

The Other Question In Song My Deaths

The harsh reality of the massacre of South Vietnamese civilians by U.S. troops some 21 months ago was etched in American minds last week by atrocity pictures and shock-filled news commentaries. Although no one knew exactly how many non-combatants had been ruthlessly shot down or precisely who was morally at fault, no one could any longer doubt that shameful crime has been done.

It is an appalling story of confusion and brutality, of gunning down women and children, of intending to destroy enemy-sympathizers but not bothering to sort them out of the town's population, of soldiers who could not do it, and others who wiped out what they saw as "the enemy" and did it "on orders," and others who were so cruel or ignorant or confused they "didn't know what they were doing."

The public revulsion over the event stands as proof that our national conscience has not been totally brutalized by this age of violence. Guilt, shame and horror have swept this country because, no matter what the shooting soldiers thought of their action at the time, slaying defenseless civilians is today totally repugnant to the moral sense of Americans.

But the Vietnam massacre was much less destructive than our bombing of densely populated cities in World War II. Were we more shocked last week than in the 1940's simply because we saw those gory news-pictures and read the confessions of soldiers who actually pulled the triggers?

U.S. bomber crews over Rotterdam and Cologne and Hiroshima clearly intended total destruction of those cities and expected the violent death of thousands of their inhabitants. Did we accept their killing of civilians then because the victims were behind the enemy's lines and because it was so impersonal to drop several tons of bombs at a time on homes five miles below the plane's bomb-sight? But should killing a non-combatant ever have been tolerated as "impersonal" and a military expedient?

Why was the philosophy or public policy behind the Allied air-strikes which killed 150,000 Germans in Dresden in 1945 accepted calmly by our society? Would we be more shocked by that carnage today?

The peculiar horror of the Vietnam massacre is that here was a personal face-to-face act of conscious, individual killing. These soldiers apparently were within a few feet of their victims and when they shot wanted their target to die violently. But is there anything more than a psychological difference between that and firing long range artillery shells into native villages from miles away with the foreknowledge that only the luckiest will escape alive? One man sees the human agony before and after he fires and the other doesn't. In terms of the soldier it's a big difference, but the villagers are just as dead either way.

Critics of the war now have new fuel for their charge that American political leadership ("the system") — not the individual military officers or fighting men — is responsible for the horror of the Vietnam casualty lists. But individual responsibility must be fixed if possible to prove that it was not the system nor our national policy which caused these particular deaths. There was individual responsibility used in Song My which must be exposed.

There may be other atrocity stories revealed as soon as other returned veterans find the courage (or the conscience) to report their memories. And there will be vehement excuses offered for those who ordered the killings and for those who had to obey orders. But the proven fact that thousands of American men have fought in this tragic war without being thus brutalized, without committing mass murder on non-combatants, must be believed, even while we beg history's pardon that war has brought some of our battle-representatives to savagery.

In the end the massacre story repeats a fact we see more clearly today than in the '40's: the only safeguard against the excesses of war is the elimination of the causes of war. Our national conscience, while it demands punishment for those whose callous instincts have caused these deaths, must grow more and more adamant that war must be forever abandoned as a weapon in a nation's search for justice and peace. Perhaps we could begin, with Song My in mind, to ask out loud: Should airmen in B-52's who kill by the thousands be praised, while soldiers who kill on the ground are court-martialed?

—Father Richard Tormey

A 'Curious' Paradox In Film Response

The most-talked about sex film of our times, "I Am Curious (Yellow)" imported from Sweden over the protests of the U.S. Customs that it was obscene, has reached the movie houses of the diocese. Although assailed by metropolitan critics as a mediocre film by every standard of art and intelligence, it has thrived profitably at high prices in the major cities. The reason it has attracted so many patrons is not merely its promise of graphic sexual scenes; it has been nourished by the tonic such unworthy movies need: free publicity.

The arrival of this movie, and the endless procession of others as deserving of moral outrage but not as well publicized, raises the question: What should be done to hurt its business and to discourage the theater-owners from bringing these distasteful and degrading films into our communities?

Zealous citizen groups in Rochester and other communities have in recent months mounted extensive public demonstrations outside theaters showing X-rated films. They have dialogued with theater owners, prodded law and justice officers, arranged open meetings to arouse their neighborhoods. But the net result has been self-satisfaction for the upholders of decency and continuing business for the sex-movie houses.

I suggest that demonstrations, picketlines, and controversy draw profitable attention to movies that would come to the attention of only a very tiny share of our communities if given the cold shoulder of silent disdain. The times have changed enough in the past decade that the attention drawn to immorality, immorality lust and depravity draws more of the curious than it used to but does not shock the virtuous.

Picketing has not shown any power of persuasion to win many others to our way of thinking. But when the news media spread the story such picketing draws an immediate response from people who may not look at theater ads: "I wonder if the show is really as bad as those people (who haven't even seen it) say it is. Let's find out."

