

ALL IN THE FAMILY

A Little Concern Goes a Long Way

By Sarah Child

We had to call a plumber to the house the other day and his visit served to remind me all over again what we Americans have lost in the disappearance of the little businessman.

It took him two hours to take apart and put back together what he so gently referred to on his work-sheet as "water closet."

Our younger child had thrown a tin cookie cutter with a little red handle down the bathroom well necessitating two trips on the plumber's part plus a couple hours of labor.

When he presented his bill it seemed more than reasonable and I told him so.

"If I were to charge you more," he smiled, "I would be dishonest."

A self-employed tradesman who lives in our village, he then told me that too often he himself ended up at the wrong end of an inflated bill as presented by other not so scrupulous repairmen.

"And when that happens," he advised, "you should refuse to pay them." He departed with my profuse thanks not only for doing the job quickly, efficiently and reasonably but for coming at all.

In the age we live in, the repair job or service call is one of the hardest commodities to come by.

One never has a problem buying the largest appliance. If you don't have any money, the store employee has been taught to tell you that cheap installment rates can be arranged.

Once the new washing machine or air conditioner or television set is in the house, however, the new own-

er can twiddle his thumbs until doomsday waiting for help should anything go wrong with the new purchase.

I attribute at least three fourths of the problem to the fact that instead of buying from Mr. Smith or Mr. Jones, the hardware or appliance man at the corner, we are conditioned to buying from the faceless discount chain store.

The Mr. Smiths and the Mr. Joneses are growing fewer and fewer every year, pushed out of business by the huge operations which save us perhaps as much as 10 per cent on an item.

Trouble is when we go back to have the purchase item repaired we run into a series of buck-passing personnel who merely work for the chain, care nothing for our problem and certainly could not worry less if we ever patronize the store again.

A couple of months ago I had the good fortune to be given the name of a woman who makes slipcovers. She came to the house, spent five hours cutting the fabric on the couch and chair, had them ready in a week and returned them to find she'd made a slight error in one cushion.

Instead of a long rigamarole of an explanation, she sat down and in another half hour had corrected the error. She stuck to her original price in spite of the long labor producing work of a quality I found difficult to believe. For too long I had been working again with the personnel of department stores. I had forgotten what it was like to do business with someone who took great pride in her work and in satisfying her customer.

By contrast, this week I cancelled



ON THE RIGHT SIDE

On the Pocketbook and Faith

By Father Paul J. Cuddy



Some years ago Dr. Frederick Zwiernick was professor of history at St. Bernard's Seminary. One day he said to the class: "The two things that bring about revolutions are an attack on a man's stomach and on his pocketbook."

I have often marveled at the lethargy of practicing Catholics regarding the theological and social teachings of the Church, and their great and sometimes unkind and unjust attitude about money needed to run the Church.

A preacher was once baited by a cynical parishioner: "Preacher, you always said that religion is as free as water, yet you want more and more." "Yes," said the preacher, "water is free but it costs money to pipe it in. So with religion."

A man whose judgment I value and whose psychological outlook I admire taught me a valuable lesson. He was soliciting for a big fund drive in Rochester. One of the men he contacted began to spout: "Money! Money! Always when they want money they come to me. Business is bad. We've had sickness. Look at the taxes, the way they're zooming! Look at inflation!" My friend let him talk himself out — and when he finished he smiled and said bluntly: "Jack, you always give. In fact you always give most generously. You know that you will give to this cause, and I know that you will give generously. Now Jack, Why Don't You Give With a Smile and Enjoy It?" I have often thought of the wisdom of that.

Recently I read of a man who was complaining about all the requests

for more cash to run the Church — which includes the Church universal as well as the local parish. He said: "They're always asking for money. I'm sick of these repeated requests!"

Another man answered: "I want to tell you a story right out of my heart. Some years ago a baby was born in our family and right from the start he cost much money. I had to buy food, clothes, medicine, toys and finally a puppy. When he started school, he cost even more. When he went to college, that took a fortune. In his senior year, he got sick and died. His burial was expensive — but from that day to this he has not cost me a cent . . .

"As long as your parish serves any purpose, it will cost money. As long as we have a school and try to provide religious formation to all our children, it will cost money.

"The Catholic Church in Russia and in China is not costing anyone anything, because the Catholic Church there is dead.

"And if the Church here dies for want of support, it won't cost anyone anything. But as long as the Church lives, it needs support. It has mine!"

