Protomastro (right) and Father Cyprian Rosen — celebrate Mass in meeting room at Baptist Temple, Clover Street, to close four-week parent-child summer program held there under auspices of diocesan Office of Christian Formation. Meeting two mornings weekly, parents discussed "Church Authority" topics while children attended "art-music religious experiential classes." "Faculty" included the two priests, two Sisters of St. Joseph and several lay persons.

'Sis' Joins Theater World

Minneapolis—(RNS)—"Sis," "C.J." and "Connie Baby" are among the nicknames that fellow theater students have given Sister Constance Julius, O.S.B., a Benedictine nun who is the second woman to be stage manager of the University of Minnesota theater.

The nun's decision to come to the university last September—to begin work on a doctorate in technical theater—meant a giant step into the secular world, and reflects a broad change in the orientation of the religious community in general.

Her life at the university is a big change from life in her order when she first joined—18 years ago—at age 18.

She doesn't wear a nun's habit at the university because she believes it "creates an obstacle for people in accepting me as an individual."

"The visual identification brings out a very definite attitude in almost everyone—a kind of conscious respect for the concept of the nun," she explained. "You begin to cry out for identity."

Sister Constance said that in relating to people, working in

the theater has certain advantages.

"People in theater seem so much more aware of their reactions, and they attempt very consciously to react honestly," she said.

Her attitudes and concepts about people have changed considerably since her move into the secular world. "It's a big change to relate so directly on a person-to-person basis. I think I am more aware of the variety in people, and the levels on which they live."

Sister Constance's job as stage manager puts her in charge of plays throughout the actual performances. She attends rehearsals in order to be more familiar with what the director wants to achieve in acting and technical efforts.

For each performance she is behind the scenes, coaching actors on timing or cues. And she handles emergencies in technical effects and props.

After she receives her Ph.D. degree, which will be "in about two years," Sister Constance said she may have an interest in pursuing a career in educational television.

Business in the Diocese

The credentials committee of the American Society of Consultant Pharmacists, Stowe, Vt. has announced the acceptance of Louis P. Kalbfeld of DAW Drug Co., Inc. as a charter member.

Through affiliation with the society, Kalbfeld will have available the latest developments in drug distribution systems, drug control and pharmacology in health care facilities.

SISTERS' COUNCIL

Altoona, Pa.—(CNC)—Religious communities of women in the Altoona-Johnston diocese have formed a Sisters' Council with the approval of Bishop James J. Hogan, who outlined its advisory role in allowing the official administration a greater liaison with religious women working various apostolates within the eight-county See.

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