

Where Kids Are Really Boss!

(By NC News Service)

Milwaukee — Five high school students who were tired of grades, exams, and academic competition were the impetus for a new experiment in education here — the Milwaukee Independent School (MIS).

One of the students, Tim Simone, said the five "were discussing the problem of change in the educational system last summer." Since it takes a long time to bring about even "relatively minor changes such as the dress codes," he said, "we decided it would take too long for any really meaningful educational reforms. So we decided to start our own school and do it our own way."

Their strategy for setting up the school was seeking legal advice, gathering funds and resource materials, and asking university representatives for their reactions. They saw their efforts take tangible form when MIS opened Feb. 2 with 36 students, aged 15 to 20, most of whom had dropped out of local schools to join the MIS "student body."

In a description of the new school, students said MIS "is based on the premise that 'education' should not be limited to 'schools' and the time spent in them, but rather that 'education' goes on 24 hours a day, in the community as well as in the 'school,' and that students can and will educate themselves if given the opportunity."

"At MIS, the excitement of learning is the spur to our education," said William Ahlhauser, 17, a former honor student at Jesuit-run Marquette University High School.

MIS students will determine both the direction and content of their education by seeking out and hiring faculty and staff members; deciding the educational policies of the school, and electing the board of directors — an administrative body of both students and adults.

Paul Krueger, formerly an English-education teacher at the University of Wisconsin at Milwaukee, resigned his post to become coordinator of MIS. "We are establishing a list of resource people which we catalogue and file with their qualifications," Krueger said. "From this list the students choose what they want to study and whom they want to study with."

One resource person, with a masters degree in mathematics, who taught for two years at Penn State, and is presently working for Wisconsin Telephone Company, has donated time to teach statistics and systems analysis at MIS.

"We also have resource people who specialize in such varied topics as automechanics, Oriental religions, film making, Ethiopia, etc., and, of course, the basic subjects such as English, history and mathematics," Krueger said.

MIS teachers or resource people must submit written evaluations of each student's work and projects to the board of directors, which decides whether a student is ready for graduation.

According to responses obtained from the admissions offices of over 40 colleges — including Harvard, Columbia, Fordham and Wisconsin — MIS graduates would not have difficulty being accepted at those schools if they fulfill basic entrance requirements.

But the experimental school does have other problems. Though some temporary meeting space has been donated by interested people and organizations, MIS does not have a permanent school building. But Krueger doesn't feel this is a necessity. "MIS teachers, who donate their time, work with the students on a one to one basis. And you don't need classrooms for this type of relationship," he said.

Finances are another problem. Krueger is at present the only fully salaried member of the MIS staff, though several people work part time. "So far we have collected nearly \$4,000 in donations from 50 cents to \$1,000," Krueger said. "And as our financial resources increase, we will be able to add more full-time staff members."

MIS students will not be required to pay tuition, though they will be asked to contribute what they can. In addition, the school hopes to get donations from city residents. "Since we are committed to the community," Krueger said, "we would be excited if the community supported us."

A third problem hinges on the experimental nature of the school itself. Since MIS is not a "school" in the normal sense, its students may be considered out of school, or truant. "They are still being marked absent until the matter is cleared up," commented Theodore Kummerlein, assistant superintendent, division of pupil personnel, for Milwaukee public schools.

The matter hinges on whether MIS "fits the definition commonly used for private schools," according to Max Ashwell, legal consultant for the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction. If MIS is defined and accepted as a private school, there is no question of truancy for those attending it.

Father Harold Ide, Milwaukee diocesan assistant superintendent of schools, said that though MIS is in a "highly experimental" stage, he thinks experiments such as the independent school "should be encouraged to see what comes from them." And he echoed the feeling of MIS founders that there is "no guarantee that our system of formal education is the only answer."

ALL IN THE FAMILY Shock Treatment Can Work

By Sarah Child



Every so often — when the weatherman has announced we've broken another snow record for the season and it really is too cold to let the rampaging kids outside for more than a 10-minute stretch — I remember a first person article I read several years ago.

