

## Madison Avenue Believes

(Catholic Press Features)

New York — The national opinion polls can say all they want to about religion's declining in the '60s, but there are still some strong believers on Madison Avenue.

An increasing number of national advertisements in newspapers and magazines are featuring ministers and priests to sell products that have nothing to do with religion.

In "Esquire" magazine recently, an ad for a men's hair spray and shampoo shows a fictional clergyman spraying his hair while the headline reads: "Thank heaven for deVoss," a product described in the copy as "the answer to a man's prayer" and "the perfect hair groom to help you face the questioning multitudes."

Another ad in the same magazine shows a minister puffing on a cigar, and the headline underneath reads: "Robt. Burns, a worldly pleasure."

In recent issues of "Time," "Newsweek," "Life," "Look" and "The Reader's Digest" a Volkswagen ad pictured a real-life "Father Aloysius Bittman" of St. Anthony's



After 30 Volkswagens, Father Bittman still believes.

Indian Mission in Mandaree, North Dakota, with the priest shown standing beside a Volkswagen parked in front of a mission chapel.

The headline was: "After 30 Volkswagens, Father Bittman still believes."

In a "Live Better Electrically" advertisement, which ran in many of the leading magazines, a minister joins a shopping-center developer, a board chairman, a builder and a homemaker in telling why he switched to electric heat. "We save expenses by turning up the heat in the chapel only when it's occupied."

Overseas National Airways ran an ad in "The New York Times" Sunday Magazine showing a large group of travelers posing on the steps of a church with their clergyman, with a headline underneath saying: "People who pray together, save together." The ad promoted group rentals of jet planes.

In fact, the Holy Father himself almost gets into the picture in one ad showing the smiling face of a happy housewife, and the headline: "Love that FOPE (and, in smaller letters) Tomato Paste."

## NOW HEAR THIS ...

### 'Last Summer': Loneliness and Terror

By Father Richard Torney

Many people still go to the movies to be taken out of their world as they have-to-live-it and transported to a fictional setting they may never visit. There they watch people they will never meet playing fictional roles rarely identifiable with anyone they know.

Most movies presume that an audience asking for escapist entertainment will be credulous or at least tolerant of whatever the cast does in its fictional world.

Last Summer is a new movie which puts you on a sandy beach where three, tanned teenagers play in the golden surf. We see them drawn together in close comradeship based on loneliness and longing. They swim and talk, drink beer and smoke pot. They are beautiful and charming, but vulgar of speech and aroused to sex.

As the most realistic portrait of upper middle-class teens ever brought to the screen, Last Summer challenges you to believe that bad seeds can flower in affluent homes.

As an often-touching look at the exploring and exploiting yearnings of all teenagers, this film will also shock adults and youthful viewers with a climax of cruelty almost unbelievable.

An adult may wonder whether the adolescent psychology in Last Summer is authentic: are we seeing children as they are or as a film-maker has dramatically fabricated them, to help the box-office? Is it an indictment of parents who give little love to their children, or a warning of what happens when a just-unfolding youth determines its own morality?

The story of three teenagers at play and of a fourth who tries to join them was written by Evan Hunter who unmasked big-city high-schoolers a few years back with a novel called Blackboard Jungle. The movie was prepared by Frank and Eleanor Perry who made the memorable David and Lisa movie. These are people who can sense and express the inner workings of youngsters.

The highschoolers, Peter and Dan, meet Sandy, a 16-year-old, at the seashore as she is trying to help an injured sea gull. She has a beautiful body she uses casually to tantalize the boys and a tongue as salty as the ocean.

They are kids who have everything: leisure and money, good looks, brains and charm. Someday they will be "the beautiful people," probably acting like their beloved parents whom we hear discussed cynically but never meet.

The three are drawn together physically and psychologically. In their talks and actions, as the scenes race by in magnificent photography, they form a "share and care alike pact." On the beach, listening to records, caring for the gull, swimming and sailing, they capture our attention and even some affection.

