Christ as a Superstar

By JOHN DASH

"Superstar" by Andrew Lloyd Webber and Tim Rice is starting the pop music of the 70's off with one whale of question: Who is Jesus a ques Christ?

The Decca 45, sung by Mur-ray Head with a backup by the Trinidad Singers, is one song from an in-development rock opera titled "Jesus Christ." And it's raising a storm.

Aware that many radio stations are very reluctant to play records in which Christ's name is used, regardless of the context, Decca has launched a campaign of enlisting clergymen to convince dj's and listeners that rock and religion can be just as compatible as rock and roll.

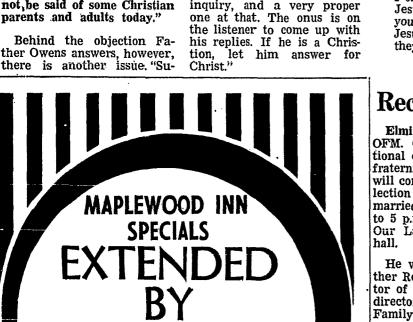
And the clergy responded well.

Father John Owens of Bismark, N.D., who hosts a radio show, circulated a statement that said in part;

"If Jesus Christ means anything at all to a Christian, this record should be the cause of some welcomed introspection. The superficial Christians, when they hear 'Superstar,' will rise up with indignation against the use of the name of Jesus Christ in such a public way, But Andy Webber and Tim Rice have done Christianity a favor.

"They will have many kids rocking and chanting the name of Someone who never objected or rejected the 'young' that came into his midst. Too bad the same cannot, be said of some Christian parents and adults today."

Behind the objection Fathere is another issue. "Su-



POPULAR

perstar" decidedly blasts icons.

"Don't get me wrong," the singer asks; "I only want to know: Jesus Christ, Super-star, do you think you're what they say you are?"

Such a question is not new. Dostoyevsky is probably the most famous writer to pick at the scab of the official 'image' of Christ over against the reality of the God-Man. He devoted one whole chapter of the Brothers Karamazov to exploring an imagined encounter between a Cardinal Inquisitor and Jesus, whom he had condemned as a heretic. The polity of the church-man came off little better than demonic.

The words of the song are hard, simple and earthy. The melody is light, the beat driving. The opening is an orchestrated piece reminiscent of title music from a Buzby Berkeley extravaganza, replete with a thousand spotlights weaving in the darkling air and a million spangle-covered dancers ascending a bogus Jacob's Ladder.

Yet for all the satire the song contains, the refrain is deadly serious, and asks the question that is more and more springing up in people's minds, "do you think you're what they say you are?"

Dean Martin Sullivan, of St. Paul's Cathedral in London commented.

"There are some people who may be shocked by this record. I ask them to listen to it and think again. It is a desperate cry . . . an urgent inquiry, and a very proper



Every time I look at you I don't understand Why you let the things you did get so out of hand You'd have managed better if you'd had it planned Why'd you choose such a backward time and such a strange land?

If you'd come today you would have reached a whole nation

Israel 4 BC had no mass communication Don't you get me wrong

I only want to know

Jesus Christ Jesus Christ who are you? What have you sacrificed? Jesus Christ Superstar do you think you're what

they say you are?

Tell me what you think about your friends at the top Who d'you think besides yourself's the pick of the crop?

Buddah was he where it's at, was he where you are? Could Mahomet move a mountain or was that just PR? Did you mean to die like that? Was that a mistake or Did you know your messy death would be a

record-breaker? Don't you get me wrong I only want to know Jesus Christ Jesus Christ who are you? What have you sacrificed? Jesus Christ Superstar do you think you're what

they say you are? (Andrew Lloyd Webber and Tim Rice)

Recollection Service Set in Elmira

Elmira — Father Bertin Roll, olds head the parish committee OFM. Cap., of Pittsburgh, na-for the program, which will tional director of the Archcon- close with celebration of Mass. fraternity of Christian Mothers, will conduct an afternoon recol-

lection service for Elmira area Territorial Mass married couples from 2:30 p.m. to 5 p.m. Sunday, March 15, in Our Lady of Lourdes Church Planned in Greece

Another of the "territorial" He will be presented by Fa-ecumenical folk Masses celether Roy Kiggins, assistant pas- brated at Our Mother of Sortor of the parish and associate rows Church will take place at director of the Marriage and 7:30 Tuesday evening, March Family Apostolate of the dio-10.

