

# The Church in the Year 2,000

By Religious News Service

Some startling and oft contradictory views of the church as it may be some 30-odd years hence are the subject of the entire Oct. 31 issue of the lay-edited weekly magazine, *Commonweal*.

The special issue presents 16 authors — theologians, philosophers and social scientists — probing current trends and outlining a myriad of options for the coming century.

Entitled "The Church in the Year 2000," it is the fourth of the "Commonweal Papers" series in which, from time to time, the magazine votes an entire issue to studies of a single topic. Previous *Commonweal* Papers have been devoted to "God," "Jesus" and "The Holy Spirit."

Perhaps the most speculative forecast in the issue on the year 2000 is that of Father Arthur Gibson, the theologian of St. Michael's College, Toronto, who predicts in a Tell-Harvard manner that "mankind is approaching the moment of zoological maturity, of integral human consciousness and of earth-leavetaking."

A new "superman" will be born, Father Gibson predicts, characterized by a "species-consciousness," a "co-ordinated vision" which all humanity will share. The Church, he says, "must lend tacit support and sensitive understanding to this immense evolutionary drive."

Most detailed and rooted in contemporary events, probably, is the article by artist and writer Frederick Franck on the election in 1997 of Pope John XXV. Franck predicts that Pope Paul will retire at age 75 and that the next Pope, John-XXIV, will introduce a general democratization of the Church.

Father Gregory Baum, O.S.A., noted theologian, predicts that the Church will continue its present trend toward becoming a "movement" rather than a "society."

"Characteristics of a movement," he notes, "is that the followers participate in it in the manner chosen by themselves. . . . The boundary lines of a movement cannot be defined." He speculates, however, that the Catholic Church will continue to maintain its particular identity within the larger Christian movement. Catholics, he suggests, would do better "to hang loose rather than to leave."

The future of the priesthood is examined in this special issue of *Commonweal* by a layman, Dr. John D. Donovan, Boston College sociologist. He predicts that the number of priests will be relatively small but that the variety of priestly life-styles will increase.



son dedicated to persons where and as he finds them and dedicated to the relevance of the Christian message for them."

Father Richard P. McBrien of the Pope John XXIII Seminary, Weston, Mass., discussing the future of ecumenism, suggests that the world in the year 2000 will be "more intensely pluralistic" and that this pluralism will be reflected within the Church by a greater acceptance of variety in belief and in forms of worship.

In the world of the future, Father McBrien insists, the Christian Churches "will have to incorporate the values and insights of the various non-Christian religious traditions" and a World Council of Religions, broader in scope than the exclusively Christian World Council of Churches, will be needed for "ecumenical polity."

Father Anselm Atkins, a Trappist writer from the Monastery of the Holy Spirit in Conyers, Ga., predicts that the study of theology will move closer to material biology, the behavioral sciences and politics but that the spectrum of attitudes (conservative-radical; belief-symbiol) will remain about the same. Dogmas, he believes, will be approached more in the context of the history of belief, rather than necessarily as propositions to be accepted or rejected.

At the same time, Father Atkins suggests, "Church authority will not change its self-understanding very drastically in the next 30 years." He adds that he believes theologians will increasingly discard the concept of infallibility, "both papal and collegial."

# ON THE RIGHT SIDE

## The People and Their Apostolate

By Father Paul J. Cuddy

A good letter came recently which read: "I have kept many copies of your *On the Right Side* articles and read them during a recent retreat. You have a few frequent themes like charity, preserving old devotions, the rosary, but sometimes you are so hard on people you call ultra-liberals, I don't know whether you're doing it in fun or just plain meanness."

"You write of them as an Elite, but they seem to irritate you, and when you write about The People, you seem to mean nice simpletons, who toe the mark for their pastors but are not capable of understanding renewal and the Council teachings. Isn't this pretty negative?"

To clarify the air I replied:

By the Elite I mean those groups throughout the country who consider themselves to be Catholics of a special breed who are constantly antagonistic toward the Church. These talk of love and equality, of the priesthood of the laity. They spawn discord and manipulate for power. They work to inject their ambitions and to impose their wills on The People. No, The People prefer their bishops to these Illuminati.

For example, an Elite group in Washington for 13 weeks deserted Sunday Mass by disturbing and shouting against their bishop. There is some dry humor that their priest-leader, suspended from his priestly office, constantly planted himself in

the midst of these "renewalists," garbed in Roman collar and cassock. This exhibitionism is good for TV Huntley-Brinkley report.