—R. T.

'Institutional Church a Necessity' 'Without Visibility... No Viability' --- Archbishop Alter

Cincinnati — (NC) — The institutional Church is necessary for "without visibility there is no viability," Archbishop Karl J. Alter said here.

The retired archbishop of Cincinnati defended the institutional Church in a sermon preached in St. Peter in Chains cathedral marking the departure of Bishop Edward A. McCarthy, former Cincinnati auxiliary, to take up his new post as bishop of Phoenix, Ariz.

"In spite of the contemporary criticism leveled at the so-called 'institutional Church' — some of it ill-founded and at times ill-tempered — nevertheless religion must be institutionalized or it will evaporate like the dew in the morning sun," Archbishop Alter declared.

"Without concrete structures, the Church would wither away like the

branch which is cut off from the vine. No doves can function without buildings for divine worship, without schools for Christian education, without hospitals, orphanages and homes for the aged, through which religion expresses its love and concern for our neighbor who is in need.

"The Church must have a visible existence, for without visibility there is no viability. This does not mean that the nature of the Church's institution cannot or does not change from time to time. The structures through which the Church expresses her inner spirit and through which she becomes the servant of our fellow men must be adapted to the particular culture in which we live."

Emphasizing that the Church is more than "buildings or material things," Archbishop Alter said: "The

Church is people—God's people. The Church is a mystery of God's wisdom, goodness and love, in which the greater mystery of the Incarnation is given continuity."

"When Christ spoke of the Church," he continued, "He spoke of it as a city on a mountain top; hence by its nature it must be visible... Christ also called the Church a sheepfold; hence it needs a shepherd who will keep his flock from entanglement in the thorns and lead it to wholesome pastures. The Church in the words of Christ is a kingdom; hence there must be a visible head to maintain order and create a right relationship between the members of the kingdom."

"The Church makes use of democratic processes, but it is not a democracy. Authority comes from above, not from below. It comes from Christ, not from the people. The Church is a sign which can be contradicted, but it is also God's great instrument which brings the fruit of Christ's redemption to all mankind. In a word, the Church is the sacrament of our salvation."

The archbishop said there is room in the Church for individuality as well as for community, for personal fulfillment, for freedom of conscience, rightly understood, and for legitimate self-expression, but there is no room for conflict and dissension.

"The unity of the Church must not be disrupted by willful deviations; it must be safeguarded and preserved as the sacred heritage of Christ."

Historic Milestone in Liturgy

'New Mass' Used in Italy

By R. A. GRAHAM, S.J.
Special Correspondent

Vatican City — Last weekend an atmosphere of keen anticipation pervaded Catholic Italy, one of the few countries ready with the translation of the new Mass. It became mandatory here on Nov. 30.

This historic point in the liturgical life of the Catholic Church marks the replacement of the 400-year-old Roman Missal of Pope St. Pius V by the "new Ordo" prepared according to the mandate of Vatican II. It is the culmination of the liturgical reform and also the most radical — and controversial — of all the changes introduced in the post-conciliar years.

Liturgyists most responsible for the new Mass could not conceal their enthusiasm and satisfaction as they saw their years of labor so near to fruition.

Pope Paul himself joined in this chorus of welcome when he said at his weekly general audience on the same day, "Let us not speak of a 'new Mass,' but of a 'new age' in the life of the Church."

The new Roman Missal of Paul VI — more accurately the new Ordo, which regulates those parts of the

Catholic Mass which remain unvaried throughout the year and therefore constitute the core of the Mass — was promulgated in April. (It will not be used in the United States until Spring of 1970.)

Following the lines set by the Vatican Council, it strives for more clarity and consistency, by omitting duplications and restoring some features abandoned in the past. Above all, it is designed to favor the active participation of the faithful.

The new missal therefore presents startling changes in texts regarded as sacrosanct. Naturally it arouses opposition and criticism, some of it bitter.

It is charged, for instance, that the Council was misled by the liturgical reformers who arranged to give themselves a blank check to revise the Mass according to their own arbitrary ideas. The new Ordo, it is claimed, was put across by high-handed procedures, without the consent of the national episcopal conferences and in defiance of the Synod of Bishops of two years ago which rejected it.

Critics charged that the new Ordo, whether considered as a whole or in its various parts, is "a striking departure from the Catholic theology of Holy Mass as it was formulated in the second session of the Council of Trent." The pastoral reasons offered to justify the changes, they claimed, are not sufficient.

On the contrary, "The recent reforms have amply shown that new changes in the liturgy cannot fail to do anything — to make the faithful who already show signs of impatience and an unmistakable diminution of faith."