They play games: in one called Major Frutt, each reveals, with sips of "truth serum" (beer) the most horrible thing each has ever done in his life. They discuss their parents' sex lives, try marijuana, pet-at the movies. They know the pressure of growing sexual feelings.

The gull is a symbol: they feed it, nurse its wounds, induce it to fly again, treat it as a pet. But one day when it turns on Sandy and bites her finger, she takes cruel and secret revenge and kills it. Later on she and the boys destroy a chubby, morally-square would-be friend named Rhoda who has been another kind of "gull" until she rebukes them for cruelty and cowardice.

Rhoda is a wide-eyed innocent in a "creepy" bathingsuit with braces on her teeth. She is a girl of brains and strength but is too principled and moral for the trio to do more than tolerate and wonder at. She can't swim, doesn't like beer, isn't good at small talk. But she wants to belong to their world.

Rhoda has known love and security. You can sense that the threesome envy her because she has a father who insists that she wear braces and that she remembers a mother who kissed her goodnight just before a tragic drowning. She is pure and serene with a slow, heart-melting smile.

But because she is principled and candid she soon discovers how heartless and selfish her new friends are: "You three treat people like they are made of plastic," she protests.

The climax scene is played in a mood of horror in a cool glade where the foursome have gone to escape blistering heat on the beach. Their

irritations with each other, some sex turmoil and beer, arguments and frustrations build up to a final shocking act toward Rhoda which may numb you.

The final scene shows Sandy and Peter and Dan walking along the sand dune in the fading sunset. Rhoda has been left, shamed and violated in the woods. The trio move like sleepwalkers, silent, automatically. The viewer cannot tell whether they know why they did this horrible thing or whether they really care.

The characters of these four youngsters are drawn so well that the conclusion leaves you wanting to ask questions, to stay and have a replay of scenes which moved too fast to talk to young people and to look inside yourself.

It is truly a story of today. The dialogue has vulgar words we don't want to hear kids use — or learn that they do. Sandy's crudest lines come when she most looks like an adorable model in a Kodak ad. Many viewers will blanche at several undressing scenes where swim clothes are taken off.

But the director has not exploited these moments. He seems to be suggesting: "Is casual nudity and casual rough speech worth society's concern? Whom does it hurt?"

Last Summer says that some modern youths do both good and bad without really caring which it is. The situations are so realistically created by these four attractive youngsters and they so embody today's tall, tanned, slim and healthy generation that some will refuse to believe that teenagers act this way under these particular conditions.

Or do they — more than we know?

Our young people loved The Graduate and Goodbye, Columbus because it offered them self-congratulation. They crowded with delight identifying with the young leading parts in those films because the adults portrayed there were so unadmirable and got just what they deserved.

I think Last Summer calls for young viewers to make a self-examination: "Are we like Sandy and Peter and Dan? Let's not blame our parents for all the selfishness and meanness, uncontrol and heedlessness which comes out when we are alone with our friends."



## ON THE RIGHT SIDE

### The Catechism Has the Answers

By Father Paul J. Cuddy

Because I am not sufficiently familiar with the new and evolving religion texts and practices proposed by Catholic educational bureaux, it would be unfair to make a judgment either to praise or to reject them.

Because I have observed the zest of so many promoters of these new systems of religious instruction, it would be cavalier not to admire their enthusiasm. "All the world loves a lover" applies to those who love ideas and projects as well as people.

Because I have experienced from many of the new religious methodologists both the undercurrent of contempt and the overt scorn for the catechism, and for those who still value the catechism, my soul is sore oppressed. These are the reasons.

1. The complete rejection of the catechism and the catechetical method seems to me another manifestation of the contemporary sensate culture which soaks and softens the brains of human beings. By our very nature we are intellectual beings, as well as sensuous.