It would be terribly unjust to consider The People as simpletons. That they are more interested in the Mass, the Buffalo Bills, their jobs and their families, than they are in speculative theology or politicking for control of the parish or the diocese, few would deny, though some might regret. In fact, speculative Theology, as it is written, sometimes has a reverse effect. It can turn men to the simplicity of the Gospels and the clarity of the catechism.

Regarding The People, the Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity is instructive and inspiring. Who are The People? They are good Catholic men and women, our fathers and mothers, our grandparents, kin and friends, who rarely were or are of the Elite. Rather they represent fidelity to the conciliar concept of the Apostolate. John XXIII was the great Pope he was because of the family apostolate of Giovanni and Marianna Roncalli.

Lalty reads: ". . . All activity of the Mystical Body directed to the attainment of this good (sharing in Christ's redemption) is called the apostolate. The Church carries it on through all her members. For by its very nature the Christian vocation is a vocation to the apostolate." (Art. 2)

We ask: "What is the Christian vo-

cation?" The Scriptures tell us. "To what shall I compare the kingdom of God? It is like leaven which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, till it was all leavened." (Lu 13: 20)

Should a father of a family neglect his family to go to Study Clubs, to parish dialogues, to "Reform the Diocese" groups and what have you? I knew a woman who got so involved in her concept of the apostolate, which to her meant activism away from home and family, that her husband got sick of her neglect and quit going to Mass and the Sacraments. In her enthusiasm for activity away from her prime responsibility, she was destroying her family.

It is true, we may not disregard group apostolates like the parish devotional and social associations, the Legion of Mary, C.C.D. Parish Boards. Nor should we disregard social action groups like the scouts, health and education groups, United Fund, unionism and political groups. Lalty reads: ". . . The group apostolate is highly important, because the apostolate must often be implemented through joint action, both in the Church communities and various other spheres." (Art. 18) Lalty reads: "Group apostolate is highly important." It does not read: "It is of equal importance to individual or family vocations." There the ferment of Christ's leaven works best.

## And It's Not Parents

# Guess Who Influences Kids Most on Smoking?

"There will be married as well as celibate priests; there will be work-priests, part-time priests, short-term priests, and other varieties of hypenation. And there will be ex-priests officially disenfranchised but unofficially exercising their clerical functions."

Some priests, he maintains, will "function in guru fashion" while others will have "a more exclusively cultic role" and still others "will be Christian revolutionaries wherever the action is or should be. The priest of the 21st Century will not be a professional qua priest. He will be a per-

New York — (RNS) — Teenagers would not start smoking — or could kick the cigarette habit more readily — if persons having authority and influence, notably teachers and physicians, set a better example.

A study discloses that teenagers are 50 per cent more likely to smoke if their parents and teachers smoke but it also revealed they are 100 per cent more likely to take up the habit if their "peer group"—friends, young relatives smoke.

Strangely enough, according to a survey of American youth sponsored by the American Cancer Society,

whether his parents smoke is not a determining factor in a young person's decision to smoke.

Rapport with his parents is a much more important influence in a teenager's decision on smoking. "A teenager is less apt to smoke if he has good rapport with his parents and they smoke than if his parents don't smoke but he had bad rapport with them," the report said.

A total of 1,562 teenagers was questioned in the national study which was conducted for the society by Lieberman Research, Inc. Results were announced at the 56th annual meeting of the American Cancer Society here.

Young people surveyed were divided equally into the following age groups: 13 and 14, 15 and 16, and 17 and 18.

Through the questions asked by the research team, the following profile was assembled:

• Teen-age smoker: "Adventurous, more experimental, more anxiety-ridden and more prone to reject the values of the Establishment." The report described this category of young persons as "nervous, frustrated, depressed, rebellious, reckless, sexy, swingers, liking to live dangerously, living for the moment and wanting to try new things."

• Teen-age non-smoker: "Happier, more sensible, more success oriented, more self-confident, and more inclined to accept the values of the Establishment. This category was described as "happy, relaxed, clean-cut, cautious, ambitious, hard-working, intelligent, and successful."

The researchers concluded: "A teenager secure and well adjusted to

his age group is less apt to smoke than one nervous and anxious to behave like an adult."

Whether a young person smoked or not seemed to be a factor in his academic average and aspiration. The survey showed that of those having "D" averages, 80 per cent smoke, while only 8 per cent of those having "A" averages are smokers.

It was also noted that among the teenagers who did not expect to attend college, 43 per cent smoked cigarettes as compared to 20 per cent of those who were looking forward to a higher education.

While teen-age non-smokers said they would listen to parents, doctors, teachers and friends if they were told not to use cigarettes, the young smokers listed only one source of advice that they might take — their physicians.

# COMMENTARY

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## ALL IN THE FAMILY

### Bravery Beyond the Call of Duty

By Sarah Child

How do you take the measure of a husband. By the size of the house he has provided? By the number of cars in the garage?