Members of the Special Commission for the Liturgical Reform reacted to the criticisms with an attitude verging on disdain. They said that the general instruction accompanying the new Ordo, criticized for neglecting the theology of the Council of Trent, is "not a dogmatic text but purely and simply an exposition of the norms guiding the Eucharistic celebration. It is not intended to be a definition of the Mass but only to offer a description of the rite."

Within the family of cardinals, the most open comment on the protest was made by Gabriel Cardinal Garrone, who heads the Congregation for Catholic Education. Interviewed on the French service of

Must Update Magisterium, Jesuit Says

Boston — (RNS) — The profound internal turmoil of the "new Jesuit" in America, his "not-new" counterpart and those in between, has made the Society of Jesus today a "society in flux," impossible to define, according to an article in the November issue of Atlantic Monthly.

In a lengthy exposition, which encompasses much of the colorful and turbulent history of the Jesuit order founded in 1540 by Ignatius Loyola, staff editor John L'Heureux, a Jesuit priest himself, says the Catholic society's major superior "are prepared to do anything... to make the Jesuits the dynamic Christian force they were at their inception."

Directing most of his attention to the upswing of the "new Jesuit" in America, Father L'Heureux says this phenomenon emanated mainly out of prestigious Woodstock College, the Jesuit theologian near Baltimore, where Jesuits began "to determine their own actions in a way radically different from traditional Church teaching."

The author says the new kind of American Jesuit is a man "intensely involved in the world around him; he demands a theology which is relevant to the problems of people rather than to the ancient and uninteresting debates of Scholasticism; he asks evidence of dynamic spiritual leadership. He seeks a style of living consonant with the two most significant facts of his life — that he is a vowed religious and that he has only one life to live and it must be lived productively."

On the other side of the coin, Father L'Heureux writes, the new Jesuit is a man who admits to being profoundly uncertain about his own personal role and about what the religious is or should be.

Father L'Heureux claims "the freedom, the activity, the uncertainty of the new Jesuit stems from three basic issues: the failure of the rhetoric of spirituality; a lack of spiritual leadership in the men making decisions; and uncertainty about the religious life, what it is or should be."

"Obedience, or the question of authority," observes Father L'Heureux, "ceases to be the important issue it was only two or three years ago. The Jesuit is now encouraged to become the kind of person his talents or shortcomings indicate he ought to be."

When he has chosen, the priest adds, the superior ratifies. In that ratification lies the subject's obedience.

"The priesthood for these men is not the safe harbor of salvation it was for another generation," contends Father L'Heureux.

At the other extreme, the priest-auteur points out, are the "hot-head" Jesuits who find these alarming men a stumbling block and sometimes a scandal. They feel threatened and betrayed by what is happening around them.

Word for Sunday

God is Never in a Hurry

By Father Albert Shamon

The Second Sunday of Advent introduces us to John the Baptist. We do not exaggerate when we call him the greatest of the prophets. Christ so called him. What encomiums He heaped upon the Baptist. He was no willy nilly reed, no namby pamby courtier. He was a man! A prophet! Yes, more than a prophet — "His messenger."

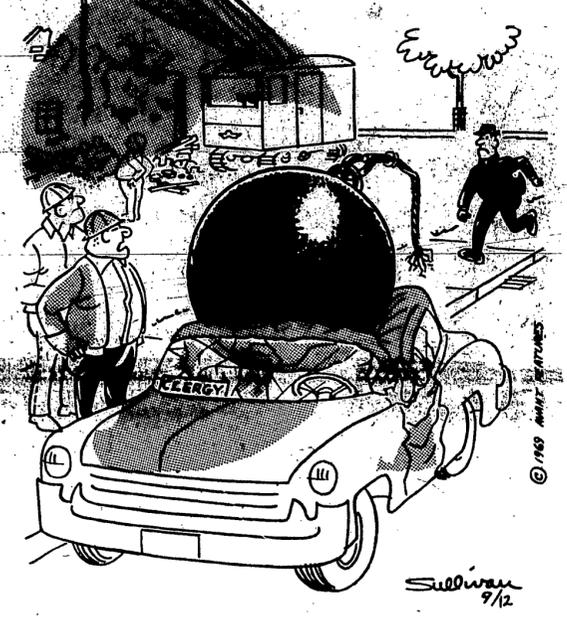
Like the prophet Elias, he dwelt in the desert; he dressed in rough garments, he lived on practically nothing. Like Elias, he was intrepid before the great and burned with zeal for the glory of God.

He was more than a prophet; for he pointed to One present, not to One absent — "in your midst stands one whom you know not." As lightning presages the rain, thirsted for by the parched earth, so from the desert his cry flashing forth heralded the long hoped-for Messiah: "Thou, Child, shalt be called the prophet of the Most High, to prepare the way for the One from on high who will shine on those seated in darkness and in the shadow of death."

