

The Church: 1970

Mistakes On Campus

By Fr. Andrew Greeley



It is my intention in this and two subsequent columns to comment, with the perspective that the passage of a few weeks provides, on the crisis on the college campuses which followed the Cambodian invasion and the shooting of students at Kent State and later at Jackson State.

Before I embark upon my comments, however, I wish to set a context by making my own position clear:

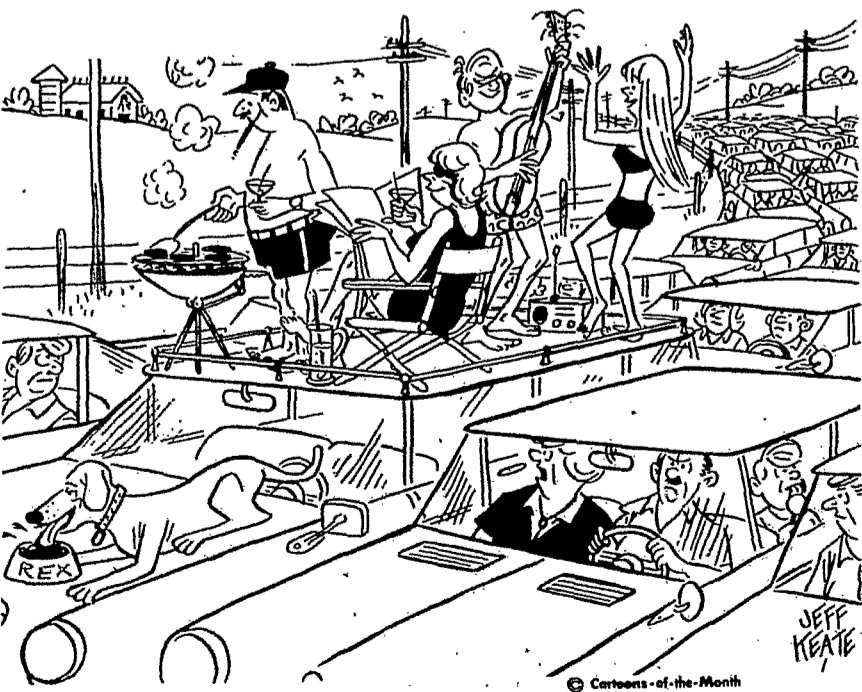
1. However successful or unsuccessful it may have been militarily, the Cambodian venture was monstrously unwise in terms of its domestic political impact. An administration which engages in such an action is dangerously out of touch with what is going on in substantial minorities within the country and is, be it noted, completely unaware of how near explosion college campuses have always been during the month of May.

2. The shooting of the students at Kent State and Jackson State was murder, committed perhaps in time of stress and strain, but still, behavior that simply cannot be tolerated from law enforcement officers. What is even more depressing about it is that one can be quite sure nobody is going to be punished for the murders. We now exist in a situation where students not only can be beaten by law enforcement officers without the officers fearing any legal reprisal, but they can even be killed.

3. The polarization rhetoric in which various members of the administration have from time to time engaged is inexcusable. It may be a way to win an election or to keep one's rating high in the public opinion polls but it is not a way to govern a nation. The Vice President insists that he will lower his voice when the leaders of the New Left lower theirs. I hold no brief for such loudmouthed new leftists as David Dellinger but the point is that David Dellinger is not the Vice President of the United States and is not responsible for holding a society together in a time of crisis.

With these observations as a framework, let me go on to a number of comments about the college crisis itself.

DRIVER'S LICENSE



"I like people who can find the bright side of things!"

Courier-Journal

On The Right Side

Is TV a Good Baby Sitter?

By Father Paul J. Cuddy



Psychologists say that the first seven years of our life are the most important in shaping our personality and attitudes. Psychologists quite frequently contradict one another, but on this principle they seem to be in agreement. Both the psychologists and sociologists used to agree pretty well that the parents and the family circle were the major determinants in the shaping of a child's personality and attitudes.

With the coming of TV into the home and family circle, it is worth speculating on the impact of this new ill-boding substitute for parents and grandparents.

For Sesame Street, Captain Kangaroo, Romper Room and the like, we can be grateful. The busy mother can safely entrust her youngsters to these TV Baby Sitter Programs. But it seems to me that parents — fathers are quite as important as mothers in child rearing — might as well have a male gorilla for a baby sitter as many TV programs.

Every day I go through our hospital pediatrics section. Our pediatrics is for children from infancy through 14 years of age.

It is a delight to observe little babies with their big eyes watching their toes, or a toy, or another baby. It also delights my soul that these tiny tykes are never afraid of me. I think that my great poundage and white hair presents the proper image, like Santa Claus. As I twiddle a little toe or adjust a slipped-off bottle, I become angry with the anger of God, thinking: "Beginning this past July 1, thanks to the governor and the majority of our lawmakers, unborn babies are being destroyed—with the blessing of the law!" We are a calloused State.