2. Scoffing at the catechism and those who were educated by it is too often done with a queer superciliousness. I cannot believe this comes from the Spirit of Whom the new methodologists speak so confidently.

3. The sneers at the catechism come too often from men and women who fear certainty. Some time ago I was with three religion teachers. They shook their heads in frustration at "the type of people who want answers!"

A Christ who is the Word without clarity, a Church which cannot answer the questions men need answered, a People of God who have no intellectual accord or communal convictions: all of these to me are as unreal as a stick having only one end.

Vatican II declares: "From the very beginning, the Lord Jesus called to Him men of His own choosing. . . . And He appointed twelve that they might be with Him, and that He might send them forth to preach. . . . He gave the command: 'Go, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.' (Matt. 28:18) 'Go into the whole world; preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized shall be saved, but he who does not believe shall be condemned.' (Mk. 16) (Decree on Missionary Activity — par. 5)

The catechism teaches clearly a philosophy of life. It is: "God made us to know Him, to love Him, and to serve Him in this world, and to be happy with Him forever in Heaven." This definition the memory can grasp and retain, the intellect can develop, and the will, under God's grace, moves men to Christian living.

Here in epitome is a clear answer to the question "Why am I in this world?" If men are bewildered about their purpose in life and their personal identity, the catechism can help them.

On Sunday, Aug. 24, two of our

Hornell Sisters of Mercy, Sister Irma Lynch and Sister Kieran Byrne, died in a tragic automobile accident. The mother of each is elderly and widowed. The two Sisters were young and gifted. They were good religious. They were the daughters of good mothers who loved them as their children and who revered them for their religious vocations.

These old mothers were the spiritual and intellectual fruits of the catechism. They had learned the questions. They knew the answers. To this day, their hope equals their faith. Their charity is unaffectedly genuine. Those who are teaching about faith, hope and charity through the new psychological and evolutionary methods will be greatly blessed if their students' charity is as authentic.

After the burial in Holy Sepulchre Cemetery I sat with one of the mothers to console and to be consoled, to listen and to learn from one to whom the catechism had given a philosophy of life.

Despite her grief, the mother was serene. She spoke of the beauty of the singing of the Sisters at the funeral Mass; of the inspiration from the Liturgy; of Bishop Casey's touching homily. Then she looked out at the distant horizon and said: "Father, there were so many in the Motherhouse Chapel I knew. I do hope that the beautiful Mass and the graces from the Mass will bring them closer to God. He has His own ways of bringing us closer to Himself. This must be His way."

By their fruits you shall know them.

## COMMENT FROM ROME

### Baptist to Teach at Rome Seminary

By ROBERT R. HOLTON  
Courier-Journal  
Special Correspondent

Rome — A Southern Baptist minister has been invited to give a doctrinal seminar on "baptism" at the Gregorian University, it was learned.

The Rev. Dr. Dale Moody, a member of the faculty of Southern Baptist Seminary, Louisville, Ky., was asked by officials of the ancient Catholic seminary to give the course and has accepted.

He is only the second non-Catholic ever asked to handle such a course in the 450-year history of the university which is known as a cradle of bishops, cardinals and popes.

Last year, the Rev. Dr. J. Robert Nelson, a Methodist theologian and member of the Boston University

faculty, gave a course at the Gregorian on "Converging Thought on Ecumenology in the Ecumenical Movement."

Dr. Moody will arrive in Rome soon on a sabbatical from his faculty position in Louisville. Dr. Nelson taught at the university while on the same type of respite from his Boston University work.

The final approval for Dr. Moody to begin his teaching on a one or two-days-a-week basis will have to come from the Vatican Secretary of State.

Last year, when Dr. Nelson was asked to join the faculty on a temporary basis, he accepted. However, it was several weeks past the target date for the start of his lectures that final approval was given.