There is an old adage: "There is a direct proportion between people's real faith and their generosity to the Church." There's more than a grain of the truth in the adage.

COMMENTARY

Courier-Journal—Friday, January 16, 1970

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A LAYMAN'S VIEW

New TV Spots . . . Religion with Zing

By John Dash

Once upon a time the Word was electrified, but electrifying it wasn't.

Until very recently religious programs and messages that fluttered across the television screen were either scheduled at impossible hours or they were as flatulent as a third grade dance recital.

Today however there is a 30-second advertisement from the Episcopal Church in which a man is watching an old film about Christians and gladiators on television. The tag line to the ad goes: "Being Christian didn't used to be a spectator sport. It still isn't." This ad has been dropped into the middle of a ball game broadcast.

Rochester area viewers have been jolted in prime time by advertising carrying the Franciscan Telespot trademark; and we may soon be treated to a mod-art cartoon cowboy drama based on the Good Samaritan parable. The credit line for the cartoon reads: "Produced by the United Presbyterian Church . . . from an original story by Jesus Christ."

All of this marks a trend in re-

ligious programming away from the religious ghetto — the Sunday morning time slot during which nobody watches television. (These programs, often excellently done, have ratings representing barely half a million people.)

It also marks a trend among religious groups to seek professional help in getting the message out. For example, Catholics in New York recently hired Batten, Barton, Durstine & Osborne to work drafting ideas for religious spots; and the Jewish Chautauqua Society has put the same team that makes the Jell-o commercials, Young & Rubicam, to work for them.

What is emerging in these trends could be called the holy quickie. It is a film running from 10 to 30 seconds giving the religious Traditions' replies to current social issues. Instead of urging attendance at church, as past ads have done, they promote ethical activity or state a basic religious principle.

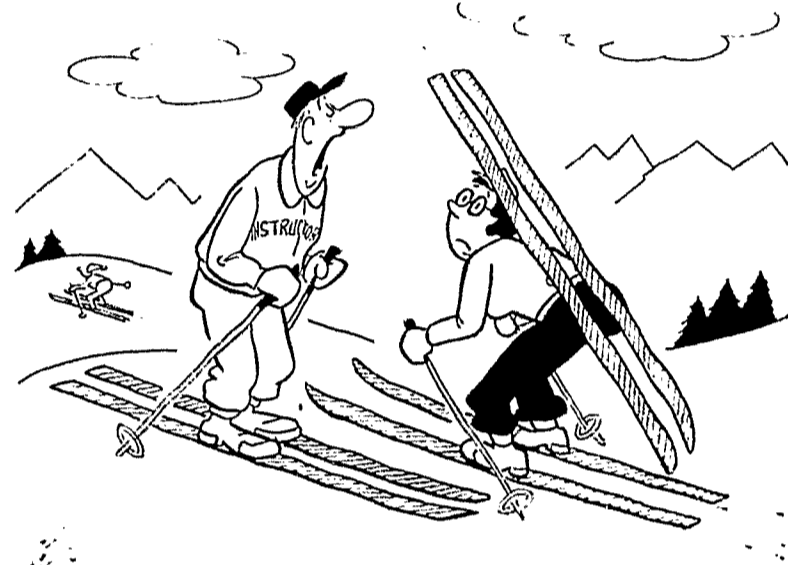
For instance, the United Presbyterian Church is now showing a cartoon of an Irish couple out house-hunting. They look at a place they

like, but the agent turns them away. As they are leaving, a black couple come up to look at the house. The Irish husband tells them: "You Irish? 'Cause if you are — forget it."

While it may seem that not much of a message could get across in so short a time, the length of the film has a decided advantage in that it can be dropped in everywhere from the station break to the pause between the cornflakes and deodorants.

Humor, in its many varieties, seems to be the selling point for the message, even to the point of stark irony as in the case of a film now being shown from the Lutheran Council. A child recites the Lord's Prayer as scenes of the Vietnam War, street riots, and atomic explosions flash across the screen.

I have quite forgotten the point made by most of the full-length religious shows I have seen; but I doubt I shall forget a recent Laugh-In. Billy Graham said, "Believe ye in the Lord Jesus and your sins shall be forgiven"; and Arte Johnson, ala the Nazi, rose from the shrubbery to say, "Verry Intterresting . . . and true. Think about it."



"A word with you about . . . self-confidence, Miss Miller . . ."

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