Recently I stopped into a room where a four-year-old child lay in a large crib, fascinated by a TV picture. I was stunned to see on the screen the ghoulish face of an Indian without turban. The horrid face alone filled the entire screen. And screaming from the face came a repetitious, hate-filled chant: "Kill him! Kill him! Kill him!"

The little boy watched the face on the screen. I watched the child's face on the pillow. It was intense, large-eyed, gripping. And I thought: "Sleeping

through that little boy is the virus which destroys sensitivity to evil. Before he is twelve he will be so accustomed to violence, hate, avarice, lust, murder, that he will be calloused toward evil." This is worse than physical evil.

Recently, several elementary school teachers from kindergarten through third grade were discussing the change among their little pupils within the past five years. All agreed: "The children are different. They are lovable, but they are different." I inquired: "How?" Again came agreement: "There's something stirring within them. They are more alert and knowledgeable in many things; and they are more restless and have less control over themselves. We think TV has a lot to do with it."

It is a fact of life that TV has become part of the family, with a power for instruction and for destruction. Would to God that we could honestly say that it is a great good. To say that it keeps children quiet and occupied while parents are busy could also be said of the hypothetical gorilla baby sitter which grapples and crushes the little child quietly, silently.

The Morriss Plan

Error Flourishes

By Frank Morriss



One of the most remarkable and frightening signs of our times is the rapidity with which error leaps from theological abstraction to concrete application.

Nuns and other Catholics are present and "impose hands" at the ordination of a Protestant minister. A priest-columnist asserts, "Of course, laymen can forgive sins . . . Occasionally the Church enters more specifically into the healing and reconciling work of the Lord by celebrating . . . Penance. Now, this kind of forgiveness is no different in nature from the pardon which you grant your neighbor."

A Benedictine monk suggests that Protestant ministers and even the laity can "celebrate the Eucharist."

The official news service for this country's Catholic press reports that Father Malcolm Boyd, an Episcopalian, was arrested with his friends "as they began offering Mass," which leaves it entirely up to the Catholic sense of readers to supply the needed footnote that none but a duly ordained Catholic priest can truly offer Mass.

I cite these examples to show how swiftly the idea has spread that there is no real distinction between the powers or authority of priest and those of laity, nor any similar distinction between those duly ordained by successors to the Apostles and those who simply have a humanly bestowed ministry outside the true line of Catholic succession. The error first appears in the musings of some of our theological gurus. And then almost overnight it is accepted by those Catholics who consider themselves progressive and open to new ideas. As I say, it is frightening to see how easily can be eroded what the Church has always believed,

and indeed for what many of our ancestors died rather than surrender.

The error is well-exemplified in the thought of the priest-columnist mentioned above. He is willing to grant a difference of degree in the services of laity and priest, but there is nothing in what he writes to indicate he accepts what the Second Vatican Council insists — that is, there is a distinction of nature between the priesthood of the laity and that of the clergy.

He admits an order of priests is necessary, but apparently only because it adds an "ecclesial dimension" to the authority and "fully effective aspect of sacramental Penance."

The progressives are scrapping all distinctions the Church has always recognized and insisting that we establish a kind of ecclesiastical proletarianism, with "power to the people" — the power of priestly ministry, that is.

The forgiveness of the sinner which every Christian should practice is entirely different from the forgiveness of the sin, which only the offended person (through a human representative — the priest) can forgive. The new speculation that God has somehow commissioned everyone — priest, lay person, minister — to forgive sins runs contrary to 2,000 years of Catholic understanding.

I have mentioned above that the Second Vatican Council reaffirms that understanding in regard to the distinct nature of the priesthood and its powers and authority. The specific references bear repeating here:

"Though all the faithful can baptize, the priest alone can complete the building up of the Body in the Eucharistic

Sacrifice." (Lumen Gentium, Chapter II).

"Though they differ from one another in essence and not only in degree, the common priesthood of the faithful and the ministerial or hierarchical priesthood are nonetheless interrelated." (Lumen Gentium, Chapter II — emphasis added).

"Now, the same Lord has established certain ministers among the faithful in order to join them together in one body where 'all members have not the same function' (Rom. 12:4). These ministers in the society of the faithful would be able by the sacred power of their order to offer sacrifice and to remit sins." (Decree on the Ministry and Life of Priests, Chapter I).

It seems almost an act of foolishness to point out these facts, but to counteract the foolishness of some of the assertions being made today it becomes necessary. There is a method in the foolishness of these progressives, who apparently are seeking a blurring of the distinctions made by the Church for centuries and climaxed by their repetition by Vatican II. In such a blurring all men and all faiths will become equal — that is, we will have an egalitarian Church in which the hierarchical structure will be obliterated, although we may keep some of its external trappings the way the British have kept those of the monarchy.

If some priests wish to abdicate their unique position, the laity should refuse to cooperate. The laity do not increase themselves by accepting priests as being completely equal in nature. In this way, Catholicism would be ended and the laity would be members of nothing more than some human fraternity.