The Gregorian, under the new, dynamic leadership of The Rev. Herve Carrier, Canadian Jesuit sociologist,

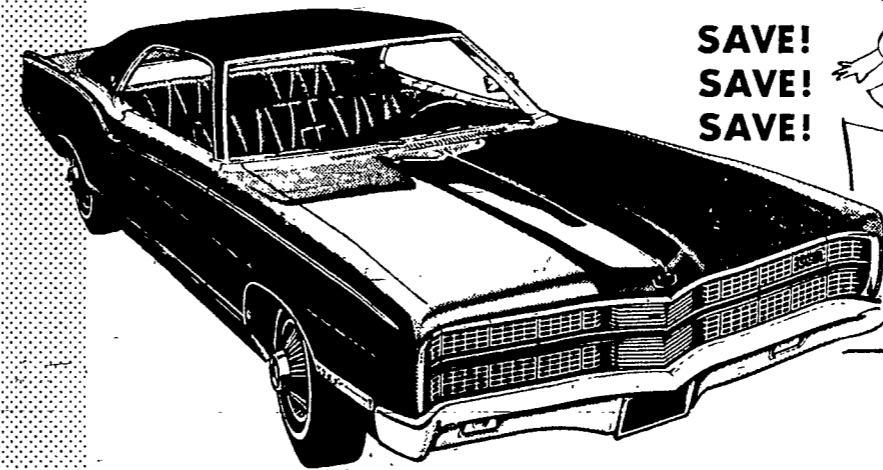
has changed greatly in the three years he has been rector.

A spokesman for the university told this reporter that the Gregorian leadership hopes some day soon to obtain the services of a Rabbi for posts similar to those offered Drs. Nelson and Moody.

Most observers informed about plans for Dr. Moody expressed surprise at the topic he was asked to teach — Baptism. Baptism forms the bedrock foundation for his denomination — one that has traditionally been least anxious to participate in the ecumenical movement.

"Yet, with the importance the Baptists place on Baptism and the same importance the Roman Catholics place on that sacrament," said one expert. "It is logical that if they want to learn the other side's view on this topic, it should be a Baptist."

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## ALL IN THE FAMILY

### Things That Are Nice to Hear

By Sarah Child

A kindred soul? Where do you find one?

If you are lucky, you are probably married to one. Or work with one. Or you may count one among your friends.

Sometimes, though, they may pop up where you least expect them to.

For example, I know I've had a glimpse of a kindred soul when:

The red-haired former school-teacher stares at the cluster of yellow-headed dandelions in our yard — an anathema to the rest of the neighborhood — and says "You know, I think they're kind of pretty."

The man with the extra long sideburns at the corporate cocktail party says he thinks kids are regimented too early in life and he and his wife aren't sending their 4-year-old to nursery school either.

The relatively new assistant pastor builds an inspiring sermon around a popular song from a Broadway musical and appears on the altar each Sunday to help distribute Communion with a happy, unsolemn smile too seldom seen in Church.

The efficient young waitress cocks an eye at our 2-year-old, confides she has twins his age at home and thus it's not the first time she's seen more food under the table than on top of it.

A mother of four confesses she's thrown away her paperback copy of Haim Ginott's "Between Parent and Child" and says when it comes to having dialogue with kids to count her out.

I read in the newspaper that today's teenagers can't stand the stereotyped look their mothers go in for at the beauty salons and opt

for the clean, fresh natural styles they can produce themselves.

My father tells my mother that he likes any color as long as it is red.

I spot the inevitable woman or two at any large gathering who haven't given up the spike heel, now ridiculously out of style, for the clunky look in shoes.

Our 4-year-old brings me a whispy wreath of a yellow flower from the meadow behind our house, presenting it for its beauty, unconscious that others classify it as a common weed.

Anyone happens to mention that they like the smells of fresh cut lumber, creosote, the insides of old time hardware and pharmacies, small children just out of the tub, evergreen forests, homemade bread baking, a crisp October afternoon, and a newly opened can of coffee.