The woman, a mother of several naturally noisy, often squalling children, was being driven up the wall. The kids, not content with yelling and raising the roof throughout the day, continued despite strict threats and warnings, to carry on the rumpus through each evening meal.

No matter how the parents attempted to keep order, either strict discipline or diverting conversation, the kids kept up the melee.

Then one night while preparing the dessert plates to bring to the table, the woman could stand the fracas no longer.

Grabbing an aerosol can of whipped ersatz cream she began whipping it as a fire extinguisher. She shot one kid in the mouth with some of the topping and decorated the head of one of the others with some

of the creamy foam. A spurt here and a poof there. Nobody escaped. By the time she finished the kitchen was splattered, but good.

Had she gone berserk? Not really, the woman reported in the article. Slightly hysterical, maybe but not really off her rocker.

Her point was that a surprise attack as an emergency measure had really done a job that seemingly couldn't be done any other way.

The attack of whipped cream startled the kids so completely that they were shocked into stark silence, a condition she had been trying to achieve for weeks.

Biggest bonus, however, she said was she got the frustration out of her system, a factor well worth the cleaning up of the kitchen. How long the effect she achieved on the children lasted she didn't say and I doubt a second such emergency episode would be very successful.

Never tempted by the whipped cream method of discipline myself I have, nevertheless seen the wisdom from time to time of breaking up a routine with a little nuttiness. Nothing too much. I have been known on occasion when the kids fight the mother's oats or poached eggs to dish up chocolate sundaes for breakfast.

Once when our older child was an infant and I was trying to have a telephone conversation with an old friend who was in town I threw her the telephone book to tear up. I regretted it later but at the time it seemed worth it.

Most of the time, however, my attempt to break the routine led to nothing. A couple of weeks ago I walked into the grocery with the usual list I'd made up the night before. It was a bore and when I chose a cart and found somebody else's list folded up in the bottom I jammed my piece of paper into my pocket and took up the other. I'd get some excitement into our meals. I'd use someone else's imagination and list.

Upon reading it however, I discovered the same mundane chicken, fruit juice and lettuce to say nothing of the dry staples that made up my own order.

Sometimes it's just better not to fight it.

ON THE RIGHT SIDE

Thoughts on Liturgy -- Part I

By Father Paul J. Cuddy



Liturgist Father Joseph Champlin of Syracuse and Washington was the guest of the diocese last week. He gave lectures on the "New Mass" coming officially March 22 to the diocese. Now, among the liturgical enthusiasts there is a higher percentage of kooks than among ordinary people. Real liturgists need take no umbrage about this declaration. These people bill themselves as liturgical enthusiasts. They are undoubtedly upright enthusiasts. They are not authentic liturgists.

I think the reason for the high percentage of kookie people among the liturgists is not because of the liturgy but because a liturgical rite, if it is free-wheeling enough, gives the kooks a chance to show off their subjective propensities. They have three common compulsions.

First is an aversion to law, especially Church law. So no matter what the Pope, or the Bishop, or the Diocesan Liturgical Commission says, they disregard their directives.

The second is an enthusiasm against status quo, including traditions which make for community stability and distinction. If these enthusiasts were in the Salvation Army Band, they would arrive sans uniform, sporting themselves in a true, anti-uniform

with violins or zithers under their arms. As clerics, they figuratively burn their collars, wear anti-uniforms and compose their own Eucharistic Prayers.

The third is a childish pleasure in their personal histrionics before an assemblage. One devout Catholic woman was lamenting to me about a Sunday Mass she unwittingly attended. "Father, the loud guitars and the teen age racket were bad enough. But the priest danced a little jig as he raised the Sacred Host. I was so upset I got sick to my stomach, and almost had to leave the church." Now, it so happens that I like soft, melodic string music, whether zither, cello, harp or guitar. But my sympathies are with any civilized person who rebels against ugliness and dissonance as a substitute for the beauty and the sublime in the worship of God.