Common sense assures us that material things have very little to do with anybody's merits, much less of a husband's, but we can err in our evaluation by using such faulty criteria as the number of times he remembers to tell us he loves us in any given week. And when was the last time he brought us home flowers?

Two weeks ago I celebrated a birthday. The proof of his caring. Not so much the flood of gifts, including the guitar I'd hinted for so profusely for the last six weeks.

Rather it was the bravery of his act of going into the kitchen with the 4-year-old and with the help of Duncan Hines putting together a cake that was as delicious to eat as perfect to look at. If you've never tried to cook with the aid of a pre-schooler you can not know what went into the particular effort. Enough to say that it was herculean.

Not that I don't like material gifts. I do. But the ones that please me the

most are the unexpected ones like the 20-cent magazines from the grocery store when he goes to pick up a loaf of bread.

But, I know what kind of husband I have from things other than gifts. Sometimes the awareness of my fortune breaks in on me as I watch other husbands or hear them talk.

I have not banged a fender since I was 16 and my father let me back the car out of the garage for the first time. But I know that were I to come back and report to my husband I'd crumpled the chrome on the new station wagon his reaction would be: "It's only a car and it's insured."

I know how much he is to be valued because, although from time to time he may point out to the kids that their mother is just a bit wacky, he has never by word or action hinted that my intelligence is any less than his own.

Some men make wonderful husbands but doubtful fathers. It gives me a nice feeling to see the kids climbing over each other to get to the door when they spot him coming up the driveway.

Other men make good husbands, excellent fathers and lousy sons-in-law. I find it flattering that my mother prefers my husband's advice to mine, as she did the other day when she asked him to help her pick out lamp fixtures. After all, I picked him out.

I also enjoy the fact that other people enjoy his company and want him around as much as I do, and I'm not always as generous as I could be in sharing him with his friends.

I like the way he smiles at strange children and makes a fuss over other peoples' babies.

But most of all I know his worth because in addition to being a loved and loving husband, he is my best friend, one who loves all the pastimes I do—the endless round of art shows, the pouring over a dictionary for pure fun; listening to a Frank Sinatra concert, the excitement of a conversation with people who know how to put words and ideas together with brilliance and preciseness.

All of this comes to mind in trying to do the door when they spot him coming up the driveway.



## RACL VIEWPOINTS

### What Are Diocesan Priorities?

By J. E. Koller

In this column last Friday, some recent comments of Father Paul Cuddy regarding the interests of American Catholics were contrasted with some of the teachings of Christ to support the idea that there is still room for constructive change in the Church. In an address to the founders of McQuaid High School on the same day, a lecturer and writer of some note, Father John McCall, S.J., summarized the basis for my interest and that of RACL in this subject by observing that, "when you love something very much, then you want to make it even better."

At St. Leo's Church in Hilton a few weeks ago, Thomas McGarry, chairman of the diocesan Lay Board, spoke for all laymen when he said to the rest of the Church: "I am here, what can I do for you?" Every where there are signs that the Church of the future will be different from the Church of the past or present, and all those who love it are interested in helping shape that future.

The question of change in the Church would seem to be of special interest and importance to its priests

and a recent development in the Rochester Diocese is particularly noteworthy. Through their council, the priests arranged for a series of discussions of "Priorities for the Church" in key cities of the diocese during October and November. Interested Catholics were invited to consider the subject and make recommendations. The fact that this program has been interrupted by the reorganization of the Priests' Council which is required by the change of bishops this month does not make the lies behind the survey any less compelling.

The number of subjects which must be considered in establishing diocesan priorities is long and varied. Some will be concerned with making maximum use of the Church's limited resources in the field of education, while diocesan and parish administration will be the primary interest of others.

The importance of the Church's positions with respect to the social problems in the nation and in the diocese certainly cannot be overlooked, and the effects of the diminishing

number of religious vocations also must be considered. Perhaps the most important question is that of improving communications among the various elements of the Church including the disenfranchised young.

RACL was one of the groups invited to make suggestions to the Priests' Council regarding priorities. If these suggestions are to represent accurately the thought of its membership, they should be formulated only after discussions involving as many members as possible.

The November meeting of the association, in St. Basil's Hall, St. John Fisher College at 8 p.m. on Thursday, Nov. 20, will be devoted primarily to a workshop in this area.

After these discussions, the position papers which will serve as a basis for any RACL recommendations on the subject will be formulated. This is a meeting which members will not want to miss and which would provide an excellent opportunity for anyone who is interested to learn more about the purposes, concerns and operation of RACL.

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