Father Roll has been direc of the area between Mt. Read It is especially for residents tor of the Christian Mothers group since 1944. He has lec-Maiden Lane to Latta Road, All

Kearney Band Headed for

Dublin Again

The Bishop Kearney High School band and associated marching units will leave for Ireland next Saturday, March 14, to take part again in Dub-lin's St. Patrick's Day parade.

They were "the sensation" of soon and she doesn't even last year's parade, the Dublin know what a rosary is". The Evening Herald declared, in mother's voice was hesitant announcing the second appear- at first, but as a murmur ance of "these remarkable through the group indicated youngsters."

Brother J.L. Heathwood of Kearney said 103 bands would guard of 16 and 13 baton twir- First Communion." lers, plus 109 "boosters." The outfit will give a half-time show

at the All-Ireland Hurling Finals, perform at Cork, Blarney Castle, Kilkenny Castle and Killarney, and also, as last year, The mother's questions pointbe on nation-wide television. ed up the fact that whatever They will return to Rochester March 21.



research, education and ser-

vice.

Confrontation

First Eucharist

By JOAN ZUMMO

"What are they teaching them in these religion classes? My daughter is going to receive her First Communion

that other parents were ask-

ing the same question, she added "and she doesn't know any of the prayers that I had make the trip, with a color to learn when I received my

> The scene was a meeting for parents for First Communicants held recently in a suburban Rochester parish. was being taught in religion classrooms there are still many parents who are con-

ence is especially obvious at a time such as First Communion when traditional ceremonies and preparations have been considered important. There are many reasons in the difference in preparation for First Eucharist now and the preparation of a generation ago. One of the most important is the whole shift in attitude from a very legalistic and negative orientation to one that is much more concerned 227 HOFFMAN ST.

with forming positive Chrig-.

tian attitudes.

Courier-Journal-Friday, March 6, 1970

In religious education this manifests itself in a number of ways, the most obvious of which is probably the near or complete absence of memorization of theological facts and many of the standard prayers.

This is not to say that the children do not learn facts or will never learn the Our Father or the Creed. It does mean, however, that the child is not expected to mouth religious formulae that he is too young to understand or appreciate.

It is far more important for a 7-year-old to understand that God is a kind and loving Father whose love, concern, and forgiveness is extended to all men, and that we, his fused by new approaches to children must give our love, teaching religion. This differconcern, and forgiveness to others, than for him to be able to recite words that say those thing in a vocabulary that is beyond his comprehension.

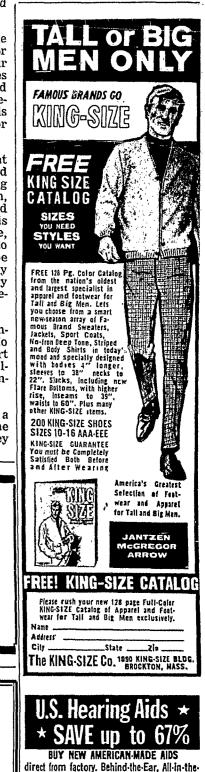
> Parents who are very concerned that their children do not know pravers by heart may, of course, teach the children these prayers themselves.

> Try to give the child a reasonable notion of the meaning of the words they are saying.

> > ELMIRA, N.Y.

& SONS

And do not be surprised if your six or seven year old has trouble remembering just what those words do mean. He just is not yet ready for what were originally meant to be, and still should be, adult prayers.



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