Despite the woman's genuine anguish at the jig-the-elevation ceremony, I must confess I could not help but chuckle. I knew the priest celebrant and he's no Fred Astaire.

It has always interested me that these subjective free wheelers talk much about concern, sing much about concern, write violently about the concern of those who don't appreciate their personal enthusiasms. What could I say to the distraught woman excepting: "Well, I know it's tough. But be patient. These people are like Saul before he was Paul. They race around harassing the People of God, excepting their own little groups, and they think they do great service to God. Saul improved, thanks be to God."

From these thoughts, the suspicious will conclude: "He's anti-liturgy." That makes as much sense as saying: "He's anti-Catholic Church," or "He's anti-Pope Paul." No. The point — and the pity — is that those who have presented their ritualistic eccentricities as liturgy have given true liturgy a bad name among many faithful Catholics.

Our own diocesan Father Benedict Ehmann has never been a kook. He is a pioneer in liturgy. He is an authentic liturgical enthusiast. His consistent teaching and practice is summed up in the General Instructions on the Mass: "In planning the celebration, the priest should consider the spiritual goal of the assembly rather than his own desires" (no. 313) The good of the assembly, not the sating of one's egocentricity, is the work of the Liturgy.

RACL VIEWPOINTS

As Others See Us

By J. E. Koller

RACL Viewpoints is written periodically for the Courier-Journal and is a means by which this paper gives the lay association a chance to have its views published. Its opinions, however, do not necessarily reflect the view of the Courier-Journal.

The Rochester diocese entertained a distinguished but relatively unpublicized guest during the first half of the current academic year. He was Douglas Hyde, a prominent British author, editor, teacher, political and economic consultant and close observer and articulate reporter of the world scene.

Actually, our guest sang for his supper by teaching at St. Bernard's Seminary. At the invitation of Bishop Sheen, he also performed a similar one-semester service two years ago so he has had ample opportunity to view Rochester and the United States against his background of experience and expertise in the affairs of every continent.

A few days before he departed for his next tour of duty somewhere in southeast Asia, Mr. Hyde favored a group of RACL members and friends with a rambling two-hour commentary on his stay in Rochester. Many of his observations are worth sharing with Courier-Journal readers.

Mr. Hyde had some very kind things to say about the Church in Rochester. He was especially impressed with the progress which has been made toward changing St. Bernard's into a modern, first-rate educational institution.

He found its students to be very "alert to the world situation", much more so than most similar groups he has encountered, and he predicted that they will be excellent priests. The experience of attending St. John Fisher College as Beckett Hall students seems to be especially beneficial.

He also praised the "Challenge to Peace" issued recently by the bishops and many priests of the diocese as "an excellent leadership document". Incidentally, he reported that its support among local priests was actually considerably more widespread than the number of signers seemed to indicate.

On occasion Mr. Hyde was less complimentary to the community of Rochester which he believes to have lost some of its dynamism, "perhaps as a result of the paternalism of some of its major industrial concerns". He was especially critical of affluent suburbanites, locally and across the nation, who "in a Kafkaesque way are in the control of forces over which they have no power." He believes their existence to be "anti-human in that they are unable to work toward improving the quality of their own lives or of anyone else's".

Perhaps because of his interest in economics, Mr. Hyde commented frequently on the subject of American and western European affluence. Since this affluence is achieved at the expense of the underdeveloped nations which provide both raw materials and markets for the finished

goods of the wealthy countries, economic gaps are growing wider. The effects of this economic disparity have been softened in the past by a strong American moral influence, but this influence has now undergone "a disastrous decline as a result of the fiasco in Vietnam."

Mr. Hyde's favorite subject proved to be contemporary Catholicism which he views from the position of a convert of 20 years ago. In his opinion, the encyclicals of Pope John and the documents of Vatican II are truly contemporary with other thought in the world, a situation which has not prevailed in official Catholic documents in several centuries.