Because with John the long centuries of waiting for the Messiah came to an end, he is the apostle of joy. A thousand years before Christ, the Greeks besieged Troy in vain. Helen, the most beautiful woman of her time, was the wife of the commander-in-chief of the Greek forces, stationed a watchman on the palace roof so that she could know when Troy fell. For when Troy fell, it would be put to flame and would burn a hole in light in the night that could be seen in far off Greece.

Aeschylus begins his play Agamemnon at this historical moment with a monologue by the watchman who has watched night after night, for long years for the burning of Troy.

From the topmost point of the roof of the Atreides, On my elbow like a dog,



"HERE HE COMES, I SUPPOSE WE CAN EXPECT A SERMON!"

I pray the gods to put an end to this wearying
And year-long watch that drags on
And now I watch for...
The flash of fire bringing news from Troy
And the report that she is taken
I suffer the night and the damp, and I have
A bed bereft of dreams
But now, O Fate, put an end to this fatigue,
And send the good news which a fire in the dark brings
Look!
Hail, light in the night, revealing the day, instituting
Feasting in Argos! Hail, beauty of the event being enacted!
I go to tell Agamemnon's spouse
To rise from her couch with all speed
And raise a cry of triumph to welcome this dawn
For Ilion's citadel has perished
As full well the announcing blaze shows.
One can imagine the watchman's joy at being relieved from his ten-

year vigil. One can surmise the feasting victory over the hated Trojans brought to all Greece. But what comparison is there to the joy ushered in when John, the watchman of the centuries, announced the Dawn — the end of darkness and the death of death. "Hail, light in the night, revealing the day, instituting feasting."

The story of John highlights one thing, among others, about God — namely, He is never in a hurry. When the Hebrews left Egypt for the Promised Land, they could have reached it in a few months by the direct route. But God kept them in the desert forty years. God is never in a hurry. Christ spent thirty years on earth before working a single miracle — no hurry!

In fact He seemed almost to regret His mother's request at Cana as though she were hurrying Him!

With us too God is never in a hurry. He knows we all find change hard — especially a change of heart. He is patient, so should we be with ourselves. When first we do not succeed, we should try and try again. Israel prayed and prayed for the Messiah in the end He came.

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They Don't

By MARGARET CONNOR
Most of us, when we were in school, lived at home with our parents and spent a lot of neighborhood time with our friends. A broad-based social life existed at school and along the sidewalks on the way home.

A fact that escaped our attention at the time — and this is true of us who went to school in New York — is that the world later almost entirely by itself.

Brenda Edwards and Shirley, aged 16, have lived in a photographic negative of school environment here.

They are black, and home down South with the fathers and sisters and all the rest of it. For racial purposes, though the reason to know otherwise was black.

But they came North here to attend Nazareth A

Here they are, a million home, boarding in Immaculation parish with two lies they never had seen — spend the school day at 900 white girls, and a black ones, all Rochester.

How would a white you in a reverse situation?

These girls are honest unnerved. Indeed, their must call them "cool."

"I don't see color a Brenda declared lately. "I fore I came that I might die. I didn't know how feel about white kids, known any, or given any what they might be like. see people as white or more."

"Just people," Shirley a Have people been nice They have, Brenda emph

Bishop Hogan, assist tribute Holy Comm parish where he ha on Nov. 28 in Sacra

Br. Josaphat Principal, Dies at 45

Brother Josaphat C. CSC, principal of Cardinal High School, "looked upon 'least in the kingdom of God' saw his vocation as easily ordinary layman's, a coil at his funeral.

He had a "deep appreciation and their problems," said Haycock, CSC. Moon assured a congregation of Our Mother of Sorrows Saturday afternoon for Br. phat's last rites.

The principal, 45, died edly at school on Nov. 28. Bishop Joseph L. Hogan pal celebrant of the reg A congregation of 1,000 about 200 priests and 100.

Concelebrants were Father Wood, Thomas Redding Whalen, John Murphy, CSB, Burton Smith, CSC, Murphy, John Hedges, M boy and Joseph Cerzitz, S.

In the sanctuary were Bishop Dennis Hickey, an Elmo Bransby, CSC, p the Eastern Province of t of the Holy Cross. Mem Student Council at Card formed an honor guard.

Brother Josaphat, a na troit, entered the Holy C gation in 1943 and recentl the 25th anniversary of h profession. He received h and master of science de Notre-Dame University, schools in Albany, New roe, Michigan and War Island, and served for s principal of Holy Cross I in Flushing, Long Islan taught for two years at St lege in Fort Portal, Ug Africa, prior to his ass principal of Cardinal M School in July, 1969.

Brother Josaphat is sury brothers, Brother Felician ski, CSC, of Warwick, R and a sister, Sister Mar the Franciscan Sisters of of Harper Woods, Mich.

Burial was in the novi tery of the Brothers of in Valetta, N.Y.