Their principal thrust is the identification of Christian values with human values, and the activists are truly "the mainstream of the Church today as defined by Vatican II." With this new orientation in the Church, lay leadership is inevitable, a fact which was fully recognized by Vatican II.

Occasionally it is necessary for the active laity to pursue its Christian efforts in the world outside the formal Church organization when support of the clergy and hierarchy cannot be obtained. However, in the opinion of Mr. Hyde it is far better that such groups operate within the framework of the Church, and particularly within conventional parish structures. It is only here that it will be possible to activate the majority of laymen whose involvement is necessary if the Christian effort in the world is to succeed.

the Church and science — after all, the Church is concerned with mystery — the mystery of God.

"And so is science concerned with mystery — with the mystery of the universe which was created by God. So it would seem natural that priests would be interested in space, especially we who study it formally and in depth."

Under space agency regulations, Fathers Coyne and Fitzgerald would have had to sign a 10-year contract had they been accepted.

"Even this did not bother our superiors," he said. "They felt that we still could have carried on valuable work for the Church and mankind by being in the program."

During his testing period, Father Coyne said, "I was treated by the space agency people just like any other scientist. They couldn't care less that I was a priest."

Father Coyne was assigned to the observatory last September. He will work one year here and then return to Arizona State University to teach under a program jointly sponsored by the university and the American space agency.

After a year in Arizona, he will return to the Vatican observatory, alternating between there and the United States for years to come.

Although Father Coyne knows of no priest currently seeking to join the space program, he said he is confident that someday a Catholic clergyman will step onto the moon in the capacity of an astronaut space pioneer.

COMMENT FROM ROME

Almost the First Priest-Astronaut

By Robert Holton

(Courier-Journal Correspondent)

Castel Gandolfo—George V. Coyne is a 37-year-old washout American astronaut who now works as an astronomer at the Vatican Observatory here atop the papal summer residence.

Given those facts, George is little different from hundreds of other American men who tried out for membership on a space team only to fall by the wayside due to a minor physical defect.

But in one way the Baltimore-born astronomer is quite different from the others.

George V. Coyne is a Jesuit priest who, had he made it, would have been the first Catholic clergyman ever to make a trip into space.

Back in 1964, when Father Coyne had only one year to go before being ordained, he obtained permission from his superiors in the order to try out for the space program as an astronaut.

The plan called for Father Coyne to continue his studies while awaiting the outcome of intensive, physical, psychological and other tests astronauts must pass in order to qualify for membership on a space team.

"I underwent the tests for more than two months," he recalled in a recent interview. "And then, in the end, they washed me out because of a very minor vision weakness."

Shortly after that, another Jesuit priest, Father Robert Fitzgerald, applied for the program but he too lost out because of a minor physical defect.

Father Fitzgerald now is doing biological work at the University of Detroit.

"I do not find it strange that two Jesuits would be given permission to try for a moon shot," Father Coyne said. "In fact, looking back over history I think a Jesuit is a logical choice for such a step."

This last was a reference to the long history of astronomy work carried out by the Jesuit order. Thirty spots on the moon are named after Jesuit astronomers who first discovered them through long hours of studying the lunar surface with telescopes in the Vatican observatory and elsewhere.

In 1964 the space agency said it needed scientist astronauts—not just men who have spent years flying." Father Coyne recalled. "And I had always been interested in space so I applied."

"As far as my own religious superior, and others associated with the Church were concerned, I got complete and willing permission."

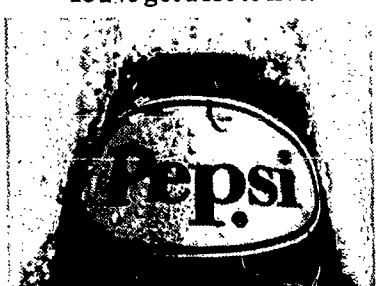
Father Coyne sees another good reason why it would be natural for a priest to become an astronaut.

"There's been a lot said in history about the conflict between the Church and science," he said. "In our day I think it has been resolved completely. Today there is no conflict between



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